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## Africa Summary

# Strategy in Urgency: Chad's Vision for a Secure and Prosperous Region

## HE Moussa Faki

Minister of Foreign Affairs; Prime Minister (2003–05), Chad

## Chair: Richard Ottaway MP

Chair, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, UK

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## INTRODUCTION

This document provides a summary of a meeting held at Chatham House on 5 September 2013 with HE Moussa Faki, the minister of foreign affairs and former prime minister of Chad.

Chad is situated in a volatile region, with instability particularly in Libya, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Sudan and Mali. Chad is playing an active role in tackling these issues. Only a secure environment will allow for the country and the wider region to reach full economic potential. A range of further topics were discussed, including the importance, and the weaknesses, of regional organizations, Chad's ambition to have a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council, military interventions in other African countries, the refugee crisis and the development of infrastructure.

The meeting was held on the record. The following summary is intended to serve as an *aide-mémoire* for those who took part and to provide a general summary of discussions for those who did not.

## MOUSSA FAKI

Mr Faki explained how Chad has suffered from a poor reputation. In the past, Sudan and Libya caused instability, but now Chad is trying to bring stability to the region. He also discussed the vastness of two of Chad's neighbors, Nigeria and Sudan, and the serious instability of countries such as Mali, the Central African Republic and Nigeria. Nevertheless, Chad is stable compared to the Sahel region at large.

Mr Faki put forward the ambition for Chad to have a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council, which is endorsed by the African Union. He also explained that Chad is interested in partnership with Europe.

He discussed the major issues that Chad faces. Firstly, the Sahel region is characterized by poverty, desertification, drugs trafficking and terrorism. Young people are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by terrorist groups and a repetition of what happened in Mali is possible. He said that institutions are lacking in Libya, so it has been possible for arms to spread into the Sahel. Islamist militias are at large in Libya and there are tribal disputes; the new authorities of Libya are not in control. He explained that there is new legislation in Libya that excludes anyone who worked with Muammar Gaddafi from leadership positions. Mr Faki argued that the policy had been badly thought out, and said that focus should have been placed on real criminals. The relationship between Libya and Chad has not been easy, but he pointed

out the importance of engaging with Libya, in collaboration with the AU and Europe. He explained that in September 2013 there will be a meeting between the AU and 10 international partners to discuss the Sahel region.

The minister went on to describe a set of issues surrounding Sudan. Despite the Doha Agreement signed two years ago, Darfur remains a complex problem. Militias continue to fight in the area, and thousands of Darfuris have taken refuge in Chad recently, adding to the 300,000 refugees already in the country. Armed movements in Darfur did not accept the Doha Agreement. They suggested that there should be a national conference on the issue – an idea that Mr Faki agreed with. The AU and UN operate programmes in Darfur which cost \$2 billion annually. Chad participates in this, and despite slow progress Mr Faki acknowledged that solving the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan would be beneficial for solving conflicts more generally. The visit by Chad's president to Khartoum may have helped the situation. Mr Faki also explained the serious nature of the humanitarian and security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). In March 2012 the Séléka coalition took power in CAR. Séléka is a mixed group with people from many nationalities, and Mr Faki described its actions as endangering the wider central African region. There is a force of 1,400 troops from across central Africa currently on the ground in CAR, and the AU is also involved. The mandate of this action is to protect civilians but it needs the diplomatic, political and financial means to succeed.

## SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Question

Are institutions such as the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sufficient for the region?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki explained how ECOWAS, the Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) had tried to solve crises and establish an architecture of peace. However in Mali this was not sufficient and eventually France and Chad, which is not an ECOWAS member, had to intervene. This demonstrates that ECOWAS needs more capacity. The organization needs a rapid intervention force, but this concept is still under debate. He expressed sadness that the region is still dependent on the UN, the European Union and the United States.

### Question

What is the nature of the relationship between Arab countries and the region?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki highlighted the significant Arab populations in African countries. He pointed to successful collaboration between Arab and African countries in Mali, despite apprehension on both sides. Rebels in the Mali crisis consisted of nationals from various Arab countries and this fuelled fears of a wider Arab-African conflict, but he argued that fundamentalist terrorists target both Arab and black African countries. Chad is committed to the fight against terrorism.

### Question

What is the reason for Chad's intervention in Mali? As it has no border with Mali, was it mainly to benefit Chad's own reputation?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki described Chad's history of civil war and interventions. The country is half Muslim and half Christian, and so strongly cares about reconciliation. He went on to explain that, although Chad does not share a border with Mali, there are no real frontiers for terrorism and attacks can occur anywhere. ECOWAS encouraged Chad's intervention in Mali due to its military experience and there is a national consensus in Chad to fight terrorism. Chad has paid a high price for its involvement in Mali – 30 Chadian troops have been killed during the intervention – but the minister insisted that the intervention was necessary. He argued that the motive for Chad's involvement in Mali was not related to Chad's reputation.

### Question

What are Chad's priorities regarding Nigeria and the desertification of the Lake Chad area?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki said Chad is in the Sahel and so it is affected by desertification. He outlined a major African project called the Great Green Wall, which is planned to be built from Senegal to Djibouti in order to tackle desertification.

Nigeria is a key economic partner for Chad. The countries share Lake Chad, which unfortunately is drying out. There is a mixed Chadian-Nigerian force along the border. Chad similarly has a mixed force with Sudan to confront destabilization. He said that security has had to take priority over economic development. The participation of the international community is therefore desired so that Chad can also tackle development and address poverty.

### Question

What would Chad's priorities be if it had a seat on the UN Security Council?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki outlined Chad's wish to develop its relationship with the United Kingdom. Chad is committed to stability partly due to its own troubled history, and many Chadians have experienced exile. Now Chad has 300,000 refugees from Darfur and 80,000 from the Central African Republic. The fate of the region could be publicized if Chad were to be included in the Security Council.

### **Question**

There are suggestions that Chad has played a power-politics role in the Central African Republic. What are Chad's relationships with different factions there and what does it think is the best way forward?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki said that the Central African Republic has been in crisis for two decades. Since 1994, all the central African countries have sent forces to stabilize the situation; today there is still a force made up of Congolese, Cameroonian, Gabonese and Chadian troops in CAR. He said that when François Bozizé, the former president of CAR, wanted to take power he used Chadian mercenaries due to their military experience. Chadians therefore helped former President Bozizé for 10 years prior to his overthrow.

Mr Faki argued that the group now in power in CAR is very dangerous. He said that Chad must support CAR for reasons of stability, and will work with international bodies to do this. Those who carried out the coup now have 18 months to organize elections. Chad will support this with the endorsement of ECCAS.

### **Question**

Regarding the military relationship with France, what is the future of European involvement in CAR?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki said the relationship with France was based upon the emergency in Mali. He explained how ECOWAS had been unable to provide forces to help, so the terrorists had gone on the offensive. Mali therefore requested French

help. Chad was also requested to help by the AU and the Malian government, which the Chadian parliament agreed to almost unanimously. He said that the Chad deployed 2,000 troops, working together with Mali and France. The Chadian-French relationship also dates back to French involvement in Chad to deter Gaddafi.

The European Union is the main source of finance for central Africa, but the new situation in the region is complex and more support is needed. Mr Faki said that central African countries should be able to mobilize the 3,000 troops that have been requested, but unfortunately more EU and UN assistance is needed. According to the minister, President François Hollande rightly recognized the threat to central Africa. He also argued that South Sudan is almost a failed state and terrorists could establish themselves in central Africa. Mr Faki insisted that the situation must be controlled to avoid contagion. He said that France is aware of these issues and their complexity. CAR is a neighbour of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a country that has similarly been unstable for years.

### **Question**

What can Chad do about the failure of the Doha Agreement?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki disputed the argument that the Doha Agreement had failed, but confirmed that many difficulties remained. He described the situation on the ground as problematic, but argued that the content of the agreement itself is excellent and should be ensured. Mr Faki described the effect of the Darfur conflict on Chad, and alleged that Sudan armed rebels against Chad. In 2010 an agreement was signed to normalize relations, and this resulted in a mixed border force. Chad facilitates negotiations between the rebels and Darfur and is a member of the follow up committee for the Doha Agreement. However, Mr Faki said that Sudan believes South Sudan is arming opponents and this hinders negotiations. Nevertheless, the minister maintained that only a political solution will work.

### **Question**

Can the situation in CAR be compared to Mali? Would Chad intervene unilaterally in CAR before the AU is ready to do so?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki explained that Mali and CAR have different contexts, but he agreed that the destabilizing outcome of insecurity could be the same in both countries. Chad has the largest contingent in CAR, but there are 10 countries in ECCAS and Chad is encouraging them to mobilize. It is envisaged that there will be 2,000 troops from ECCAS and more from the AU. Mr Faki explained that Chad would continue to observe whether extra personnel would be needed. There is a UN mandate in place in CAR to protect civilians, because unfortunately the country currently has no standing army. Mr Faki argued that neighbouring countries must mobilize their means or the situation will spiral out of control.

### **Question**

Mr Faki has a personal history of exile. What supporting role could the diaspora play in Chad?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki described how large Chad's diaspora is, and said that Chad's government encouraged them to return. There is a section in Chad's foreign ministry that is dedicated to bringing Chadians back to help their country. The minister said that the diaspora was experienced, and while it is legitimate for people to study and work abroad, he argued that this knowledge could be used to the benefit Chad. Mr Faki said that doctors and teachers have a duty to help, even if they decide to leave again after returning to Chad.

### **Question**

As Chad is bidding for a seat on the UN Security Council, what is the country's position on Guinea-Bissau?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki maintained that he considers Guinea-Bissau to be an important country. He argued that the problems of the country were the responsibility of ECOWAS, but that they also represent a threat that should be addressed at the level of the AU and the UN. He said that Guinea-Bissau is known to be a transit country for drugs, and that there are remaining military aspects relating



to the coup there, but these issues need to be addressed at AU and UN levels.

### Question

Regarding the Chadian economy, what will its future be after the oil is depleted?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki said that Chad is mainly agricultural but for historical reasons has not developed all of its capacities. For example, there are no railways. Infrastructure is needed first in order to benefit from resources. Petrol production has now almost halved, but Canadian and Chinese companies have led in exploiting new fields. Mr Faki acknowledged that Chad's oil revenues should primarily finance agriculture. He described an ambitious planned project to build a railway linking Sudan and Nigeria. Mr Faki said that peace and stability in the region would be essential for the evolution of Chad.

### Question

There have been incidents with the China National Petroleum Corporation relating to pricing and the environment. Does this indicate a cooling in relations between China and Chad? Is there room for other companies?

### Moussa Faki

Mr Faki denied any cooling in the relationship between China and Chad, but he said that Chinese companies understand that they must respect Chad's rules, particularly those concerning the environment. Chad remains open to companies from elsewhere. Mr Faki mentioned the Canadian and American companies already making investments, and also encouraged UK companies to invest. He described Chad as an attractive investment opportunity, as it is at the crossroads between Sudan, Libya and Nigeria.

### Question

What is Chad's experience of the *Coopération Financière en Afrique Centrale* (CFA), especially regarding problems with the management of the central bank?

What is the nature of Chad's relationship with Cameroon, and what progress has been made on negotiations relating to transit fees and the oil pipeline?

### **Moussa Faki**

Mr Faki described as excellent relations within the CFA, and pointed out that the six member countries share a single currency. He said that CFA countries are contributing to CAR, and that they agreed to each contribute five billion CFA francs to the country. Chad has a special relationship with Cameroon and the initial pipeline agreement was signed over 10 years ago. The transit fee was 0.31 cents per barrel transported and there are negotiations to increase that amount. Chad and Cameroon are on the way to reaching this agreement. There is already an agreement regarding a new railway connection between the countries.