

# The Chad–Sudan Proxy War and the ‘Darfurization’ of Chad: Myths and Reality

*By Jérôme Tubiana*



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Danida



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Small Arms Survey

Graduate Institute of International Studies

47 Avenue Blanc, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

*Phone:* +41 22 908 5777

*Fax:* +41 22 732 2738

*Email:* [smallarm@hei.unige.ch](mailto:smallarm@hei.unige.ch)

*Web site:* [www.smallarmssurvey.org](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org)

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The HSBA project is supported by Canada, the UK Government Global Conflict Prevention Pool, the Danish International Development Agency (Danida), and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For more information contact:

Claire Mc Evoy  
HSBA Project Coordinator  
Small Arms Survey, 47 Avenue Blanc  
1202 Geneva, Switzerland

*E-mail:* [mcevoy@hei.unige.ch](mailto:mcevoy@hei.unige.ch)  
*Web site:* [www.smallarmssurvey.org/sudan](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sudan)

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

AN	Alliance nationale
ANR	Alliance nationale de résistance
CAR	Central African Republic
CDR	Conseil démocratique révolutionnaire
CNT	Concorde nationale du Tchad (or Convention nationale du Tchad)
EUFOR	European Union Force
FPRN	Front populaire pour la renaissance nationale
Frolinat	Front de libération nationale du Tchad
FSR	Front pour le salut de la république
FUC	Front uni pour le changement
FUCD	Front uni pour le changement démocratique
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
MPRD	Mouvement pour la paix, la reconstruction et le développement
NMRD	National Movement for Reform and Development
NRF	National Redemption Front
PDF	Popular Defence Forces
RAFD	Rassemblement des forces démocratiques
RDL	Rassemblement pour la démocratie et les libertés
RFC	Rassemblement des forces pour le changement
RFI	Radio France Internationale
RND	Rassemblement national démocratique
RNDP	Rassemblement national démocratique populaire
RPJ	Rassemblement populaire pour la justice
SCUD	Socle pour le changement, l'unité et la démocratie
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
UFCD	Union des forces pour le changement et la démocratie
UFDD	Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement
UFDD/F	UFDD–Fondamentale
UFDR	Union des forces démocratiques et du rassemblement
UFPD	Union des forces pour le progrès et la démocratie

## About the author

Jérôme Tubiana (tubiana@gmail.com) holds a Ph.D. in African Studies from the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO) in Paris. Over the past 12 years he has conducted more than ten research missions in northern and eastern Chad, western Sudan, and eastern Niger, focusing on the Tubu (Teda–Daza) and Beri (Zaghawa and Bideyat) peoples. Since 2004, he has worked in Darfur and Chad as a researcher for various NGOs, most notably Action contre la faim (ACF) and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF–France). Among other publications, he has authored a field study on the causes and consequences of the Darfur crisis ('Le Darfour: un conflit identitaire,' *Afrique Contemporaine*, No. 214, 2005), a study on the issue of land in Darfur ('Darfur: a conflict for land,' in *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*, edited by Alex de Waal, Harvard University, 2007), a study of Darfur rebels (*Divided They Fall: The Fragmentation of Darfur's Rebel Groups*, with Victor Tanner, Small Arms Survey, 2007), and a book of Teda–Daza and Beri tales (*Contes Toubou du Sahara*, L'Harmattan, 2007). As a freelance journalist and photographer, he has also written for a number of French newspapers and publications on Chad and the Horn of Africa.

## Abstract

The contention that the Darfurian conflict is being ‘exported’ to eastern Chad via *janjawid* militia has received widespread coverage. However, this is a dangerous oversimplification of the ethnic and political dynamics of the region, and most especially neglects the importance of the political crisis in Chad. Khartoum and N’Djamena have been engaged in an on-again, off-again proxy conflict using one another’s rebel movements since the Darfur conflict began in 2003, most intensively since 2005. Khartoum has attempted on multiple occasions to unify the Chadian rebel groups to destabilize or even overthrow the Déby regime. While Déby has survived two attacks on the capital, he has managed to hold on to power through repression and incentives to those who rally to him. This Working Paper provides the contextual and historical background for understanding the current Chad–Sudan conflict, its complex ethnic components, and the history of the Chadian rebel factions. The paper explains why the current international peacekeeping effort is unlikely to be successful without an accompanying diplomatic push to bring the Chadian opposition—both legal and armed—and the Déby regime to the negotiating table.



## I. Introduction

The current far-reaching conflict in Darfur extends well beyond the borders of Sudan, particularly into Chad. Efforts by the Chadian government to avoid taking sides in the conflict were shattered in 2003–04 by the arrival of some 200,000 Sudanese refugees across the border and the establishment of rear bases in eastern Chad by Darfurian rebel groups. The rebels were strengthened by their membership of cross-border ethnic groups, including the Beri (Zaghawa and Bideyat), to which the Chadian president Idriss Déby belongs. Déby's inability to control his Beri kinsmen, including those closest to him, brought an end to more than ten years of good relations with the Sudanese regime of Omar al-Bashir. Subsequently, violence similar to that in Darfur began emerging in eastern Chad: attacks on villages, mainly non-Arab ones, by militias known as the *janjawid*, who recruit largely (though not solely) from nomadic Arab groups. This has caused the internal displacement of more than 170,000 Chadian civilians.

Some of the perpetrators of this violence have links with Darfur: some of the *janjawid* active in Chad appear to be the same as those active on the western border of Darfur, who are supported by the Sudanese government and recruit from both Sudanese and Chadian Arab groups. But more than the *janjawid* in Darfur, those in Chad also recruit from non-Arab communities, whose motivation comes mostly from local conflicts for land with other non-Arabs, which are similar but not related to the land conflicts in Darfur (Tubiana, 2006b; Tubiana, 2007). The violence in eastern Chad has roots in the aggravation of these local conflicts between communities, as well as in the weakness of Chadian institutions and the Chadian people's widespread frustration with the country's unequal wealth distribution—particularly its oil wealth—and lack of democracy. The same factors have also led to an increase in the power of the rebel groups in Chad, who, thanks to the cooling in Chad–Sudan relations, have been supported directly by Khartoum since 2005.

This Sudanese support featured again in the last rebel raid on N'Djamena, which was defeated outright thanks to Déby's superiority in arms (helicopters and tanks), some support from France and Libya, and the rebels' lack of preparation for urban warfare, their limited fuel and ammunitions, and their persistent ethnic divisions and personal rivalries. On 2 February 2008, when the rebels entered the Chadian capital, many people among both rebel and government forces—by then suffering numerous defections—the civilian population, and the international community had given up Déby's regime for dead, after 17 years in power. The day before, the Chadian Army and the president himself had been defeated in Massaguett, only 50 kilometres north-east of N'Djamena, and retreated to the capital after an hour of fighting. The rebels had travelled the breadth of Chad from east to west in less than a week, having crossed the border from West Darfur in the area of Adé, south of Geneina. They had driven fast, avoiding the government forces concentrated in the east, and gathered a force of around 4,000 fighters mounted on some 300 pick-ups, which had mostly been given, together with arms, by the Sudanese government. It was not the first time Khartoum was arming Chadian rebel groups, in particular the three main ones: Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (UFDD), UFDD–Fondamentale (UFDD/F), and Rassemblement des forces pour le changement (RFC). But once again the Sudanese regime had failed to unify them, and the rebels' joint military command proved ineffectual.

The attack on N'Djamena challenges yet again the international community's failure to address the central issues in the Chad–Darfur crisis: the first is the proxy war between Chad and Sudan, the roots of which lie in Darfur and in the lack of political freedom in Déby's regime; the second is the ongoing French support for this regime, which says as much about traditional French politics as about the possibility of the Darfur conflict spilling over into Chad. Although French support is not the main factor behind Déby's survival in the most recent attack,<sup>1</sup> it could now become more open in its provision of French troops to fight the rebels. On 4 February 2008, following a proposal by the French government, the UN Security Council adopted a declaration (not a resolution, as France originally wished) condemning the rebels and asking member states to support Chad. On the one hand, this satisfied the long-standing French aim to 'multilateralize' its support for the Chadian regime (although it is unlikely

that many countries other than France will fight the rebels alongside the Chadian Army). But on the other hand, it posed a challenge to another recent attempt to multilateralize the Chadian issue: the establishing of a European Union peacekeeping force (EUFOR) expected to arrive in eastern Chad in the coming months. The neutrality of this force is more and more in question given the pre-eminence of French troops in its ranks.

This *Working Paper* finds that:

- The simplification of the situation in Chad, in particular by the media, ignores some of the key factors that explain the violence. This has been exploited by the Chadian and French governments and by other players in the conflict. The present violence is often characterized as attacks by the *janjawid*—always portrayed as Arab and always as Sudanese—on the non-Arab civilian populations in Chad, and as attacks by Chadian rebel movements supposedly following orders from Khartoum. This presents the situation as a direct exportation of the Darfur conflict into Chad, or the ‘Darfurization’ of the country, without paying enough attention to the existence of a political crisis in Chad itself.<sup>2</sup>
- It will not be possible to resolve the conflict in Darfur without involving the whole region—particularly Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR), and other neighbours of Sudan. The complexity of the ethnic links across borders and the tormented history of Chad–Sudanese relations since the former’s independence in 1960 are central to understanding how the conflicts in Darfur and Chad influence each other, without being totally interdependent.
- Sudan and Chad have been in conflict via rebel groups and proxy militias intensively since the end of 2005. Attempts by both states, however, to set up rebel coalitions under their control have failed, leaving the field open to a multitude of armed factions, which are increasingly local and increasingly divided along ethnic lines, aggravating the security situation even further.
- The international response to the crises in Darfur and Chad is currently based on the dispatch of peacekeeping forces: 26,000 men, under the aegis of the United Nations and the African Union, are being sent to Darfur itself; and 3,700 men comprising the EUFOR troops are being sent to Chad and the CAR. The diplomatic process is still in its infancy and so far has been dom-

inated by attempts to negotiate between the Sudanese and Chadian governments, and between these governments and their respective rebel movements. The peacekeeping operations and negotiations will only be successful, however, if the peacekeepers—particularly EUFOR—prove to be sufficiently neutral, if the international community continues to put pressure on the different armed actors to take part, and if these negotiations open up to non-armed actors—the political opposition and civil society—and incorporate fundamental issues of the democratic process in both Chad and Sudan. 🗨️



## II. The ‘Darfurization’ of Chad? Background and current context

The Dar Sila region of south-eastern Chad has been raided by *janjawid* militias since the conflict in Darfur began in 2003. The raids intensified at the end of 2005 when the international community became aware that Chad might become ‘contaminated’ by Darfur’s violence.<sup>3</sup> Fighting has taken place between these militias and the rebels in Darfur, for whom Dar Sila is one of their rear bases in Chad. But as in Darfur, the *janjawid* mostly attack the non-Arab civilians in the region, particularly the Dajo, who hold the sultanate of Dar Sila. And as in Darfur, villages are burnt, cattle and goods stolen, and the civilian population forced to flee from their lands. By February 2008 more than 170,000 people had been displaced inside Chad, mainly in Dar Sila, in fewer than two years and are now dependent on international humanitarian aid. In a short period of time, then, the symptoms of the crisis in Darfur have been exported to south-eastern Chad, and to some extent to the CAR.

The primary reason for the spread of the conflict from Darfur is the permeability of the 600 kilometre Chad–Sudan border. Several ethnic groups live on either side of what, for them, is simply a line on the map. This is particularly true of the Beri—who are better known by their Arabic names of Zaghawa and Bideyat—a people who play a central role in both countries (Tubiana, 1977; Tubiana, 2006a). The president of Chad, Idriss Déby, is a member of this group, as are some of the leading rebel chiefs in Darfur (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007). Déby has long maintained relations with the government in Khartoum, but has never been able to prevent those close to him from supporting the rebels in Darfur. As one of them explained in 2006: ‘The Sudanese think that as long as we, the Zaghawa, are in power in Chad, they will never end the rebellion. What they want is regime change in N’Djamena.’<sup>4</sup>

In 2004, and particularly from the end of 2005, Khartoum began actively to support various groups of Chadian rebels based in Darfur. In April 2006, one of the groups, the Front uni pour le changement (FUC), sometimes also called

the Front uni pour le changement démocratique (FUCD), attempted a first lightning raid on N’Djamena, which the Chadian government only halted at the last minute with French support. Since then, tensions between the two states have continued to rise. In April 2007, the Chadian Army itself entered Sudanese territory and confronted troops from Khartoum. And in January 2008, Chadian planes bombed Chadian rebel positions in West Darfur. Throughout 2006 and 2007, however, it was mainly the rebel groups in Darfur who, on several occasions, fought rebel groups from Chad alongside the Chadian Army, in Chadian territory. Sudan and Chad have thus become embroiled in a proxy war through various rebel movements and auxiliary militias.

The identification of these movements and militias is not simple. In Chad, all of the rebels from Darfur, and sometimes also the non-Arab (mostly Dajo) militias who fight against the *janjawid*, are referred to as the ‘Toro Boro’, irrespective of the faction to which they belong. This term is imported from Darfur, where ‘Tora Bora’ or ‘Toro Boro’ is the nickname given to and adopted by the Darfur rebels, especially the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), as a reference to the mountains in Afghanistan where Osama bin Laden survived intensive US bombing. In 2003–04, SLA fighters were similarly bombed by Khartoum’s planes while they were hiding in Darfur’s mountains. This general nickname does not, however, give any indication of the number of rebel factions in Darfur, nor the fact that not all are supported by Chad and only some fight alongside the Chadian Army. Similarly, identifying the *janjawid* who are active in Chad in terms of ethnicity and nationality (Arab or non-Arab? Chadian or Sudanese, or both?) is very difficult.

Although the *janjawid* militias in Chad are largely autonomous—much more so than the Sudanese *janjawid*, who are mainly Khartoum-backed militias fighting together with the army and often officially integrated in paramilitary forces—they appear to have benefited from Sudanese support, the extent of which is hard to determine. Not all combatants in these militias were recruited in Sudan, but many appear to obey the same leaders as the *janjawid* in West Darfur, who have been armed for more than ten years by the Sudanese government in their attacks on non-Arab villages. Indeed, the Arab leaders from West Darfur—such as Amir Hamid ad-Daway and Amir Abdallah Abu Shinebat—are regularly cited as commanders of the *janjawid* active in both



West Darfur and Chad. In the 1990s, some of these leaders, who mostly originated from Chad, were appointed as traditional leaders by the Sudanese government and given the title of *amir* (a term meaning prince in Arabic, that was used in Sudan for the Mahdist military chiefs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and since the 1990s for Darfur Arab traditional leaders, many of whom happen also to be military chiefs). Sudanese uniforms are now worn both by the militias active in Chad and by the Chadian rebels, providing a more visible sign of Khartoum's support.<sup>5</sup>

The *janjawid* and the Chadian rebels do not necessarily employ the same methods, nor have the same motivations, but their attacks often coincide. Thus, at the beginning of November 2006, the first attacks of the Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (UFDD)—the new rebel coalition supported by Khartoum—in Dar Sila and Salamat were followed by violent *janjawid* attacks in the two regions.<sup>6</sup> This can be partly explained by the fact that, in order to defend themselves against the highly mobile rebels, the government in Chad preferred to concentrate its forces around the main towns, especially the capital, leaving regions such as Dar Sila without any defence. Occasionally, *janjawid* forces and Chadian rebels have fought together. In March 2007, for example, the Concorde nationale du Tchad (also known as the Convention nationale du Tchad) (CNT) took part alongside *janjawid* forces in a violent attack on the villages of Tiero and Marena, in Dar Sila, in which 200–400 Dajo civilians and militiamen were killed.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, certain leaders and Chadian rebel combatants (particularly Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim) were part of the auxiliary forces of the Sudanese government in West Darfur at the beginning of the conflict and have maintained contacts with the West Darfurian *janjawid*.<sup>8</sup>

One of the objectives of the rebel attacks in eastern Chad has been to destabilize the regime in N'Djamena, but Déby has managed to turn the situation to his advantage. In November 2006, the Chadian government used the violence provoked by the rebels as a pretext to order a state of emergency in most of its territory, even though the violence was localized. The attacks have also allowed the regime to renew its request for an international force to police its eastern border (UN, 2006). Resolution 1778, adopted unanimously by the United Nations Security Council on 25 September 2007, has subsequently

created the European Union Force (EUFOR) Chad/CAR, which is expected to include 3,700 troops.

From the very beginning, however, those advocating the deployment of an international force in Chad have been divided. The Chadian government apparently sees it as additional protection, strengthening the usual French support, sparing its own forces the cost of protecting civilians, and allowing them to concentrate on fighting the rebels instead. Déby admitted this explicitly in February 2008 during an interview on the French radio station Europe 1 regarding the recent attack on N'Djamena:

*'It would have helped us if EUFOR had been already in Chad, because I would have had the possibility to dismantle units at the border. . . [EUFOR will] free us of the weight of being responsible for the security of 300,000 Sudanese refugees and 170,000 Chadian IDPs. It is a significant burden that mobilizes many of our forces.'*<sup>9</sup>

His minister of foreign affairs, Ahmat Allam-Mi, declared in a press conference the same month:

*'We wish to have good relations with our neighbours [Sudan]. This is why we hesitated a lot before accepting this force. . . EUFOR will be able to discourage rebels coming from Sudan and to discourage Sudan itself from attacking Chad. . . . EUFOR will be an unsettling witness, another open window on Darfur alongside the International Criminal Court, which will shake up Khartoum's regime.'*<sup>10</sup>

This expected role of EUFOR contradicts its mandate, which does not include protecting the border from rebel attacks;<sup>11</sup> similarly it is not tasked with addressing events in Darfur, or arresting criminals indicted by the International Criminal Court.

On the other hand, the first EUFOR promoters are human rights organizations—particularly Human Rights Watch, which has recommended a solution of this type since February 2006—hoping that this force will protect local people against the incursions of the *janjawid* militias from Darfur, and even avoid the Darfurization of Chad as a whole (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Prior to the recommendations of Human Rights Watch, leaders of other organizations

(such as Physicians for Human Rights) were insisting on the need to protect Chad from the risk of destabilization in order to avoid an extension of the Darfur crisis (Heffernan and Johnson, 2005). More recently, this analysis has been taken up in diplomatic circles in order to justify French and UN support for Déby's regime after the rebel attack of 2 February. Anonymous diplomats quoted by a French newspaper argued that Déby's fall would be 'catastrophic' for Darfur, to the extent that the deployment of the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) would have to be aborted.<sup>12</sup> Some even talk about a risk of Muslim fundamentalism spilling over from Sudan into Chad (Bernard et al., 2008), but this is both anachronistic—it is well-known that Omar al-Bashir's regime gave up its Islamic expansionist agenda to break its international isolation years ago—and unlikely to happen: it did not, after all, occur during the many years in which Déby was a close ally of a much more expansionist Sudanese regime.

These analyses of the potential Darfurization of Chad are widely known and broadcast by the news media, but they can be challenged on several points. First, although Chad has at times been depicted as a centre of stability in the region, it has often played a destabilizing role in Darfur—dividing the rebels, intentionally or not—and in the CAR. Second, if there is a real risk of Chad becoming 'Darfurized' then the exact meaning of this term needs to be considered. If, for example, it is implying that a general war between Arab and non-Arab could develop throughout Chad then it does not take into account the fact that, while there are similarities between Darfur and Chad in terms of their ethnic groups and interethnic conflicts—in particular between nomads and sedentary peoples, between first settlers and newcomers—there are also important differences. The same ethnic groups (Arabs and Beri) have very different positions and claims in the two countries. In Darfur, the Beri are mostly rebels against Khartoum (although some also support the government); in Chad, they form the main base of both the regime and one of the three main rebel groups. Likewise, Arabs in Chad have similar aspirations to their kinsmen in Darfur in terms of political power and economic development, but they are not ready to embrace a global war, either against non-Arab populations or against a regime that has maintained good relations with many Arab tribes and leaders.

Finally, Chadian rebels may be backed by Khartoum but they have their own motivations and agenda. If they were to take power, they would not necessarily become stooges of the Sudanese government or allow it to install a puppet regime. 🗑

### III. Historical and political context of the region

The geography of Darfur and Chad stretches from the Sahara across the Sahel to central and east Africa. The crises occurring in both places are closely linked into this wider region, having causes that originate in and consequences that affect several of their neighbouring countries.

To the north, Gadhafi's Libya has always attempted to extend its influence into sub-Saharan Africa, particularly into Chad and Darfur. Initially, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Libyan government, inspired by a pan-Arabic doctrine, attempted to find allies among the local Arab nomads. This fostered the emergence of an ideology that advocated Arab supremacy, which is now one of the driving forces of the *janjawid* militias. More opportunistically, Gadhafi also sought support from the Tubu (or Teda), non-Arab nomads whose territory, straddling the Chad–Libya border, was once a rebel bastion against the regime in N'Djamena and, since 1997, is so again. Tripoli's links with its neighbours to the south have also been fostered by the presence of major diasporas from the north of Chad and Darfur in Libya—particularly the Teda, but also Beri and Arabs—who play an important role in trans-Saharan trade connecting Chad and Sudan with the Mediterranean. In the 1990s, attempting to escape his isolation, Gadhafi adopted a pan-African stance, which led him to support the African Union and attempt to act as mediator in all possible conflicts, particularly in Darfur and Chad.

To the south, the CAR is in the hands of a weak regime that was installed in 2003 and has been maintained ever since by the military support of Chad and France. In December 2006, the French Army intervened directly to retake the north-eastern city of Birao from the Central African rebel forces of the Union des forces démocratiques et du rassemblement (UFDR), before resuming fighting against the same rebels in March 2007 (International Crisis Group, 2007, pp. 27–8; Small Arms Survey, 2007a, pp. 1, 6). Having borders with Chad, Darfur, and South Sudan, the north-east of the CAR is barely controlled by the government. But rather than being fought over, the region acts an area of

transit and trade for nomadic peoples (particularly Arabs and Pula or Fellata) and rebel groups from all neighbouring countries. The Chadian rebels based in Darfur have crossed the region several times in order to attack Chad and then return to their bases in Darfur (International Crisis Group, 2007, p. 27; Small Arms Survey, 2007a, p. 2; UN, 2006). Some Chadian rebel groups also allied with or even included in their ranks Central African rebels (see Chapter V).

On the other side of Sudan, Eritrea also has an influence on Darfur, in that it tries, first and foremost, to present itself as a regional power on a par with its major rival, Ethiopia. Before these two countries went to war in 1998, they were part of an anti-Sudanese block (including Uganda and Egypt) that was supported by the United States (Marchal, 2007, p. 189). The Ethiopia–Eritrea conflict and the split between the Sudanese government and its Islamist fringe in 1999, followed by the 2005 Naivasha peace agreements relating to South Sudan, helped to isolate Eritrea further in its conflict with Sudan, with each state supporting the rebels of the other. Asmara has thus supported and sheltered some of the Darfur rebels on its territory, first jointly with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) at the beginning of the conflict and then, since 2006, jointly with Chad (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, pp. 22, 35, 52, 54).

The Chad–Sudan border is also very significant in both ethnic and historical terms. In such an isolated region, the colonial empires found it difficult to impose their authority. The powerful sultanate of Ouaddai, in the east of Chad, only fell to the French in 1909, while the British had to wait until 1916 to take the sultanate of Darfur. The border between the two colonial empires was determined in 1923, and respected more or less the areas of influence of the two rival sultans. A third area, that of the Masalit, which was initially conquered by France, was finally incorporated into Sudan, leaving only a small part of this ethnic group on the Chadian side. At the southern end of the border, a fourth small and isolated kingdom, the Sinyar sultanate, was also cut in two and lost its independence. At the northern end, the Beri people, who were split between numerous independent chiefdoms or vassals of the major sultanates, likewise had their lands divided by the new border. Far from being a handicap, however, this enabled the Beri to acquire greater influence in cross-border trade and more control of the routes, which, starting in Beri country, link Chad and Sudan with Libya. This special position also explains why Beri

rebels from both countries have always been able to find rear bases on either side of the border (Tubiana, 2006a).

For the nomadic, semi-nomadic, and transhumant peoples, in particular the Arabs and the Beri, the border has never existed: a person can be born in one of these countries and live in the other, and feel that they belong equally to both. Some groups are truly cross-border, while others were dispersed over considerable distances in east/west directions long before the colonial era and are now generally found at the same latitudes in Chad and Darfur, although their geographical locations today are sometimes a long way from the border. This applies to some Arabs (particularly branches of the Rizeigat Abbala, the Misiryia, the Hemat, and the Beni Halba) and also to the Mimi or Mima, the Dajo, and the Tama peoples. Furthermore, some communities have moved from Chad to Sudan relatively recently, either in search of work (in the case of many Ouaddaïans)<sup>13</sup> or fleeing from drought, unjust chieftains, political persecution, or war: it was for these reasons that many Arabs, and some non-Arabs, left Chad for Sudan.

On the non-Arab side, a good example is the Bideyat. The French colonizers had dismissed the important Kolyala clan from the chieftancy. Many went to Sudan, including Hitno, Idriss Déby's grandfather. The family spent some years in Darfur, where Hitno and his son Déby were *sheikh* representing their clans in Shigek-Karo, a Bideyat stronghold north of Um Buru. When Idriss Déby himself had to find refuge in Darfur in 1989, his family relations proved useful.

Among the Arabs, many Rizeigat Abbala began to leave to Darfur for similar reasons. Before the French colonization, their paramount leader had often been chosen from the Mahamid clan and was a vassal of the sultan of Ouaddaï, with the title of *agid al-Mahamid* (*agid* usually means 'war leader' in local Arabic). After the last *agid* was killed fighting against the French in 1910, the colonizers first dismantled the chieftancy then, in 1930, reunified it under Mahamat Trehe, a Mahamid Awlad Jonub. The choice was particularly resented by the Awlad Id, who retained the chieftancy before, and it provoked the departures of the Awlad Id to Darfur, followed soon after by the other rivals for the chieftancy, the Awlad Zeid. The French finally arrested Mahamat Trehe in 1940, leading to an exodus of the Awlad Jonub themselves.<sup>14</sup>

In the decade that followed, the Rizeigat Mahariya began to leave for Sudan too. In 1952, Al-Amin Baraka, the *wakil* (deputy) of Annadif and the Mahariya leader, went to Geneina, where he became *damin* (guarantor during the cattle sales) and representative of the Mahariya. Among his sons, one is now a deputy in Omar al-Bashir's National Congress. In the 1990s, another son received the title of *amir* from the Sudanese government, which was given at this time to Chadian Arab leaders forming pro-government militia.<sup>15</sup> Both of these sons, like many *amir* in Darfur, are today considered *janjawid* leaders.

A more important wave of departures occurred in the years 1967–68 after fighting between the Mahariya and the Goran, who supported rival rebel groups. After the coup d'état of Hisssein Habré (a Goran) in 1982, many Arabs took refuge in West Darfur as a result of the violence and other forms of persecution (such as forced taxes) imposed on them by the new Chadian regime. This particularly affected the supporters of the Conseil démocratique révolutionnaire (CDR), a Chadian rebel group that recruited predominantly among Arabs. The wave of displacements had the greatest impact on the Mahariya people, whose paramount leader, the *chef de canton* Abdelkarim Annadif, was arrested by Habré in 1983 and died in prison. At this time, some Mahariya Awlad Mansur settled as far away as Nyala, in South Darfur, with the support of the Sudanese government. Their chief, *omda* Juma'a Dogolo, is also considered a *janjawid* leader, while his nephew, Mohamed Hamdan Dogolo 'Hemeti', leads important *janjawid* forces that fought for the government before turning against it at the end of 2007.<sup>16</sup>

Most recently, in 2006, it was the turn of the Rizeigat Nawayba and other Arab groups from Dar Sila to leave Chad for Darfur. They, too, were welcomed by Sudanese government officials who promised them titles and land.<sup>17</sup> 📍

## IV. Bilateral relations between Chad and Sudan

### Chad–Sudan relations since the 1960s

Over the long-term, colonization brutally marginalized the sultanates of Ouaddaï and Darfur, pushing them towards the borders of the two great empires. The frustration of the local populations over this loss of power is still perceptible today, especially given their continued marginalization since the colonial period.

When Chad became independent in 1960 (four years after Sudan), power was rapidly seized by leaders who came from the south of the country and were supported by France. The people of the north soon rebelled against domination by the southerners. Sudan became the main rear base of these northern dissidents, who formed the first armed movement in 1966 in Nyala, South Darfur. The Front de libération nationale du Tchad (Frolinat) was steeped in revolutionary ideas, but it also used Islamic rhetoric to mobilize people in the north against the ‘pagans’ and Christians of the south, who remained closely bound to the former colonial power. The Front recruited among all the northern populations (Ouaddaïans and Arabs from the Sahel, Tubu and Goran from the Sahara), but ultimately broke up along ethnic lines into different movements that fought each other as much as they fought the regime. In the 1970s and 1980s, a major conflict developed within Frolinat between two groups that are ethnically very close: the Tubu, led by Goukouni Weddeye, and the Goran, led by Hissein Habré, who was also supported by the Beri. Traditionally hostile to the Goran, Arabs tended to support Weddeye. They also, however, founded their own movements: first, in 1970, the Volcan Army (Armée Volcan) of Mahamat al-Baghalani, which was both pro-Arab and Islamist in persuasion, and in 1978, the Conseil démocratique révolutionnaire (CDR) of Acyl Ahmat Agbash.

With the support of Libya, Goukouni Weddeye took power in N’Djamena in 1979. Habré sought refuge in Darfur, where he received support from the Beri thanks largely to being accompanied by Chadian Beri, including a young officer named Idriss Déby. In 1982, Habré took power with the support of Sudan,

the United States, and France—all united in a desire to counter the influence of Libya. In order to continue the war and reinstall a regime that would be favourable to him in N’Djamena, Gadhafi supported the Arabs of the CDR, who had been led by Acheikh Ibn Oumar Saïd, an Awlad Rashid Arab, since 1982.<sup>18</sup>

With bases in Darfur in the 1980s, the CDR and its leaders have occasionally been portrayed as the initiators of the *janjawid* and as the importers of a racist Arab-supremacist ideology into Sudan, leading to the present conflict (Haggar, 2007). This is not the place to analyse the dramatic stories of the supposed racism of CDR leaders, but it is worth noting that many Chadian intellectuals—Arab or not, pro-CDR or not—who closely witnessed the events of the 1970s and 1980s consider this interpretation anachronistic. Fighting against both the southern power in N’Djamena and rival northern (Goran) rebel groups, the CDR, like most Chadian armed movements, did have a limited ethnic base, in this case Arab. Like other northern movements, it sometimes used Islamic rhetoric to rally northerners against the southerners, as well as a pan-Arab discourse aimed at acquiring support from Libya and other Arab countries—Acheikh Ibn Oumar having been more pro-Libya than Acyl Ahmat. But this discourse, which was quite different from that of the Darfurian Arab leaders of the *janjawid*, did not prevent the CDR from staying open to alliances with non-Arab movements, including those from the south.

Hissein Habré achieved an appearance of national unity by expelling Libyan and pro-Libyan forces from the north of Chad in 1987. However, the human rights violations committed by the Chadian dictator, and his method of playing off the United States against France, meant that his supporters began to tire of him. In 1989, having successively used his army and secret police against the southerners and the Hajeray from the Guéra Mountains, in central Chad, he turned his military strength against the Beri, who were collectively suspected of attempting a coup. Of three major Beri leaders who had previously been pillars of the regime, Idriss Déby was the only one to escape the repression and take refuge in neighbouring Darfur. There, he enjoyed the support of Sudanese Beri and the Islamist junta of Omar al-Bashir, who had just taken power in Khartoum—and who counted a prominent Sudanese Beri, General Tijani Adam Taher, among his main leaders.



Idriss Déby seized power in Chad the following year, in 1990. Since then, the state, the army, and the economy have come under the control of certain sectors of the Beri, particularly Déby's own sub-group, the Bideyat, and his own clan, the Kolyala (Lemarchand, 2005, p. 121; Marchal, 2007, pp. 185–86). It is important to note that, while relying strongly on his ethnic group, Déby never managed to attain the support of all the Beri. Bideyat camel-herders, for example, are often viewed with disdain by the rich and old Zaghawa chieftaincies, which prompted the Chadian Zaghawa to rebel against Déby as early as 1992 (Hagggar, 2003).

Around the same time in Darfur the conflicts between Arab and non-Arab groups multiplied. Khartoum's bias in favour of Arabs pushed the non-Arabs to form militias and then rebel groups. These became more significant in 2002 when the Fur formed an alliance with the Beri, who were strengthened by their presence and influence in Chad (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, p. 18).

### **Idriss Déby: peacemaker or troublemaker?**

Until war broke out in Darfur, Idriss Déby was a loyal ally of the regime in Sudan. The Sudanese rebels, whether from Darfur or South Sudan, had been asking him for aid since 1991 but he had always refused (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, p. 20). In the early 1990s, he rejected requests from some Sudanese Zaghawa intellectuals to support their incipient rebel movements (some of these individuals are now among the leaders of the Darfur rebels, including Sharif Harir, Adam Ali Shogar, Ahmad Tugod, and Nurein Minnawi Bartcham). However, from 2003, he was no longer able to prevent the two rebel movements in Darfur—the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)—from using Chad as a rear base, from recruiting combatants among the regime's own Republican Guard, and from seeking support among the Chadian Beri, including those very close to the government. In March–April 2003, Déby sent Chadian troops to fight the SLA and JEM inside Darfur. But the Beri soldiers from Chad had no intention of fighting against other Beri, and warned the Sudanese rebels of their approach. In March 2004, the Chadian government offered new pledges of fidelity to the Sudanese government. This led to the creation of a dissident group within the JEM, namely

the National Movement for Reform and Development (NMRD), which secured a short-lived ceasefire agreement with Khartoum in December 2004 (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, pp. 60–62). In May 2004, the Chadian authorities arrested two important JEM leaders, Bahar Idris Abu Garda (the JEM's number two—its vice-president and general secretary) and Jamal Idris Bahar-ed-Din, both Sudanese Zaghawa, to turn them over to the Sudanese government. Family connections were quickly mobilized, however, and they were soon released. More than ever, then, Déby was stuck between his alliance with Bashir and his solidarity with Sudanese Beri, both of whom had brought him to power. In the following months, he continued fighting the Darfur rebels, in particular the JEM, and even formed an alliance with the SLA to attempt to dismantle JEM bases in the Tiné area.<sup>19</sup>

In February 2005, Déby gave his support to another splinter group from the JEM, which first called itself the Provisional Revolutionary Collective Leadership Council, and then the JEM–Field Command. This movement was led by Mahamat Saleh Arba, a Zaghawa Kobe of the Kiregu clan—also the clan of General Mahamat Ali Abdallah, one of the main Chadian officials in charge of the Darfur file, and then president of the joint Government of Sudan–SLA–JEM commission.<sup>20</sup> The JEM–Field Command numbered about 200 combatants, all Zaghawa from Sudan and Chad, who were mostly based south of Tiné. The Chadian government gave them ten or so vehicles, and they stole an estimated 15 others from the African Union and the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross).<sup>21</sup>

For Idriss Déby, this easing of relations with Khartoum, indicated through his support for JEM splinter groups, was not just about weakening the JEM but also about presenting himself as a mediator in the Darfur conflict, which was an embarrassment to him. On 8 April 2004 a ceasefire agreement between the Sudanese government, the SLA, and the JEM was signed in N'Djamena. Very quickly, however, the Chadian mediation lost all credibility, both in the eyes of the rebels and in the eyes of the Sudanese government. Nevertheless, N'Djamena remained co-mediator in the Abuja negotiations until the beginning of 2006.

Idriss Déby has proved incapable of preventing those close to him from supporting the rebels in Darfur, and the Sudanese regime has clearly held this against him. From 2003, Khartoum incorporated into the *janjawid* Chadian

opposition elements based in Darfur, particularly Arabs, former supporters of the CDR, and Tama—traditional enemies of the Beri.<sup>22</sup> When these groups were not fighting alongside the Sudanese Army in Darfur, they were launching attacks across the border into Chadian territory. Did Sudan simply want to destabilize the border region, or was it aiming to install a puppet regime in Chad? The intention is not clear. However, from 2004 opponents of the Déby regime streamed into Sudan in the hope of winning support. As Acheikh Ibn Omar said at the time, before making the journey to Khartoum himself, ‘Regardless of whether you are Arab, Sara [the main ethnic group in the south of Chad], or Zaghawa, nowadays every opponent of the Chadian regime is trying to contact the Sudanese.’<sup>23</sup> Khartoum received anyone who might destabilize the regime in Chad, including the Bideyat, among them close relatives of the president, who gradually joined the rebellion. In May 2004 Déby escaped an attempted putsch fomented by soldiers from his own ethnic group. Since then, and particularly since the end of 2005, the numbers of desertions from the Chadian Army have multiplied. In 2003 the deserters were leaving to join the rebels in Darfur, but now they choose the Sudanese government camp to form anti-Déby rebel movements.

## Chad–Sudan relations since December 2005

In 2004, Khartoum began asking the numerous Chadian rebel factions to unite. In return, throughout 2005, Idriss Déby formed closer bonds with certain Sudanese rebel groups, such as the JEM and the Zaghawa faction of the SLA, led by Minni Arku Minnawi. The situation intensified at the end of 2005. An attack on the border town of Adré on 18 December by the *Rassemblement pour la démocratie et les libertés* (RDL), a Chadian rebel movement made up of Tama led by Captain Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim, marked a turning point. At that point Déby realized that Sudan was earnestly supporting the Chadian rebels against him.<sup>24</sup> A few days before the attack, on 11–12 December, Mahamat Nour had a meeting near Geneina with President Bashir’s adviser Nafi Ali Nafi, Minister of the Interior Al-Zubeir Bashir Taha, and Minister of Humanitarian Affairs Ahmad Mohamad Haroun—all considered powerful officials in charge of the Darfur file in Khartoum—and West Darfur governor Jaffar Abdul-Hakim.<sup>25</sup>

Similar meetings also occurred later, before main attacks on Chadian territory, as well prior to the creation of rebel coalitions, which was one of the aims of the meeting of 11–12 December.

The rebels did not succeed in taking Adré, but the raid allowed Mahamat Nour to show his strength and to assume the leadership of the rebel coalition that formed a short while later, known as the *Front uni pour le changement* (FUC), or the *Front uni pour le changement démocratique* (FUCD). In response, Déby decided to lend more support to the Darfur rebels, against whom he had previously often fought.

Chad–Sudan relations cooled even further when the FUC launched a second raid in April 2006: a rebel column moved directly on N’Djamena, where it was defeated at the last minute, thanks to support from the French Army and the poor preparation of FUC forces for urban combat. At the same time, the Chadian Army and the JEM pushed other rebel forces back from Adré.

A short while later, on 3 May, Déby was re-elected head of state, despite accusations by rebels and the political opposition that there had been voter fraud, as in the two preceding elections (1996 and 2001). One of the first acts of Déby’s new government was to replace his traditional ally of Taiwan with China, the friend of Sudan; another was to form a rapprochement, mediated by Gadhafi, with Omar al-Bashir who was present at Déby’s investiture. On 26 July 2006, an agreement was signed in which both governments agreed not to give refuge any more to the other’s rebels. Two weeks later, the two countries normalized their diplomatic relations. Finally, on 28 August, they agreed to ‘a framework agreement’ recording the normalization of their relations as ‘friends and good neighbours’.

Though short-lived, the agreement was the first bilateral attempt to yield any real effect on the ground, while also showing the limits of negotiations between the governments, which themselves appeared overwhelmed by the rise in local tensions that they fostered. It is difficult to speculate on the real willingness of the Chadian and Sudanese governments to calm the situation in summer 2006, but it seems that Déby did play the game to some extent and asked the Darfur rebels to leave Chad.<sup>26</sup> Some of them went abroad or to rebel areas in Darfur; others remained in Chad, acting more discreetly. The Chadian rebels based in Darfur mostly left for their home country, but with the



clear intention of resuming the offensive as soon as possible. Violent fighting occurred from September 2006 between these different rebel groups and the Chadian Army, particularly in the mountains of Dar Tama in the region of Guéréda, without either side achieving a significant victory.

The truce also corresponded to the rainy season (which lasts from July to September), but as soon as the *wadis* (temporary water routes) began to dry up, the rebel incursions and, in some areas, attacks by the *janjawid* resumed at the same pace as in the first half of the year. Because of these new attacks, for which the Chadian government mostly blamed Khartoum, the bilateral agreement was shattered. At the end of September, the Sudanese rebels hoped that Chad would once again show some support for their cause,<sup>27</sup> which seems to have happened at the beginning of October.

After several months of escalating proxy war at the end of 2006 and beginning of 2007, bilateral negotiations were relaunched by a new agreement signed in Saudi Arabia in May 2007. Once again the two countries committed themselves to expelling their neighbour's rebels: again, then, the rainy season was marked by a truce. With pressure from Khartoum, Chadian rebels accepted negotiations under the aegis of Libya. 'We have no other choice. The Sudanese want us to leave their territory so they can concentrate on the conflict in Darfur,' explained a Chadian rebel leader.<sup>28</sup>

On 3 October, just when many were expecting new rebel attacks in Chadian territory, N'Djamena signed an agreement in Sirte, Libya, with four rebel movements: the UFDD, the UFDD-Fondamentale, the RFC, and the CNT. These were the four principal rebel groups, all of which have benefited from Sudanese support. Most of the factions remaining outside these negotiations were less influential, and have received little backing from Sudan. But the inter-Chadian negotiations in Libya failed to reach agreement on a number of important points. As a rebel leader explained:

*'We laid down conditions, but the Chadian government only accepted about a third of them, for example the reintegration of deserters into the army. But the decisive points, like the appointment of a transitional prime minister chosen by the rebel movements and the organization of a round table, including the official opposition, with a view to holding fresh elections, have all been turned down by the government.'*<sup>29</sup>

It was clear, if in retrospect only, that the agreement was not likely to end the Chadian rebellion. Further violence would bear this out. On 14 March 2008 in Dakar, Presidents Déby and Bashir signed a new agreement of 'non-aggression' (*Le Monde*, 2008), which does little more than repeat the terms of the earlier ones, with just as little chance of being respected. 🗨️

## V. Armed groups in eastern Chad and Darfur

### December 2005–April 2006: the FUC attacks

As the Darfur rebels have grown stronger, so has the Sudanese government's support for the Chadian rebels. Its aim is to open a second front against the SLA and the JEM, first by destabilizing eastern Chad, which they use as a rear base, and then—as the Chadian government insists—by attempting to instal a pro-Sudanese regime in N'Djamena. This latter goal is obviously more ambitious and risky, but the intention was quite apparent at the time of the FUC attack on N'Djamena on 13 April 2006 (though some argue that the FUC launched this attack without clear permission from Khartoum). Between the end of 2005 and April 2006 the Chadian government, in retaliation, began to support some of the Darfur rebels directly in exchange for their commitment in helping to fight the Chadian rebels within Chad itself. If the attack on Adré in April 2006 failed, it was thanks at least in part to the JEM, which was able to mobilize seven vehicles (with approximately 100 alongside the Chadian Army). From then on the Sudanese rebels, in particular the JEM, fought regularly with the Chadian forces against Chadian rebels, particularly at Adré and in Dar Tama.<sup>30</sup>

The government in Chad came most under threat between December 2005 and April 2006. From the beginning of this period Sudan's strategy was to form the various Chadian rebel factions into a coalition in the FUC, placing them under the leadership of Captain Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim, who was Khartoum's protégé at the time. This selection was far from unanimous. Mahamat Nour—nicknamed Abtantama, 'the stammerer', due to a speech defect—is the son of a traditional Tama chieftain: the Tama are a non-Arab ethnic group with a sultanate in the region of Guéréda, to the north of Abéché, and several small dispersed communities in Darfur. Mahamat Nour spent part of his youth with Colonel Mahamat Garfa, the main Tama political leader in Chad. In 1989, still a student and barely 20 years old, he was one of the few Tama to join Idriss Déby's Mouvement patriotique du salut (MPS) in Darfur. Having returned to

Chad with the victors in 1990, he first became the deputy prefect in Biltine before holding various secondary posts in the army.

In 1994, Mahamat Garfa rebelled against the regime and founded the Alliance nationale de résistance (ANR), or Forces nationales de résistance (FNR). Mahamat Nour followed his mentor, but while Garfa went into exile in Benin, he established a base in Sudan with the combatants. In 1998, he was recruited by the Sudanese intelligence service through Azzein Issak Ibrahim, a Tama from Sudan and adviser to President Bashir. In this role Mahamat Nour was active in the oil regions of Western Upper Nile, but when the repression of the Darfur rebellion was organized in 2003 he was made lieutenant colonel and given responsibility for recruiting and leading *janjawid* militias, under the supervision of Abderahim Ahmed Mohamed 'Shukurallah', an officer in Military Intelligence who was then the principal leader of the *janjawid* in West Darfur.<sup>31</sup> Mahamat Nour's role was to recruit Tama troops to attack the positions of the SLA and villages in West Darfur. Like many *janjawid*, his troops initially formed part of the Sudanese Popular Defence Forces (PDF), before reverting to a Chadian rebel movement.<sup>32</sup> Through December 2005, Mahamat Nour was the 'general coordinator' of the PDF in West Darfur.<sup>33</sup>

In 2003, Mahamat Garfa signed a peace agreement with Idriss Déby under the aegis of Gabon president Omar Bongo, and was later rewarded with the position of minister of post and telecommunications. However, most of the combatants of the ANR remained in Sudan. In 2005, Mahamat Abbo Silek, a first cousin of Mahamat Nour exiled in France, arrived in Sudan to remobilize the troops, but was arrested by the Sudanese secret services in September and imprisoned for nine months. This enabled Mahamat Nour to take over the movement, which he immediately renamed the Rassemblement pour la démocratie et les libertés (RDL).<sup>34</sup>

In December 2005, the RDL became the main component of the FUC. It recruited predominantly among the Tama (from Chad and Sudan), Chadian Arabs (particularly the Eregat of Dar Tama), and the Ouaddaïans. The FUC also had an Arab component (from Chad and Sudan), which originated partly in the remnants of the CDR and was headed by Hassan Saleh Al-Gaddam, known as 'Al-Jineidi'.<sup>35</sup> An Arab Hemat<sup>36</sup> from Chad, Al-Jineidi was formerly a member of the CDR and later trained at a Libyan military academy. He joined

the anti-Déby rebellion in Sudan as early as 1994, and founded the CNT in 2004. His troops included Arabs who took part in attacks on non-Arab villages in the Wadi Saleh, West Darfur, in 2003–04, wearing the uniform of the Sudanese PDF.<sup>37</sup> In July 2004, Al-Jineidi launched a first attack on Chadian territory, choosing Haraz Manguéigne, to the south of Am Timan, on the border with the CAR. He was arrested by the Sudanese government—who had possibly disapproved of this early operation—but was released in 2005, when he became the first vice-president of the FUC. An SLA leader detained in Khartoum’s Kober prison at the same time as Al-Jineidi says that he ‘had refused to follow the orders of the Sudanese government and was imprisoned in Kober by the Security Services until he changed his mind. When I was released, I saw him free as well and I learnt he had received vehicles and guns from the government.’

The FUC also included a Ouaddaïan and Mimi component, led by Adouma Hassaballah Jedareb, an Arab of Ouaddaïan mother and ex-member of Adoum Yacoub’s Front populaire pour la renaissance nationale (FPRN), from which the component partly derives. There was also a Bideyat section of the FUC, based on the Rassemblement populaire pour la justice (RPJ), a movement made up of deserters from the Borogat sub-group headed by Abakar Tolli—brother of the Borogat traditional leader Wukey Tolli and uncle of Déby’s minister of Finance Abbas Mahamat Tolli.

The other large movement of Bideyat deserters, the Socle pour le changement, l’unité et la démocratie (SCUD), agreed to join the FUC in its initial composition in December 2005, in spite of Mahamat Nour’s well-known anti-Beri feelings. However, both the Sudanese government and Mahamat Nour remained suspicious of this movement, whose leaders belonged to the close family of Idriss Déby, and consequently SCUD leaders were never awarded important positions in the FUC. When the FUC launched its raid in April 2006 on N’Djamena it did not coordinate its actions with the SCUD.

The FUC recruited both Chadian and Sudanese combatants, in particular among the Tama from Sudan. Around 60 per cent of the FUC rebels captured by Chadian forces during their failed raid on N’Djamena on 13 April 2006 were Sudanese: many of them lived in Sudan and had Sudanese nationality, although they were of Chadian origin. Sudanese papers were found on some of the men, and in interviews carried out by Chadian authorities with around

170 FUC prisoners (out of a total of 600), 100 or so claimed to be Sudanese. Of these 170 prisoners, 73 were Tama, more than half of whom were from Sudan. Many declared that they had been recruited by force or with promises of rewards, not only by Chadian rebels but also by the Sudanese military.<sup>38</sup>

The FUC also included some Central African rebels. These were *ex-Libérateurs* (‘former liberators’) who had brought the CAR president François Bozizé to power with Chadian support in 2003 and then, rapidly disappointed by him, became rebels against his regime. When they asked the Sudanese government for support, they were told that Khartoum’s priority was Chad, and that they would be given aid against Bozizé only if they joined the FUC against Déby. Their leader was Adoum Rakhis Abder-Razul, a Chadian Arab who was captured, along with some 50 CAR rebels, by Chadian forces during the FUC raid on N’Djamena on 13 April 2006 (FIDH, 2006, pp. 55, 58; International Crisis Group, 2007, p. 27). Interviewed by the Chadian police on 15 April, Abder-Razul said:

*‘Given the suffering on Central African soil during the hostilities when we have taken the power for Bozizé, we, eight officers of the “Libérateurs”, decided to start a [new] rebellion against the CAR regime. . . As we did not have any weapons, we responded to a request by the Sudanese government and the Chadian opposition to help them liberate Chad, and in return they said they would help us do the same for the CAR. I [initially] refused this proposal, and so the Sudanese government took back the Toyota and Thuraya they had given me, and asked us to leave. But as we then didn’t know what to do, we were obliged to [change our minds and] accept their decision. And so Al-Bechir gave us weapons. . . I joined a rebellion against the CAR, but our lack of arms forced us to join the Chadian opposition.’* (Debos, 2008)

These dealings between *ex-Libérateurs* and Khartoum are a good example of the ‘fluid loyalties’ common in the region (Debos, 2008).

In April 2006, the FUC would have numbered from 5,000–7,000 men, with about half belonging to the RDL. Only about 1,200 of them on 70 vehicles participated in the raid on N’Djamena. It is clear that Khartoum was not providing equal backing to the various FUC factions at this time: the RDL received more arms than the others, including the group of Adouma Hassaballah (see Box 1).

The failure of the attack on N'Djamena led to the rapid decline of the FUC, which lost both its troops and the confidence of Khartoum. In July 2006, Al-Jineidi's group, the Concorde nationale du Tchad (CNT), broke away from the FUC and moved closer to the SCUD. In September, Adouma Hassaballah left Mahamat Nour to found, along with numerous Ouaddaïan combatants, the Rassemblement national démocratique (RND).

#### Box 1 'The gun is like food for us': arms flows between Chad and Sudan

Both Chad and Sudan have armed one another's opponents throughout various phases of the rebellions in both countries. This process of militarization has never, however, been constant, symmetric, or uniform. Instead, the uneven arming of various factions has continually shifted the power dynamics between competing rebel groups and fostered dissent. A notable aspect of these weapons transfers and flows in the region has been recycling, whereby weapons captured from one rebel group are subsequently turned over to others.

Until mid-2004, the flow of Sudanese-supplied arms to Darfur was intended primarily for the *janjawid*. At the time, some Chadian rebels, such as Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim, who recruited combatants of Chadian origin for the *janjawid*, benefited from this support. In 2005, when fewer arms were flowing to the *janjawid*, Khartoum began to arm Chadian rebel groups, in some cases with Chinese-made weapons, some of which were produced in Sudan itself (Amnesty International, 2007; Small Arms Survey, 2007b, 2007c). Arms were funnelled primarily to the FUC, and in particular to Mahamat Nour's Tama faction, causing disputes within the rebel coalition (Correau, 2007).

Much of what is known about arms flows comes from weapons recovered during clashes. For example, weapons captured from the FUC by Chadian forces during the battle of N'Djamena in April 2006 revealed Chinese MRBL, recoilless rifles (Chinese B-10s or Russian SPG-9s), and RPG rocket launchers.<sup>39</sup> An FUC officer captured in N'Djamena during this battle told the Chadian police that the group attacking the capital—with more than 70 vehicles—had five sol-sol missile launchers and ten anti-tanks. Another prisoner, an FUC 'head of section' based in Harara (south of Geneina), declared: 'We were visited three times by the president of Sudan, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, in person. Each time he came, he talked at length with our leaders. The last time he brought us food, uniforms, and weapons, overland. The leaders left by air and the vehicles returned empty.'<sup>40</sup> Many FUC combatants, including the prisoners taken by the Chadian authorities, have been observed wearing Sudanese uniforms. Some of these prisoners claimed that they were Sudanese soldiers or police officers.<sup>41</sup> Significantly, weapons taken from Mahamat Nour's men in April 2006, like those taken at Adré in December 2005, were subsequently given by the Chadian government to Darfur rebels. A source close to Idriss Déby admitted to this gift, describing it as a 'return to sender'.<sup>42</sup>

After the failure of the FUC raid on N'Djamena, Khartoum shifted its transfer of weapons to the UFDD. The new coalition received RPG rocket launchers, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, as well as SAM-7 missiles (Correau, 2007). Mahamat Nouri told Radio France Internationale (RFI) that 'most' of these missiles had been taken from Chadian Army stocks during the raid on Abéché in November 2006. However, it seems that the SAM-7 missiles were also supplied to the UFDD by Khartoum. An RFI journalist noted that there was 'Chinese script. . . on the UFDD's batteries of anti-aircraft missiles' (Correau, 2007). Deliveries of arms from Khartoum to Chadian rebel factions, particularly the UFDD, appear to have continued in the first months of 2007, and on larger scale after September 2007 (UN, 2007).

For their part, from 2003 the Darfur rebels had the benefit of Chadian support (money, gifts, and sales of vehicles and weapons), particularly from the Beri community and even from the family of Idriss Déby, without his consent. Chadian civilians, in particular Beri, used to bring vehicles and arms to the border or across into Darfur to sell them to the rebels. An AK47 was sold here for USD 300–500: in Chad, such guns would not be sold for more than USD 200–250. The Chadian dealers were also attracted by the Sudanese currency.

Since May 2003, the JEM, trying to avoid conflict with the Chadian regime, tried to refuse Chadian deserters, cars, and arms stolen in Chad. As a high-level JEM leader explained:

'In the beginning many Chadians came to join us but we want to stop that and have asked them to leave. Since May 2003, after the attack of Chadian troops against us in Sudan [in March–April 2003], we don't want the Chadian military deserters to join us anymore, or that they loot cars and arms from the Chadian government to give or sell to us. We stated this publicly in the mosque during *Eid*, and it allowed the tensions between the Chadian government and us to decrease. We repeated it in 2004 at Déby's request.'<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless, according to many rebel leaders, it is difficult to determine the national origin of a Beri let alone the origin of cars and arms. A JEM leader admitted that 'maybe sometimes Chadian Army cars, repainted, have passed to us'. Another declared: 'The gun is like food for us. We don't ask where it came from.'<sup>44</sup>

Alongside the JEM, the Zaghawa branch of the SLA benefited greatly from arms brought over from Chad, thanks largely to the good contacts of Abdallah Abbakar Bashar with the Chadian Beri community.<sup>45</sup> Within the SLA, Abdallah Abbakar and his successor, Minni Minnawi, held most of the arms and vehicles that came across the border, to the detriment of the Fur faction of Abdelwahid Mohammad Nur. In February 2005, Idriss Déby apparently paid SDG 500 million (approximately USD 240,000) to Juma' Mahamat Hagggar, the head of Minni Minnawi's general staff.<sup>46</sup> Chadian financial aid supposedly enabled the SLA to purchase anti-aircraft weapons in Chad, specifically 15–20 SAM missiles that were later taken from SLA–Minni Minnawi by the G19, in the summer of 2006.<sup>47</sup> However, it was mainly from the end of 2005 that Chad began to arm Darfur rebels directly, beginning with the JEM to whom it gave arms taken from Chadian rebels.

After the Darfur Peace Agreement of May 2006,<sup>48</sup> the non-signatory G19 rapidly acquired arms during clashes with the Sudanese Army and SLA–Minni Minnawi. In autumn 2006, the new National Redemption Front alliance (which included the JEM and the G19) also



enabled the G19 to benefit from N'Djamena's aid. But the rapid split in the coalition meant that Chadian arms and vehicles were mainly concentrated in the hands of one faction, namely that of Adam Bakhit and Khamis Abdallah Abbakar.

The arms market in N'Djamena has also been a supply source. Russian Kalashnikovs, Libyan handguns, and other small arms can be bought there for USD 200–600. These guns appear to come from various sources, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) via the CAR. Rebel factions active in the CAR, in particular the FPRN, use this supply line by entering the Equateur region of northern DRC to buy arms on the local market.<sup>49</sup>

In Dar Sila, since 2006, the Dajo traditional militias have tried to replace their bows, poisoned arrows, and spears with guns (Amnesty International, 2006, p. 2). They have asked both the Chadian government and the JEM to provide them with 'kalash'. In July 2006, six Dajo hard-liners—in particular Bashir Hassan Bashir, both a militia supporter and colonel in the Chadian Army—signed an agreement of mutual support with Nourain Minnawi Bartcham, a JEM politician charged with recruiting Dajo militia to help open a front from Dar Sila into West Darfur.<sup>50</sup> But most Chadian Dajo were not ready to fight in Darfur, and this is the reason why the JEM and the SLA trained several hundred Dajo militiamen but did not arm them. For instance, in 2006, 400 Dajo men from the Tiero and Marena areas, constituting one of the most important local militia, were trained during four months in a camp not far from Koukou Angarana. Videos of the training shot by Darfur rebels show a relatively small number of firearms, and the rebels did not give them to the Dajo. This militia had then to buy guns by its own means.<sup>51</sup>

A few months later, in November 2006, other higher-level Dajo hard-liners—including politicians in N'Djamena—requested the government to provide them with 2,000 'assault arms' and as many uniforms, as well as ammunition, three Toyota pick-ups, horses, eight Thuraya satellite phones, and 30 million Chadian francs (USD 71,000).<sup>52</sup> But their demand was not satisfied. Careful to avoid taking sides against the Arabs, the Chadian government refused to arm the Dajo, and the army soldiers often disarmed them of guns they had bought. Yet the militias did receive some guns—mostly old *kalash*, but also RPGs—from the Chadian Army and the JEM, especially when the army left Dar Sila after the FUC attack on Adré in December 2005. But it appears that these were gifts from kin or from individuals sympathetic to their cause, rather than the result of an upper-level order. The Dajo bought most of their firearms, therefore, at prices ranging from USD 300–700, often from Chadian soldiers who later came back to disarm them of the same guns. One of the most important Dajo militia, in Tiero, had some 75 *kalash*—all purchased—for about 200 men, as well as about seven RPGs—five purchased, two given by soldiers.<sup>53</sup>

The Dajo militias' efforts to acquire arms was not necessarily encouraged by their community leaders. In September 2006, the Dajo sultan Saïd Brahim declared: 'My people want arms, this is the reason why I am really not happy at all. I tell them: where will I find arms to give you? Arms will attract even more enemies.'<sup>54</sup>

## Autumn 2006: the rise of the NRF and the UFDD

After the truce in the summer of 2006, support by Khartoum and N'Djamena for each other's rebels resumed with fresh vigour. A military victory by the Darfur rebels on 7 October sealed their rapprochement with the regime in Chad: it was a successful attack by the National Redemption Front (NRF)—a new and ephemeral coalition of Darfurian rebel groups opposed to the Abuja Agreement—on the Sudanese base of Kariyari, on the border just opposite the refugee camp of Ouré Cassoni (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, p. 55). The dismantling of this threatening base was useful for N'Djamena, and thus both before and after the attack the Darfur rebels were permitted to cross into and remain in Chadian territory,<sup>55</sup> where they held several dozen Sudanese military prisoners for a number of months.<sup>56</sup> However, this rapprochement also triggered a split in the NRF between those factions closest to N'Djamena and those that were keen to show their independence from any external power (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, p. 56).

At the same time, further to the south, attacks resumed in Dar Sila by *janjawid* militias comprising both Sudanese and Chadians. In the same area, there were also clashes between *janjawid* and the Darfur rebels. Previously seen only on horseback, by October 2006—when it was again possible to cross the *wadis* in vehicles—the *janjawid* in Chad were also riding in cars, probably supplied by Sudan or by the Chadian rebels. The victims of these attacks sometimes confuse *janjawid* and Chadian rebels, many simplifying the differences by calling all aggressors on horseback *janjawid*, which corresponds to the word's etymology, and those on cars simply rebels. The attackers frequently wore Sudanese uniforms, and identity cards of the Sudanese Army were found on *janjawid* killed in the fighting.<sup>57</sup>

The purpose of these attacks may have been to prepare another offensive by the Chadian rebels. Indeed, on 22 October, the Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (UFDD), a new coalition formed that morning, attacked Goz Beïda, the capital of Dar Sila, and the following day attacked Am Timan, the capital of the neighbouring department of Salamat. These successful surprise incursions enabled the Sudanese government to make another attempt to form a coalition of all the rebel groups to replace the FUC. This second attempt was based on the arrival among the rebels—or the return—of

two Khartoum protégées with much more experience than Mahamat Nour: Acheikh Ibn Oumar Saïd, former leader of the CDR, who had been alternately a minister and a rebel under all regimes since 1979; and Mahamat Nouri, a Goran from the Anakazza sub-group, like Hissein Habré. Nouri had been a minister under both Habré and Déby. In July 2006, he left his post as Chadian ambassador in Saudi Arabia to return to the rebellion and to found the Union des forces pour le progrès et la démocratie (UFPD), which was made up of a few hundred Goran combatants.

The UFDD had three factions at the outset. First, Mahamat Nouri's UFPD. Second, the Conseil démocratique révolutionnaire (CDR), which had been led by Acheikh Ibn Oumar since 1982 and recruited mainly among the Arabs (and also the Ouaddaïans and the Mimi), but which was never able to attract all Arab rebels together. Third, another small Arab group: a breakaway faction from the FUC led by Abdelwahid Aboud Makaye, also an Awlad Rashid Arab.

The incursion of 22 October was no doubt intended to hand back the reins to Mahamat Nouri in the event that a wider coalition was set up. Indeed, a short while later, in November, a meeting of various rebel factions was held in Geneina, West Darfur, with a view to extending the base of the UFDD. It seems that Khartoum wanted Mahamat Nouri to replace Mahamat Nour at the head of a coalition of all the rebel groups. The UFDD was then joined by Adouma Hassaballah's RND, which brought a large number of Ouaddaïan combatants from the FUC. But apart from this movement and a few factions with limited influence, the most important groups refused to join the UFDD, including the Tama kernel of the FUC, which remained faithful to Mahamat Nour. The CNT and the various Bideyat movements comprising the Rassemblement des forces démocratiques (RAFD) also refused. However, on 25 November 2006, while the FUC remained at a distance, these movements acted in concert with the UFDD: the latter successfully carried out a lightning raid on Abéché while the RAFD and CNT attacked Am Zoer and Biltine. In the following months splits appeared within the core of the UFDD. In May 2007, Acheikh Ibn Oumar, disappointed at being limited to a role as second in command behind Nouri, left the UFDD along with Abdelwahid Aboud Makaye to found the breakaway UFDD-Fondamentale. These two Awlad Rashid Arab leaders took with them the Arab members of the UFDD.

In order to win the support of Khartoum, Chadian rebel factions have thus had to belong to successive coalitions: first the FUC and then the UFDD. Since mid-2006, Khartoum's support in the form of vehicles and weapons went predominantly to Mahamat Nouri, whereas previously it went to Mahamat Nour. In 2006, 2007, and 2008, Nouri acquired several hundred vehicles in this way.

Again on 25 February 2008, after the failed attack on N'Djamena, a new rebel coalition called the Alliance Nationale (AN) was launched with Khartoum's backing, still headed by Mahamat Nouri. It was composed of what remained of Nouri's UFDD, UFDD-Fondamentale, and the recently formed Front pour le salut de la République (FSR), led by Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane, a Chadian Arab from the Mahamid branch—well represented in West and North Darfur—and a former minister of Déby. It was shortly joined by the Union des forces pour le changement démocratique (UFCD), founded less than one month earlier from Ouaddaïan splinters of the UFDD and RFC. Khartoum had thus succeeded in re-forming a Chadian rebel coalition that was looking very similar to the original UFDD, which had fallen to pieces less than two years after its birth. As previously, the Bideyat RFC refused to join (Alliance nationale, 2008; Correau, 2008).

The position of the Bideyat movements towards these coalitions has been awkward. They are not against unity, but they have consistently been viewed with distrust by those outside their ethnic group because of the close family links of some of their leaders to Idriss Déby. For the same reason, Khartoum had been reluctant to support them before September–October 2006. It was only their bitter clashes with the Chadian Army in late 2006 (and therefore with other Beri peoples), in their bastion of Hadjer Morfaïn on the border south-east of Guéréda, that finally convinced Khartoum of their genuine desire to overthrow Déby. At the end of 2006, the Bideyat movements were thought to have received several dozen vehicles and anti-tank weapons.<sup>58</sup>

Due to the suspicion with which the Bideyat are held by other rebel groups and by Khartoum, Bideyat deserters have tried to remain autonomous and form other coalitions in opposition to the FUC and then the UFDD and the AN. Founded at the beginning of 2006, the RAFD brought together several movements, such as the SCUD, made up of Bideyat deserters from the Chadian Army. From May 2004 to February 2006 there were repeated mutinies and

hundreds of members of Déby's forces—including high-ranking officers—deserted, taking vehicles and weapons with them. Initially spurred by mismanagement and problems with the payment of army salaries, these desertions subsequently became more political.

The RAFD is led by Tom and Timan Erdimi, twin brothers who are cousins of Idriss Déby. They were longstanding pillars of the regime, both having been director of the president's cabinet, before playing other key roles: Tom was coordinator of the Chadian oil project and Timan director of Cotonchad, the cotton company. The willingness of the RAFD to unite with others is limited by its ethnic base, but still, in the second half of 2006, it managed to establish within a few months a 'unified military command' with Al-Jineidi's CNT. The CNT was anxious to preserve its autonomy vis-à-vis Mahamat Nouri and especially vis-à-vis its Arab rival, Acheikh Ibn Oumar. After this failed attempt at forming a coalition, in January 2007 the RAFD managed to unite with a small Ouaddaïan faction (fewer than 200 combatants) called the Rassemblement national démocratique populaire (RNDP), led by Mahamat Aguid Bachar, a dissident of the RND and therefore of the UFDD. The new coalition was called the Rassemblement des forces pour le changement (RFC). Bachar quit in September 2007, but he left the major part of his combatants to the RFC, where they remained through March 2008, when they joined the UFCD.<sup>59</sup> RAFD continues to call itself the RFC but its options for joining with other movements are now limited. In February 2008, Timan Erdimi refused the post of vice-president of the Alliance nationale, the new Khartoum-backed coalition led by Mahamat Nouri (Correau, 2008). 'If the AN attacks Déby, we would go with them but this time not in the first line,' an RFC leader said in March.<sup>60</sup>

One other movement has had more difficulties acquiring support from Khartoum, not because of suspicions about its ethnic composition but because of its earlier relations with Khartoum's enemies. Founded in 2001, the Front populaire pour la renaissance nationale (FPRN) is led by Adoum Yacoub 'Koukou', a Frolinat veteran and an old hand from the world of anti-Déby insurrections. It was initially composed of combatants from diverse older rebel movements (such as the Tama-dominated ANR) and different ethnic groups, in particular Ouaddaïans (such as Adoum Yacoub) and Masalit—who included Adam Mahamat Musa 'Bazooka', co-founder of the movement,

and Khamis Abdallah Abbakar, who later shifted from the Chadian to the Sudanese rebellion and became vice-president of the SLA. When the war in Darfur began in 2003, ethnic solidarity between FPRN combatants and non-Arab civilians, in particular the Masalit, led the FPRN to switch from rebelling against N'Djamena to fighting the Sudanese Army and the *janjawid* alongside the newborn SLA. This, together with the friendship between Adoum Yacoub and the late John Garang, is the reason why the FPRN has never had the Sudanese support that most other Chadian rebel groups have enjoyed.<sup>61</sup> It is also another example of the diverse and sometimes unpredictable consequences of trans-border ethnic connections.

## Ethnic divisions

Ever since he came to power Idriss Déby has faced rebellions by all ethnic groups, including his own. Whatever their origin, he has fought them using a strategy that has so far proved effective: repression combined, often simultaneously, with incentives to rally behind him. He rewards those who leave the rebellion with money and status: countless former rebels in Chad have become ministers, from Moïse Ketté (southerner, later killed by the regime) and Mahamat Garfa (Tama) to, more recently, Hassan "Al-Jineidi" (Arab) and Yahya Dillo Djerou (Bideyat). From September 2006, even before the emergence of the UFDD, rumours were circulating that Mahamat Nour, in disgrace in Khartoum, might rally to the president in N'Djamena. In February 2007 he did exactly that, with Libyan mediation, and was rewarded with an unusually important gift—the ministry of defence—while other Tama officials were appointed to local jobs.

Mahamat Nour brought with him 4,000–6,000 men, who kept hold of their weapons.<sup>62</sup> They were supposed to be assimilated into the Chadian Army but they refused to mix with Beri soldiers or to be disarmed. Concentrated in their homeland of Dar Tama, they subsequently operated as a Tama militia there, carrying out acts of violence against civilians from other ethnic groups, particularly the Beri. They attacked Sudanese Beri refugees of the Kounoungou camp in Dar Tama (UNHCR, 2007), and also invaded Beri and Goran communities (the Tama do not always distinguish between the Goran and the Beri)



that have settled in Dar Tama during the past thirty years following droughts in their own homelands.<sup>63</sup> Beri militias responded with acts of violence against Tama civilians. Because they live in adjoining territory and the Beri (particularly the Bideyat) have habitually crossed over to steal their livestock, the Tama nurse old hatreds against the Beri. The impunity enjoyed by Beri cattle rustlers under Déby's regime has exacerbated the violence.

By fuelling this ancient conflict and seeming to support the Tama against his own ethnic group, Idriss Déby has clearly been playing with fire. Unhappy with the situation, greater numbers of Beri have joined the rebellion, while Tama combatants could easily turn against the regime again at any time. In the summer of 2007, relations between Déby and Mahamat Nour cooled, just when rumours were circulating that the new minister of defence might attempt a coup d'état. There is a risk, especially in the event of further rebel raids, that the violence affecting the Beri in Dar Tama may spread to the rest of Chad, given the unpopularity of the government and the stigmatization of the Beri in general. The regime, for its part, is using this risk to bring the Zaghawa back into its camp. At the time of the FUC raid on 13 April 2006, Déby had already raised the spectre of anti-Beri massacres to rally the Beri community of N'Djamena to his side. Again in October–November 2007, he turned against the Tama: after ex-FUC forces stationed in Dar Tama resisted attempts to disarm them and tried to seize Guéréda, Déby dismissed Mahamat Nour—who took refuge in the Libyan Embassy in N'Djamena—and arrested the Tama sultan Haroun Mahamat—one of the most respected traditional leaders in eastern Chad. Thus, in just a few months Déby gave up his risky alliance with the Tama. Some 30 ex-FUC vehicles, integrated into the UFDD, participated in the rebel attack on N'Djamena in February 2008.<sup>64</sup>

There is also uncertainty regarding the position of two communities that played important historic roles in the Chadian rebellions of 1960–70, but whose access to power has remained limited: the Ouaddaïans and the Arabs. The Ouaddaïans have participated in various rebel factions, but they have had no top-ranking leaders, and their rebel leaders were left at the second rank, like Mahamat Issa Mahamat (FUC chief of staff, killed during the April 2006 raid) or Adouma Hassaballah (FUC deputy chief of staff and UFDD vice-president). In March 2008, Ouaddaïan combatants left both the UFDD and the RFC and

united to found the UFCV, only to come back the same month under Mahamat Nouri's leadership, in the new Alliance nationale. By contrast, some key figures in the official political opposition come from the Ouaddaï region.

Chadian Arabs, meanwhile, are extremely divided, with new or erstwhile leaders in different rebel factions as well as in the Chadian government and Army. In spite of the substantial support some of them have given and continue to give to the president, when Déby appointed Mahamat Nour minister of defence he expelled a number of Arab ministers from the government, particularly Rakhis Mannani, the resident minister for cattle-rearing, based in Salamat. Arab officials who voiced criticism of the regime by calling into question the responsibility of N'Djamena—as well as Khartoum—for the escalating violence, have also been stripped of their posts. One of the first was the Dajo sultan of Dar Sila, Saïd Brahim Mustafa Bakhit, who was also being challenged by his own people and family for, among other reasons, not showing sufficient support for the Dajo.<sup>65</sup>

The regime also launched a campaign denouncing Chadian Arabs as *janjawid* and mercenaries in the pay of Khartoum, thereby depicting Sudan as the sole cause of the insecurity in eastern Chad.<sup>66</sup> Déby seeks to present himself to the international community as a pro-Western bulwark against a Sudan that would seek to 'Arabize' and 'Islamize' the whole region, allowing him to deflect awkward questions about the lack of democratization in Chad (Marchal, 2006, p. 478). But denouncing Chadian Arabs in this way increases the risk that the existing gulf in Darfur between Arabs and non-Arabs will be replicated across the border (Tubiana, 2005).

Déby's regime has managed to avoid this risk so far, partly because of political circumstances outside Chad over which he has little control. In Darfur, the many Chadian Arabs who left for Sudan several decades ago were given or promised power, wealth, land, and development assistance by Khartoum, in exchange for forming the bulk of the *janjawid*. Since the beginning of the war in Darfur, prominent Arab personalities in the Chadian regime, such as Bichara Issa Jadalla, former minister of defence and now the governor of the Ouaddaï region, have been trying to undermine Khartoum's attempts to win over Arabs from Chad. This increased after the Khartoum-backed FUC raid on N'Djamena in April 2006 and the Abuja Agreement in May 2006: since this

latter event, Chadian Arabs in Darfur have increasingly lost confidence in Khartoum, as have many Darfurian Arabs (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, pp. 62–64). Through its loyal Arab members, the Chadian regime is encouraging them to leave Khartoum’s side. Bichara, as a Mahariya Awlad Mansur, is in touch with prominent *janjawid* leaders in Darfur, beginning with members of his tribe, such as Mohamed Hamdan Dogolo ‘Hemeti’, another Mahariya Awlad Mansur of Chadian origin (see page 23 above), who recently turned against Khartoum before going back on the government’s side at the beginning of 2008.<sup>67</sup>

Thus N’Djamena and Khartoum are competing for Chadian Arabs, and not only for those who left Chad decades ago. In Dar Sila, many local Arabs have been fleeing the violence in Darfur since 2006. Throughout 2007, N’Djamena tried to avoid taking sides against them, calling them back with promises of amnesty for any crimes they had committed and offering them the same incentives as Khartoum—power, wealth, and development assistance.<sup>68</sup> This policy began to have an effect when the main Arab rebel group, the CNT, rallied to Déby’s side in December 2007. Among the CNT’s reasons for rallying was the fact that Khartoum had made clear it did not want an Arab to rule Chad: first because Chadian Arabs could then support Darfurian Arabs opposed to Khartoum, and second because it would strengthen the arguments of international activists denouncing Khartoum’s supposed plans to ‘Arabize’ the region.<sup>69</sup> Since 2005, Khartoum’s preference for Chadian leadership has thus been a non-Arab—first Mahamat Nour, then Mahamat Nouri—in spite of the inability of either man to unite the Chadian rebels.

## Splintering coalitions

The Chadian rebellion has not succeeded in capitalizing on these tensions between communities, as it has itself been severely undermined by personal rivalries and ethnic divisions. Unable to bring the rebels together under one banner, Khartoum appeared to ease off its proxy support for Chadian armed groups in early 2007. In April, the Chadian Army and JEM forces jointly pushed CNT rebels and *janjawid* out of the area of Dogdoré–Daguessa–Mongororo, which the CNT had been occupying since late 2006. Claiming a ‘right of hot

pursuit’, the pro-Chadian combatants crossed the border near Foro Boranga, killing some Sudanese policemen before withdrawing.<sup>70</sup> While denouncing this incident and forcing N’Djamena to apologize, Khartoum seemed determined to take a gamble on peacemaking. The context in Darfur seemed favourable, as the government was having to focus less on the border and more on areas closer to Khartoum. In September–October, the JEM had left the Chadian front in order to rekindle the conflict in eastern Darfur, at the Kordofan border.<sup>71</sup>

But the Libyan bilateral agreement of 3 October did not last more than a few weeks. Open grievances (see page 23 above) and the lack of trust in Déby’s intentions were serious enough, and Libyan and Sudanese commitment to peace weak enough, for the rebels to withdraw from the agreement. They did so through a chain-reaction of attacks starting on 24 November—a date that indicates a delay in which the government and the rebels had to settle the details of the Sirte Agreement, and which marks the first anniversary of the successful attack of Abéché by the UFDD. The attacks lasted up to the first week of December.

As in 2006, then, the ceasefire launched by the negotiations in Libya in the summer of 2007 did not last much beyond the rainy season. While Déby’s forces were busy containing and disarming the ex-FUC forces in Dar Tama and Dar Sila, the RFC and the UFDD launched a series of attacks all along eastern Chad, between the CAR border in the south and Kalaït town in the north, catching the military off-guard and inflicting heavy casualties. Ex-FUC forces also attacked the army. Estimates put the number of government forces killed and wounded in November and early December in the hundreds, and rebel losses would have been as high.<sup>72</sup> As the Chadian Army moved its forces to the area in response to these attacks, the FPRN of Adoum Yacoub, one of the smaller rebel groups not party to the Sirte Agreement, attacked the area of Tissi on the Darfur–CAR border, where the group had long been stationed. At the end of 2007, the FPRN briefly united with a new group also opposed to the Sirte Agreement, the Arab-based FSR, which, like the FPRN, did not then enjoy Khartoum’s support.

Chadian Arabs remain very divided, with leaders in rival rebel factions as well as within the regime. Since July 2007, their main faction has been the CNT. Recently arrived among the rebels, Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane had

attempted unsuccessfully to take the leadership of this movement, but the founder, Hassan Al-Jineidi, resisted. In December, after the failure of the Sirte Agreement, Al-Jineidi resumed direct talks with the government and rallied with a large part of his forces—some 2,000 men, who quickly began a process of integration into the army. A few weeks later N'Djamena was attacked by his former allies, but Al-Jineidi remained loyal to Déby. He was rewarded with the post of secretary of state under the minister of defence, in charge of veterans and war victims. This defection did not discourage the other rebel factions and their Sudanese backers, and armed violence persisted into January 2008. The Chadian Army responded with aerial bombing of rebel bases south of Geneina, in Darfur. Khartoum interpreted these actions as 'attacks on Sudan' and threatened to bring its army to the border (Hasni, 2008).

Khartoum had good reason to worry. During this period, the JEM<sup>73</sup> had succeeded in launching a major offensive in West Darfur, controlling important territories north of Geneina for the first time, and was now seriously threatening the state capital. Having succeeded in containing Chadian rebels east of the Goz Beïda–Abéché–Kalaït line, N'Djamena now seemed intent on expanding the war into Sudanese territory, thanks to the JEM. On the other side, Khartoum appeared to rely mostly on the Chadian rebels to defend Geneina.<sup>74</sup> In spite of their limited successes they were rearmed once again: according to Chadian officials, they received several hundred brand new vehicles from Khartoum before their raid on N'Djamena.<sup>75</sup>

But unlike their backers, Darfurian and Chadian rebel groups preferred not to fight each other directly. The JEM's strategy was to leave open the south of Geneina, thereby allowing Chadian rebels to return to south-eastern Chad where the Chadian Army was waiting for them. This is exactly what the rebels did at the end of January, but this time they continued on towards N'Djamena—leaving the JEM fearful that a change of power in Chad could bring an end to its strategy in Darfur. Between 100 and 200 JEM vehicles then travelled to Chad to support Déby. They arrived too late to fight in N'Djamena and only came up against the rebels in eastern Chad (between Guéra and Dar Sila) as they retreated towards Sudan. Meanwhile, JEM involvement in the Chadian conflict allowed the Sudanese Army to attack JEM areas north of Geneina, pushing several thousand new refugees into Chad.<sup>76</sup>

It is difficult to determine how long and at what level Khartoum will maintain its support for Chadian groups after the failure of their raid on N'Djamena, and given the international condemnation of the rebels. Even while attacking the capital, the Chadian rebels seemed to consider a return to Sudan impossible, not for practical reasons but because Khartoum would not be willing to receive them back. 'The next battle will be the last one, but no matter what happens, we can't go back to Sudan,' one of the main rebel leaders said the day before entering N'Djamena.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, a few days later, the remaining rebel forces—in some 200 vehicles—retreated to Mongo, in the Guéra Mountains, and then back to Sudan. It may be possible, therefore, that Khartoum will give them a second chance. In March 2008, the Sudanese government was still asking them to go back to Chadian territory. According one rebel leader: 'The Sudanese don't ask us to attack N'Djamena again, but they gave us arms and they tell us go home. They don't like us on their territory.'<sup>78</sup>

Regardless of support from Khartoum, another persistent problem remains unsolved: their lack of unity. In December 2007, the RFC, UFDD, and UFDD–Fondamentale established a Joint Military Command. For the attack itself, the three rebel groups joined their forces and leadership, but the troops still sought orders from the leaders of their own factions. Along with Déby's unexpectedly strong resistance, then, the main reason for the rebels' defeat was the divisions among them, which remained strong before, during, and after the battle. Overconfident in their chances of success, they had begun discussing power sharing early on but had failed to reach an agreement. Nor had they been able to find a common position regarding the terms of possible negotiations with the government, which the RFC continued proposing to Déby until the moment they entered N'Djamena.<sup>79</sup> Ethnic divisions between the rebel factions remain even stronger. The two main groups involved in recent fighting, the UFDD (Goran) and the RFC (Bideyat), are unable to build a real alliance because of persistent Goran–Bideyat rivalries following the eviction of Hissein Habré (Goran) by Idriss Déby (Bideyat). Many Arabs, who suffered considerably under Habré, are also reluctant to bring Gorans back to power. Lastly, the month after the failed attack on N'Djamena in February 2008, Mahamat Nouri's leadership was also contested by the important Ouaddaïan fringe of the UFDD: Adouma Hassaballah left with numerous Ouaddaïan combatants

to found the UFCO. Nevertheless, Khartoum kept backing Nouri as the main rebel leader, and the UFCO quickly came back under his leadership, in the Alliance nationale.

These divisions within the rebels mean that Déby's two-pronged strategy of fighting combined with negotiations remains effective. As of March 2008, while digging trenches around N'Djamena and buying more arms, the Chadian regime is trying to open negotiations with the RFC. Though the chances of success with the talks are limited, this strategy continues to frustrate Sudanese attempts to unify the Chadian rebel movements. Between surprise raids and equally unexpected alliances, the recent and past histories of Chadian and Darfurian rebellions have been dominated by one constant: the impossibility of rebel unity. This is due to the deep ethnic divisions and personal rivalries that endure between them, despite the wishes of their mentors, namely the leaders of the Chadian and Sudanese regimes.

### A free rein for the ethnic militias?

Neither a peace agreement between the Chadian regime and rebels, nor an improvement in Chad–Sudan relations, would necessarily mean that the local conflicts fuelled by both sides come to an end. The diverse ethnic militias that keep these conflicts going are largely beyond the control of the states that have armed them and the rebel movements with which they are aligned.

In Chad, the ethnic militias have not succeeded in controlling such important areas as their counterparts in Darfur. Nevertheless, they often act as a substitute for the government and the traditional authorities in south-eastern Chad. Even more than in Darfur, civilian populations in this region feel compelled to choose one of the warring camps as it is impossible for them to stay neutral.

In Dar Sila, the *janjawid*, the Darfur rebels, and the Chadian government have exploited local conflicts in order to recruit combatants. Whereas in Darfur the *janjawid* recruit mainly among Arabs, in Dar Sila they recruit just as much from non-Arab groups who have recently moved into the region, particularly the Ouaddaïans and the Mimi. Arab or not, most of these recruits have fled the great droughts in their homelands, particularly that of 1984, to

settle in less arid regions. By enlisting them in their ranks, the *janjawid* are playing on the rivalries between these newcomers and the Dajo, the first occupants of Dar Sila. This is exactly the strategy of the Sudanese government in Darfur as it arms recently arrived Arabs, bent on acquiring land and independent chieftainships (Tubiana, 2006b; Tubiana, 2007).

While the Chadian rebels and the *janjawid* are both active in Dar Sila and may coordinate their activities, their objectives nevertheless appear to be different. For the Chadian rebels, Dar Sila is primarily an entry point for attacking Chad. For the *janjawid*, their aims are more or less the same as in Darfur: the Sudanese government is using them to destabilize a region that serves as a rear base for the Darfurian rebels. The *janjawid* also have more local motives, however, such as stealing livestock and sometimes seizing land.

In response to the attacks by the *janjawid* in Chadian territory, the Dajo—and, to a lesser extent, the Masalit who are both residents and refugees in Chad—have mobilized their traditional militias to attack Arab villages in return. But the capabilities of these local militias should not be overestimated: they are groups of young people who come together from each village for collective work (agricultural labour, house-building), festivals, or war. Among the Dajo, and also the Ouaddaïans, the Masalit, and the Fur, the leaders of these groups at the village level are called *warnang*. At the upper level, the Dajo call them *jermay*.<sup>80</sup> In Darfur, they have contributed to the formation of Masalit and Fur self-defence groups against the *janjawid*—groups that later played an important role in the emergence of the Darfurian rebel groups (Tanner and Tubiana, 2007, p. 18).

Initially armed with bows, poisoned arrows, and spears, the Dajo militia of Chad tried to acquire firearms by collecting money from civilians and approaching both the Sudanese rebels and the Chadian Army. They had little success, though, and ultimately had to buy most of their own weapons, with the Chadian military giving them a few guns and RPGs.<sup>81</sup> Although most Dajo militiamen were not armed by the Sudanese rebels, many did receive training from them, but quickly found that they had different goals: the Sudanese rebels, particularly the JEM, were very willing to recruit Chadian Dajo to fight in Darfur against the Sudanese government, but the main aim of the Dajo was to combat the *janjawid* in Dar Sila.<sup>82</sup>

The Chadian regime resisted an escalation of the Dajo–Arab conflict, which was becoming ever more similar to identity conflicts in Darfur. It refused to arm the Dajo on a large scale or to transform their traditional militias into proxy forces, as many of their traditional and political leaders were demanding: this could well have turned the Arabs against the government, not only in Dar Sila but in the whole country. In March 2007, after several months of inter-community fighting, the villages of Tiero and Marena, strongholds of the Dajo militias, were violently destroyed by *janjawid* and the CNT. The army refrained from intervening and left several hundred Dajo fighters—and civilians—to be slaughtered by the rebels’ heavy guns. Since then, Dajo militias throughout Dar Sila have kept a low profile. Some of them, including survivors from Tiero and Marena, have been integrated in the Chadian Army.<sup>83</sup>

The Chadian regime has thus regained calm in the region, but not reconciliation. The desire to seek revenge is strong among the Dajo, and those integrated in the army have already been accused of violence against Arab civilians, such as occurred in January 2008 east of Koukou Angarana.<sup>84</sup>

Further north, the region of Dar Tama has seen violence for many years now resulting from a similar conflict between the Tama, who were the first occupants of the region, and the newly arrived Beri. Each group now has its own militia. Recently, in October 2007, Idriss Déby made a serious attempt to integrate ex-FUC Tama combatants into the army by placing them under the control of officers loyal to the regime, but the Tama resisted. By March 2008, there was still a risk of confrontations in Dar Tama between the Tama former rebels and both the Chadian Army and the local Beri militia. 📌

## VI. The international response

The international community’s response to the crisis in Darfur and Chad has been to push for peacekeeping operations. The idea of an international force in Chad has been around since the beginning of 2006, particularly within the UN. At first, however, it was widely rejected as it did not seem suitable for such a complex situation, especially as there was a serious risk that it might be interpreted, especially in Chad, as a show of support by the international community for an undemocratic regime—one already benefiting from French military aid. The proposal to provide an international force was repeated several times in 2006 and 2007 by France, which was anxious to ‘multilateralize’ its backing of Déby’s regime, which was giving it a bad image among the local population and potentially creating a security risk for the local French community. In the first half of 2007, Chad, having previously requested a peacekeeping operation, refused a plan for the deployment of a UN force on its territory. Paris then proposed a European force instead, through UN Security Council Resolution 1778 of 25 September 2007.

This resolution created the UN Mission for the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), which will consist of 350 police and military liaison personnel directly under UN control with a mandate to contribute to the ‘protection of refugees, displaced persons and civilians in danger, by facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic and by creating favourable conditions for the reconstruction and economic and social development of those areas’ (UNSC, 2007, para. 1). It will be focused primarily on the security of refugees and IDP camps.

The most important peacekeeping operation, however, will be the European Union Force (EUFOR) Chad/CAR, expected to include 3,700 troops tasked with taking ‘all necessary measures, within its capabilities and its area of operation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic to protect civilians, facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid, and ensure the safety of UN



personnel' (UNSC, 2007, para. 6(a)). 'All necessary measures' is widely interpreted as the possibility of engaging armed groups directly. Deployment was delayed over the question of troop contributions and financial commitments for transport, aircraft, and medical resources, but finally the first Italian and Spanish soldiers arrived in N'Djamena on 28 January. Full deployment is expected by mid-2008, though the rebel attack in N'Djamena has put it temporarily on 'standby'.<sup>85</sup> Unofficial estimates put the cost of the one-year mission at EUR 500 million (USD 725 million), but it may rise much higher (Seibert, 2007, p. 38).

There are wide differences of opinion within Chad regarding the peacekeeping operations. Having initially requested it, then rejected it during the first half of 2007, the government now hopes the force will help protect it from destabilizing incursions from Sudan. Rebels and many civilians also regard the operations as merely an extension of the 1,200-strong French force (Opération Epervier) on the ground since 1986, as they consider any international intervention to be tainted by French interests. The main Chadian rebel groups and coalitions (the CNT, RFC, UFDD, and UFDD-Fondamentale) have explicitly threatened violence against peacekeepers. In a press release in July, they stated that they:

*'strongly condemn[ed] French government initiatives aiming to transform the French troops in Chad into a European force under the pretext of protecting Sudanese refugees from Darfur, and Chadian displaced persons, and of guaranteeing border and national security. The intervention of these foreign forces in Chad is unacceptable to us because the undeclared aim of this Machiavellian manoeuvre is to save a failing regime at all costs. . . The armed opposition warns the countries of the European Union who are tempted by this military adventure, as it will have disastrous repercussions and risks leading them directly into a conflict with our armed forces. They will then be obliged to face all the consequences of their actions.'*<sup>86</sup>

This threat places humanitarian staff and their beneficiaries, whom EUFOR will be protecting, in a deeply risky position. The rebels reiterated their opposition to EUFOR after their defeat in N'Djamena, asking 'European countries [other than France]' not to participate in 'an operation whose final aim is to protect Déby's regime' (RFC, UFDD, and UFDD-Fondamentale, 2008b).

Indeed, France's persistent support of Déby is one of EUFOR's primary liabilities (Ismail and Prendergast, 2007). France will contribute the bulk of the peacekeepers: by January 2008, contributions from 14 European countries had reached some 3,440 soldiers, of which 2,000 were French (IRIN, 2008).<sup>87</sup> The other contributors are far behind: Ireland and Poland will provide 400 troops each, followed by Austria (250) and Sweden (200). France is also likely to make a substantial financial contribution beyond the nearly EUR 120 million (USD 170 million) in the EU budget.<sup>88</sup> To the dismay of other European countries, including the UK and Germany who have declined to take part in the force, France is pushing forward in the absence of a broader comprehensive process of reform or reciprocal offers from Déby. As one British diplomat noted, 'We do not understand why France does not ask anything in exchange [for EUFOR], like a democratic process and a real dialogue with both official and armed oppositions.'<sup>89</sup> Some contributing countries such as Sweden and Austria raised similar questions, particularly after the February 2008 attack.

The French presidential election of May 2007 might have ended what some perceive to be a policy of unconditional support for the regime. But although the '*rupture*' (splitting with the past)—in everything, including French-African relations—was the leitmotiv of his campaign, President Nicolas Sarkozy has since maintained the status quo.

French support is based on an 'agreement of military cooperation' going back to 1976, which in recent years has allowed Paris to provide the Chadian Army with training, medical assistance, logistics (including aerial transportation and fuel), and intelligence (through aerial and satellite observations of the rebels, as well as the tapping of telephone communications). But it could be argued that French support went further than the agreement. One newspaper asserted that French officers coordinated the failed attack of the Chadian Army against the rebels on 2 February this year, and, maybe more importantly, that Paris asked Libya—its recent ally after the Bulgarian nurses affair<sup>90</sup>—to deliver ammunitions to Déby at the French-controlled N'Djamena airport, in particular for the T-55 tanks that ensured his survival in the following days (d'Ersu and Ploquin, 2008). French troops also fought against the rebels when they attempted to seize N'Djamena airport, which was used not only to evacuate foreign citizens but also as a launch pad for Déby's helicopters and the site for receiving Libyan ammunitions.

This 'usual' support for Déby was not unexpected by the rebels. More threatening for them was the Security Council declaration of 4 February, which they strongly condemned, stating that the Security Council had 'missed a nice opportunity to call all parties to the conflict to solve the problem through dialogue and negotiation'. They denounced Paris as having 'abused' the United Nations, concluding that they were 'now convinced that the French presence in Chad is a major handicap for peace and for the coming of a truly democratic regime' (RFC, UFDD, and UFDD-Fondamentale, 2008a).

Chadian rebels are not alone in resisting an expanded role for France in Chadian affairs. Anti-French sentiment is widespread among civilians too. France's reputation suffered a serious blow during the Zoe's Ark scandal of October–December 2007 (Reuters, 2007), in which it appeared that Paris was trying to shield from Chadian justice six French citizens accused of kidnapping Chadian children and presenting them as 'Darfur orphans'. The fact that, on 7 February, only a few days after the attack on N'Djamena, Déby offered to pardon them—their sentence of eight years of forced labour was commuted into an eight-year prison sentence in France—can only aggravate this resentment.

Despite the differing mandates of MINURCAT, EUFOR, and Epervier, the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of these forces are far from clear to many on the ground. French troops in EUFOR and those of Epervier will have different uniforms (sand for EUFOR, khaki for Epervier), but the European peacekeepers will be stationed in the same areas as the Epervier troops in N'Djamena and Abéché, and will also benefit from Epervier aerial support. Interviewed in January, EUFOR was unable to promise that it will remain neutral if Epervier troops come into danger. Neither was it able to confirm that it will protect civilians if they are attacked by Chadian government or pro-government forces, as opposed to Chadian rebels or *janjawid*. Finally, while being unable to differentiate their position clearly from that of Epervier, EUFOR troops are planning to carry out humanitarian or development 'quick impact projects' to 'facilitate the acceptance of the force's presence'. This is bound to create another dangerous confusion and overlapping of roles, this time between the military forces and the humanitarian organizations.<sup>91</sup> 🗨️

## VII. Conclusions: from peacekeeping to diplomacy

Violence similar to that in Darfur has intensified in recent years across the Chad–Sudan border, especially in south-eastern Chad. This instability has precedents extending as far back as 1990 at least, many of them caused by divisive ethnic policies. The violence has been widely analysed as an extension of the conflict in Darfur, but it has also been fuelled by internal Chadian factors, whether national or local. Bringing an end to this violence requires simultaneous solutions to four crises that are closely interlinked:

1. The conflict in Darfur itself, played out between Darfuri rebel groups and the Sudanese government, and, beyond them, between ethnic groups considered favourable to the rebellion (mainly non-Arab groups) and groups favourable to the government (for the most part a section of the Arabs).
2. The chronic conflict, reactivated in 2005, between the Chadian government and a political opposition that finds no way to be heard other than by taking up arms. This crisis is rooted in the failure of democratization in Chad.
3. The proxy war in which Chad and Sudan are engaged through rebel groups and militias.
4. The ethnic conflicts, in Chad as in Darfur, between long-settled landowning groups and newcomers with no traditional rights to land.

Until now, Chad and Sudan have tended to aggravate each other's troubles. So how can Chad be persuaded to take part in resolving the conflict in Darfur, and Sudan to be involved in resolving the crisis in Chad? In other words, how is it possible to stop each state from sustaining the internal conflicts of its neighbour, and engaging in this proxy war?

The current international peacekeeping 'solution' does not address the root causes of the instability. More alarmingly, it could easily bring UN and EU forces into direct armed conflict with armed groups, and put the lives of humanitarian



workers and their civilian beneficiaries at risk. If French support for the Chadian government persists, there is a real risk that EUFOR will become a party to this conflict. In principal, supervision by the UN was originally intended to replace that of the EU after only six months, followed by a UN replacement force after a preliminary period of one year. Certainly, a force placed under the sole banner of the UN would be more acceptable to the Chadian population and rebels. But Resolution 1778 remains vague on this matter, President Déby is still opposed to a UN deployment on his territory, and it is unlikely that the UN will be able to assemble a new force. The question of a prolongation of EUFOR's stay is already in the air, though it is clear few participating countries (besides France) wish to stay longer than planned.

Whether under EU or UN command, the presence of a peacekeeping force in Chad can have only a limited impact on the resolution of the interconnected crises of Chad and Darfur. It is the diplomatic front, largely neglected until now, that could most effectively launch or relaunch peace processes. This requires support from the international community for continued dialogue between the Chadian government and its internal opponents. Unlike the Libyan-mediated peace process, future negotiations must involve not only the rebels but also the political opposition and deal with core issues relating to democratic governance. Conscious of their divisions and limitations, the rebels called several times for such inclusive negotiations, before, during, and after their attack on N'Djamena. But the Chadian president has not been heading in this direction: after the attack on the capital, Déby's forces arrested prominent figures of the official opposition, including Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, president of the coalition of the opposition parties, Lol Mahamat Choua, who was heading a committee overseeing the application of an agreement of August 2007 between the opposition and the government concerning the reform of the electoral system, and Yorongar Ngarleju, famous for his strong 'federalist' stance demanding more autonomy for the oil-rich south (Amnesty International, 2008). The latter two have been released after late and muted European and French pressure, while the first was still considered 'disappeared' at the end of March 2008. The Chadian government continues to deny having arrested him despite credible testimonies that he was abducted by government soldiers and detained together with Lol and Yorongar.

France's historical role as a protector of the Chadian regime militates against the possibility of a genuine dialogue between Déby and his opponents. External pressure will not work unless the international community is united, which requires participation by France. Until now Paris has backed both the repeated refusals of the Chadian government to enter into dialogue with the armed opposition, and its marginalization of the official opposition. Both oppositions are regarded as strongly anti-French, and the disdain shown by Paris for the rebels and Déby's political opponents can only radicalize anti-French feelings in both these camps. In spite of its stated wish to 'multilateralize' its intervention in Chad, the new French government has also shown that it continues to view the country as an integral part of its African 'domain'. France has found it difficult to convince its European partners to allocate troops and funds to EUFOR. The other European and international players might commit themselves more readily if France genuinely changed its policy and came to an agreement with them on supporting a dialogue between the Chadian government and the political opposition.

This internal Chadian dialogue also requires effective mediators. France is not one of them, and this affects the feasibility of the European Union as possible mediator. The United Nations may have a more important role to play, but ultimately it is the African Union, among all international organizations, that seems to have the confidence of the Chadian opposition and rebels. Through its activism, Libya has also been able to acquire some credibility, although its recent rapprochement with Paris over the Bulgarian nurses affair<sup>92</sup> may put it in an awkward position. In their press release of July 2007, the main Chadian rebel movements 'invite[d] the United Nations and principally the European Union to direct their efforts instead to resolving the Chadian conflict by supporting the steps already embarked upon by the Libyan mediation, CEN-SAD (Community of Sahel-Saharan States), and the countries favourable to the setting up of a truly democratic process' (CNT, RFC, UFDD, and UFDD-Fondamentale, 2007).

The international community also has a role to play in providing selective development assistance, in setting up programmes suitable to the fast-changing (and in some cases politically-induced) ecological dynamics, and in resolving conflicts between settled and nomadic peoples, and between long-established

populations and newcomers. Aid that enables nomadic Arabs to maintain a way of life appropriate to their environment while minimizing clashes with other communities could further defuse future conflicts in both Chad and Darfur. Meanwhile, successful diplomatic pressure on both Khartoum and the Darfur rebels to return to the negotiating table after successive failures would have a positive echo effect in eastern Chad. This alone, however, would be insufficient to improve security. Chadian opposition groups will not unilaterally disarm without systematic changes to the democratic arena in Chad.

The main argument justifying EUFOR's deployment is the conflict in Darfur, and there is a particular stress on its role in protecting Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad. These refugees suffer less violence, however, and are easier to protect than any other civilians living in this region. Although they have focused more on the Darfur refugees, the peacekeepers are supposedly charged with protecting all civilians, without any distinction of nationality or ethnicity, and irrespective of whether the violence against them is perpetrated by Chadians or Sudanese.

This 'Darfur argument' for an intervention in Chad also stems from the fact that President Sarkozy and Minister of Foreign Affairs Bernard Kouchner—both supporters of the interventionist stance of the French–Darfur coalition—present Darfur as a priority for French diplomacy. Yet, in June 2007, one month after the presidential election, French attempts to become more involved had limited results. Kouchner was even forced to retreat from his hasty proposal for establishing a humanitarian corridor from Chad to Darfur, and settle for additional air links between N'Djamena and eastern Chad. French diplomacy has thus withdrawn to its Chadian domain, all the while exploiting the confusion—now common in the French media—between the Chadian crisis and the conflict in Darfur.

France's main justification for its support of Idriss Déby has not been the crisis in Darfur but the fact that 'he was elected'.<sup>93</sup> While the Chadian regime continues to denounce 'Sudanese aggression' on its border, Paris prudently avoids using this argument. In French diplomatic circles, however, the 'Darfurization' of Chad—and the need to stabilize Chad as a means of resolving the Darfur conflict—is often used as a justification for the backing of Déby. According to the French newspaper *Le Monde*, the United States would share this

argument and therefore support French interventionism (Bernard, Bolopion, and Nougayrède, 2008). But the fact that a peacekeeping force might, in spite of itself and under the pretext of resolving the Darfur conflict, also help consolidate the Chadian regime, raises a deeply troubling question: should the process of democratization in Chad be adjourned for the sake of peace in Darfur? 🗨

## Appendix: Armed groups of Darfur and Chad

### A. The rebel groups of Darfur<sup>94</sup>

#### 1. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)

Between 2003 and the signing of the Abuja Agreement on 5 May 2006, the SLA was the main rebel group in Darfur and the matrix of the strongest factions currently present. It was founded in August 2001 under the name of the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF) or Darfur Liberation Movement (DLM). It adopted the name SLA in February 2003. In 2004–05 the SLA had about 10,000 combatants, drawn from the Zaghawa, Fur, Masalit, Berti, Meidob, Tunjur, and Dajo.

*President:* Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur (Fur).

*Vice-president:* Khamis Abdallah Abbakar (Masalit).

*General secretary:* Abdallah Abbakar Bashar (Zaghawa Wogi), replaced in 2004 by Minni Arku Minnawi (Zaghawa Wogi).

#### 2. SLA–Minni Arku Minnawi

This group gradually broke away from the faction of Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur in 2004–05, a split that was confirmed at the Haskanita conference (south-eastern Darfur) in October 2005. It was the main faction in the SLA until its leader, Minni Arku Minnawi, signed the Abuja Agreement. Subsequently it lost the bulk of its troops, vehicles, the territories it controlled, and its popular support from groups opposed to Abuja. It still has some representatives and supporters in Chad, especially in the refugee camps, but they are isolated individuals and seem only to stay with Minnawi because they are enemies or rivals of leaders opposed to him.

*Leader:* Minni Arku Minnawi (Zaghawa Wogi).

#### 3. SLA–Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur

By refusing to sign the Abuja Agreement Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur gained enormous popularity. But he has failed to capitalize on this, and his procrasti-

nation has caused his group to split in two: some of his men have abandoned him for the other Fur faction led by Ahmad Abdeshafi.

*Leader:* Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur (Fur).

#### 4. Group of 11

This group is headed by Ahmad Abdeshafi, who broke away from the SLA–Abdel-Wahid Mohammad Nur in July 2006. But in 2007 he lost the territories he controlled in East Jebel Marra to the SLA–Abdel-Wahid and a large part of his troops left for other non-signatory factions. He founded the Group of 11 with small autonomous splinter factions and political leaders from both the JEM and the SLA North Command (see below), the latter largely autonomous.

*Leader:* Ahmad Abdeshafi Yagub Baasi (Fur).

#### 5. Group of 19 (G19)/SLA North Command

From the beginning of March 2005, the G19 gradually broke away from the SLA in opposition to both Minni and Abdel-Wahid. At the end of 2006, it brought together most of the factions of the SLA opposed to the Abuja Agreement, apart from the two Fur factions of Abdel-Wahid and Abdeshafi. Although dominated by the Zaghawa Wogi, the G19 also had leaders and combatants from other ethnic groups, including the Masalit, Meidob, and Berti. However, in April 2007, most of its Zaghawa fringe (except for Jar-el-Nebi Abdelkarim) broke away and called itself SLA–Unity. The remaining kernel of its main leaders (Jar-el-Nebi, Suleimain Marejan, and Saleh Adam Issak) tried to remain united under the name SLA North Command, but are actually largely autonomous, each one with a narrow ethnic or clan base. They also maintain floating alliances between Ahmat Abdeshafi's Group of 11 and the SLA–Abdel-Wahid (Suleiman Marejan being closer to the latter).

*Principal leaders:* Jar-el-Nebi Abdelkarim (Zaghawa Wogi); Suleiman Marejan (Meidob); Saleh Adam Issak (Berti).

#### 6. SLA–Unity

Although this name formerly designated the whole of the G19, the faction that now carries the name was formed in April 2007. It brings together most

of the Zaghawa Wogi from the G19 and defectors from the SLA–Minni Arku Minnawi, which makes it the strongest group. It has good relations with several URF factions (see below). Its leaders also have important connections with the Chadian regime, but remain more autonomous from it than some of the smaller SLA factions or the JEM (see below).

*Principal leaders:* Suleiman Jamous (Zaghawa Wogi/Bideyat); Abdallah Yahya (Zaghawa Wogi); Dr Sharif Harir (Zaghawa Wogi).

### **7. Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)**

Founded in 1999–2000, the JEM fought its first battle in March 2003. The group is active mainly in the Tiné/Tina area of the Chad–Sudan border, in Jebel Mun in West Darfur, and in eastern Darfur. It is dominated by the Zaghawa Kobe and recruits predominantly among this ethnic group, both Sudanese and Chadians. It has rear bases in Chad, particularly in the Tiné area, and also in the regions of Bahay (Kariyari), Hiriba (camp of Am Nabak, Zaghawa Kobe), Adré (camp of Tredjing, Masalit), Goz Beïda (camp of Jebel, Dajo, and Masalit), and Koukou Angarana (camp of Goz Amer, Dajo, and Masalit). Since 2006, the JEM has fought on several occasions on behalf of Idriss Déby.

Disagreements between the president Dr Khalil Ibrahim and Bahar Idris Abu Garda, vice-president and general secretary, have led to the movement splitting into two rival factions, Bahar’s taking the name of JEM Collective Leadership and joining the URF (see below). At the beginning of 2008, Khalil’s JEM number between 2,000 and 4,000 fighters.

*President:* Dr Khalil Ibrahim (Zaghawa Kobe).

### **8. National Redemption Front (NRF)**

Formed on 30 June 2006, this coalition was originally supported by Chad and Eritrea, and combined the JEM, the G19, and the SFDA (Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance, a movement that is more political than military). In spite of its military successes, the NRF fell apart in October 2007 and became a substitute for the JEM, retaining only a smaller force derived from the SLA under the orders of Adam Bakhit and Khamis Abdallah Abakar. This later became part of a rival coalition, the URF (see below).

### **9. National Movement for Reform and Development (NMRD)**

Having split with the JEM in March 2004 on the instigation of the Chadian government, this movement is now merely an auxiliary militia group supporting N’Djamena. In 2007, the NMRD had about a dozen vehicles and approximately 200 combatants, largely Zaghawa Kabka from Chad. It operates mostly along the Chad–Sudan border in the areas of Adé, Adré, and Jebel Morfaïn.

*Military leader:* Colonel Jibril Abdelkarim Bahri, known as Jibril ‘Tek’ (Zaghawa Kabka from Chad).

*Political leader:* Khalil Abdallah (Zaghawa Kabka).

### **10. United Resistance Front (URF)**

This recent coalition is composed of small but in some cases militarily strong factions, mostly splinters of both the SLA and the JEM. It includes the JEM Collective Leadership, the NMRD, and the autonomous SLA factions of Khamis Abdallah Abbakar (former SLA vice-president and G19 president), Adam Bakhit (former G19 chief of staff), and Adam Ali Shogar (former SLA representative in Chad). Like the NMRD, the three latter factions are largely dependent on Chadian support and since 2006 have fought repeatedly on Idriss Déby’s behalf. Like the JEM, they have rear bases in Chad, especially in the regions of Bahay (Zaghawa), Adré, and Goz Beïda (Masalit). Like the JEM Collective Leadership, they also have good relations with the SLA–Unity. Among these factions, Khamis Abadallah remains largely autonomous in his loyalties.

The URF also includes the United Revolutionary Force Front (URFF), the main Darfur Arab rebel group composed mostly of Rizeigat Baggara Arabs and a splinter group of Saleh ‘Abu Sura’ Mohamad’s Revolutionary Democratic Front Forces (RDFF).

*Principal leaders:* Bahar Idris Abu Garda (Zaghawa Kobe, JEM Collective Leadership), Adam Bakhit (Zaghawa Wogi), Adam Ali Shogar (Zaghawa Wogi), Khamis Abdallah Abbakar (Masalit), Ibrahim Ahmed Abdallah Al-Zibeidi (Rizeigat Baggara), NMRD leaders (see above).

## **B. Chadian rebel groups and coalitions**

The following groups represent the most significant of the rebel groups and coalitions from 2005 to the present.

**1. Front uni pour le changement (démocratique) (United Front for (Democratic) Change) or FUC/FUCD.** The coalition was founded in December 2005 and expected (by Khartoum) to unify all of the Chadian rebel factions against Déby under the Sudanese protégé Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim, a Tama. At its peak in April 2006 the FUC had 5,000–7,000 men but went into decline after its failed attack on N'Djamena on 13 April. In March 2007, the Tama kernel of the FUC rallied to the Chadian regime and became a militia operating in Dar Tama. Several hundred troops also came back to the rebellion and joined the UFDD (see below).

**2. Rassemblement pour la démocratie et les libertés (Rally for Democracy and Freedom) or RDL.** This group founded in 2005 from the ANR (Alliance nationale de résistance) was the main component of the FUC and recruited mainly among the Tama (from Chad and Sudan), Chadian Arabs (particularly the Eregat of Dar Tama), and Ouaddaïans.

**3. Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement (Union of Forces for Democracy and Development) or UFDD.** The second significant Sudanese-supported coalition, the UFDD was founded on 22 October 2006 and led by Mahamat Nouri, a Goran from the Anakazza sub-group, like Hissein Habré. Nouri was formerly Chadian ambassador to Saudi Arabia. In 2007, the UFDD had some 3,000 men including Ouaddaïans, Arabs, Gorans, and Bideyats of the Borogat sub-group (a Bideyat group very close to the Gorans and whose main rebel leader is Abakar Tolli). Khartoum intended for the UFDD to replace the failed FUC and unify all the major Chadian rebels against Déby. The group has operated mostly in south-eastern Chad, Adré, Abéché, and west of Ennedi (Goran area). It was party to the Sirte Agreement of October 2007. After several splits, the UFDD has been reduced to its leader's faction: UFPD (Union des forces pour le progrès et la démocratie), founded in July 2006 by Mahamat Nouri.

**4. Alliance nationale (National Alliance) or AN.** The third Sudanese-supported coalition, the AN was founded on 25 February 2008 and again led by Mahamat Nouri. It includes four main factions:

(i) UFDD. (see above)

(ii) **Union des forces pour le changement et la démocratie (Union of Forces for Change and Democracy) or UFCD.** This faction was founded in March 2008 by Adouma Hassaballah Jedareb (half-Arab, half-Ouaddaïan), ex-vice president of UFDD, in an attempt to take autonomy from Mahamat Nouri. Adouma had been a member of the FPRN (see below), then the FUC. He took numerous Ouaddaïan combatants with him in the wake of the failed FUC attack on N'Djamena in 2006 to join the UFDD. His faction now numbers some 2,000 Ouaddaïan combatants from the UFDD and the RFC.

(iii) **UFDD–Fondamentale.** This group is an Arab breakaway faction from the UFDD, founded in May 2007 by Acheikh Ibn Oumar Saïd and Abdelwahid Aboud Makaye. It was party to the Sirte Agreement of October 2007. In 2007, it numbered some 1,000 men.

(iv) **Front pour la salut de la république (Front for the Salvation of the Republic) or FSR.** Founded in 2007 and led by Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane, a Chadian Arab from the Mahamid branch and a former minister of Déby, this group was not party to the Sirte Agreement. It was not strongly supported by Khartoum and at the end of 2007 it tried to ally with the FPRN (see below). But on 3 February 2008, the FSR joined UFDD troops to attack Adré and agreed to join Mahamat Nouri's new coalition. In March 2008, the FSR numbered some 1,000 combatants. The Sudanese government, now backing it, would allow him to recruit among Sudanese *janjawid*—among whom the Mahamid are well represented, including one of their main leaders, Musa Hilal.<sup>95</sup>

**5. Conseil démocratique révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Democratic Council) or CDR.** One of the oldest Chadian rebel movements, the CDR was founded in 1978. It was led until 1982 by Acyl Ahmat Agbash and since then by Acheikh Ibn Oumar Saïd—both of whom are Awlad Rashid Arabs. Acheikh Ibn Oumar retained the name of the historic movement of Chadian Arabs when he left France, where he was a political refugee, to rejoin the rebellion in Sudan. He founded the UFDD alongside Mahamat Nouri in 2006, before breaking away in May 2007 and forming the UFDD–Fondamentale.



**6. Rassemblement des forces pour le changement (Rally of the Forces for Change)/Rassemblement des forces démocratiques (Rally of Democratic Forces) or RFC/RAFD.** Founded in December 2005, this is a coalition of several Bideyat deserter groups, the principal one being the Socle pour le changement, l'unité et la démocratie (Platform for Change, Unity and Democracy) or SCUD, established in October 2005. Initially known as the RAFD, it took the name RFC in February 2007 during a brief alliance with the Ouaddaïan Rassemblement national démocratique populaire (RNDP), a splinter group of the RND (see above). The RAFD is led by Tom and Timan Erdimi, twin brothers and cousins of Idriss Déby. Because of these family links both the Sudanese government and other rebel factions remain suspicious of the movement. The force consists of approximately 1,000 men. They have been based mainly in the area of Hadjer Morfaïn, at the border east of Guéréda.

**7. Concorde nationale du Tchad (Chad National Concord/Convention) or CNT.** This is the principle Chadian Arab rebel group, founded in 2004 by Hassan Saleh Al-Gaddam 'Al-Jineidi', a Chadian Hemat Arab and former member of the CDR in the 1970s who has been in rebellion against Déby since 1994. First vice-president of the FUC, he broke away in July 2006. The CNT is the only rebel group to have controlled part of Chadian territory—the areas of Daguessa and Tissi in the south-east—during several months in 2006 and 2007. The group is said to have had close links with *janjawid* active in Chad and West Darfur. In December 2007, after the failure of the Sirte Agreement (to which the CNT was a party), Al-Jineidi resumed direct talks with the Chadian regime and rallied with a significant section of his forces—some 2,000 men.

**8. Front populaire pour la renaissance nationale (Popular Front for National Rebirth) or FPRN.** Founded in 2001 by Adoum Yacoub (Ouaddaïan), this group of Ouaddaïan and Masalit combatants was initially based in West Darfur. It is not strongly backed by Khartoum nor was it party to the Sirte Agreement. The faction currently operates mostly in the area of Tissi, at the border between Chad, Sudan, and the CAR.<sup>96</sup>

**9. Mouvement pour la paix, la reconstruction et le développement (Movement for Peace, Reconstruction and Development) or MPRD.** This small group is led by Jibrine Dassert, former MPS member and colonel in the Chadian Army. It was based in southern Chad in 2005–06, then in northern CAR, where it has good relations with the CAR rebels of Union des forces démocratiques et du rassemblement (UFDR). It has also been trying to coordinate with Khartoum backed-coalitions, first the FUC then the UFDD.

### C. The *janjawid*

Currently, this term is mainly used to refer to the militias that are auxiliary to the Sudanese government. The *janjawid* are recruited mostly among nomadic Arab groups known as the 'Abbala' (camel herders), and among Arab groups originating in Chad (such as the Rizeigat Abbala, Beni Halba, and Misirya) who moved to Darfur, especially during the 1980s, because of droughts and conflicts in their homeland. Khartoum has also encouraged non-Arab populations to join the militias by exploiting rivalries between these communities in West Darfur, in particular calling upon the Gimir and the Tama (these latter originating in Chad) to take up arms. In Chad, the term *janjawid* has a different meaning, closer to the one it had originally in Darfur when it appeared in the 1990s: it refers to largely autonomous militias, often involved in livestock lootings, and recruiting among Arabs (both Sudanese and Chadian) and non-Arabs, mainly Ouaddaïans. In Sudan, the *janjawid* have been drawn more and more into the Sudanese paramilitary forces—the Popular Defence Forces and Border Intelligence Guards—which explains why they often wear Sudanese uniforms.

## Endnotes

- 1 After his defeat in Massaguett, Paris even offered the Chadian president asylum. Had he accepted, his successor may have been quickly chosen from among the rebels. Telephone conversations with rebel leaders and French military personnel, February 2008.
- 2 See Marchal (2006).
- 3 See Amnesty International (2006), Human Rights Watch (2006), (2007), and International Crisis Group (2006).
- 4 Interview with a source close to Idriss Déby, N'Djamena, October 2006.
- 5 Together with arms, uniforms have been widely distributed to the *janjawid* since 2003. Some fighters may also buy them in local markets.
- 6 At the time of the attacks in early 2006, Amnesty International noted that the *janjawid* followed the raids of the Chadian rebels closely, mainly in order to pillage in their wake. This occurred during the attack by Al-Jineidi's FUC faction on Tissi on 12 April 2006. Amnesty International (2006), p. 9.
- 7 Interviews with eyewitnesses, Dar Sila (locations withheld), January 2008. CNT leader Hassan Al-Jineidi strongly denies the involvement of his troops. Interviews with Hassan Al-Jineidi, N'Djamena, January 2008.
- 8 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, October 2007.
- 9 Interview with Idriss Déby on Europe 1. The transcript is available on the Chadian Presidency's website: <<http://www.presidencedutchad.org/Activites/Interviews/Interview%20du%20PR%20Europe%201.htm>>.
- 10 Strangely, the minister also added that 'EUFOR will also discourage Chad from supporting Sudanese rebels, in case we are arming the JEM to attack Sudan. It will allow us to calm the Sudanese, [to prove to them] that we are not behind the rebels'. Press conference by Ahmat Allam-mi, Paris, 22 February 2008.
- 11 EUFOR officials have repeatedly indicated, including to the author, that they would have to remain neutral in such a case, as long as the rebels do not harm civilians.
- 12 'If Déby falls, it will be a catastrophe for the Darfur file as Khartoum's hand would be completely reinforced. . . Darfur rebels would lose their rear bases in Chad and the Sudanese Army would go on the offensive in Darfur. UNAMID would be over.' An unnamed Western source quoted by *Le Monde*. See Bernard, Bolopion, and Nougayrède (2008).
- 13 The term 'Ouaddaïan' refers to the inhabitants of the sultanate of Ouaddaï, who are mainly Maba. This group also, however, includes members of various Arab and non-Arab ethnic groups, for whom being Ouaddaïan often takes precedence over their ethnic identity.
- 14 Interviews with traditional chieftains and prominent Arabs from Chad, N'Djamena, September–October 2006. See also Le Rouvreur (1989), p. 344.
- 15 Interviews with traditional chieftains and prominent Arabs from Chad, N'Djamena, September–October 2006.
- 16 Interview with a Fur leader from South Darfur, rebel area of North Darfur (location withheld), March 2007.
- 17 Interviews with traditional chieftains and prominent Arabs from Chad, N'Djamena and eastern Chad, January 2008.
- 18 With a father from the Awlad Rashid and a mother from the Misirya, Acheikh is closer to the latter.
- 19 Interviews with JEM leaders and Chadian officials, Paris and N'Djamena, September–October 2006.
- 20 Since then he continued to play an important role in relations between the Chadian regime and the Darfur rebels. Contrary to other Chadian Beri, his position on the Darfur issue seems to reflect more the regime's policy than any solidarity with the Sudanese Beri. In February 2008, just after the last rebel raid on N'Djamena, he became minister of defence.
- 21 After the Abuja Agreement, Mahamat Saleh Arba rallied to Minni Minnawi's SLA—the only rebel faction to have signed the agreement with Khartoum—but all his vehicles were taken by the non-signatory JEM. Interviews with JEM leaders and Chadian officials, Paris and N'Djamena, September–October 2006.
- 22 Interviews with Chadian opposition leaders, Paris, April–August 2004.
- 23 Interview with Acheikh Ibn Omar Saïd, Paris, August 2004.
- 24 Interview with Chadian officials close to President Déby, September–October 2006.
- 25 Confidential report seen by the author.
- 26 Interviews with the leaders of various rebel groups in Darfur, Chad, September–October 2006 and March 2007, and telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, October 2007.
- 27 Interviews with the leaders of various rebel groups in Darfur and Chad, September 2006.
- 28 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel chief, October 2007.
- 29 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel chief, October 2007.
- 30 Interviews with the leaders of various rebel groups in Darfur and Chad, September–October 2006 and March 2007, and telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, October 2007.
- 31 Interviews with Tama leaders, Chad, September–October 2006, and Paris, October 2007. For more information about Shukurtallah, see Human Rights Watch (2004, pp. 45, 47–48), and *Africa Confidential* (2005). Shukurtallah is thought to have been killed fighting in Abu Gamra, in the south of the Sudanese Dar Zaghawa in January 2004. However, many people do not believe that he is dead, and a certain Shukurtallah has again been reported leading a *janjawid* group in the fighting in Jebel Mun at the end of October 2006.
- 32 The Popular Defence Forces, a paramilitary force, were created by the National Islamic Front as soon as it came to power in 1989 in order to bring local militias, particularly the *Mura-hileen* from South Sudan, under the control of the army and the regime. Even before the current conflict in Darfur, the *janjawid* were gradually brought in. See Salih and Harir (1994) and Salmon (2007).
- 33 Confidential report seen by the author.
- 34 Interviews with Tama leaders, Chad, September–October 2006, and Paris, October 2007.
- 35 This is a nickname coming from Jineid, son of Abdallah Al-Juhayni and mythic common ancestor of almost all Chadian and Darfur Arabs, known as the 'Juhayna Arabs'.
- 36 Originally from Salamat, this group also lives in Darfur where it is known by the name of one of its branches, the Ta'aisha.
- 37 Some SLA leaders and rival Chadian rebel leaders say that Al-Jineidi himself has been leading these attacks. Interviews with SLA leaders and Chadian rebel leaders, locations withheld, September–October 2006 and October–November 2007.



- 38 Interviews with FUC prisoners by the Chadian police, 15–16 April 2006. File consulted by the author.
- 39 These weapons were exhibited by the regime after the battle.
- 40 Interviews with FUC prisoners by the Chadian police, 15–16 April 2006. File consulted by the author.
- 41 Interviews with FUC prisoners by the Chadian police, 15–16 April 2006. File consulted by the author.
- 42 Interview with a source close to Idriss Déby, N'Djamena, September 2006.
- 43 Interview with a JEM leader, N'Djamena, September 2006.
- 44 Interviews with JEM leaders, N'Djamena, September–October 2006.
- 45 Abdallah Abbakar Bashar, a Sudanese Zaghawa Wogi and a former soldier of the Chadian Army, was the first chief of staff of the SLA until his death in December 2004. See Tanner and Tubiana (2007).
- 46 Interview with a rebel leader from the G19 who witnessed this payment, rebel area of North Darfur, March 2007.
- 47 Interview with a rebel leader from the G19, rebel area of North Darfur, March 2007. See also Tanner and Tubiana (2007), p. 42.
- 48 See Small Arms Survey (2006).
- 49 Interview with a FPRN member, location withheld, 2007.
- 50 The untilted Dajo–JEM agreement, a copy of which was viewed by the author.
- 51 Interview with Dajo militias, including participants to the training, and JEM leaders, N'Djaména, Abéché, and Dar Sila, March 2007 and January 2008. The author viewed the videos.
- 52 Written request from the Dajo to the government, a copy of which was viewed by the author.
- 53 Interviews with Dajo traditional leaders and militia, and with JEM and SLA leaders, N'Djamena, Abéché, and Dar Sila, September–October 2006, March 2007, and January 2008.
- 54 Interview with Sultan Saïd Brahim, N'Djamena, September 2006.
- 55 Author's observations and interviews, Bahay and Kariyari, October 2006.
- 56 Interview with a soldier taken prisoner at the battle of Kariyari, rebel zone of North Darfur, March 2007.
- 57 Interviews with Chadian IDPs and JEM rebels, Dar Sila (locations withheld), October 2006.
- 58 Telephone conversation with a leader of the RFC, October 2007.
- 59 Telephone conversations with a leader of the RFC, October 2007 and March 2008.
- 60 Telephone interview with a RFC leader, March 2008.
- 61 Interviews with Adoum Yacoub (location withheld), November 2007, and with Masalit SLA combatants, eastern Chad (locations withheld), January 2008.
- 62 Interview with a source close to the Chadian government, N'Djamena, March 2007.
- 63 Interviews with Tama, Beri, and Goran civilians, N'Djamena and eastern Chad, September–October 2006 and March 2007.
- 64 Phone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, February 2008.
- 65 Numerous interviews in Dar Sila, January 2007.
- 66 See for example Idriss Déby's speech in Goz Beïda, 7 January 2007. Available at <<http://www.presidencedutchad.org/president/Discours/allocutionPRgoz.htm>>.
- 67 Interviews with Chadian Arab politicians, N'Djamena and eastern Chad, January 2008.
- 68 Interviews with Chadian Arab traditional leaders, Dar Sila, January 2008.
- 69 Interviews with Hassan Saleh Al-Gaddam 'Al-Jineidi', N'Djamena, January 2008.
- 70 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel chief, October 2007.
- 71 Since the start of the conflict in Darfur both the SLA and the JEM have tried to settle in eastern Darfur, where the Abu Jabra oilfield is situated, and to take the war to Kordofan. This strategy, aimed at bringing the war closer to Khartoum to threaten the government and influence public opinion among the northern Sudanese—who are little concerned by the conflict in Darfur—has been revived several times. Consequently, at the beginning of October 2007, SLA–Unity and JEM combatants were suspected of having attacked an African Union base at Haskanita, killing ten Nigerian peacekeepers. See Tanner and Tubiana (2007).
- 72 Interviews and telephone interviews with humanitarian NGOs present in eastern Chad, Paris, December 2007, and Chad, January 2008.
- 73 Specifically the faction of the JEM's historical leader Khalil Ibrahim. The recent splinter faction of Bahar Idris Abu Garda (called JEM–Collective Leadership), his former vice-president and general secretary, was at this time based in North Darfur on SLA–Unity territory. Interviews with JEM leaders and representatives, Chad (locations withheld), January 2008.
- 74 Interviews with JEM representatives and Chadian officials, Chad (locations withheld), January 2008.
- 75 According to one important Chadian official, they received 600 vehicles altogether. Interviews with Chadian officials, N'Djamena, January 2008.
- 76 Interviews with JEM representatives, Chad (locations withheld), January 2008, and telephone interviews with a Chadian rebel leader and with humanitarian organizations present in West Darfur and eastern Chad, February 2008.
- 77 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, 1 February 2008.
- 78 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, March 2008.
- 79 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, March 2008.
- 80 Interviews with Dajo traditional leaders and militia members, Dar Sila, October 2006 and January 2008.
- 81 Interviews with Dajo traditional leaders and militia members and with Darfur rebels, N'Djamena and eastern Chad, October 2006, March 2007, and January 2008. See also Amnesty International (2006), p. 2, and IRIN (2007).
- 82 Interviews with Dajo leaders and JEM leaders, N'Djamena and eastern Chad, September–October 2006, March 2007, and January 2008.
- 83 Interviews with Dajo combatants and civilians, including survivors from Tiero and Marena, and Arab leaders from Dar Sila, January 2008.
- 84 Interviews with Dajo combatants and civilians and with Arab leaders from Dar Sila, January 2008.
- 85 Telephone conversation with a EUFOR official, February 2008.
- 86 CNT, RFC, UFDD, and UFDD–Fondamentale (2007). The FSR did the same in a separate communiqué.
- 87 An independent evaluation published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has concluded that EUFOR is undersized for the scope of its mission, and that the force should 'range between 5,000–12,500 troops, but more likely closer to the latter than the former' (Seibert, 2007, p. 32).
- 88 See Bernard and Zecchini (2007).
- 89 Interview with a British diplomat, November 2007.
- 90 In late July 2007, France (in the guise of Sarkozy's then-wife, Cecilia) was involved in negotiations that led to the release of the five medics and a Palestinian doctor accused of infecting Libyan children with HIV. Libya emerged with a deal allowing them to obtain military vehicles, ships, air defence, and space systems (Samuel, 2007).

- 91 Interview with a EUFOR official, N'Djamena, January 2008.
- 92 In which five Bulgarian nurses and one Palestinian-born physician were charged with intentionally infecting children in a Libyan hospital with HIV. Found guilty and condemned to death, the EU and French president Nicolas Sarkozy negotiated for their release. Reportedly, Libya obtained arms as well as nuclear reactor technology as part of the deal to release the health workers (BBC, 2007).
- 93 Déby in fact took power by force in 1990. The hopes of democratic change he brought with him materialized briefly through the establishing of a multi-party system, together with the outward appearance of a civil society and free press. But it was soon clear that real political engagement was impossible. The legitimacy of three elections that confirmed Déby as president—in 1996, 2001, and 2006—were all contested, and to run for the last one he had to modify the constitution, which until then forbade a president from holding power for more than two terms.
- 94 See Tanner and Tubiana (2007).
- 95 Telephone interview with a Chadian rebel leader, March 2008.
- 96 Interview with Adoum Yacoub, location withheld, November 2007.

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