



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



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CHAD/CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Expected Council Action

Council members seem ready to adopt a draft resolution to establish a UN operation in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) and to authorise an EU military operation to provide security for civilians at risk and UN personnel. At press time, the draft was subject to final review in capitals. Adoption next week, perhaps during, or in conjunction with, the summit-level Council meeting on Africa on 25 September seems likely.

Important questions on funding remain, as well as other issues pertaining to the mission's longer-term viability.

Key Recent Developments

The Secretary-General visited Chad in early September as part of his wider efforts to advance peacekeeping plans in the region and the political process in Darfur. During the trip, a joint communiqué with the Chadian government was signed, in which N'Djamena expressed its readiness to consolidate the domestic political dialogue and to coordinate with Sudan on normalisation of regional relations. The UN reaffirmed its readiness to support existing dialogue efforts in Chad, assist in the normalisation of regional relations and in improving the security and humanitarian situation at the border.

In Libya, the Secretary-General reportedly noted Tripoli's formal support for the proposed deployments.

In a letter dated 11 September, Chad formally confirmed its consent to the proposed deployments by the UN and the EU. The letter further confirmed Chad's intention to form a police component in line with the planned peacekeeping presence and declared its readiness to facilitate the EU and UN deployments. Chad also agreed to a preliminary assessment after six months, "in order to prepare for the transfer of the tasks discharged by the European Union operation to other contingents, within the framework of the United Nations and with the consent of Chad, after a further six months, should such assessment establish the need to do so." The CAR government sent a similar letter on 18 September.

Recent media reports noted threats from Chadian rebel groups that if the proposed EU force—and its French contingents in particular—were perceived to be taking sides they would be attacked. The February 2007 Secretary-General's report had already cautioned that "eastern Chad is not a conventional peacekeeping environment" and that deployment would "carry distinct and serious risks [including] the possibility that armed groups may view a United Nations force as interfering with their military agenda and decide to attack it". The clear inference then was that, if the Council were to respond to the humanitarian imperative in Chad, rebel recognition of the mission's impartial nature would be an important issue. (This development no doubt reflects the fact that the existing political dialogue process in Chad currently excludes the rebel groups and is limited to the government and the political opposition.)

The situation in the CAR continues to be dire, with continuing reports of abuse against civilians perpetrated by government forces and armed rebel groups. Evidence seems to be mounting that the conflict in the CAR—like in Chad—is largely domestic in origin and not only associated with spill over from Darfur. In the CAR this is particularly the case in the northwest. A recent report by Human Rights Watch suggests that scant attention

“has been paid to the actual dynamics of conflict, which are largely home grown. The main rebel protagonists are Central Africans with local grievances...the degree of linkage with the situation in Darfur has been exaggerated.”

In late August, media reports suggested that the CAR government was willing to follow up on plans to hold an all-inclusive national dialogue conference with UN support. It seems that this could be formally launched by the end of the year.

In a letter dated 17 September, the EU reportedly indicated its readiness to proceed with the proposed deployments in Chad and the CAR. The letter came after the Council of the European Union adopted a “crisis management concept” prepared by EU military planners, which contained the major aspects of the force’s structure and functions.

The EU letter also asks the Council to adopt a resolution authorising the EU force, indicating this would be “indispensable” for finalising the preparations for the EU deployments (which would include, following the resolution, a formal authorisation by the EU and by the national parliaments of contributing countries). The letter also requests a legal basis for the deployments, which seems to infer an authorisation under Chapter VII. (This carefully phrased request may be related to the widespread public concern in Europe about the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the absence of a prior Security Council resolution for that action. In this regard, domestic parliamentary concerns and the risk of erosion of public support for the deployments seem also to be a factor.)

At press time, it seemed that the EU deployments would involve between 3,000 and 4,000 troops with operational headquarters in Paris. France would lead the operation and provide most of the troops with other possible contributions still under discussion at press time, possibly including the Nordic Battle Group. A key concern at this point relates to the existence of other competing peacekeeping commitments for European troops, including Afghanistan and Darfur. (France already has significant military assets and personnel deployed in bilateral assistance to the governments of Chad and the CAR.)

The Draft Resolution

France circulated a draft resolution on 14 September which would authorise the proposed EU and UN deployments. The draft reportedly envisages authorising for one year the UN component, or UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). The EU component would be authorised for one year after its initial operating capability is declared by the EU in consultation with the Secretary-General.

The UN operation, to be called MINURCAT, would comprise up to 300 police and fifty military liaison officers plus civilian personnel. Its mandate would include:

- selecting, training, advising and supporting elements of the Chadian police responsible for protection in camps and associated areas and for securing humanitarian assistance (Chadian units would remain under the overall authority of the Chadian government);
- liaison with Chadian security forces to contribute to improvements in the security situation;
- liaison with the Chadian government and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in support of existing efforts to relocate camps (provision of logistical assistance to UNHCR in that regard was included in a later version of the draft);
- liaison with Sudan, the AU, the AU Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the UN-AU hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the UN Peacebuilding Office in the CAR (BONUCA), the Multinational Force of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (FOMUC) and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD, comprising 24 states including Chad, Sudan, CAR, Egypt, Eritrea and Libya) to exchange information on regional threats to humanitarian activities;
- contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights and international humanitarian law, recommending action to the competent authorities and providing training in international human rights standards; and
- assisting Chad and the CAR in the promotion of the rule of law.

The draft envisages that the EU military elements would be under Chapter VII of the Charter and authorised to support MINURCAT and the Chadian police units. It would be authorised to take all necessary measures,

within its capabilities and its area of operation to:

- contribute to protecting civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons;
- facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel by helping to improve security in the area of operations;
- contribute to protecting UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and ensure the security and freedom of movement of its staff and UN and associated personnel; and
- after 12 months, achieve an orderly disengagement, including fulfilment of its mandate and within the limits of its residual capacity.

The draft invites the EU to take part in MINURCAT's liaison activities. It seems that this provision previously included an invitation to take part in the human rights monitoring and reporting, which now has been seemingly dropped.

Reportedly it also notes that an assessment would be conducted six months after the mission is declared operational. It also encourages Chadian and CAR authorities to pursue national dialogue efforts with respect for existing constitutional frameworks.

Under Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno briefed the Council on 19 September on major aspects of the proposed deployments, including funding issues. If the resolution is approved, the UN component would be funded through assessed UN contributions.

But it seems that important questions have been raised on the possibility of any UN resources being used to fund the Chad national police contingent. Perhaps in response, the latest version of the French draft requests the Secretary-General to mobilise member states and institutional donors to provide logistical and financial support for the Chadian police.

Options

Options available to the Council include:

- encouraging the appointment of a Secretary-General's special envoy to Chad, who, in addition to playing a wider role, would be able to liaise with armed rebel groups and help promote the desired neutral perception of the international personnel;
- signalling support for a larger role for BONUCA in support of existing domestic dialogue efforts in the CAR, as well as the need for the prompt establishment of the national reconciliation conference;
- requesting a report of the Secretary-General on wider political reconciliation issues; and
- signal a willingness to begin addressing the insecurity in northwestern CAR by encouraging an increase in FOMUC.

Key Issues

The immediate issue for the Council is proceeding with authorising the proposed EU and UN deployments.

But the evidence that the situations in Chad and the CAR have major internal dynamics in their own right raises a number of issues:

- whether to become involved in political reconciliation in those countries, and how best to do so;
- the viability and risks involved in the proposed deployments, especially given the potential for being seen as taking sides, in the absence of a political reconciliation track; and
- the absence of a Council response to the growing insecurity in northwestern CAR.

Council Dynamics

There appears to be strong agreement within the Council on the major aspects of the French draft. During discussions so far, it seems that there has been concern from the US over funding for MINURCAT, especially if it would entail the use of the UN budget to fund national police.

Others, such as China, seemingly were interested in underlining the need for consent and consultation with the governments of Chad and the CAR.

The question of whether and how to include references to Sudan and the situation in the region were also problematic. China, Qatar, Russia and Indonesia expressed cautiousness towards direct references to Sudan in the draft.

Major concerns among European members about an exit strategy for EU forces appear to have been resolved with agreement that those forces would disengage after twelve months. African members were concerned about the need for clarity on follow-up arrangements.

At time of writing it seemed that there were no major differences of view regarding the basic issues of the proposed deployments.

Some members had previously expressed concern about the absence of a concrete political process in Chad and the CAR and associated risks for the proposed presence. But most are also sympathetic to the humanitarian imperative underlying the mission and to the months of efforts made by the UN and the EU—especially France—to reach agreement on the deployments, particularly from Chad and on balance seem therefore to prefer to act quickly on the resolution. Chad’s reluctance about involvement in the domestic political dimension plays a role, and there is a sense in the Council that it is better not to press Chad openly at this stage on the need to entertain concrete reconciliation efforts with the armed rebel groups.

UN Documents

Selected Security Council Resolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/RES/1706 (31 August 2006) requested recommendations on a multidimensional UN presence in Chad and the CAR.
Selected Presidential Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/PRST/2007/30 (27 August 2007) expressed readiness to authorise deployments.
Selected Secretary-General’s Reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/2007/488 (10 August 2007) contained revised recommendations for peacekeeping in Chad and the CAR, including the EU component. • S/2007/376 (22 June 2007) was the latest CAR report.
Selected Letter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S/2007/540 (12 September 2007) and 551 (18 September 2007) were the recent Chadian and CAR letters.

Other Relevant Facts

CAR: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
François Lonseny Fall (Guinea)
BONUCA: Size
Strength as of 31 July 2007: 25 international civilians; five military advisers; six police; 53 local civilians; three UN volunteers
BONUCA: Duration
15 February 2000 to present; mandate expires 31 December 2007
FOMUC: Size and Composition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current strength: 380 troops • Contributors: Gabon, Republic of Congo and Chad
FOMUC: Duration
October 2002 to present; mandate expires 31 December 2007

Useful Additional Sources

Human Rights Watch, *CAR: State of Anarchy: Rebellion and Abuses against Civilians*, September 2007, available at <http://hrw.org/reports/2007/car0907/>