DIALOGUES

SECURITAIRES DANS L'ESPACE SAHELO - SAHARIEN

SECURITY CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IN THE SAHELO-SAHARAN REGION

THE CHAD PERSPECTIVE

by Ahmat Mahamat HASSAN

CONTENT

c

FOREWORD

The recent Malian and Libyan crises have exacerbated the multidimensional insecurity (at personal, economic, political, social, environmental, healthcare, etc. levels) that affects the populations living the Sahelo-Saharan region, and have showcased not only the weakness of the States but also the necessity for regional cooperation, especially between the Maghreb and West Africa. Together, they may face up to similar challenges.

The project called "Dialogues about Security in the Sahelo-Saharan Region" stems from this observation. It was initiated by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Office in Mali, in partnership with its counterparts in Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia, in order to underscore the strong interdependences that exist between North and West Africa regarding security matters, and to promote national and sub-regional dialogues about the security challenges and issues that prevail within the States and across borders.

It aims at assessing the overall situation in the region, in light of the concept of human security. This is why country-based studies were conducted in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad and Tunisia. Each country-based study went through a validation process led by a committee of human security specialists from the country in question. Also, each country-based study was discussed by experts during a workshop that was organized for the purpose of not only identifying shared issues, but also agreeing on the top political actions that must be carried out in the Sahelo-Maghrebian region.

These country-based studies represent the first phase of an on-going multiyear project. They are also the intellectual basis on which some upcoming activities will be based, such as a regional conference that will focus on the priority issues that the experts have defined during their respective workshops.

The outcomes of the project will be used by all the key players involved in the various aspects of human security across the region. They will also be important sources of information and guidelines for the policy-makers and the members of the civil society, as well as for national and foreign researchers and university staff members.

Dakar, March 2017

Holger Grimm   Rémy Arsène Dioussé
Director Peace and Security Competence Centre Sub-Saharan Africa   Chargé de programmes

INTRODUCTION

Being a Central African country, Chad is located in the heart of the African continent. Its surface area is 1,284,000 km². The average density is the number of inhabitants per km².

It is a landlocked country. N'Djaména its capital city is 1,500 km far from the port of Douala in neighboring Cameroon, 3,000 km from the port of Pointe-Noire in Congo and 2,500 km from Port Harcourt in Nigeria. It is located between the Arab world (Libya in the north and Sudan in the east), and Black Africa (Niger and Nigeria in the west; Cameroon and the CAR and in the south). It is a country of contrast due to its climate and its landscape. A desert covers the entire northern part of the country (almost half of the territory) and a Sahelo-Sudanian zone covers the central and the southern parts. But the desert is gaining ground every year.

Chad is populated by nomadic herders and Sahelian farmers who live in the north and part of the center, practicing the Muslim religion, whose main activities include livestock, trade and agriculture to a lesser extent. The south of the country is inhabited by populations of Nilotic origin. Animism and Christianity are the most practiced religions in this region. Agriculture is particularly developed in this area which constitutes the granary and the source of the wealth of the country because of the farming of food crops and cotton which used to generate foreign exchange revenues to the State. Cotton farming was also the main source of livelihoods for more than two million Chadians. Even if cotton farming is becoming less and less profitable, the economic significance of the southern region of Chad is still marked by the exploitation of oil that has been underway for some years and which has enabled the country to achieve significant social and economic progress. But for the past few years, more and more people from the northern and the central parts have been fleeing the desert and soil aridity, thus migrating to the southern part in search of pasture land and more fertile lands for food crops.

For the time being, Chad remains one of the poorest countries on the planet. The vast majority of the population lives on less than a dollar a day. According to the latest population census carried out in 2009, Chad has more than 11 million inhabitants. People's life largely depends on the Nature and especially the level of rainfall because rainfall is rare in this part of Africa (rainfall is 50 to 200 mm per year). We notice a difference between the northern and southern Chadians due to their lifestyles, culture, religion and social and traditional organization, as evidenced by the diversity of their social and traditional organizations.

As a former territory conquered by France after wars and allegiance agreements concluded with the traditional chieftains, the current territory of Chad became a military territory of the countries and protectorates of Chad in 1900, then a colony in 1920. On 28 November 1958, the colony was proclaimed a Republic with portions of autonomy based on a social contract meant for regulating the common life of the Chadian people.

The new Republic of Chad proclaimed on 28 November 1958 adopted its own Constitution on 31 March 1959. It was the first Constitution of Chad adopted by legislative Act 71 by its Constituent Legislative Assembly. It was written in the preamble to the First Constitution which was adopted on 31 March 1959 by the Constituent Assembly that: "*by an act of free determination, the Chadian people constituted themselves as a Republic[1]*". The first Article of the Constitution provides as follows: "*Chad constituted itself as one and indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic[2].*" On 11 August 1960, Chad became an independent and sovereign State governed by a presidential political system. Democracy was chosen as a system of government. But only two years after independence, the democratic life animated by political parties built in the image of what was happening in the metropolis at that time had been prematurely extinguished by the new authorities of independent Chad. The first social contract was therefore broken. Indeed, Francois TOMBALBAYE, the first Chadian President who was a Christian form the southern part of the country, had the Constitution revised in 1962. This new Constitution prohibited the multiparty system and all forms of democratic expression. The Muslim elites from the North who felt they were excluded from public affairs revolted and entered into rebellion. Since then, the country is in turbulence.

The initial trend which should lead all Chadians to Republican citizenship in which reference to the law of the State should be the only benchmark has disappeared from the lives of the Chadians, thus making way for the ethnic and community

---

[1]Recueil des constitutions et textes à valeur constitutionnelle de la République du Tchad (1958-2005), Préambule de la Constitution de 1959.

[2]Recueil des constitutions et textes à valeur constitutionnelle de la République du Tchad (1958-2005), Art.1 de la Constitution de mars 1959.

reference. Identitarian closure is in the process of dominating public life. The exercise of power has enabled some ethnic groups to impose the values of their tribes and the traditions that govern them in the management of the State and in their relations with others. The social contract is broken and there is accentuated lack of well-being. The situation in Chad has mobilized everyone - political actors, civil society, the International Community, citizens, the youth, women, and the elderly. Everyone agrees that the country is not running smoothly. Since independence, the country has not been able to achieve lasting stability. Issues such as national unity, the rule of law, development, poverty, insecurity, injustice, violence, national army, administration and state authority have been accentuated and have become almost insoluble. Meetings were held with the view of finding solutions. All solutions pathways were explored but no lasting solution was actually found to save the country permanently from the specter of violence and instability. Political and military conflicts[3] in Chad, presented as opposing the populations of the North to those of the South, have turned into inter-tribal and inter-ethnic clashes for the control of State power. Some groups have understood and adopted the strategy based on the idea that the monopoly of violence and control of weapons are effective means of accessing positions of power. Unfortunately, weapons are used to settle conflicts related to access to natural resources such as pasture and arable lands. Possessing a weapon is the surest way to ensure one's protection in a country where the Government has shown its security deficiencies. During the difficult moments experienced by the country, political figures like the former French President Giscard have even referred to Chad as a State of nothingness or a totally failed State. Some fatalists even described this situation as a divine curse. Others have highlighted the cultural ambivalence between the north and the south, the incompatibility of the invading Arab-Muslim culture with other cultures and religions. Diagnosing the situation, some have mentioned that the solutions shall be a new form of State: Centralization, Federalism[4], Decentralization, and a new administrative division. The options on new administrative division and decentralization have been selected, but this is still not the right solution! Chadians still find it difficult to live together in a peaceful environment.

Resulting from the resolutions of the National Sovereign Conference, the Constitution of the Republic of Chad, adopted in 1996 and revised in 2005, provides in its preamble as follows: "*The various regimes that have succeeded each other have created and fostered regionalism, tribalism, nepotism, social inequalities, violations of human rights and fundamental, individual and collective freedoms, which resulted in war, political violence, hatred, intolerance and mistrust between the different communities that make up the Chadian Nation[5]"*.

Identitarian closure has thus become a new political issue, and at the same time, we have seen the rather marked emergence of tribal identities. This strong return to the community spirit with its corollary of contempt between ethnic groups seems to have been at the origin of the ideas of separation expressed by a part of the Chadians, especially those from the South. People feel like they are in the colonial era with separate statutes during which there were the natives and the French citizens; a class society; princes and subjects.

But time has shown us that there isn't any single North that shares the same values or a single South. Peaceful coexistence and Chadian nationality almost have no meaning and content. When individuals express themselves, they refer only to identity benchmarks whose pillars are the chiefs of races, chiefs of cantons, chiefs of tribes, and heads of families.

The Republic of Chad is characterized by authoritarianism, political instability, power-related conflicts by armed groups, attempts of military coups, inter-family conflicts, and community conflicts over access to natural resources. Crises in this country between the Arab world and sub-Saharan Africa raise the worrying issue of security. However, it should be pointed out that the security risks in Chad cannot only be apprehended under the prism of internal crisis factors. The global security context of the Sahel since the fall of the regime of Mouammar Al Khadafi, the Libyan leader, changed the internal security situation in all the countries of the area. From Libya to Mauritania, through Algeria, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and even to the Central African Republic, the States in the Sahelo-Saharan space have been suffering from the consequences of the Libyan chaos since 2011: terrorism, trafficking of arms, drugs, human beings, etc.

From a purely internal perspective, the most recurrent conflicts in Chad which constitute potential risks of insecurity to be prevented derive from issues including:

-   Accession and devolution of political power (military coups and rebellions or rigged elections);

-   Access to natural resources causing conflicts between herders and farmers, or between farmers themselves;

---

[3]For a better understanding of these conflicts read Robert Buijtenhuijs « Le Frolinat et les guerres civiles du Tchad 1977-1984 », Edition Karthala or Gali Gothé Gata « Les politico-militaires à l'assaut de la capitale », Editions du centre ALMOUNA de N'Djamena/TCHAD 2008, Book.in imprimerie du Tchad (IDT).
[4]Cf. Feckoua L. L., Tchad, la solution fédérale: une dynamique de paix et une stratégie de développement par la gestion partagée, Paris, Présence africaine, 1996.
[5]Préambule de la Constitution du Tchad version 1996, Journal officiel numéro spécial Avril 1996.

- Traditional chiefdoms (power accession struggle);

- Religious extremism against a backdrop of identity crises;

- Poverty and misery associated with social injustice, horizontal inequalities, and mass unemployment among the youth;

- The incursion of the former Boko Haram Islamists, the threat of desertification, proximity with areas of instability such as Libya and Sudan.

Before discussing the first point of this study, it is worth mentioning the methodological approach used. It should be noted that in Chad, discourse on security is a taboo raising suspicions and leading to mistrust. Indeed, due to the social and political upheavals experienced by this country (especially under the dictatorship of Hissein Habré), even simple research carried out for scientific purposes is mistakenly viewed as a police investigation, particularly for the intelligence services. While such a study would require a qualitative and quantitative approach in terms of data collection, we have selected an analytical approach based on general literature on Chad, information and a review of some press articles. Here again, the same methodological constraints remain, as we know that for good or bad reasons, journalists struggle to have access to official sources of information. But it must be noted that it is the very constraints of such a context that imposed an analysis which questions, examines and proposes. Based on these few sources (including some field surveys and interviews), this study identifies security risks and analyzes the characteristics of power and governance characterized by violence and political instability. The majority of the statements are reported on condition of anonymity, mainly for security reasons because of their sensitivity.

I. WEAK GOVERNANCE AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR TO BE MONITORED IN CHAD

For more than three decades, Chad has experienced a situation of armed conflict, instability and crises related to the conquest and exercise of State power. Since independence, power has been identified with ethnic groups and most often it is attributed to the ethnic group of the person in power. The country is being held hostage by the following dual coalition: on the one hand, the leaders who have privatized the State and are hanging on to it through corruption and political violence; on the other hand, the members of the ethnic group of the person in power who feel they possess a portion of that power, and try to exercise it in the environment in which they evolve considering themselves more important than the other citizens. The latter, feeling excluded and deprived, resent this situation, hoping for political change. Each time, violence is used for change. Democratic and peaceful alternation never took place in this country.

New non-state actors such as Islamists have emerged and are gradually taking root due to people's misery and poverty.

The country is experiencing a population expansion against a background of high unemployment among young graduates (45-50%). Besides, there are practices of all kinds such as poaching and plundering of natural resources, trafficking of human beings, weapons, drugs, etc.

Internally, under the pretext of preserving stability and security, the natural resources of the country are used to buy weapons and equip the army[6]. But in reality, faced with numerous challenges, the ruling party which is often deprived of legitimacy uses part of the resources to corrupt certain political circles of the former colonizing power, but also to reward the various clans in power. The means are also used to satisfy partisans and the allies, and to corrupt some protesters from the internal political groups, and a certain category of civil society organizations.

In a schematic way, we could summarize the situation as follows: the Head of State manages power, his family entourage and the political toadies of the ruling party appropriate the State. The country, on the other hand, is left to economic predators and the people who are abandoned to themselves fall into fatalism. Without going so far as to predicting curse, the factors of contamination seem to be mutually reinforcing, thus leading the country into a situation of deflagration and generalized insecurity.

Beyond Chad, the Central African sub-region, ravaged by internal wars with colonial war undertones, pays the heaviest tributes due to the lack of leadership and bad governance. From Angola to Chad through the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo Brazzaville and the Central African Republic, the list of conflicts is long and the misery of the populations is frightening. Bad leaders and bad policies lead states to situations of crisis and conflict. The degradation of the internal security of States stems from a correlation of several historical factors that could be attributed to the governance crisis.

Today, States are facing internal crises and not interstate crises. Political instability, on the other hand, is a consequence of a double problem, namely the weakness of the state and the absence of alternation. Yet, it is clear to all stakeholders and observers that the settlement of security issues is a prerequisite for the development of the continent in general and the sub-region of Central Africa in particular. The issue of insecurity in Africa sounds like a wake-up call. To avoid the risk of permanent chaos, States shall not continue to accept violence as the means of settling internal conflicts. They must be aware of the seriousness of the situation that determines their survival and their powers.

In 2016, Chad organized elections that were the consultations of all hopes but also and especially of all the risks. President IDRISS DEBY ITNO was re-elected but against a backdrop of controversy and under questionable conditions where freedom of voting and transparency in electoral operations were decried. Democracy and the legitimacy of the power are weakened. Once again, the security aspect and ethnic factor were decisive for the preservation of power. Democratic alternation did not happen.

A. A Neo-patrimonial Power and Potential Risks of Revolt

Unlike some African countries, Chad has not yet experienced a peaceful political alternation to power since independence in 1960.

Since 1990, the multiparty system has been re-established in the country. But there has never been a democratic alternation. The same president has retained power for 26 years. Besides, the neo-patrimonial management mode with which he exercises power creates an enabling environment for the clan to which he belongs to have great influence on power

---

[6]In an article he wrote on "Les voies et les moyens de la lutte antiterrorist" (in France) [the ways and means to fight against terrorism], Louis Gautier analyzes the dilemma as follows: "In the present period, nobody can dispute the appropriateness of investments and the budgetary priority for security. However, if security has no price, it has a cost." P.46.

management. Thus, the power center is found elsewhere, i.e. in the consultations of armed clans and the supporting ethnic groups who are the true power holders. Violence and the control of weapons seem to have become the appropriate ways of conserving power in Chad. All the regimes that have succeeded one another in Chad have used this method of power patrimonialization. Indeed, the ruling party does not have a great influence on the way of governing. It is rather an instrument of propaganda and not an instrument of development of public policies. The president controls everything and all party leaders are appointed by him. The successive leaders of the party are in a kind of desired precariousness. They must not have significant longevity or influence. The viciousness of the conquering ethnic groups that control the actual power and public resources continues to hold the people hostage. Election as a legal way of devolution of power is still problematic. Often subject to manipulation and controversy, voting has never been considered as a "political ritual" among many others of the complex democratic process. The Constitution, the laws and institutions seem to be decorations to legitimize and maintain a power conquered by arms. The good resolutions taken at the 1993 National Sovereign Conference (NSC) or at the reconciliation meetings do not seem to have solved the issue of peace and lasting stability in Chad. This situation may ultimately lead to the destruction of the national community and the unity of the country. Everyone experiences and seems to understand the situation, including the president of the Republic, who publicly mentioned the issue in his speech given on the occasion of the celebration of democracy and freedom in December 2010 in Ati, central part of the country. Among the solutions announced, he mentioned the rebirth of a "new Chad" based on new values. *"Rebirth is nothing more than better living together"*, he said. In this formula, the Head of State seems to once again call on the Chadians to reconstruct a new social contract. Paradoxically, this is the social contract whose milestones were laid in 1993 by the NSC[7] but whose essential and important provisions were broken in 2005 by the constitutional amendment carried out then. Henceforth, one can easily measure the skepticism of citizens who believe less in speech, but more in actions because there is accentuated injustice.

The first aspect is that power is primarily personal and based on a deliberately unstructured, unstable and fund-consuming administration. Positions are created at will to satisfy supporters and other toadies. The regime has nothing to do with the principle of conflict of interest between private affairs of the supporters of the people in power and those of the State. It is a clannish and clientelistic power that has monopolized all the resources of the country. Corruption has become structural, thus causing a negative ripple effect on the economy and social structure. The privatization of State corporations is only a sell-off of the country's patrimony for the benefit of members of the clan and their accomplices.

The current authorities seem to lack a viable economic and political vision. Rational management is ignored by the rulers; unemployment is growing year after year due to a lack of employment policy, especially for young people. This situation aggravates poverty and constitutes a time bomb for the country. Besides, resources generated from oil production since 2003 which are often misallocated and largely misappropriated are not allocated to priority sectors. In terms of public policies, infrastructure and the military are the sectors that have absorbed most of the oil resources. But all of these funds have been squandered, while the increase in the barrel price from 2008 to 2014 would normally allow Chad to have good economic health, or at least serve as a reserve for "leaner" periods. This mismanagement has resulted in serious social consequences. On the one hand, the expectations of the populations remain vainly unanswered and their social rights are often flouted. On the other hand, rising inflation increases the cost of living, while social conflicts remain unresolved. In short, the situation is very disastrous with regard to inequalities. Moreover, Chadians have no information on the exploitation of gold, cement and uranium in Pala and Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET). Revenues from other sectors such as livestock, agriculture, customs, and taxes are not known, or monopolized by members of the ruling clan. In fact, the country's financial crisis cannot be attributed solely to the fall in oil prices. On the basis of all the above, it can be considered that the crisis is also and above all the consequence of the mismanagement of public resources by the authorities. The anger of the population is further aggravated by issues such as deprivations, injustice, non-payment of salaries, high cost of living, and above all the arrogant wealth of members of the ruling clan who live in opulence and insolence.

Regarding the judicial sector, the fact of sanctioning certain members of the clan who have become troublesome is a maneuver to calm the reaction of the populations. But no trial is organized and the persons concerned totally enjoy their freedom and their ill-gotten assets.

It should also be noted that, under its efforts to mitigate protests, the government practices the policy of balance management by distributing positions of responsibility to the natives of the various regions. Indeed, the appointment of high executive officials from other ethnic groups to certain positions of lesser influence has always been practiced by the authorities. It is a formal and superficial association technique to satisfy the other ethnic groups but it has no impact on the control of power and resources monopolized by the ruling clan. The country and the population are still "thirsty" for political change. The massive participation of the population in the April 2016 presidential election is mainly due to the hope of change in which they believed, but which did not finally take place.

---

[7]Cf. Robert Buijtenhuijs « La Conférence nationale souveraine du Tchad, un essai d'histoire immédiate », Edition Karthala, 1993.

Thus, it is revealed that the disappointment of the populations has become even greater, and a great malaise has gained the whole country. Aware of the populations' desire to protest, the government has taken all the necessary military measures by deploying significant security forces in certain regions and cities that are hostile to the government in order to prevent possible revolts or demonstrations. Admittedly, the revolt did not take place, but the social malaise continues and a kind of rancor seems to take place among the populations.

B. Limited Opportunities of Change through Election and the Risk of Recourse to Violence

Elections are democratic gathering for the expression of the suffrage of the sovereign people. It is during elections and under the supervision of political parties that the people express their choice for alternation or political continuity. But, as mentioned above, in Chad, voting is far from being regarded as the only mode of accession or preservation of power. Elections are organized only for the consumption of the international community which is aware of the reality but complies with it in order to preserve the interests of certain Western chancelleries. Political parties as organizations of Western origin seem to have difficulty taking root in African political systems, as is the case of other Western imports such as liberal constitutionalism or representative government, or simply the free and thoughtful expression of universal suffrage. New parties were created or taken in hand by politicians who were already known public figures - historical opponents or apparatchiks that have left the ruling party. Many parties were actually created based on the political capital of their leaders. This is still the case with several political parties today. Beyond their formal existence, these parties are very centralized and characterized by personalistic and informal practices that are difficult to grasp. Actions are often poorly coordinated and incoherent. Moreover, parties are rarely analyzed in terms of ideology, programs and political platform. How many of these new political parties really fall within the classical definitions of a political party? The names of these parties are mere labels to designate organizations that are in fact disorganized and personalist factions, hurriedly and inconsistently established around political leaders. This is the case of most Chadian parties which are founded around charismatic men or people who have a capital of sympathy and attachment to the leader. Yet, in a democratic system, political parties are central elements of the electoral game. Political parties are personalized and this personalization suggests a patrimonialization of the organization which becomes a property of the founder. Therefore, the founders' successors think they can possess the party under succession rights.

If there is no alternation at this level, it is difficult to talk about alternation to others. Alternation in the context of Chad and many African countries is perceived as an opportunity to get rid of a political system which is rejected and which has disappointed the people. However, the "forces of hope" constituted by the civil society organizations, the press and political parties seem not to play their full role in this difficult situation faced by the population. Undermined by various difficulties, divisions, leadership crises, corruption, bribery, tribalism, personal ambitions, suspicions, financial and material dependence - the same evils that society is experiencing - these forces of hope no longer seem to be able to provide solutions and credible alternative for the country. The civil society which was very active at the National Sovereign Conference in claiming rights and denouncing abuses even paid a heavy price due to these defects. Today, the civil society is almost reduced to advocating and accompanying a system which is increasingly harmful to the people. Civil society is often divided into two categories between one wing that still supports the authorities and another wing that often adheres to the positions of the opposition. The authorities have no legitimacy. They are incapable of driving a change after 26 years of rule or even unable of improving governance. They control everything including the forces of change and hope of the country. The country is in danger and revolt is predictable.

In addition, there is almost a breakdown and lack of coordination between party leaders and their bases within the country. At present, everyone is struggling to survive. The opposition by denouncing the failings of the authorities humbly recognizes its own weaknesses and internal erosion. Faced with a strategic, skillful and manipulative government with sufficient financial means, the opposition does not seem to have the appropriate strategies or techniques to review its modes of action. During the presidential election of April 2016, the high number of candidates was an opportunity for the outgoing president who got advantage of the situation. The party in power for more than 25 years is quite established across the country and uses clientelism. Believing in the identity vote that could put the outgoing president in a minority, the parties ended up being disillusioned. The general discontent in the country as a result of poor governance and people's poverty has not been capitalized or captured by the opposition in order to put the power in difficulty or at least bring it to more openness toward actual negotiations on the general situation of the country.

Beyond the financial and military resources on which the regime relies to consolidate its power, the regime benefits from the support of the international community on the pretext of the fight against terrorism. Thus, the international community aggravates the fragility of the opposition and breaks all possibility of alternation. Citizens are concerned about what they

are experiencing. But they are not really concerned about the dream of true democracy. But some believe that alternation could be an opportunity to choose a political regime that can improve their lives provided they participate massively in the elections and freely express their choices.

As expected, the 2016 elections went well overall. The 13 candidates were able to campaign without violence or major disruption. But for the first time, Chad has experienced an election under strong social and security tension. The ruling party was seriously afraid of this consultation. Fear was obvious in every circle of the President's community. The force of protests resulted in pushing the government to use violence, intimidation and harassment. The vote was marked by intimidation, harassment of activists and representatives of the opposition parties and, above all, allegations on the disappearance of soldiers accused of voting for opposition candidates. The vote was also marked by identitarian closure. Each candidate seems to have been supported by the voters of their native region. For the very first time, the north-south factor did not really have a significant effect on the elections. This is a significant sign for Chad which has always been presented as a country with opposition between the northern Arab-Muslim culture and the southern Negro-Christian culture.

Civil society leaders who were arrested were released with a suspended sentence. It was as if the authorities, fearing their influence on the voters, preferred to keep them in prison the time to finish the elections. One of the explanations for this detention is their political actions before the elections. Remember that they had multiplied the acts of protest against the candidacy of the outgoing President, even if it was without legal foundation, by calling the population for a "dead city". They had also used citizen whistles, the din of pots, and pacific marches, even if these had been forbidden, etc. The government restricted freedoms and put the country under heavy police pressure: prohibition of demonstrations, prohibition of campaigning through private media, rearmament of the police, encircling the city of N'Djamena by soldiers from the provinces, all kinds of actions that gave the impression that the country was going to sink into troubles or insurrection. The government explained this situation saying they have taken measures to prevent post-election conflicts. In N'Djamena, the government suspended and disrupted telephone calls and the Internet connection. The army was deployed in all parts of the country and especially in the south. This election has led Chad into a sort of democratic setback, thus plunging it into a situation of a police State. The vote was free only in the southern part of the country and in N'Djamena. Everywhere in the north and in the center, people voted under strong pressure and intimidation. Traditional leaders and administrative and military authorities have been widely implicated in favor of the outgoing President who himself, during his first campaign meeting threatened those organizations that launched slogans such as *"Enough"*, or *"Enough is enough"* and *"Iyina[8]"*. After the elections, there was a kind of lull and a lot of speculation about the voting operations. But once again, for the stability and preservation of the unity of the country, the government will provide wound dressings instead of a real healing. In his inaugural speech, the President called for dialogue and national concord. But the crisis is real, and we are witnessing a kind of revolt of the Chadian Diaspora populations. Will the changes achieved by other peoples in other countries inspire the Chadians? Even though Chad does not have a real national army, a real national unity, a high degree of citizenship and solid institutions, the cases of injustice and the degree of cumulative disappointments risk pushing people to revolt.

II. THE USE OF DIPLOMACY TO ADDRESS LEGITIMACY DEFICIT AND PROTECT THE STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY

The Chadian government that is faced with a legitimacy crisis and several political and social challenges uses diplomacy as a solution for the preservation of power. Twenty-six years after his accession to power, the President has actually succeeded in positioning the Republic of Chad as one of the major players in the international community. In recent years, having succeeded in maintaining peace on the national territory, in gaining a quasi uncontested regional leadership and becoming a friend of the great Western powers, Idriss DEBY has recovered "good" reputation. With its involvement in Mali in 2013, Chad has become the leader in the fight against the Nigerian Islamists (former Boko Haram which is today a branch of the Islamic state). The Chadian war effort in Mali and in the fight against the Islamist sect is exceptional. The intervention in Mali, along with France, sent a very positive image of the Chadian forces. Indeed, the international community appealed to Chad as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. But before this, Chad had chaired the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) for several years and played a significant role in the security field. Last January, and for the first time in its history, Chad was given the rotating presidency of the African Union.

As far as the United Nations Security Council is concerned, it should be reminded that since 1965, several African countries have already held a non-permanent membership position in this United Nations council, but this was the first time for Chad to be a member. During its tenure, it convinced its partners of its ability to live up to international, geopolitical and

---

[8] This is a Chadian Arabic term meaning "*Enough is enough*".

geostrategic challenges. Chad has demonstrated its undeniable ability to bring added value to peace, security, stability and international prosperity in the current context of changing international relations and challenges. In its relations with France, it has forged ties of cooperation and friendship but above all partnership relations which are quite different from what happened in the past. Indeed, in most of the former colonies, Heads of state must be able to create a balance between an apparent independence which nourishes patriotic discourse and sustained links forming a guarantee of stability. In international bodies, the President of Chad has opted for the placement of his high executives who are virtually absent at the international level.

The year 2016 started well for the President of Chad. This election for a one-year term as President of the African Union strengthened his growing diplomatic influence. And all this contributed a lot during the presidential election of April 2016. Until January 2013, Chad was not a major player on the African scene. The country was much better known for its internal conflicts than for its ability to open up to external world. But as of January 2013, everything has changed. To cope with a powerful jihadist aggression in northern Mali, Bamako had to appeal to two friendly States - France and Chad. Chad supported the French intervention in Mali in 2013 by sending its troops. Since then, France has chosen the Chadian capital, Ndjamena, to set up the center of its military operation named Barkhane in order to fight jihadists in the Sahel. It is also very active in the fight against the Islamic state in West Africa (former Boko Haram) in the Lake Chad region. The Chadian army, considered as one of the most experienced armies on the continent has carried out numerous offensive actions in neighboring Nigeria in early 2015.

For three years now, the Chadian leader has acquired a new international stature by establishing himself as a key ally in the fight against terrorism. His regime has taken advantage of his diplomacy to fill the gap in internal legitimacy and to maintain him in power despite the many protests and weak governance.

III. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR

Religion has never been a source of conflict in Chad. The vast majority of Chadian citizens practice Islam and Christianity. According to the 1993 census, the religions most practiced in Chad include: Islam (53.9%); Christianity (34.7%); and Animism (7.4%). People without any religion represent 3.1% of the population and the other religions account for 0.9%[9]. Yet, the practice of religions had not resulted in major troubles. Chad had not experienced inter-religious conflicts. The Chadians of the above-mentioned major religions had always lived in tolerance and peaceful coexistence. But politicians are those who caused confessional divisions in their struggle to access and exercise power. Muslims and Christians lived in good cohabitation with mutual respect until the first major political conflict of 1963.

Indeed, after the independence and especially after the amendment of the Constitution of 1962 and the prohibition of the multiparty system, the very small elite of the Arab-Muslim north feeling they were excluded from the management of public affairs decided to revolt. The revolt was bloodily repressed. Then, people started talking about the power of the Southern Christians repressing the Muslims of the North. The young independent state, still immature, was not able to find mechanisms to manage the cultural and religious diversity of the country. It was difficult to control the discontent caused by bad governance. Therefore, the revolt turned into a political and military guerilla. This led to the creation of the *Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad* (Frolinat, the National Liberation Front of Chad) in 1966 in Sudan.

After years of war, a branch of the National Liberation Front of Chad (Frolinat) led by Hissein HABRE signed a political agreement with the *Conseil Supérieur Militaire* (CSM - Supreme Military Council, in English) which had meanwhile overthrown Tombalbaye in 1975. This agreement which was supposed to bring back permanent peace in Chad which had experienced years of war rather enshrined the sharing of power between the Muslim North and the Christian South. The President of the Republic was General MALLOUM, a Christian from the South and the Prime Minister was Hissein HABRE, a Muslim from the North. Ministerial positions were also divided between the people of the north and the people of the south.

From this period onwards, the people who had always lived together had been sensitized on their different and distinctive situation as Muslims on the one hand and Christians on the other. Everyone claimed for their share in the management of the country and power. The justifications provided had worsened the divisions. From then on, Muslims had to understand that they had been victims for years of the Christian authorities from the south who had repressed and marginalized them in the conduct of state affairs and that henceforth their brothers of Frolinat had arrived to do them justice. Christians also had to understand that they are collectively guilty and responsible for the injustice experienced by Muslims because of the power led by their brother. It was alleged that since independence, they have benefited from the favors of the Republic led by their brother. It was time to do justice to the people of the north. Northern Chad was then considered and confirmed as the natural region of Muslims and the south was the area of Christians and Animists as if there were no Christians and Animist

---

[9] **https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tchad#Religions**. Site consulté le 10.2.2017 à 10h 20.

practices in the north and Muslims in the south. Since then, religious identities had to be materialized and visible through the outfits that were made and classified as the outfits of the high executives of the north and those of the high executives of the south. Yet, no one knew where the Muslim north begins and where the limits of the Christian south lie. There are, of course, Christians in the northern part of the country and Muslims in the south. The proportion of Muslims in the south is becoming increasingly significant. Until now, Muslims practice a domesticated Islam dominated by fetishistic and animistic beliefs and customs. This is a kind of Islam mixed with occult practices and the use of magic potions and magic. This Islam has some practices which are not that different from the animist practices in the south. This is a kind of Islam that is close to African practices and that has never been a problem. The Muslims, Animists or Christians of the south often used to appeal to the local *marabouts* (religious teachers) to cure illnesses, to cast out "bad spirits", implore God's favors, or celebrate a marriage. In the past, Christians or other Animists could easily embrace this tolerant Islam. It was easy for the southern Christians living in the north to marry a Muslim girl by embracing this Islam whose practices were not too different from what they knew in their tradition. But the problem is that politicians have instilled an idea that considers Islam as an identity and a property of the people of the north to assert themselves against the south. The idea was that a "good northern citizen" must have an Arab-Muslim culture and a southerner must be naturally a Christian or *Kirdi*[10] according to Muslims. Yet, Chadian Animists and animist practices are often excluded from Islam and Christianity. Proclaimed secularism and freedom of worship were flouted. Politicians largely took advantage of this situation to achieve their purposes. The new mentality anchored among the Chadians prepared the war. Only a few months after the cohabitation in the government resulting from the Khartoum agreements, the war broke out on 12 February 1979 in N'Djaména. People from the South were massacred in the North and people from the North were massacred in the South. Thus, two state entities seemed to be emerging - northern Chad with Arab-Muslim culture and a southern Chad with Christian and Animist culture. This war has completely changed the lives of Chadians. The chances of building genuine national unity had almost disappeared. Religious identification and the push to religiosity provoked by politicians laid the foundations for a new practice of Islam. The practice of Islam in Chad is currently decried by scholars returning from the East with new interpretations of the Holy Quran and the practice of prophet MOHAMED. Sects have emerged and the mosques are differentiated into sects.

In N'Djaména, the neighborhoods that were once mixed are now categorized into neighborhoods of the people of the south and neighborhoods of the people of the north. Religion as identity has become the most decisive criterion in the lives of individuals.

Yet, Muslims continue to go to the southern neighborhoods. The Muslim traders have returned to the towns and villages of the South. The people of the South use to go to the north and young people use to work in the houses of the Muslims. But the evil is already done and mistrust has finally taken place. Extremism has become a reality in the country, thus reducing tolerance that has always prevailed. Generally speaking, extremism refers to the process by which a person adopts radical views that result in violent behavior. Factors that may motivate individuals to resort to violence include actual or perceived grievances such as the deprivation of rights, the supremacy of certain groups, the movements inspired by Al-Qaeda, and the struggle against injustice.

The government is complacent in the management of Islamist tendencies in Chad. The rulers prefer maintaining contradiction in order to take advantage of it. The Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs which is supposed to represent all the Muslims of Chad controls almost nothing. Chadian Muslims are lost among several Islam trends and tendencies. They are dealing with a system of values which weakens them and leads them to isolate themselves from their social environment. The danger is even more devastating for young people who are confronted with contradiction and poverty. The new situation maintains the youth in this universe which excludes any possibility of exchanges with others. It is this process that should be stopped and not just the transgressions it engenders.

Given the government's lack of commitment to the management of the religious factor and its consequences, experts try to balance the international context with what is happening in Chadian society threatened by terrorism and violence. The phenomenon worries the professionals who do not the appropriate means to identify Muslim actors and evaluate what underlies their speeches. Because of a lack of sufficient education on this subject, many people often do not know how to distinguish between the practice of Islam and extremism or radicalism. A new practice of Islam is emerging and attracting more and more youth especially those faced with social difficulties and from the Arab-Muslim culture. Nowadays, we are living in a world of violence, hatred, all against a backdrop of religious extremism that uses young people as actors or victims. The modes of governance which are generally based on injustice and exclusion cause individuals to trigger wars and violence in the name of God.

Interest-based solution approaches aggravate the crises. After suffering several suicide bombings from Boko Haram in N'Djamena and Lake Chad for its commitment to fighting terrorism in Mali and Nigeria, the government responded by taking measures to fight against this extremist movement. These measures are reported by the newspaper named *N'Djaména Hebdo* No. 1604 of 22 to 28 June 2015. Despite the protests of the populations, these measures made it possible

---

[10] Chadian Arabic word for "*heathen*"

to better prevent and control the actions of Boko Haram against Chad. But it must be acknowledged that the country is increasingly contaminated by religious factors that may undermine the good inter-religious coexistence observed up to that point.

IV. THE LAND-RELATED ISSUE AND THE RISK OF GENERALIZED CONFLICT

Chad is a real an agro-sylvo-pastoral country. Having a population including more than 70% of rural people, the country is full of invaluable natural resources on which depend millions of people. Shared between livestock and agriculture, like the other countries in the Sahel, the country has experienced over the last few years, a land pressure and a tough competition for access to land and resources due to climate change. Resource scarcity has resulted in a migratory movement towards the Sudanian zone and a concentration of humans and animals in search of pasture and fertile lands. This crisis related to the access to resources aggravated by the degradation of nature and the political and military conflicts that the country has experienced has resulted in endless conflicts between farmers and herders. Therefore, land, agro-pastoral and food issues have become major challenges for Chad, whose administration is limited to managing the consequences of resource-related conflicts. Traditionally known herders and farmers who have always been together and who generate their main resources from their activities are no longer the same. Nowadays, they are influential politicians, military, capital holders or notables highlighting their power and influence in times of conflicts over access to resources. This further complicates the resolution of conflicts.

In order to meet the challenges such as land and natural resource management, the fight against food insecurity and environmental degradation, Chad, like other African countries facing similar problems must establish a genuine national policy for the management of natural resources.

For years, the Government has been looking for solutions to resolve the land crisis and ensure the settlement of conflicts between farmers and herders. Actions to sensitize, inform and organize the main rural actors, such as farmers and herders have been carried out without any solutions being found. Existing texts and mechanisms, even when properly applied seem inappropriate to solve the problems. Despite the traditional and customary constraints that continue to have a real impact on land and resource issues, the government has decided to pass laws in order to regulate equitable access to resources for all. Believing that Act 4 of 1959 regulating nomadic pastoralism in Chad is outdated, the Government has submitted a draft pastoral code in 2014 for adoption by the National Assembly. This bill which was adopted on first reading despite the opposition of some MPs who pointed out the discriminatory and conflicting nature of some of its provisions was fortunately rejected by the Constitutional Council that was referred to by a group of MPs, thus preventing its promulgation. The President of the Republic took the opportunity to request the withdrawal of this bill. But it is true that the draft pastoral code or any other law would not solve the fundamental problems related to the regulation of equitable access to natural resources for the development of livestock and agriculture which constitute the true leading factors of the Chadian economy, and which should in principle be the main objective of any solution approach. It would have been wiser to propose a rural code that would govern all sectors of production and which would better assist in achieving the primary objective of developing pastoral herding and agriculture in our country. However, the government preferred the sectoral approach by introducing a draft law on land, a draft law on pastoralism and other draft laws on land use planning and on water and the environment. Even by following the sectoral approach chosen by the government and which would later lead to a merger of the different texts into a single rural code, the question of pastoralism must be approached with realism by introducing a law that takes into account the rights of all the stakeholders in rural production. The land-related issue in Chad is more a matter of governance than a purely legislative issue. Administrators and judicial police officers at various levels are in a situation of impunity and widespread anarchy from which everyone benefits while allowing the conflict to persist. We have come to a conclusion that describes farmers as eternal victims living in injustice, and herders as conquerors and rulers who take advantage of the widespread impunity to infringe the laws or the rights of farmers.

The scarcity of natural resources aggravates poverty and conflict. With the power-related issue of the religious issue, land-related disputes are a major issue and a security risk to be monitored. The land-related problems have remained unchanged and the whole problem revolves around the following issues: access to land which has become the most secure property; securing the rights of peasants on customary rural lands that are increasingly coveted; securing urban lands for the holders of the rights of use through unassailable titles that are obligatory for all; and the need to dispose of urban and rural lands for common use whose management is carried out by the State or other customary or decentralized authorities. It should be noted that food in Chad is mainly based on family agricultural production which has almost become insufficient in the context of growing demand and population. In the near future, the country may face a serious land crisis. It is time to think about it seriously.

V.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The security issue in Chad and the risks of violence mainly result from the leadership crisis.

- There is an urgent need to rebuild State authority, administration and justice to combat impunity and the mob justice;
- Establish a genuine inclusive dialogue involving all communities to preserve life in community;
- The mode of devolution of power must be revised to prevent groups feeling excluded from resorting to violence;
- The dialogue approach proposed by the government shall not, as usual, result in a sharing of positions between the different political actors. It is important to address the real issues of the country;
- The issue of access to land resources must be urgently resolved to avoid inter-community conflicts;
- Put in place a genuine development policy for young people;
- The distribution of the country's resources and a genuine fight against poverty can mitigate the risks of conflict;
- The government must monitor the multiplication of the Islamic trends coming from the East with new practices of Islam;
- For all these actions, the international community can play a major role (strengthening advocacy for Chad) to help Chad in the preservation of peace and stability.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the security situation in Chad places the power-related issue at the center of all concerns. Any solution approach requires addressing this fundamental issue. For the moment, the people in power, drawing their legitimacy from their warlike actions through the total control of the clan army and their military interventions in other countries have become a necessary evil. But the country is in crisis and lives with fragile institutions and instability.

Ethnicity is strong and constitutes a major risk. It is true that ethnic groups and religions are instrumentalized by politicians, but shall the people not live peacefully in community? Restoring peace, tolerance and non-violence in a society long imbued with these evils is laborious. These are factors of division and risks of deflagration.

The country's internal and external security risks and challenges are real and beyond the capacity of a single State even if it is the strongest State. Indeed, transnational threats can only be addressed through a comprehensive and inclusive approach on the basis of a partnership in a regional integration framework or with the support of the international community.

In the fight against terrorism, aid for the development of regions affected by terrorism is adopted as a solution. But this measure must be more general and accompanied by others in order to hope for a possible solution.

The question is whether in the fight against terrorism, the international community can always accommodate itself to a power without real legitimacy in Chad? The international community who recommends political dialogue as a solution to the crisis of legitimacy in Chad must take into account the depth and gravity of the crisis and especially the security risks. Political dialogue, constitutional change, social and security crisis will be significant elements of the political life of Chad in the future.

REFERENCES

Proceedings of the Colloquium held by the Al Mouna Center on Secularism, 1998;

Constitution of the Republic of Chad;

Répertoire de l'administration territoriale du Tchad 1990-1994 (Bernard LANN, L'Harmattan 1994) [Directory of Territorial Administration of Chad 1990-1994]

2005 National Good Governance Strategy Paper

2015 National Security Strategy Paper

Report of the 1993 National Sovereign Conference

Report of the Opposition Forum held in April 2015

Testimonies of the actors (political, army, security actors …)

Libération of 27 February 2015: « La saga sanglante de BokoHaram ». (The bloody saga of Boko Haram)

Olivier Roy, « Peut-on comprendre les motivations de Djihadistes ? », Pouvoir 2016 (N°158), p.15-24.

Jean-Luc Marret, « Action-réaction : le terrorisme et l'État », Pouvoir 2016 (N°158), p.5-14.

Louis Gautier, « Les voies et les moyens de la lutte antiterroriste », Pouvoirs 2016 (N°158), p.39-50.

Tchad et culture No. 318, June 2013, « La sécurité mise à mal par des agents véreux » (Security put at risk by corrupt officers)

Le Temps No. 865 of 17 to 24 June 2015, « Les terroristes frappent N'Djaména » (Terrorists hit N'Djaména)

Le Potential No. 146, of 4 to 14 March 2016, « Lutte contre BokoHaram : Opération plumes contre bombes » (Fight against Boko Haram: Operation named feathers against bombs)

Le Citoyen No. 0115 of January 18 to 25 2016, « Contrôle de sécurité ou d'insécurité ? » (Security or insecurity control?)

Le Temps No. 882 of 10 to 17 February 2016, « La baisse de garde dans les contrôles anti-terroristes » (Lowering of guard in the anti-terrorist controls)

Le Temps No. 835 of 18 to 24 June 2015, « Lutte contre Boko Haram, que peut le Tchad? » (Fight against Boko Haram, what can Chad do?)

Le Progrès No. 4282 of Monday February 1st, 2016 « 3 kamikazes frappent Guité et Mitérine » (3 suicide bombers hit Guité and Mitérine).

Le Progrès No. 4287 of Monday, 8 February 2016, « L'État rappelle aux consignes de sécurité. Une prévention d'attaque de BokoHaram à N'Djaména ». (The government recalls the security instructions. Prevention of attack by Boko Haram in N'Djaména)
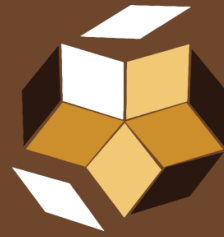
DIALOGUES

SECURITAIRES
DANS L'ESPACE
SAHELO - SAHARIEN

Biography of the author

Professor Ahmat Mahamat HASSAN is the current Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals, in charge of human rights in the Republic of Chad. As a Professor in public law and political science, he was also the dean of the Faculty of Law of the ADAM BARKA d'Abéché University. He served successively as a magistrate and legal adviser to the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture and to the National Assembly.

Summary

The country-based studies highlight the nature of the State and the key question of governance in the Sahelo-Saharan region. The types of relations that the State maintains with the populations become a crucial issue when one considers the identity/ethnic dimensions of the demands that minority groups often express at the risk of destabilizing the entire region. The issues of violent extremism and of crime organized across borders are also discussed.

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG