

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment, please email the [Knowledge and Information Management Unit](#).

10 March 2014

TCD104816.FE

Chad: Military service, including age of recruitment, enrollment procedure and duration of service; whether conscripts receive notification from regional recruitment office; reasons for exemption and the possibility of performing alternative military service (2011-February 2014)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on military recruitment and service in Chad was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to two sources, the minimum age for voluntarily enrollment in the armed forces is 18, and the minimum age for being called to perform compulsory military service is 20 (Child Soldiers International 2013, 2; U.S. 27 Feb. 2014, 25). The United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) states that compulsory military service is for a term of three years [for men] and that women must perform one year of military or civilian service at the age of 21 (28 Feb. 2014). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

British NGO Child Soldiers International, an "international...advocacy organization which campaigns for the effective implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict" (Child Soldiers International 2013, 1), indicates that the provisions dictating the minimum age for military service are set out in section 32 of *Loi 06-012 2006-03-10 PR du 10 mars 2006 portant réorganisation des forces armées et de sécurité* (ibid. 2013, 3, footnote 6). Child Soldiers International also notes that, according to the 2006 law, military service is compulsory for all citizens of Chad, except those who have a proven physical disability (Apr. 2012, 18, footnote 63). The NGO specifies, however, that the law "remains in force, but it is not fully enforced" (Child Soldiers International 2013, 2). The organization explains that although the legislation provides for compulsory military service for all citizens, the reality is that "successive leaders that have acceded to power have all kept their own permanent armies, sometimes integrating them with existing armed forces" (ibid. Apr. 2012, 8). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to Child Soldiers International, "recruitment, particularly in the north, often takes place informally and the persistent practice of patronage means that official army recruitment procedures are often further subverted" (ibid., 9). In addition, the NGO points out that for the past 20 years, recruitment has been "haphazard" and there have been "indiscriminate mass recruitment drives" (ibid., 8). According to a government official interviewed by the NGO, state officials recruit "who they want" and they "strengthen the ethnic clan" (ibid., 9). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Many sources indicate that minors are still being recruited and enrolled in the national army and other armed groups in Chad (AI Mar. 2013, 2; Centre for Human Rights Mar. 2013, 1-2). According to Amnesty

International (AI), at least 36 children were enrolled in the national army in 2012, and the Chadian government has made little effort to implement the Action Plan on children associated with armed forces and groups in Chad, which was signed in 2011 by the government and the United Nations (Mar. 2013, 2). Child Soldiers International also indicates that dozens of children were enrolled in the national army in 2012 and that no measures have been taken to put an end to the practice (2013, 3, 4). The NGO also published the following information:

One must acknowledge that the ban on child recruitment remains difficult to enforce because of **low birth registration** rates in Chad, as a result of which most candidates to recruitment do not have birth certificates or other proof of age. However, recruiting agents had not received any instructions or child protection training prior to the 2012 recruitment campaign, and age verification methods used were flawed. Furthermore, the 11,000 recruitment quota set by the government appears difficult to meet for the narrow age group targeted (18-20 year-olds) and may have put pressure on recruiters to enrol without thorough age verification. Finally, it is concerning that some recruiting agents set up temporary recruitment desks in local schools, thereby unwittingly encouraging school-age children to enlist. (Child Soldiers International 2013, 4, emphasis in original)

Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate, nor was any information found indicating whether conscripts receive notification from a recruitment office or any information about performing alternative service.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Amnesty International (AI). March 2013. *Chad: Amnesty International Submission for the UN Universal Periodic Review, 17th Session of the UPR Working Group, October/November 2013* .

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Child Soldiers International. 2013. *Tchad : Enfants Soldats International : Contribution à l'Examen périodique universel, Second cycle, 17^e session, 2013*. <http://www.child-soldiers.org/user_uploads/pdf/csintuprchadsubmission3apr2013fr6712985.pdf> [Accessed 3 Mar. 2014]

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Sources: Attempts to contact the Chadian embassy in Washington, the Chadian consulate in New York and a representative from the Association des ressortissants tchadiens au Québec were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: AllAfrica; Association des ressortissants tchadiens au Québec; Chad – Présidence de la République du Tchad, Tchad Diplomatie; Directory of Development Organizations; eoi.net; Factiva; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; *Jeune Afrique*; *Journal du Tchad*; Radio France internationale; United Nations – High Commissioner for Human Rights, International Labour Organization, Refworld; War Resisters International.

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