Chad: Update to TCD40509.F of 20 November 2002 on forced marriage, particularly when the parents of a young girl are against the marriage; application of the law of March 2002; whether there are any organizations that provide support for women who are forced to marry (2002-November 2004)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

The following information was provided during a 2 November 2004 telephone interview with the president of the Chadian Association for Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (Association tchadienne pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme, ATPDH).

Forced and early marriages are still practised in Chad. The law of March 2002 which prohibits any form of sexual violence against women, including forced marriage, is too recent for it to have had an effect on Chadian society, especially since the majority of the population is not aware that this law exists. Since 2002, there has been no improvement in the general human rights situation, which is still [translation] “catastrophic.”

The ATPDH president said that, to her knowledge, a forced marriage could not take place without the consent of the young girl's parents. Forced and early marriages are generally arranged by the parents of the bride- and groom-to-be.

The ATPDH president also said that there are various organizations fighting for women's rights in Chad, such as the Association of Women Jurists. However, she stated that there is no organization dedicated specifically to women who are forced by their families to marry.

The president of the Chadian League for Human Rights (Ligue tchadienne des droits de la personne, LTDH) provided the following information during an 8 November 2004 telephone interview. Forced and early marriages are widespread in Chad, particularly in the northern regions, which are predominantly Muslim. However, in the southern and predominantly Christian regions, the practice is rare, if it exists at all. The law of March 2002 has not had any direct impact on the situation of young girls forced to marry. The law is in effect, but is generally not enforced, since the Chadian population, which is mostly illiterate, is unaware of its rights. Moreover, those responsible for enforcing the law must be willing to do so.

The LTDH president added that young girls are forced into marriage by their parents. The parents of the bride and groom agree to arrange their children's marriage. Like the ATPDH president, the LTDH president said that various
organizations are dedicated to women's rights in Chad, such as the Association of Women Jurists. However, most young girls forced to marry accept their parents' decision and do not know their own rights.

*Country Reports 2003* indicated that forced and early marriages were still being practised in Chad in 2003, and that "although the law prohibits sexual relations with a girl under the age of 14, even if married, this law rarely was enforced" (25 Feb. 2004).

No additional information on forced marriage in Chad could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

**Reference**

Association tchadienne pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme (ATPDH), N'Djamena. 2 November 2004. Telephone interview with the president.


Ligue tchadienne des droits de la personne (LTDH), N'Djamena. 8 November 2004. Telephone interview with the president.

**Additional Sources Consulted**

Unsuccessful attempts to contact the Association for the Promotion of Fundamental Liberties in Chad (APLFT) and the Association of Women Jurists.

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.