



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

The Board		
About the Board		25 August 2008
Biographies	TCD102896.E	
Employment	Chad: The attempted coup of February 2008; treatment of certain tribes and members of political parties since the attempted coup.	
Legal and Policy	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
References		
Organization Chart	The Attempted Coup	
Publications		
Tribunal		
Decisions	On 2 February 2008, rebel forces entered the capital city of N'djamena in Chad in an attempt to overthrow President Idriss Déby (MSF 4 Apr. 2008; AFP 15 Feb. 2008). Fighting continued in the capital for two days before the rebels were driven back (ibid.; MSF 4 Apr. 2008; <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> 14 Feb. 2008). Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières, MSF) reports that over 270 people were killed during the fighting and nearly 1,000 injured (MSF 4 Apr. 2008). The Red Cross provided similar figures to the <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> , reportedly stating that "hundreds died in the fighting and thousands were injured" (<i>Christian Science Monitor</i> 14 Feb. 2008). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 30,000 people fled to Cameroon (MSF 4 Apr. 2008; UN 26 Feb. 2008; ibid. 15 Feb. 2008). By the end of February, it was reported that although many people had returned to Chad, many others remained hesitant to go back citing insecurity as the reason (UN 26 Feb. 2008; see also ibid. 15 Feb. 2008).	
Forms		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Immigration Division		
Refugee Protection Division		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program		
National Documentation Packages	On 7 February 2008, the government imposed a country-wide "dusk-to-dawn" curfew (<i>Oakland Tribune</i> 8 Feb. 2008) and a week later, declared a state of emergency (AFP 15 Feb. 2008; HRW 20 Mar. 2008) authorizing "'house searches and controls on the private and public press'" (AFP 15 Feb. 2008). The state of emergency was lifted on 15 March 2008 (HRW 20 Mar. 2008; UN 20 Mar. 2008).	
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests	Armed Groups and their Leaders	
Recent Research	The group involved in the attempted coup is a new alliance of three rebel forces: the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (Union des Forces pour la démocratie et le développement, UFDD), also known as the United Force for Democracy and Development (BBC 4 Feb. 2008), led by Mahamat Nouri who is of Goran (Gorane) ethnicity and is a former key member of the government of President Idriss Déby (<i>Jeune Afrique</i> 10-16 Feb. 2008; BBC 4 Feb. 2008); the Rally of Forces for Change (Rassemblement des forces pour le changement, RFC) led by Timane Erdimi of Zaghawa ethnicity, another high ranking former member of Déby's administration (ibid.; <i>Jeune Afrique</i> 10-16 Feb. 2008) who is also Déby's nephew (ibid.; <i>Oakland Tribune</i> 8 Feb. 2008); and the UFDD-Fondamentale, a splinter group of the UFDD led by Abdelwahid Aboud (BBC 4 Feb. 2008), a Chadian Arab also	
Media Centre		
News		
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Proactive Disclosure		

known as Abdelwahid Aboud Mackaye (*Jeune Afrique* 10-16 Feb. 2008).

Situation of Ethnic Groups

According to the *New York Times*, the armed rebels represent a variety of ethnic groups (*New York Times* 12 Feb. 2008). They allege that Déby's administration favours members of the Zaghawa clan (*ibid.*; BBC 4 Feb. 2008), who reportedly "make up less than 3% of Chad's population" (*ibid.*). A displaced Chadian who fled to northern Cameroon during the coup attempt to escape the violence in N'djamena told the UN Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) that the rebels had targeted primarily Zaghawan Chadians (UN 15 Feb. 2008).

Various groups have expressed concern about the government's reaction to the attempted coup (HRW 20 Mar. 2008; UN 20 Mar. 2008). In a press release dated 7 February 2008, the deputy program director for Africa at Amnesty International (AI) expressed concern that the government was launching a "major witch-hunt" against people suspected of supporting the rebels (AI 7 Feb. 2008). Of fifteen cases of "apparent arbitrary detention" documented by Human Rights Watch (HRW) in a 20 March 2008 article, eleven cases involved individuals of Goran ethnicity, the predominant ethnic group of the UFDD, the "rebel group that led the coup attempt" (20 Mar. 2008). The HRW article describes "abuses" committed by state security forces including looting, extortion, beatings, torture and rape that were committed by security forces during "house-to-house searches" (*ibid.*). Amnesty International (AI) USA reports that three men who were thought to "belong to the same ethnic community as the armed opposition groups" were victims of extrajudicial executions in the immediate aftermath of the attempted coup (AI USA 7 Feb. 2008).

Situation of Political Opponents of Déby's Government

Concerns have been expressed about the arrest of opposition politicians during the state of emergency (HRW 26 Feb. 2008; Agence Europe 13 Feb. 2008; *Oakland Tribune* 8 Feb. 2008). A *New York Times* article published on 12 February 2008 reported that "at least half a dozen" opposition leaders had disappeared after being last seen under escort by men in military uniform that bore no insignias. The article included a quote by a member of an opposition party who stated, "[a]ll of us who are against this government are afraid now" (*New York Times* 12 Feb. 2008). The head of the Chadian human rights organization Human Rights Without Borders (Droits de l'homme sans frontières, DHSF), who fled to Cameroon following a visit to his home by the police, was quoted in an IRIN article as saying that "[a]nyone who was suspected of supporting the rebels was arrested" following the coup attempt (UN 20 Mar. 2008).

In particular, concerns have been raised about the detention of the following three opposition leaders (HRW 4 Mar. 2008): Lol Mahamat Choua, a former Chadian president (Agence Europe 13 Feb. 2008; AFP 14 Feb. 2008) who was heading a committee on democratic reform (*ibid.*); Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, spokesman for the Coordination for the Defense of the Constitution (Coordination pour la défense de la Constitution, CPDC) (HRW 26 Feb. 2008; Agence Europe 13 Feb. 2008); and Ngarlejy Yorongar, a veteran opposition leader (*ibid.*; AFP 14 Feb. 2008) and head of the political party Federation Action for the Republic (Fédération Action pour la République, FAR) (HRW 26 Feb. 2008). Choua was reportedly placed under arrest and later released (HRW 4 Mar. 2008; AFP 6 Mar. 2008). Yorongar was detained and then fled to France via Cameroon (*ibid.*). As of July 2008, the whereabouts of Ibni remain unknown (AFP 15 July 2008).

Yorongar told the press that Ibni was severely beaten in custody and that he fears that Ibni has died as a result (AFP 6 Mar. 2008; *Afrique Express* 20 June 2008). In a report by *Afrique Express*, Yorongar alleges that he was initially detained with both Choua and Ibni (*ibid.*); however, Choua contradicts Yorongar's version of events claiming that he was always kept in solitary detention (*ibid.*).

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

- Afrique Express*. 20 June 2008. "Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh disparu depuis le 3 février 2008." <<http://www.afrique-express.com/afrique/tchad/politique/ibni.html>> [Accessed 14 July 2008]
- Agence Europe [Brussels]. 13 February 2008. "EU / Chad: Louis Michel Expresses Concern about Arrest of Chadian Opposition Members." (Factiva)
- Agence France-Presse (AFP). 15 July 2008. "Tchad: le siège du parti d'Ibni cambriolé à N'Djamena." (Factiva)
- _____. 6 March 2008. "Chad Opposition Leader: Other Opponent Beaten in Custody." (Factiva)
- _____. 15 February 2008. "Chad under State of Emergency after Foiled Rebel Assault." (Dialog)
- _____. 14 February 2008. "Chad Opposition: Pres Guard Brutally Arrested its Leaders." (Factiva)
- Amnesty International (AI) USA. 7 February 2008. "Amnesty International Decries Executions in Chad, Calls on Government to Prevent Extrajudicial Killings." <<http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?lang=e&id=ENGUSA20080207002>> [Accessed 14 July 2008]
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 4 February 2008. Stephanie Hancock. "Q&A: Chad Rebellion." <<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7225023.stm>> [Accessed 10 July 2008]
- Christian Science Monitor*. 14 February 2008. Sarah Simpson. "Chad Refugees Head Home after Failed Rebel Coup." <<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0214/p07s03-woaf.html>> [Accessed 21 July 2008]
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). 20 March 2008. "Chad: Charge or Release Political Detainees." <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/03/19/chad18319_txt.htm> [Accessed 14 July 2008]
- _____. 4 March 2008. "Chad - Opposition Leader Ibni Still Missing; Yorongar Confirms Detention; Government Inquiry Lacks Independence." <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/03/03/chad18197_txt.htm> [Accessed 14 July 2008]
- _____. 26 February 2008. "Chad - Account for 'Disappeared' Opposition Leaders: Two Missing Politicians Last Seen in Army Custody." <<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/02/25/chad18144.htm>> [Accessed 14 July 2008]
- Jeune Afrique* [Paris]. 10 - 16 February 2008. No. 2457. Christophe Boisbouvier. "Le Cancer Tchadien: Le triumvirat de la rébellion."
- Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders (MSF). 4 April 2008. "Coup Attempt in Chad Leaves Hundreds Dead and Wounded: Thousands Flee to Cameroon." <<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/alert/article.cfm?>

id=2589> [Accessed 21 July 2008]

The New York Times. 12 February 2008. Lydia Polgreen. "Chad's Leader Survives, but Dissidents' Peril Grows."
<<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/12/world/africa/12chad.html> > [Accessed 10 July 2008]

Oakland Tribune. 8 February 2008. Tom Maliti. "Chad Government Declares Curfew."
(BNet Business Network)
<http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4176/is_20080208/ai_n21415968>
[Accessed 10 July 2008]

United Nations (UN). 20 March 2008. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). "Chad: Civilians Flee as Govt Targets Critics."
<<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=77394>> [Accessed 14 July 2008]

_____. 26 February 2008. Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "Cameroon: Many Chadians Feel Return Is not yet Safe."
<<http://www.unhcr.org/news/NEWS/47c3fb246.html>> [Accessed 30 July 2008]

_____. 15 February 2008. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN). "Chadian Refugees Refuse to Leave Northern Cameroon Citing Insecurity." (Dialog)

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sources, including: AllAfrica.com, Associated Press, Chad NOW, Elcano Royal Institute, Guardian News and Media Limited (UK), *Jerusalem Post*, MSNBC, ReliefWeb, Reuters, United States (US) Department of State, Voice of America (VOA), Washington Post

 [Top of Page](#)

[Important Notices](#)

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.