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# Responses to Information Requests

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2 January 2018

## TCD106034.FE

Chad: Requirements and procedure for obtaining a national identity card, a passport, a driver's licence and a vehicle registration (carte grise), both from within the country and from abroad; appearance and security features of these documents, including those issued by the company SOGECT; information on the shortage of these documents (2014-December 2017)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

## 1. Issuance of National Identity Documents

### 1.1 SOGECT-Tchad (2011-2014)

Sources indicate that the Chadian government awarded the production of passports, national identity cards and driver's licences to the General Construction and Import/Export Transportation Trade Company (Société de commerce général de construction et de transport import/export, SOGECT-Tchad) between 2011 [or 2010

(Alwihda Info 18 Dec. 2014)] and December 2014 (Alwihda Info 18 Dec. 2014; RFI 17 Dec. 2014). On its website, SOGECT-Tchad presents itself as an infrastructure construction company created in 2003 by Abderahaman Hassan Mahamat Itno, with headquarters in N'Djamena (SOGECT-Tchad n.d.a). According to the same source, Abderahaman Hassan Mahamat Itno holds the position of chief executive officer of SOGECT-Tchad (SOGECT-Tchad n.d.b). Among the services it offers, SOGECT-Tchad mentions a department specialized in biometrics, which includes a centre for issuing national identity cards, resident permits and passports, as well as a centre for issuing driver's licences and vehicle registrations (*carte grise*) (SOGECT-Tchad n.d.c).

According to sources, SOGECT is headed by the nephew of Idriss Deby, the President of the Republic of Chad (RFI 17 Dec. 2014; Le Tchadanthropus 6 Jan. 2014). Sources indicate that the awarding of contracts for manufacturing identity documents to a company headed by a relative of the President was challenged in 2014 by Chadian civil society (RFI 17 Dec. 2014; Africa Info 12 Dec. 2014), opposition political parties and members of the government (Africa Info 12 Dec. 2014). Radio France internationale (RFI) explains the following regarding SOGECT:

[translation]

The contracts awarded to it are profitable: vehicle inspection, but also the printing of various official documents, such as driver's licences, identity cards and secure biometric passports.

Profitable contracts, and yet the conditions set with the distributor seem extremely favourable. The contracts and agreements that RFI was able to consult stipulate that only a 10 percent fee on revenues collected by SOGECT is paid to the Chadian government which, according to civil society, creates a considerable loss of earnings for public finances. (RFI 17 Dec. 2014)

Africa Info, a website covering [translation] "news on corruption and poverty in Africa," reports the following:

[translation]

Everyone in Chad knew that the company [SOGECT] headed by Abdramane Hassane, aka “Bedey,” is the shared property of Idriss and Timan Deby. Bedey is a mere employee. The government, in other words Idriss Deby, granted itself, by mutual agreement, the issuance of official documents coming under the sovereignty of the state (passports, national identity cards, driver’s licences, etc....). (Africa Info 12 Dec. 2014)

In November 2014, according to sources, Chadian authorities terminated contracts signed with SOGECT-Tchad (Alwihda Info 18 Dec. 2014; Africa Info 12 Dec. 2014). According to the Chadian news website Alwihda Info, the Minister of Territorial Administration and Public Safety (Administration du territoire et de la Sécurité publique) addressed a letter to SOGECT on 18 November 2014, in which he requests restitution for the following activities: [translation] “the issuance of national identity cards, passports, documents related to vehicle traffic (vehicle registration, driver’s licences and consignment notes) and vehicle specifications” (Alwihda Info 18 Dec. 2014).

Information on the appearance and security features of the documents issued by SOGECT could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

## **1.2 Post-SOGECT (2015-2017)**

Information on the company responsible for the production of Chadian identity documents after December 2014 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In June 2015, according to sources, following attacks in N’Djamena, the Chadian government announced, among the new security measures, changes to passports and identity cards for Chadian citizens (Alwihda Info 9 July 2015; RFI 22 June 2015). Sources cite the Minister of Territorial Administration and Public Security, who explained that this decision was in response to the requirements of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (Communauté économique et monétaire de l’Afrique centrale, CEMAC) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which require the issuance of biometric documents (Alwihda Info 9 July 2015; Tchadinfos 6 July 2015). According to Tchadinfos, a Chadian news website, the Minister stated that [translation] “the attacks on June 15 simply

accelerated the process to change identity documents” (Tchadinfos 6 July 2015). Alwihda Info cites the Minister’s statement according to which [translation] “administrative documents currently held are valid and will continue to be. I will ask all our citizens to continue to have these documents issued until such time as the government states that it is time to do so” (Alwihda Info 9 July 2015).

An RFI article from July 2015 refers to delays in renewing passports and identity cards (RFI 7 July 2015).

## **2. Requirements and Procedure for Obtaining National Identity Documents**

Information on the requirements and steps to follow in order to obtain a national identity card, a passport, a driver’s licence and a vehicle registration was scarce among the among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

### **2.1 National Identity Card**

According to sources, the national police are responsible for issuing national identity cards in Chad (APA News 21 Apr. 2017; Tchadinfos 29 Aug. 2013).

Regarding the location where identity cards are issued, Tchadinfos reported the following in August 2013:

[translation]

For five months, the granting of national identity cards to Chadians from the four corners of N’Djamena, an urban area of two million inhabitants, and those from across the national territory of 1,284,000 km<sup>2</sup> has been centralized in N’Djamena, at a single centre, the central police station ... in Djambal Barh. (Tchadinfos 29 Aug. 2013)

Similarly, an article from July 2017 published by VOA Afrique, [translation] “the French-language service of Voice of America [VOA]” (VOA Afrique n.d.), quotes the statements of a Chadian who indicated that he wanted to renew his identity card at the [translation] “central police station” (VOA Afrique 10 July 2017).

According to sources, the national identity card is valid for 10 years (IZF 2017; Keesing Reference System n.d.). A copy of a sample of a national identity card, available on the Keesing Reference System document verification website, containing details on the appearance and security features of the national identity card, is attached to this Response (Attachment 1).

The July 2017 VOA Afrique article reports that [translation] “for two years in Chad, citizens have experienced great difficulties in having their identity cards issued” (VOA Afrique 10 July 2017). Sources indicate that in April 2017, the card issuing service resumed activities after a four-month interruption, which was caused by a shortage of the material used to print the cards (Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017; APA News 21 Apr. 2017), as well as a printer failure (Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017). During the shortage, according to sources, priority was given to people having to travel for their studies (Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017; APA News 21 Apr. 2017), as well as people requiring medical treatment (APA News 21 Apr. 2017) or [translation] “needing medical evacuation” (Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017). Other applicants, according to Agence de presse africaine (APA News), a [APA News English version] “news portal” aggregating news sites supported by a “network of correspondents” in Africa, Europe, Asia and America (APA News n.d.), received a “receipt” that they could use in banks and other services, as needed (APA News 21 Apr. 2017).

2017 sources indicated that the cost of national identity cards went from 4,000 African Financial Community (CFA) francs [approximately C\$9] at the beginning of 2017 to 10,000 CFA francs [about C\$23] (VOA Afrique 10 July 2017; Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017; APA News 21 Apr. 2017). In April 2017, Tchadinfos reported the following:

[translation]

Officially, the national identity card is 10,000 CFA francs, but on the spot, you have to pay more than that amount to obtain one. Despite everything, to be photographed and actually obtain one is quite a feat. In addition, you must contend with brokers who scam service users. (Tchadinfos 24 Apr. 2017)

Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

## 2.2 Passport

Sources report on Chadian passports being issued by the central police station in N'Djamena (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017; APA News 23 May 2017). Tchadinfos states that the [translation] “computerized passport issuing centre” is located at the central police station in N'Djamena (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017). According to the Reciprocity Schedule for Chad published by the US Department of State, “[t]he issuance of Chadian passports has been centralized,” and “the national police ... will be responsible for issuing all regular passports, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will control issuance of all diplomatic and official passports” (US n.d.).

According to sources, there are at least three types of Chadian passports: regular passports, diplomatic passports and service passports (US n.d.; Chad n.d.a).

The information in the following paragraph is taken from the US Department of State Reciprocity Schedule:

On February 1, 2002, Chad introduced new diplomatic and service passports. The passports have a five-year validity period. The new diplomatic passport cover is now dark burgundy, and the service passport has a camel-coloured cover. The Chadian flag, which appeared on the passport cover prior to 2002, has been eliminated. The intaglio U-shaped design, with “Francois-Charles Oberthur Fiduc[i] are” printed in a small font has been added to the inside cover. The perforated passport number is now shown at the top of the pages instead of the bottom. The bearer’s personal information, including full name, nationality, date and place of birth, sex, and the passport’s issuance and expiration date, as well as the photograph, all appear on the same page, displayed horizontally and no longer vertically. The passports come with the following “new security features”:

The paper stock is multicolored (mint green on either side, and a peach-colored band running down the center), with “Republic of Chad” (in Arabic) and the Chadian logo printed in a pale golden brown. The pages are watermarked, with a four leaf clover encircled by the name “Oberthru.” The personal data/photo page is now laminated. (US n.d.)

An article from the Agence France-Presse (AFP), published in December 2017, indicates that according to [translation] “a US security delegation in Chad,” the Chadian passport “is not biometric even if it is secure” (AFP 14 Dec. 2017).

According to an article published in January 2017 on Yadri info, a Chadian news portal, the cost of the passport went from 85,000 CFA francs [approximately C\$196] in January 2017, to 150,000 CFA francs [approximately C\$348] (Yadari info 27 Jan. 2017). Similarly, *Jeune Afrique* reported in June 2017 that the Chadian passport costs 228 euros [approximately C\$344] (*Jeune Afrique* 8 June 2017). However, in June 2017, Tchadinfos reported the following rates:

[translation]

The cost for a regular passport for adult Chadians inside the country is set at 85,300 CFA francs [approximately C\$198]; for minors the cost is 42,500 CFA francs [approximately C\$99]; for Chadian adults residing outside the country, the cost is 105,000 CFA francs [approximately C\$244]; and for minors, the cost is 52,400 CFA francs [approximately C\$122], and this is in keeping with the new financing law. (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017)

The same source adds that [translation] “contrary ... to certain rumours, the price of passports has not increased. But police officers claim that intermediaries are speculating” (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to sources, the issuance of Chadian passports was interrupted in May 2017 because of a lack of [translation] “blank booklets” (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017; APA News 23 May 2017). During this interruption, according to the same sources, the few passports that were issued were for people who were sick (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017; APA News 23 May 2017) and people on [translation] “extremely urgent official missions” (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017). Sources report that Chad approached a Canadian company to obtain booklets (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017; APA News 23 May 2017). Without providing further details, Tchadinfos reports that on 13 June 2017, the issuance of passports resumed:

[translation]

Chadians prevented from travelling for lack of a passport rush to have the document issued. “We started up again on Tuesday 13 June, 2017. There are passports now, go ahead,” stated a police officer at the entrance of the Centre. Inside, in a small room, applicants whose passports have been signed leave in the order they came in.

A little further in the same building, police officers record and film new applicants. Behind them, other National Police officers work determinedly to produce and finish the new passports. (Tchadinfos 23 June 2017)

Articles from October 2017 report a “travel ban” imposed on Chadians by the US because of a paper shortage for Chadian passports, as well as Chad’s inability to provide the US with a sample passport (AP 18 Oct. 2017; *The Hill* 19 Oct. 2017; Slate 19 Oct. 2017). According to *The Hill*, a newspaper “for and about [the US] Congress” (*The Hill* n.d.), Chadian nationals have been banned from travelling to the US since the implementation on 18 October 2017 of an order of the US president (*The Hill* 19 Oct. 2017). The same source cites a spokesman from the US Department of Homeland Security, according to whom the restrictions placed on Chad are regarding more than just the receipt of a passport sample: “Chad does not adequately share public safety and terrorism-related information’,” and the US is “eager to see Chad develop more secure travel documents and make other enhancements” (*The Hill* 19 Oct. 2017). A currently valid Chadian passport sample could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Alwihda Info reports the following in a September 2017 article:

[translation]

The National Union for Development and Renewal (Union nationale pour le développement et le renouveau, UNDR) [an opposition political party in Chad (RFI Mar. 2017)] ... regrets that the ban on Chadians’ travel to the [US] is, to some extent, the consequence of privatizing the issuance of national identity cards and passports for a time. (Alwihda Info 29 Sept. 2017)

According to the US Department of State’s Reciprocity Schedule, Chadian embassies overseas were previously authorized to issue passports; however, this service is now centralized in Chad (US n.d.). The website of the Embassy of Chad in Paris reports that the embassy does not issue passports, but that it takes fingerprints and validates passport application documents (Chad n.d.b). The same source indicates that the cost of a passport is 170 euros [approximately C\$258] and that it takes one or two months for the passport to be issued (Chad n.d.b). According to the website of the Embassy of Chad in Paris, the process for obtaining a passport is the following:

[translation]

1. The interested party reports to the Embassy of Chad in Paris (Consular Service) with the following documents:
  - A legalized copy of the birth certificate,
  - A photocopy of the national identity card or previous passport,
  - Two (2) colour identity photographs (no digital photographs), in 50/50 format[.]
2. The embassy bailiff will take fingerprints to complete the file[.]
3. The interested party will personally take responsibility for sending their passport application, as well as incurring the related costs (170 euros), to the Passport Issuing Centre (Centre de délivrance de passeport) in N'djamena. (Chad n.d.b, emphasis in original)

### **2.3. Driver's Licence and Vehicle Registration**

For information on the Chadian driver's licence, see Response to Information Request TCD105069 of February 2015.

The information in the following paragraph was taken from a 14 November 2017 APA News article:

Chad has faced a driver's licence and vehicle registration shortage for more than four months. The production of these documents was suspended without any official explanation. [translation] "[A]nonymously, a source close to the vehicle registration services at the Department of Infrastructure, Access and Transportation (ministère des Infrastructures, du Désenclavement et des Transports) stated that a specialized machine for the production of documents was out of order." According to people who had their vehicle registration issued, it costs 10,500 CFA francs [approximately C\$24] for motorcycle owners; 40,500 CFA francs [approximately C\$93] for small car owners; 55,500 CFA francs [approximately C\$128] for small truck owners; 75,000 CFA francs [approximately C\$173] for owners of large trucks; and 93,000 CFA francs [approximately C\$214] for owners of tractor-trailers or heavy load trucks. Some people have been waiting for three or four years to obtain their vehicle registration. [translation] "There are many drivers in Chad who are driving with temporary permits." Vehicle registration services are facing [translation] "a significant

number of applications for new documents,” and according to “a source close to vehicle registration services,” these problems are the result of a termination of contract between the Government of Chad and SOGECT (APA News 14 Nov. 2017).

Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In its Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO), the European Union (EU) published a sample of a Chadian driver’s licence which was issued for the first time on 1 January 2011 and is currently valid (EU 7 May 2017). According to the same source, the licence is valid for four years (EU 7 May 2017). A copy of a driver’s licence sample, from PRADO, with details on its appearance, the information appearing on the licence and its security features, has been attached to this Response (Attachment 2).

Information on the appearance of the vehicle registration could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

### **3. Creation of the National Agency of Secure Documents (Agence nationale des titres sécurisés, ANATS) (2016-2017)**

Sources report that by order of the Chadian president in 2016, the National Agency of Secure Documents was created under the mandate of the Ministry of Public Safety and Immigration (ministère de la Sécurité publique et de l’Immigration) (Alwihda Info 15 Apr. 2017; JuriAfrique 13 Nov. 2016; Le Tchadanthropus 16 May 2016). According to the Presidency of the Republic of Chad website, [translation] “this agency is responsible for managing all official documents, from passports and national identity cards to driver’s licences, vehicle registrations, visas and residence permits” (Chad 23 Dec. 2016). According to JuriAfrique, an [translation] “African law portal,” this agency “has the specific mission of collecting the biometric and biographic data required to identify people, as well as producing secure documents” (JuriAfrique 13 Nov. 2016).

The website for the Prime Minister's Office of Chad reports that, on 10 October 2017, the Prime Minister chaired a meeting on [translation] "the operations of the National Agency of Secure Documents," the goal of which was to "define the terms and conditions of the implementation of this structure in order to guarantee the security of documents, such as birth certificates, national identity cards, passports, vehicle registrations and many others" (Chad 10 Oct. 2017). A Tchadinfos article on this meeting indicates that the Minister of Public Safety and Immigration announced the implementation of ANATS at the end of 2018 (Tchadinfos 13 Oct. 2017).

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.

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**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International; BBC; eoi.net; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; International Crisis Group; passportindex.org.; UN – Refworld.

## Attachments

1. Keesing Reference Systems. N.d. "Chad - Domestic Identity Card 2004." [Accessed 7 Dec. 2017]
2. European Union (EU). 7 December 2017. Public Register of Authentic travel and identity Documents Online (PRADO). "Document: TCD-FO-01001." [Accessed 7 Dec. 2017]

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