

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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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 February 2015

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Chad: Movement for Peace and Development in Chad (Mouvement pour la paix et le développement du Tchad, MPDT), including its structure, objectives, leaders and activities; its membership cards; current situation of the former leader of the party, Mahamat Abdoulaye; treatment of party members by authorities (2014-January 2015)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on the MPDT was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1. Overview of the MPDT

1.1 Origins and objectives of the MPDT

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a Chadian journalist and blogger in exile [1], and human rights activist, said that the MPDT was founded in January 1993 (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). According to an article published by the online newspaper *Alwihda* [2], the MPDT celebrated its 16th anniversary on 12 January 2009 (*Alwihda* 13 Jan. 2009).

The journalist-blogger indicated that Mahamat Abdoulaye was the first president of the MPDT (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to an MPDT news release dated 27 September 2009, a digital copy of which appears on the Chadian news website Tchadenligne, the party's national headquarters is located in N'Djamena, and the party is called the Movement for Peace and Development in Chad (Mouvement pour la paix et le développement du Tchad), abbreviated MPDT (MPDT 27 Sept. 2009). However, the *Political Handbook of the World 2014 (PHW)* uses the name "People's Movement for Democracy in Chad (Mouvement populaire pour la démocratie au Tchad) for the MPDT political party (*PHW* 2014, 264). The journalist-blogger believes that the name "People's Movement for Democracy in Chad" as applied to the Chadian political party MPDT, is incorrect (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). Other occurrences of the name as it is indicated in *PHW* could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The journalist-blogger stated that the MPDT's objectives are [translation] "justice, peace, stability and development" (*ibid.*). He added that the MPDT is an opposition party (*ibid.*). Corroborating information and additional information on the objectives of the MPDT could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1.2 Structure, Key Leaders, Activities and Membership Card

Concerning the structure and operations of the MPDT, the journalist-blogger said that the party was led by a president, with an executive office and a national council, and that he was not aware of any changes in this regard (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). He added that the MPDT held a conference every five years (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The MPDT press release dated 27 September 2009 is signed by Hassan Souleyman Moussa, the party's second vice-president. Agence France-Presse (AFP), in a 28 September 2009 article, cites excerpts of remarks made by Hassan Souleyman, [translation] "2nd vice-president of the MPDT," in a press release published by the party on 27 September 2009.

PHW 2011 notes that the MPDT won a seat in Chad's National Assembly in the 2002 legislative elections (*PHW* 2011, 261). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. The MPDT also won a seat in the National Assembly in the 2011 legislative elections (EU [2011]; Inter-Parliamentary Union n.d.; *PHW* 2014, 264).

The journalist-blogger wrote that, [translation] "in theory, a membership card is [required], but in practice, this is not the case for activists and supporters" (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Additional information on the structure, leaders, activities and membership card of the MPDT could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Mahamat Abdoulaye

According to AFP, Mahamat Abdoulaye ran as a candidate in the 1996 presidential elections (AFP 2 Oct. 2009).

Sources report that Mahamat Abdoulaye was a minister in the cabinet of the President of Chad, Idriss Déby (AFP 2 Oct. 2009; *PHW* 2014, 264). *PHW* 2014 states that he was appointed minister in 2005 (ibid.). AFP reports that Mr. Abdoulaye was minister in charge of Agriculture, Decentralization and Commerce (2 Oct. 2009).

The same sources note that Mahamat Abdoulaye also ran in the 2006 presidential election (*PHW* 2014, 264; AFP 2 Oct. 2009).

The *Alwihda* article published in January 2009 reports that on 12 January 2009, Mahamat Abdoulaye published a press release to urge the government, among other things, to respect the agreement reached 13 August 2007 agreement on strengthening democracy in Chad [3] (13 Jan. 2009).

In September 2009, as he was the president of the MPDT, Mahamat Abdoulaye was arrested for "contacts with mercenaries" (*PHW* 2011, 261; AFP 2 Oct. 2009), [translation] "the official name for Chadian rebels with rear bases in Sudan" (ibid.). According to the US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009*, he was accused of having made contact with "rebel leader" Timan Erdimi [4], and was sentenced on 9 November 2012 to three years in prison for "treason" (US 11 Mar. 2010, sec. 1e). An AFP dispatch on Mahamat Abdoulaye's arrest describes him as the [translation] "president of a majority party" (AFP 2 Oct. 2009). An *Alwihda* article states that at the time of his arrest, Mr. Abdoulaye was the [translation] "advisor in charge of missions with the National Mediator (Médiateur national) [5]" (*Alwihda* 11 Feb. 2010). International Crisis Group reports that he was an [translation] "advisor to the Office of the President" (17 Aug. 2010, 13). In February 2010, Mahamat Abdoulaye was pardoned by Idriss Déby (ibid.; *Alwihda* 11 Feb. 2010). Without mentioning the name of the party, a report published in August 2010 by the International Crisis Group describes Mahamat Abdoulaye as a [translation] "leader of a the opposition party allied with the presidential camp" (17 Aug. 2010, 13). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the journalist-blogger stated that Mahamat Abdoulaye has been in exile in Dakar since 2013 and that Hassan Souleyman [also spelled Souleymane] had replaced him as party president (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). An article published 28 January 2013 on the *Alwihda* website reports that Mahamat Abdoulaye went into exile in Senegal [translation] "to create a new opposition movement, the Pan-African Movement for Democracy and Justice (Mouvement panafricain pour la démocratie et la justice, MPDJ)."

The journalist-blogger provided the following information about the MPDJ:

[translation]

The MPDJ was formed in August 2012.

Its temporary headquarters is in Africa, in Dakar.

...

It is an opposition movement in exile; its objectives are pan-Africanism, democratization, peace and justice.

Its recent activities are fighting for freedom and democracy, in coordination with the Chadian opposition in exile, through agreements, conferences and press releases (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015).

According to the 28 January 2013 article in *Alwihda*, Mahamat Abdoulaye, while in exile in Senegal, expressed his opposition against Chadian forces being sent to Mali. The blog of Makaila Nguebla, a Chadian journalist and human rights activist, notes in a 14 January 2013 article that during a press conference held by [translation] "Central African and Chadian opposition leaders," Mahamat Abdoulaye spoke about the political and armed conflicts in Central Africa. Additional information on the current situation of Mahamat Abdoulaye could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. Treatment of MPDT Members by Authorities

The journalist-blogger noted that Mahamat Abdoulaye, some of his collaborators and MPDT activists [translation] "have gone into exile" (journalist-blogger 3 Feb. 2015). He added that they [translation] "are persecuted in Chad and do not feel safe, even in other countries" (ibid.). Additional information on the treatment of MPDT members by the authorities could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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.

Notes

[1] The journalist-blogger is an opponent of President Déby (*Jeune Afrique* 8 May 2013). He has received support from several human rights NGOs, including the following: Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières) (ibid.), Amnesty International (RFI 31 July 2013) and Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch 10 May 2013).

[2] *Alwihda*, an online newspaper, was started in 1994 and primarily publishes articles on current affairs in Africa (*Alwihda* 15 Feb. 2009). A print version has been distributed in N'Djamena since January 2009 (ibid.).

[3] The agreement of 13 August 2007, titled Political Agreement to Strengthen the Democratic Process in Chad (Accord politique en vue du renforcement du processus démocratique au Tchad), [translation] "formed the basis for legislative reform and implementation of equal and independent electoral administration for maintaining calm at polling stations during the 2011 legislative and presidential elections" (EU n.d.).

[4] In 2009, Timan Erdimi was appointed by his peers as leader of the Chadian rebellion against President Déby, under the banner of the Union of Resistance Forces (Union des forces de la résistance, UFR) (AFP 21 Mar. 2013). AFP describes him as [translation] "a former close collaborator of [P]resident" Déby, who is his uncle (ibid.).

[5] In Chad, the national mediator is in charge of [translation] "working to restore and maintain civil and political peace" (Tsakadi 2010, 393). He works under the authority of the prime minister (ibid.).

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact the following organizations were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response: Association tchadienne pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme au Tchad; Mouvement panafricain pour la démocratie et la justice; Mouvement pour la paix et le développement du Tchad.

Internet sites, including: Afrik.com; Agence tchadienne de presse; AllAfrica; BBC; Bertelsmann Stiftung; Chad – official government website; ecoi.net; Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa; Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme; Freedom House; International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance; IRIN; *Le Monde*; Organisation mondiale contre la torture; Panapress; TchadOnline; UN – Refworld.

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