



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY



EU Military Operation in Eastern Chad and North Eastern Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA)

Updated: March 2009
Tchad-RCA/9

Operation background

The European Union conducted a military bridging operation, EUFOR Tchad/RCA, from 28 January 2008 to 15 March 2009, under the mandate provided by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1778 (of 25 September 2007).

This operation, deployed in Eastern Chad and in the North East of the Central African Republic, was conducted under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), with the agreement of the governments of Chad and the Central African Republic.



General M. Kandji, MINURCAT Force Commander, and General J-P Ganascia, EUFOR Force Commander

With this operation, the EU stepped up its longstanding action to tackle the crisis in Darfur, as part of its regional approach to the crisis.

The UN took over from EUFOR on 15 March 2009 in both Chad and the CAR, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1834. EUFOR and the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) cooperated closely to prepare the handover. The chief task of MINURCAT, which was also set up under UNSC Resolution 1778, is to help maintain order in the camps for refugees displaced people close to the border with Darfur.

Mandate and objectives

EUFOR Tchad/RCA coordinated closely with the multi-dimensional United Nations presence in the East of Chad and in the North East of the CAR in order to improve security in those regions. The EU operation had the following specific objectives:

- to contribute to the protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons;
- to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian aid workers by helping to improve security in the area of operations;
- to contribute to the protection of UN personnel, premises, installations and equipment and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its own personnel, of UN personnel and of associated personnel.

Operational parameters

EUFOR Tchad/RCA was a particular challenge for the EU, given the situation on the ground, the vast area covered and the logistical difficulties.

The operation began on 28 January and reached Initial Operational Capability on 15 March 2008. When fully deployed it numbered as many as 3 700 troops.

EUFOR Tchad/RCA was the most multinational military operation deployed in Africa so far, with 14 EU Member States present in the field, 19 in theatre, and 22 at the Operation Headquarters (OHQ) at Mont Valérien (France).

The EU Operation Commander was Lt General Patrick Nash

(Ireland) and the EU Force Commander was Brigadier General Jean-Philippe Ganascia (France).

FACTS AND FIGURES

<p>Theatre: Chad and Central African Republic Headquarters: OHQ: Mont-Valérien (Paris) Rear FHQ: N'Djamena, FHQ: Abéché Starting Date: January 2008 (COI 15 March 2008) Operation Commander: General Patrick Nash (Op.Cdr.) Mission strength: 3 700 Budget: EUR 119.6 million (common costs) Contributing states: 26 States in total; 23 EU member states and three third states (Albania, Croatia and Russia).</p>	
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The deployment included a rear Force Headquarters (FHQ) at N'Djamena, an FHQ at Abéché and three battalions stationed in the eastern Chad areas of Iriba (North), Forchana (Centre) and Goz Beida (South) respectively, as well as a detachment in Birao (Central African Republic).

EUFOR Tchad/RCA was allowed under its mandate to use armed force if necessary. It was independent, impartial and neutral.

A comprehensive EU approach

Operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA was part of a package of measures designed to enhance the EU's engagement in tackling the crisis in Darfur. All the EU's instruments – diplomatic, political and financial – are being mobilised in support of this effort. The main elements, which are all interlinked, comprise:

- increased support for African Union (AU) and UN efforts to revitalise the political process aimed at finding a lasting solution in Darfur;
- acceleration of the final phase of deployment of the AU/UN hybrid operation (UNAMID) in Darfur;
- increased mobilisation to finance humanitarian aid and secure humanitarian access.

This is the context in which the European Union, through the European Commission, is supporting MINURCAT. The European Commission has contributed EUR 10 million under the Instrument for Stability to the fund set up by MINURCAT to finance its programme to train, equip and support the deployment of Chadian police and gendarmes responsible for the security of the refugee camps and sites for displaced persons in eastern Chad.

The European Community is also providing substantial funding for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of return zones for displaced people, particularly through reconstruction, mediation and administrative capacity-building, which is needed to improve security in the areas covered by the EU/UN mission.

In Chad, the objective of the Accompanying Programme for Stabilisation (for the period 2008-2012) is to facilitate the transition phase between emergency and development programmes by helping to establish the conditions for the voluntary and permanent return of displaced persons and refugees. The 10th European Development Fund (EDF) is to devote almost EUR 300 million to Chad for the period 2008-2013

In the Central African Republic, the Accompanying Programme for the North-Eastern CAR launched its first activities in November 2008 and the 10th EDF provides for EUR 137 million for the CAR for the period 2008-2013.

Success of the operation

EUFOR raised the level of security in its area of activity

To secure the area, EUFOR conducted numerous patrols (more than 2000 short-range patrols and over 440 long-range patrols) and large-scale operations in areas where it did not have permanent camps. The presence of Russian helicopters (from December 2008) increased the mobility of the force. Some 500 air missions were carried out.

EUFOR also protected the population by deactivating some 350 unexploded ordnance items. And, whilst medical care was not its primary task, EUFOR's medical units were able to treat the local population (in more than 3 000 medical consultations and 65 surgical operations), demonstrating EUFOR's real concern for the local community.



EU HR Javier Solana visits Chad, May 2008

By helping to create secure conditions, EUFOR enabled MINURCAT to become operational over its entire area of action. For example, it helped MINURCAT set up by escorting United Nations convoys and conducting operations to secure the area around MINURCAT's future deployment sites.

The improvement in the security situation and the measures to provide assistance and rebuild return zones for displaced people made it possible for at least 10 000 people to return voluntarily to 22 villages.

EUFOR facilitated humanitarian assistance

The security provided by EUFOR facilitated the work of humanitarian organisations, with which EUFOR coordinated on a regular basis.

The humanitarian assistance provided by the European Commission (ECHO programme) to refugees, displaced persons and host communities in Chad amounted to EUR 30 million in 2008. ECHO's activities include healthcare and water purification treatment, food aid and food security, protection, emergency shelters and education. Humanitarian aid is also provided for CAR, where more than 250 000 people were directly assisted in 2007-2008.

The European Union's continuing commitment

EUFOR'S mandate has ended but the European Union remains fully engaged in Chad and the CAR. A number of Member States and third countries will remain on the ground with MINURCAT (Ireland, Austria, Finland, Poland, France, Albania, Croatia and Russia). Around 2 000 men who served in EUFOR are now serving under the MINURCAT flag.

The EU will also continue its political and diplomatic engagement in Chad, the Central African Republic and, in particular, in Sudan, where implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Darfur peace process is crucial to the region's stabilisation. The EU is engaged in seeking a political solution to the Darfur conflict and an improvement in relations between Chad and Sudan, particularly through the activities of the EU Special Representative for Sudan.

Despite the end of the EUFOR operation, the European Union's long-term assistance to Chad and Central African Republic will continue.

*The European Union's **European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)** includes the gradual framing of a common defence policy which might in time lead to a common defence. The ESDP allows the Union to develop its civilian and military capacities for crisis management and conflict prevention at international level, thus helping to maintain peace and international security, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The ESDP includes a strong conflict prevention component.*

*More information and background documents available on
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/esdp>*