



Nomads and Warlords, Chadian Forces in African Peace Operations

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Abstract

Despite criticism of the United Nations (UN) as peacekeepers “hiding behind sandbags,” by the former president of Chad, the Chadian military has become a critical enabler of African-led and UN peace operations. This paper posits that the effectiveness of the Chadian forces stems from refined and modified nomad and warlord structures and attributes used during Chad’s various conflicts to build and improve its national army. This has allowed the Chadian regime to exercise and project power, thus, producing one of Africa’s most effective forces for current conflicts and challenges. Thus, Chad’s military leadership reflects a trend of states that use military prowess to project force, while maintaining international partnerships with permanent members of the UNSC (the US and France), UN peacekeeping missions and African ad hoc security initiatives. Finally, the paper examines the implications of this trend for the evolving nature of African Peace and Security Architecture.

Keywords

Chad – nomad – warlords – African Union Peace Support Operations – UN PKO and ad hoc security initiatives

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Introduction

Over the last 60 years, the nature of warfare has changed, and with this change has come shifts in how United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO) has responded to conflict. The first shift was a move away from limited efforts to maintain peace in post-conflict environments, towards more robust efforts at peace enforcement. The second shift was the composition of peacekeepers from the north who felt the need to stop violent conflict from getting out of hand, and whose remit focused on passing on liberal democratic norms to global south states. These shifts led to more international interventions and UN PKOs such as the United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I) (1992–1993), the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) (1993–1995), and Operation Restore Hope, the US-led Unified Task Force (1992–1993). The third shift was the strengthening of African peacekeeping or peace enforcement capabilities underneath the African Union (AU) and Peace Support Operations flag (development of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)). Consequently, the AU has deployed eleven peace operations, including Burundi (AMIB), the Central African Republic (MISCA and MOUACA), Comoros (AMISEC and MAES), Mali (AFISMA), Somalia (AMISOM and now ATMIS) and Sudan (AMIS I and II). African-led PSOs have evolved due to several drivers and shifts in regional and global dynamics, which have inspired African PSOs to seek to fill the vacuum (by intervening and dealing with insecurity), by taking on greater responsibility. African-led PSOs demonstrate a more local, context-specific response to insecurity, and a desire from member states to turn to more self-help options. The AMISOM, in particular, was a unique African Peace Support Operation (PSO) deployed in 2007, led by the African Union (AU) and designed to provide support and protection to civilians of Somalia, with provision from the United Nations (UN).² Other changes during this period included changes to the mandate of UN missions, with some having enforcement and stabilisation directives like the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), which had a United Nations Force Intervention Brigade attached to the mission.³ This third period also included attempts to transfer peacekeeping expertise from the global north to the global south, with states like Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan,

2 African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), 'AMISOM Background', (2021). available at: <https://amisom-au.org/amisom-background/>.

3 The Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network (EPON), *Assessing the Effectiveness of the United Nations Mission in the DRC / MONUC—MONUSCO UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)*, 2019, available at <https://effectivepeaceops.net/publication/monusco/> (accessed on 13 September 2022).

Ghana, Ethiopia and Nigeria taking on the mantle, and integrating into UN PKOs. It also witnessed the formation of African-led PSOs. This included the expansion of African forces from states like Nigeria and Ghana, who cultivated their experiences of regional peacekeeping efforts through Regional Economic Communities or Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) missions into large UN PKOs.⁴

The success of African-led PSOs during the early 90s to late 2000s encouraged the AU and the RECs/RMs to develop Africa's capacity to deploy and conduct PSOs of their own.⁵ African leaders felt it was essential to take control of the growing insecurity emerging across the continent. This resulted in the African Standby Force (ASF) initiative launched in 2003.⁶ The ASF and related initiatives have resulted in almost two decades of a significant increase in African-led PSO capacity and the AU's deployment of ten PSOs.^{7 8} Since then, three types of African-led deployment have emerged that were outside the ASF concept. The first AU-led PSO include African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) and the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB). The AMISOM demonstrated a unique, agile, adaptive, and blended approach to stabilising states and regions in conflict by the AU during periods when there is no peace to keep. The second is the RECs-led missions categorised by missions led by ECOWAS in Sierra Leone and Liberia and, more recently, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) mission to Mozambique (SAMIM), and previously to Lesotho. Third, a coalition of states or coalitions of the willing operating inside and outside of two RECs forming Ad hoc Security Initiatives

4 This period verged with notable supporters of multilateral cooperation and other liberal-democratic norms with extensive peacekeeping experience.

5 Linda Darkwa, 'The African Standby Force: The African Union's tool for the maintenance of peace and security', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 38:3, 2017, pp. 471–482, DOI: 10.1080/13523260.2017.1342478.

6 Cedric De Coning, *Can the AU Finance its own peace operations, and if so, what would the impact be?*, available at: <https://cedricdeconing.net/2017/03/28/can-the-au-finance-its-own-peace-operations-and-if-so-what-would-the-impact-be/#:~:text=If%20the%20AU%20develops%20the,UN%2C%20EU%20and%20bilateral%20partners>, (accessed on 15 November 2022).

7 Cedric De Coning, *et al.*, *The future of African peace operations: From Janjaweed to Boko Haram*. (London: Zed Books, 2016).

8 The AU mission in Burundi (AMIB), the Central African Republic (MISCA and MOUACA), Comoros (AMISEC and MAES), Mali (AFISMA), Somalia (AMISOM and ATMIS) and Sudan (AMIS I and II).

(ASI),⁹ which include missions such as the Lake Chad Basin Commission Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)¹⁰ and the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel).¹¹ All three represent African-led political missions, with a coalition of the willing which are context-specific to the situation on the ground and include rapid deployment and the increased agency of RECs and RMS as critical actors.

These three types of African-led PSOs have developed several unique characteristics that distinguish them from UN PKOs. Firstly, they were not deployed to implement ceasefire or peace agreements after the cessation of violent conflict but were designed as peace enforcement operations that would intervene amidst ongoing conflict. The operations were also designed to protect civilians and stop violent insurgency, and operated in environments where there was no peace to be kept. These missions would expose the limitations of UN doctrine, which rests on the preservation of traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, impartiality and minimum use of force. Secondly, African-led PSOs were deployed to protect and support the state against identified aggressors. In later years, these aggressors were mostly insurgents (violent extremists or local bandits) with no clearly defined political motive. The MNJTF and JF-G5S, and the African Union Regional Task Force to counter the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA), provide the clearest examples of this model of operation — designed to address insecurity linked with jihadism, banditry and cross border challenges.¹² Thirdly, the missions operated in support of and, where feasible, alongside host nation forces. This is in line with the AU constitutional order, designed to support and assist states back to stability through force if deemed necessary.¹³ This meant African-led PSOs were taking on challenges UN PKOs could not deliver on.

9 Cedric De Coning, *et al.*, 'Ad-hoc Security Initiatives, an African response to insecurity', *African Security Review*, 31:4, 2022, pp. 383–398 DOI: 10.1080/10246029.2022.2134810.

10 Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network (EPON), *A quest to win the hearts and minds: Assessing the Effectiveness of the Multinational Joint Task Force*, 2023. Available at: <https://effectivepeaceops.net/publication/mnjtf/> (accessed on 28 January 2023).

11 Effectiveness of Peace Operations Network (EPON), *Shifting from External Dependency: Remodelling the G5 Sahel Joint Force for the Future*. 2022, Available at: <https://effectivepeaceops.net/publication/shifting-from-external-dependency/> 2022 (accessed on 26 December 2022).

12 Cedric De Coning, *et al.*, 'Ad-hoc Security Initiatives, an African response to insecurity', *African Security Review*, 31:4, 2022, pp. 383–398 DOI: 10.1080/10246029.2022.2134810.

13 Ben Kioko, *The right of intervention under the African Union's Constitutive Act: From non-interference to non-intervention*, *Revue Internationale De La Croix-Rouge/International Review of the Red Cross*, 85(852), 2003, pp. 807–826. doi:10.1017/S0035336100179948.

Parallel to this has been the emergence of some African states whose strategies of warfare and past violent conflicts (ethnic clashes, internal and external insurgent movements and/or rebel movements in neighbouring states) have been capitalised on to develop forces that now operate as guardians of Africa's peace and security challenges. Since the fall of Libyan leader Qaddafi in 2011, some states like Chad have been able to exploit regional and global challenges, allowing political-strategic space for Chad to deploy forces (other states include Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda). The former president of Chad criticised the failure of some African states with large armies to deal with the rise of new insurgent groups, stating, "The whole world is asking why the Nigerian army, which is a big army ... is not in a position to stand up to untrained kids armed with Kalashnikovs".¹⁴ It has been posited that opportunity-seeking and strategic, ever-changing armed alliances in Chadian politics led to Déby's forces being better equipped and trained, which in turn benefitted Déby in his fight against domestic rebels and other challengers.¹⁵ This paper contends that Chadian forces, through nomad and warlord strategies, present a new wave of African forces (part of PSO, peace enforcement, international interventions and remote warfare) which have filled a gap that the UN, AU, RECS/RMS and permanent members of the UNSC (the US and France) have not been capable of filling. This encouraged the former president Déby to use Chadian forces to increase his standing, to gain and maintain international partnerships for his regime and personal political ambitions, while enabling the forces' ability to project power and their standing regionally. As a result, the Chadian force represents an adaptable and agile force for dealing with current and emerging conflicts among insurgent groups.¹⁶

The paper is divided into five sections. Section one briefly examines Chad's nomad and warlord traditions, examining how these have contributed to the state's formation processes, the rise of the Chadian army and later contributed to the effectiveness of the Chadian forces in regional conflicts. The section argues that these practises, alongside the willingness and adaptability of under-equipped Chadian forces to manoeuvre and attack without returning to base every day has allowed the Chadian military to be effective in conflicts

14 PM News Nigeria, *Idriss Déby, Chads Déby unhappy with Nigeria's military*, 2015. Available at: <https://pmnewsnigeria.com/2015/03/27/boko-haram-chads-deby-unhappy-with-nigerias-military/> (accessed on 28 June 2021).

15 Michael Klen, *Le tchad face à son desine, Revue Défense Nationale*, 792(7), 1999, pp. 176–185. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rdna.792.0176>.

16 Malte Brosig, 'Rentier peacekeeping in neo-patrimonial systems: The examples of Burundi and Kenya'. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 38(1), 2017, pp. 109–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2017.1283926>.

against groups like Boko Haram. Section two examines how decades of civil war, conflict and violence perpetuated by the state and nomad societal dynamics contributed to disunity in the armed forces. This allowed for the recruitment of nomads and warlords into the Chadian army, contributing to the Chad state formation process, and Déby's building of an effective army for contemporary conflicts. Section three examines the clash of liberal democratic ideals against the backdrop of Déby's leadership, and how these helped to reinforce his time in office. It argues that these factors helped to perfect nomad and warlord structures that helped remodel the Chadian military into a rapid deployment force against insecurity. Section four examines how nomad and warlord structures and attributes deployed by Déby through military operations and cooperation with permanent members of the UNSC (US and France), allowed him to exploit those partnerships to sustain his regime, and to deploy forces to AU and UN authorised missions and African-led operations. Section five briefly examines the implications of the rise of the Chadian army for the African Peace and Security Architecture. The final section provides some concluding thoughts.

Nomad Warlords and State Formation

In the 1870s, the German explorer Gustav Nachtigal described eastern Chadians as zealous warriors.¹⁷ Pre-colonial rulers of empires and peoples in the state named "Territoire Militaire des pays et protectorats du Tchad" by a French decree on September 5, 1900, offered serious armed resistance to the French colonisers.¹⁸ Between 1880–1900 the Muslim Leader Rabah Fadlallah took control of most of the northern part of the area now known as Chad. Rabah would enlist many of the local tribes' sons into their forces. In particular, sons of the nobility were taken into the Rabah's army as hostages to secure the loyalty of local chiefs. In 1891, Rabah successfully fought the expeditionary force of French Lieutenant Paul Crampel.¹⁹ In 1899 Rabah won a battle against the French, in which he killed Lieutenant Bretonnet and most of his men.²⁰ In 1900, Rabah, and his troops of 1000 anti-colonialists, defeated the French and an unknown number of "tirailleurs Sénégalais". Rabah was later killed in 1900,

17 Gustav Nachtigal, 'Sahara and the Sudan: Wadai and Darfur'. (London, UK: C. Hurst, 1971).

18 Mahamat Assileck, 'Colonial conquest and demarcation of the borders of Chad: 1890–1936'; Master's thesis, *Department of History*, University of Ngaoundere, 2007. p. 33.

19 Crampel was killed two years later by Sultan al Sanussi of Dar Kuti.

20 Timothy J. Stapelton, *A Military History of Africa, Volume 1. The Colonial Period: From the Scramble for Africa to the Algerian Independence War* (ca. 1870–1963). (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger Publishers, 2013).

on the battlefields outside of Kousseri, known today as the Chadian capital city of N'Djamena.

Rabah's followers continued to resist French colonisation, until 1911, when Mohammed el Sanussi, Rabah's most powerful general of the "Emir of the Faithful", was killed by French forces. Some pockets of defiance remained.²¹ From 1911 to 1920, fighting between colonial forces and the local resistance – especially the Tubu, in the Borko-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET) region – continued, with both sides incurring heavy losses.²² In Eastern Chad, the sultan of Waddai's army of 10,000–11,000 troops fiercely resisted the invaders.²³ Historians claim that the period following the 1920 killing of Derdei, the Tubu spiritual leader was marked by episodic weak resistance.²⁴ Nevertheless, the French military administration in the Borko-Ennedi-Tibesti region continued to meet rebellion from "warlike inhabitants," making armed ad hoc resistance attractive to groups and people in this area.²⁵

Two trends emerged during this period; first, some nomadic pastoralists were hired as security, personal protection and community forces, and in this capacity contributed to the Chadian state formation process; they were already part of powerful empires from which modern-day Chad and Sudan emerged, and came to dominate these territories.²⁶ Second, the spread of traditional nomad pastoralist practises referred to as "going out" was embedded as a cultural norm; (nomads and pastoralists, resistance fighters and warlords, left their towns and villages for months and years, and hired out their services, joining rebellions against those in power.²⁷ Essentially, warlords took on the role as autonomous governors of territories across Chad.²⁸

21 Mario J. Azevedo, 'Roots of violence: A history of war in Chad'. (Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1998, pp. 69–70).

22 Mahamat Assileck, 'Colonial conquest and demarcation of the borders of Chad: 1890–1936'; Master's thesis, *Department of History*, University of Ngaoundere, 2007, p. 33.

23 Marielle Debos, 'Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa's Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation' (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016.).

24 Mario J. Azevedo, 'Roots of violence: A history of war in Chad'. (Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1998, pp. 69–71).

25 Ibid.

26 Robert Buijtenhuijs, 'The Chadian Tubu: Contemporary Nomads Who Conquered a State'. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 71, 1, 2001, pp. 149–161. See also, F. K. Madjirangar, 'Paysans-eleveurs: pourquoi une cohabitation difficile?' N'Djamena Hebdo, 1991.

27 Marielle Debos, 'Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa's Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation' (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016.).

28 Charlton Roger, and Roy May, 'Warlords and Militarism in Chad'. *Review of African Political Economy*, no. 45/46, 1989, pp. 12–25. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006007>. (accessed 11 December 2022).

The Chadian army led a campaign of repression against Malgalmé rebels of Central Chad, whose rose against a controversial tax increase to quell the revolt. The uprising could not be quelled entirely; it spread to the Batha, Ouaddai and Salamat regions, where entire villages took to the bush or spontaneously ‘liberated’ themselves from the hold of the central administration. Revolts were contained within eastern and central regions and involved sedentary peasant populations. These rebellions were often backed by men “going out”, or seeking employment with security services—going back to the government fold, resistant groups or the regular army—or the highest bidder,²⁹ a practice that continued throughout Chad’s evolution into a modern state.³⁰

James Sheridan summarises the key features of warlord leadership as characterised by effective governmental control over a reasonably well-defined region, supported by a military organisation that recognises the ultimate authority of the warlord.³¹ Such loyalty denotes the army’s willingness and ability to manoeuvre and attack as necessary. That they are able to remain ‘in the field’ of war, without needing to return to their bases each day demonstrates their strong control over areas—despite being under-equipped and having inadequate logistical support—and a level of risk and tolerance. This contrasts with most other Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) that rely on deployment well within range of their bases.

These shifts demonstrate mutually inconsistent developments in Chad’s military experience and deployment in current African operations, which scholars have overlooked. These key characteristics can often be concealed within the state-building process or alongside state collapse and failure processes. Following independence, intermittent armed conflicts overshadowed Chad’s state formation process, beginning in 1965 with a rebellion in the Malgalmé region of central Chad.³² Thus, understanding the nomad and warlord practise, and its contribution to the Chadian army’s risk-tolerance approach to conflict and overall strategy in current deployments in Africa can help scholars understand how and why Chad has achieved noticeable success in its operational capacity against insurgent groups.

29 Marielle Debos, ‘Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa’s Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation’ (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016).

30 Ibid.

31 John K. Sheridan, ‘Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-Hsiang’. Stanford University Press. *The American Historical Review*, 72, 4, 1967, p. 1460. <https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/72.4.1460>.

32 Robert Buijtenhuijs, ‘The Chadian Tubu: Contemporary Nomads Who Conquered a State’. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 71, 1, 2001, pp. 149–161.

In contrast, it is often argued that the capacity to deploy an effective force as observed in developed countries, often requires constant resources to maintain the deployment, effective force structure, disciplined forces and the capacity to project force in the national interests.³³ In the case of Chad, it can be maintained that nomad and warlord strategies, internal and regional conflicts, and disunity within the army have contributed to the ability of the Chadian army to achieve success against insurgent groups. Therefore, re-examining the nomad-warlord practice can help to understand the success of modern-day Chad forces.

Chad's Civil War

The French colonial period in Chad was based on indirect rule with the co-optation of sultans, local chiefs and Muslim and non-Muslim divisions, which helped create a north-south divide that destabilised post-colonial nation building efforts. Under Charles de Gaulle, the French army used Chadians as porters and soldiers, helping to produce “generations of men in arms”.³⁴ Shortly after independence in 1960, President François Tombalbaye (1960 until his overthrow in 1975) declared his party, the Chadian Progressive Party (PPT), the sole legitimate political party. Tombalbaye's programme ensured that central government—situated in the south—consisted mostly of non-Muslim southern tribes, while trying to Africanise the state. The southern region dominated government and civil service leaving Muslims in the north feeling alienated by Tombalbaye's exclusionism. Tax increases in 1965 fuelled a rebellion, which rekindled traditional animosities between the Muslim northern and central regions, and the predominantly non-Muslim peoples of the south. Unrest erupted across Chad, with dissident groups merging into the National Liberation Front of Chad or Front de Liberation Nationale du Tchad (Frolinat). Frolinat was formed in Sudan in June 1966 as a coordinating body for the rural rebels; however, the groups struggled to maintain cohesion. From 1966 to about 1972, some unity was maintained by Frolinat whose strategy of unifying the forces and politically seemed to work by highlighting the challenges these communities faced, but outbreaks of factionalism occurred, causing the Group to splinter into several politico-military groups. Meanwhile, the government dissolved into a succession of coalitions and factionalism. For one scholar, “post-1965 conflicts in Chad more often broke solidarities down to

33 Ian Johnstone, ‘Peace Operations’, *The Power of Deliberation*. *International Law, Politics and Organisations*, 2011, pp. 136–159. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195394931.003.0007>.

34 Marielle Debos, ‘Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa's Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation’ (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016.).

lineage or family level, instead of promoting and sustaining cohesion of larger social groups".³⁵ By March 1969, President Tombalbaye felt Frolinat's threat so strongly that he sought France's military assistance. Though not particularly supportive of Tombalbaye's regime, but unable to find a better alternative, France conceded and sent 2,000 men.³⁶ For three years, France propped up Tombalbaye's regime with military support, first under Operation Limousin (1969–1972) and then, in 1971, changing to Operation Bison.³⁷

Frolinat mainly consisted of fractioned groups, though most members were from the nomadic Tubu tribe, pledged loyalty to rebel leader Hissein Habre, and made up the Armed Rebel Forces of the North. Frolinat also included fighters from Dazaori Forces Armées Populaires (FAP), or the Peoples Armed Forces, an insurgent group of followers of Goukouni Oueddei, a representative of the Teda sub-group (Tibest),³⁸ who received significant support from Libya after the split with Habré in 1976. In 1975, the authoritarian Tombalbaye was murdered by the Chadian military, and was succeeded by a military government led by Félix Malloum, who continued the war against northern insurgents. While Frolinat fighters controlled vast northern, eastern and central areas, they could not defeat the government or the Chadian army, who received substantial support from French forces based in Chad between 1969–72.

With support from Libya's Colonel Qaddafi, Goukouni's FAP continued to over-run the Largeau city of Borko-Ennedi-Tibesti regional garrisons between 1977 and 1978, one of the largest cities of northern Chad. French general Delayen praised FAP and FAN's courage, noting how they fought 'like lions'—indications of this success included Goukouni's FAP unit defeating in 1978, 1,200 Chadian soldiers.³⁹ During this period, building military strength—including by defections from one side to the other—solidified a political economy of war for nomads and warlord groups. In this way, they were able to perfect the nomad and warlord strategy, increase opportunities for forces to fight, for some fighters to defect, while also increasing the risk-tolerance of forces.

The small gains made by the insurgents began to spread to other parts of the country. In February 1979, war broke out in N'Djamena, with the

35 William J. Foltz, 'Reconstructing the State of Chad', 1995; In William Zartman, *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*. (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).

36 Marielle Debos and Nathaniel Powell, *The other country of "Endless Wars": A history of military France in Chad (1960–2016)*. *Les Temps Modernes*, 2017. 693. pp. 1–46.

37 Sam C. Nolutshungu, *Limits of anarchy: Intervention and state formation in Chad*. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996.).

38 Robert Buijtenhuijs, 'The Chadian Tubu: Contemporary Nomads Who Conquered a State'. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 71, 1, 2001. pp. 149–161.

39 *Ibid.*, pp. 149–161.

southern-dominated National Army who joined a fragile alliance with Habre's FAN, as part of a deal with Malloum. Though opposed by several southern forces, Habre joined a fragile alliance with Goukouni fighters. Malloum stepped down the following month, and power was turned over to an eight-person provisional council headed by Oueddei, until a permanent solution was decided at a conference in Kano, Nigeria. However, fighting continued, and the Tubu coalition won the battle, forcing the Chadian army to abandon the capital and withdraw to the south. In joining the Frolinat rebellion, Tubu fighters took up their traditional nomad fighting strategies and deployed these in battles against the state; as a result, the Tubu combatants were regarded among the most accomplished of the Frolinat rebels who captured the Chadian state.⁴⁰

Disunity Within Chad

Chad was divided into two, with large parts of the territory and population outside the official administration of the central government. Under Colonel Kamougue's leadership in the south, the military and civil servants created a parallel administration headed by a 'Comite permanent', with all the attributes of a legitimate government, except the name and the absence of international recognition. In contrast, the north descended into chaos and rebellion, with the nomad and warlords' groups contributing further to Frolinat's splintering, while maintaining control over their ethnic strongholds, which led to incessant war against each other. In November 1979, a new national coalition government, known as the "Transitional Government of National Unity" (GUNT), led by the northerner Goukouni emerged. During his three-year presidency, Goukouni asserted little control over rival northern regions held by nomads and warlords. Neither could he stop the south becoming self-sustaining segments of the state. Continued differences with Habré, who opposed Libya's intervention, led to Goukouni's ousting by Habré's forces in 1982, with help from Sudan, Egypt and the United States.⁴¹

Internal civil war and the fragmentation of groups created an economy (and risk-tolerance) which in turn created freelance forces who needed to survive economically by occupying positions. At the same time, they were able to develop their skills gained from observing nomad and warlord tactics, an advantage that allowed them to be easily adaptable fighters who helped increase the risk tolerance and effectiveness of their forces in Chad's internal civil strife. Many of these same forces were later absorbed within the Chadian

⁴⁰ Robert Buijtenhuijs, 'The Chadian Tubu: Contemporary Nomads Who Conquered a State'. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 71, 1, 2001. pp. 149–161.

⁴¹ Ibid.

army, or continued to defect into other local groups using nomadic and warlord practices which they integrated with guerrilla warfare (later refined through US, French and Libyan training through bases in Sudan).

Part of the success of these groups lies in the fact that the conflicts and battles in which they participated were fought in vast desert areas of the Borko-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET) region and its periphery areas. These regions bear striking similarity to areas favoured by terrorist groups like Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Lake Chad and Sahel. They are well suited to guerrilla warfare, and the fighting capacity of the Tubu in pre- and post-colonial times meant forces based here were well adapted to these natural environments.⁴² FAN made efforts to recruit from local communities in the north, but also from components and representatives of the Tubu group, especially Daza, the eastern Zaghawa, the central Hadjeray and a few elements from south-western Chad.

Two notable aspects of these forces were their ability to rapidly deploy, and to operate independently of a line of command to achieve strategic and tactical goals. These forces were organised in pre-existing groups with established loyalty and understanding within units. Hence, the forces were not a national army, but a modular network of existing fighting units to create a joint force.

National conflicts during the late 1970s and early 1980 resulted in Tubu achieving political control over the Chadian central government.⁴³ The Tubu are, in a sense, born guerrillas in “a warring society”⁴⁴ with aggression regarded as normal, but reprehensible.⁴⁵ Tubu nomads and Zaghawa, who formed part of President Déby’s tribal group, conquered Chad in 1982 and 1990, and became the new ruling elites, controlling both government and military, and merging their practices with those of wider society. These practices were woven into the governance structures of their regions and throughout Chad. As parts of FAN and FAP’s forces, Tubus demonstrated their superiority to other military groups. The desert environment, the “going out” way of life of nomad and warlords,⁴⁶ and the adaptive abilities of Chadian forces lend to their nomadic and warlord characteristics. Their local combating structures and fighting attributes used

42 Jean Chappelle, ‘Nomades noirs du Sahara’, 1982. Paris, L’Harmattan; Tubu, according to Chappelle, advanced combat ability and a culture attributing great value to military skills featured in many nomadic societies and the Tubu were particularly gifted in this field.

43 Claude Arditi, ‘Commerce, Islam et Etat au Tchad, 1900–90 and 1993–94’. *Journal des anthropologues*, 31,4, 1995. Available at <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/39855656.pdf> (accessed on 12 November 2022).

44 Robert Buijtenhuijs, ‘Le Frolinat et les revoltes populaires du Tchad, 1965’; (The Hague, Paris and New York: Mouton, 1978).

45 Ibid.

46 Marielle Debos, ‘Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa’s Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation’ (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016).

by President Déby were adopted to deal with terrorist and rebel groups. The president's warrior-like leadership contributed to the modern-day Chadian army. This differs from other African armies e.g., Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya, who adopted and adapted many of the colonial military structures nationally, and later for UN PKO and AU PSOs. Thus, the success of Chad's armies may originate from the nomad and warlords practices, which represent a way of life for northern and eastern forces; and are relied upon by successive regimes, insurgent groups and ethnically aligned leaders.^{47 48}

The Rise of Déby

France had shown reluctance to interfere in Chad under Habré's leadership. However, the capture of Faya-Largeau by Oueddei in August 1983 drew immediate reaction from the French. Operation Manta deployed 3,500 French troops supported by eight fighter aircraft, to help President Habré control the country south of Longitude 15. Heavy resistance from Oueddei and Gaddafi's forces, and President Mitterrand's view of northern Chad as "Tchad inutile", forced France withdraw to Longitude 16 after January 1984. A joint agreement with Libya should have resulted in the withdrawal of French and Libyan forces from Chad by the end of 1984. France withdrew in early 1985, and officially terminated Operation Manta; the Libyan force, however, remained, and Oueddei's GUNT regained terrain in northern Chad. The new army, the "Chad National Armed force" (FANT) formed in 1982, was a composite army in which career soldiers, former Frolinat fighters and rebels integrated into successive waves. However, tensions arose over the processes of integrating the FAN into the Chadian armed forces, and competition over military rank created further challenges. Habré wanted to rebalance the army, whose units were from the south, and quickly sought to mobilise the Muslims from the north.

During the '90s, Chad disintegrated into regimented disorder: the rebels had no central government which supported their gains and allowed for peculiar flexibility, fluidity and opportunity for personal engagement.⁴⁹ Déby had already fled to Senegal and then Darfur to regroup before the promulgation of

47 Sam C. Nolutshungu, *Limits of anarchy: Intervention and state formation in Chad* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996).

48 Roland Marchal, 'An emerging military power in central Africa? Chad under Idriss Déby'. *Societes Politiques Comparees*, 40, 2016, pp. 1–20. Available at: <https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/an-emerging-military-power-in-central-africa-chad-under-idriss-deby.pdf> (accessed on 12 September 2022).

49 Julien Brachet and Judith Scheele, 'Remoteness is power: Disconnection as a relation in northern Chad'. *Social Anthropology*, 27,2, 2019a, pp. 156–171; Julien Brachet and Judith Scheele, *The value of disorder: Autonomy, prosperity, and plunder in the Chadian Sahara*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

the new constitution, and a failed coup. Ethnic tensions amongst government troops in the south was mirrored by disaffection in N'Djaména. Disgruntlement fermented ethnic-nationalist discussions, leading to emerging political and military cadres organising self-defence militia to tackle local conflicts fostered by regional political and military movements. The regionalisation of conflict in Chad encouraged ethnic grouping, but also led Déby's ethnic Zaghawa to unite behind him as protection from Habré's regime, after Déby's attempted coup.

Déby established the Mouvement Patriotique du Salut (MPS) in Darfur, and trained approximately 2,000 troops with support from Libya and Sudan.⁵⁰ The MPS mainly consisted of estranged Hadjerai and Bideyat Zaghawa (Déby's clan not found over the border in Sudan) and Zaghawa from Sudan —including Gala and the Twer, Suweini, Artaj, Awlad Digein. In November 1990, Déby left Darfur for N'Djaména, and in a successful coup, entered the capital city in December, with support from French colonel Paul Fontbonne, who later served as Déby's special military adviser, employed as a French intelligence officer in the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure (DGSE).⁵¹ Several of Habré's high-level agents continued to work for newly installed President Déby.⁵²

Clash of Liberal Democracy Ideals

Over the years, it became clear that Déby's role in power was to prevent potential wildfires that could eventually conflict with broader internal challenges and neighbouring states, and which could threaten his position and the country's stability. Déby's first act was to suspend the constitution and elect a national assembly; eventually, he engineered a version of democratic transition which often went counter to western notions of liberal democracy. On February 29, 1991, a Charte Nationale or National Charter was created to replace the provisional Council of State established after the MPS captured N'Djaména. Later confirming his presidency under the *Charte Nationale* and solidifying his leadership in Chad, Déby created a new government with elements of the previous leadership, comprised of officials and groups from the south, and outside of the MPS coalition. Pressured by western forces, Déby implemented a form of democracy that served his purpose, despite being regarded as a warlord. Under

50 Marielle Debos, 'Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa's Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation' (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016); Mario J. Azevedo and Samuel Decalo, *Historical dictionary of Chad*. (London, UK: The Scarecrow Press, 2018).

51 Antoine Glaser, 'AfricaFrance: When African leaders become the masters of the game'; (Paris, France: Fayard, 2014).

52 Reed Brody, 'Bringing a Dictator to Justice: The Case of Hissène Habré,' *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, 13, 2, 2015, pp. 209–217.

the terms of the *Charte Nationale* (pending a referendum on a new constitution), in mid-1993, Jean Alingue, was appointed prime minister.

Structural development plans imposed by France and the International Monetary Fund that were designed to trim public expenditure, actually contributed to instability in Chad, threatening jobs in the *Armées Nationales Tchadiennes* (ANT) and civil service. This outcome triggered infighting, and a series of military coups and serious offensives by the *Mouvement Pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (MDD), led by Goukouni Guet, a former advisor to Habré. Déby's ascension to power saw Chadian voters finally entering the polling stations five years and four months later.

Fragmentation in the Chad army and amongst ethnic groups in the north but central parts of Chad continued; for example, since 1993, former General Mahamat Nouri had held influential positions as minister of health, interior, defence and ambassador to Saudi Arabia within Déby's government. On the day of Déby's third re-election in 2006, Nouri resigned as ambassador, and established the Union des Forces pour la Démocratie et le Développement (UFDD), a coalition of six rebel movements. After some unsuccessful attempted coups and disagreements over powerful positions within the rebel movement, in 2007, one fraction of the UFDD split into the UFDD-Fondamentale (UFDD-F).^{53 54} On October 25, 2007, both the UFDD and the UFDD-F signed a short-lived peace deal with Déby.⁵⁵

In April 2006, General Mahamat Nour and 5,600 "troops," primarily young Tama civilians who had taken up arms in the Front Uni pour le Changement (FUC) made it nearly from Darfur to N'Djamena.⁵⁶ With French assistance, the Chadian army routed the rebels.⁵⁷ Déby would, in later years, circumvent

53 Gérard Prunier, *Armed Movements in Sudan, Chad CAR, Somalia Eritrea and Ethiopia*. Berlin: Centre for International Peace Operations, 2008. Available at http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/5382-v~Armed_Movements_in_Sudan_Chad_CAR_Somalia_Eritrea_and_Ethiopia.pdf (accessed on 10 August 2022).

54 Jérôme Tubiana, *The Chad-Sudan Proxy War and the "Darfurization" of Chad: Myths and Reality*, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International Studies, 2008. Available at: <http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/fileadmin/docs/working-papers/HSBA-WP-12-Chad-Sudan-Proxy-War.pdf>. (accessed on 04 August 2022).

55 Reuters, "Chad signs peace deal with main rebel groups", 2007. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/chad/chad-arab-rebel-group-signs-peace-deal-deby> (accessed on 01 September 2022).

56 Marielle Debos, 'Living by the gun in Chad: Governing Africa's Inter-Wars: Combatants, Impunity and State Formation' (London, UK: Zed Books, 2016.)

57 Simon Massey and Roy May, 'Dallas to Doba: Oil and Chad, external controls and internal politics', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 23,2, 2005, pp. 253–276, DOI: 10.1080/02589000500176065; Emad Mekay, 'Chad gets World Bank over a barrel', *Inter Press Service*. May 4, 2006.

rebellions by installing his son Mahamat Kaka (now transitional president of Chad) as the head of the Direction Generale de Service and Securite des Institutions de l'Etat (DGSSIE) —formerly the Republican Guard. This unit was attached to the presidency and commanded by officers nominated by the president by decree, which forestalled potential mutiny.

By 2008, under Nouri's command, UFDD was the most critical rebel movement;⁵⁸ Nouri was himself among 12 rebels sentenced to death in August 2008. After a peace agreement between Chad and Sudan in January 2010, Nouri was expelled from Sudan and exiled to Saudi Arabia.

Solidifying a Dictator

Throughout his reign, Déby brought the international community onto his side, securing western support for several presidential election campaigns (1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021); but against this achievement were massive electoral irregularities, and French intervention to support his presidency. Déby's network was fed by and kept within his family, which solidified power and standing with global partners, including the US. Déby also banned political parties from creating military or paramilitary organisations, prohibited informal parties from reconstituting into political parties or politico-military bodies, and forbade the use of religious emblems. Development assistance was given in exchange for security-related counter-terror support. This enabled Déby to deal with regional fractions and to rebuild the army, helping to assure his ability to deal with internal challenges, while presenting a form of liberal principles (which was often sold through the support of counterterrorism and training) without advancing democracy and human rights. This helped solidify his position, modifying and incorporating nomads' and warlords' structures and attributes into Chad's army, and converting loyal rebel factions into units and forces to deal with challenges.

In 2004 and 2005, Déby faced unsuccessful army mutinies sponsored by his kinsmen.⁵⁹ He later forced parliament to eliminate maximum presidential term limits. When Déby declared his intention to seek a third term, many political friends deserted him, and headed to Darfur to mount politico-military opposition movements. Even his nephews' twin brothers, Tom and Timan Erdimi, who held prominent government positions, attempted in March 2006, to shoot down Déby's presidential plane.

58 UFDD-F, headed by Sous-Prefet Abdelwahid Aboud Makaye with the support of former Foreign Minister Acheik Ibn Oumar, had an estimated 500 men. In contrast, Erdimi's RFC had around 800 soldiers at that time.

59 Alex De Waal, 'Chad in the firing line'. *Index on Censorship*, 35, 1, 2006, pp. 58–65.

Building Déby's Forces

Over the years, as discontent grew, Déby's Zaghawa played an increasingly central role in the military and community. The army went through quasi-reform processes, with many military personnel from Déby's ethnic group either returning and being incorporated into or forming new groups, or defecting. Many who remained in the reformed army were either part of the Tubu or brought in, like the Zaghawa. While the Zaghawa threatened Déby's regime stability, the FUR constituted a significant majority of those within the broader security sector, who were nomad groupings and integrated into the ANT, nomad guard and republic guard at different points.⁶⁰

Historians claim that some Zaghawa were disappointed that Déby's patronage system did not extend beyond his innermost circle.⁶¹ Their discontent drove the Zaghawa contingents within Chad's army to rebel in 2005, forcing Déby to shift his stance on Darfur, to regain the support of his Zaghawa kinsmen. In 2005, he concluded a "gentleman's agreement" with the Sudan-based Zaghawa Justice and Equality Movement, allowing them to attack Sudanese forces in Darfur from bases in Chad.⁶² However, by the end of 2005, Déby pushed to resolve the various conflicts—with the Zaghawa, the south, and other threats to Chad's security from armed groups from the Sudan. This also included, in November 2005, changes to the military, such as replacing the chiefs of the Armed Forces, Gendarmerie, Nomadic Guard, and National Police, in efforts to weed out disloyal officers, and instil discipline into the military. Over the same period, the treasury spent significant amounts on Déby's intelligence service and personal guard. This expenditure improved their capabilities, but neglected the broader military, leaving little to pay the salaries of the rank-and-file, generating resentment and new rounds of defections. Former rebels in the army defected, becoming rebels again, with many joining groups formed in the wake of the May 2004 coup. Threatened from abroad and within, Déby secured the IMF's approval to take oil funds earmarked for development and use them

60 Roland Marchal and Victoria Bawtree, 'Chad/Darfur: How Two Crises Merge'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 33,109, 2006. pp. 467–82. Available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4007053> (accessed 11 December 2022).

61 Roland Marchal, 'The roots of the Darfur conflict and the Chadian civil war'. *Public Culture* 20, 3, 2008, pp. 429–436.

62 Gérard Prunier, 'Chad: Caught in the Darfur crossfire'. *Le Monde diplomatique*, English edition, 2008. Available at <http://mondediplo.com/2008/03/05chad>. (accessed 10 September 2022); Gérard Prunier, 'Armed Movements in Sudan, Chad CAR, Somalia Eritrea and Ethiopia'. Berlin: Centre for International Peace Operations, 2008. Available at http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/5382~v~Armed_Movements_in_Sudan_Chad_CAR_Somalia_Eritrea_and_Ethiopia.pdf (accessed on 10 August 2022).

for government and army salaries instead.⁶³ By 2008, Chad was spending almost \$80 million on military equipment, in line with Déby's reorganisation of the security apparatus in Chad.⁶⁴

Reforming the Chadian Army

Déby justified the expenditure of vast sums on military equipment, declaring, "we don't have a choice".⁶⁵ In 2015–2016, Chad had one soldier for every 578 inhabitants, compared to Niger's one to every 3,758 per inhabitants.⁶⁶ However, military spending in Chad officially decreased by 40 per cent from 2014 to 2017.⁶⁷ The increase in military expenditure facilitated the building of a patronage network which allowed Déby to equip, train, and support Chadian forces to become an effective force, using similar nomad and warlord tactics. As one expert remarked, "Chadian military are more warriors than soldiers ... they obey their leaders, not always the officers".⁶⁸ This is reflected in the fact that Chad's fluid loyalties result from constant bargaining among politico-military actors, which resulted in unregulated warfare. Part of Déby's success is rooted in support of the Zaghawa, who hail from his sub-clan;⁶⁹ and their fighting capacity is rooted in the success of the nomad approach to dealing with insecurity. A US Air Force personnel stated that Chadian ANT was the "best performer in countering terrorism and violent extremist organisations (VEOs) in Africa"⁷⁰ with Chad regarded as a crucial partner in the fight against

63 Simon Massey and Roy May, 'Dallas to Doba: Oil and Chad, external controls and internal politics', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 23, 2, 2005, pp. 253–276, DOI: 10.1080/02589000500176065.

64 Global Security, 'Chad Military Spending', 2010. Available at: <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/africa/cd-budget.htm> (accessed 23 August 2022).

65 M. T. Bangora, *Political Violence and Conflicts in Africa: The Case of Chad*. Paris, France: L'Harmattan, 2005.

66 Daniel Eizenga, 'Long term trends across security and development in the Sahel'; (West African Papers). 2019. Paris, France: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

67 Pieter D. Wezeman *et al.*, 'Military expenditure transparency in sub-Saharan Africa'; SIPRI, 2018. Policy Papers, 48. Stockholm, Sweden. Available at: <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2018/sipri-policy-papers/military-expenditure-transparency-sub-saharan-africa> (accessed on 09 June 2022).

68 Roland Marchall, "An emerging military power in Central Africa? Chad under Idriss Déby", 2016, p. 18. Available at: <https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/an-emerging-military-power-in-central-africa-chad-under-idriss-deby.pdf> (accessed on 03 September 2022).

69 Nathaniel K. Powell, 'Battling Instability? The Recurring Logic of French Military Interventions in Africa', *African Security*, 10:1, 2017, pp. 47–72.

70 Stephen F. Burgess, 'UN and AU counterterrorism norm acceptance: Comparative security policies of Uganda and Chad'. *Comparative Strategy*, 35, 4, 2016.

regional instability and terrorism.⁷¹ Key to this success has been the doubling of the Chadian army forces—mostly former unemployed combatants, bandits, or captains or Generals among their home constituencies and loyal to local commanders. The effectiveness of nomad and warlord strategies was evident until Déby's death; he frequently wore military attire and did not hesitate to go into battle with small forces. In 2008, for example, he went with his men to Massaguet, north of N'Djamena, to try to stop the rebels' advance, but narrowly escaped capture. In April 2020, after the deadly attack by Boko Haram in Bohoma, Déby led the counter-offensive with small joint units against the jihadists across Lake Chad Basin under Operation "Wrath of Bohoma".⁷² By deploying nomad and warlord practices, Déby's operations were agile, responsive and adaptable to their environment.

Military Corporation and Operations

As outlined throughout, support from France and the US has allowed the Chadian army to pursue an agile and adaptable remote warfare agenda. While the training benefits the Chadian force, the number of defections and the political marketplace of war demonstrate that training alone from international actors cannot sustain the success of the Chadian forces. However, France has continued to play a role supporting incumbent or incoming presidents, with a mandate to save regimes facing internal threats. Its remit has been to attempt to create stability through deployment of French expeditionary forces to put down rebellions. Between April 1969 and June 1971, two thousand specialists forces from the Foreign Legion and Marines took on FROLINAT forces in Northern Chad. In February 1978, France launched Operation Tacaoud to protect N'Djamena and the Malloum regime against CCFAN and the other factions of Frolinat with 2,500 French troops.⁷³ As part of its bilateral agreement with Chad's first president, France created a garrison, which, at full capacity, had a light infantry force consisting of five companies and a company of machine-guns. French forces operated under Opération Epervier in 1986 as a defensive air-strike force,⁷⁴ but later dissolved under Déby in 1992. France's military support aimed to ensure forces were skilled enough to survive attacks from

71 Fred Ketil Hansen, 'Regime security in Chad: How the Western war on terror saved the Chadian dictatorial regime'. *Ante Portas*, 2, 9, 2017, pp. 55–69.

72 Daniel Eizenga, 'Chad's Escalating Fight against Boko Haram', 2020. *African Centre for strategic studies*. Available at: <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/chad-escalating-fight-against-boko-haram/> (accessed 02 March 2022).

73 Timothy J. Stapleton, *A Military History of Africa*. (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2003).

74 Bruno Charbonneau, 'France', in David Black and Paul Williams (eds.), *The International Politics of Mass Atrocities: The Case of Darfur*, (London: Routledge, 2010).

enemy forces, and deployed long enough to allow the French air force to provide firepower.⁷⁵

During Déby's time in power, France intervened in military operations in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2009. In 2008, the European Force intended to replace the proposed United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad—designed to create a safe and secure environment with 10,900 personnel—witnessed French forces helping the Chad government repel an offensive.⁷⁶ Even Herve Morin, then French Minister of Defence, offered “unwavering support” to Chad.⁷⁷ France also deployed its Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de Maintien de la Paix (Reinforcement of African Capacity to Maintain Peace (RECAMP)) programme in 1998.⁷⁸ The partnership between Chad and France extended to intervention in neighbouring Central Africa Republic and Mali. In 2013, alongside Operation Serval, Déby deployed a force of 2000 as part of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA); his son was deployed to Mali as second-in-command of the Chadian Armed Force, and later promoted to head of the powerful DGSSIE. Serval later reformed into Operation Barkhane. French support for Chad even included training the Reserved Actions Detachment (DAR) soldiers who were set for deployments to the central Sahel, and whose support included the gendarmerie and the nomad national guard.

The Chadian army's participation in the US's Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), later renamed Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI), established in 2005, with congressional support and a 500\$ million budget (over six years) was core to the “war against terrorism”, and US efforts to prevent Al Qaeda's operations in the Sahel. The US–Africom Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership has equipped and trained the Chadian army since 2007.⁷⁹ Military cooperation with the US has enabled its forces to modify its nomad and warlord forces, and fuse this to develop modified counter-terror capacity for violent extremists, to prevent attacks and kill terrorists (and sometimes civilians) indiscriminately.

75 Nathaniel K. Powell, ‘Battling Instability? The Recurring Logic of French Military Interventions in Africa’, *African Security*, 10:1, 2017, pp. 47–72.

76 United Nations, ‘Report of the Secretary-General on Chad and the Central African Republic’, 2007. Available at UN doc., S/2007/488 (accessed on 12 April 2022).

77 Paul D. Williams, (eds.), (2010). *The International Politics of Mass Atrocities: The Case of Darfur* (1st ed.). (Routledge, 2010).

78 Alan Ingram, ‘France and the New Imperialism: Security policy in sub-Saharan Africa’, by Bruno Charbonneau, *African Affairs*, 109, 434, 2010, pp. 168–169,

79 Robert Moeller, ‘The truth about Africom’. Foreign Policy. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/07/21/the-truth-about-africom/> (accessed 04 June 2022).

Multinational Joint Task Force

With the rise of remote warfare by western states and the accompanying reluctance to deploy western forces to areas of operation, significant sums were given to states prepared to deploy forces ready and prepared to tackle growing insecurity across the continent. In late 2014, the ministers of defence and chiefs of staff of LCBC member countries re-activated and re-operation-alised the MNJTF as a counterterrorism force, with an increased capacity of about 10,000 forces from Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon, with its HQ in N'Djamena, Chad. In November 2014, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) fully endorsed the re-activation of the MNJTF, and later, the AU Peace and Security Council declared its support and authorised the MNJTF deployment in January 2015, with a 12-month mandate.⁸⁰ The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) also authorised the deployment of the force through a presidential statement.⁸¹ The mission was a response to terrorism that largely stemmed from Nigeria, but had spread across other parts of the Lake Chad Basin region. Chadian forces occupy Sector 2, operating in Western Chad, with Headquarters at Baga Sola, and sub-sectors at Kaiga Ngouboua, Litri, Bargaram, and Koufoua. Chadian forces have played a significant role in dispersing and defeating extremist groups from the Lake Chad Basin and into areas like Nigeria for the Nigerian Army to deal with. While there have been challenges, Chad's role in the mission and its ability to rapidly deploy to remote areas and push back terrorists and violent extremists have been welcomed by the MNJTF.

Joint Force-G5 Sahel

With the spread from Mali of conflicts and terrorism to neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger, neighbouring Sahelian states came together and agreed to form an alternative regional platform. The Joint Force-G5 Sahel has its particular characteristics but shares similarities with the MNJTF.⁸² Established under the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel) and founded in 2014, the G5 Sahel provides an institutional framework to promote development and security within its member countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and

80 African Union Peace and Security Council, 'Communiqué of the 484th meeting of the AU PSC on the Boko Haram terrorist group', January 29, 2015.

81 United Nations Security Council, Statement by the President of the Security Council. 2015. Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_prst_2015_14.pdf (accessed on 17 August 2022).

82 Andrew E. Yaw Tchie, 'The UK Joins an Unwinnable Fight in the Sahel'. *The Royal United Services Institute*, 2020. Available at: <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/uk-joins-unwinnable-fight-sahel> (accessed 09 September 2022).

Niger. In 2017, the Joint Force of the G5S (JF-G5S) was established. The JF-G5 Sahel is heavily supported by France and the EU, and was seen as a core part of France's concept of operations and exit strategy for Operation Barkhane in Mali and the Sahel.

Establishing the G5 Sahel was instrumental in Chad's acquiring a more central position in global and regional initiatives and contributed around 1200 forces to fight rebel groups.⁸³ The Chadian army also included combat forces which signalled Chad's return to the fold of the EU Sahel initiatives and the regional Joint Military Staff Committee of the Sahel Region, allowing Chad to receive additional military resources. Nonetheless, with Mali's withdrawal from the force, questions were raised over JF-G5S's regional ownership and sustainability.

Mali (Serval, AFISMA and MINUSMA)

In 2013, following the takeover of Konna in Central Mali by Islamic militias approaching the capital, located close to the military airport in Searé, the Malian government called upon France for military intervention in 2013. French Operation Serval included a Chadian contingent, part of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), deployed to disperse Islamic groups from urban centres. The UN Security Council passed resolution 2100 on April 25, 2013, establishing a stabilising force to support the political transition in Mali. Chadian forces received recognition for their rapid deployment and capacity to deal with the Islamist insurgents.⁸⁴ AFISMA collaborated closely with Operation Serval and Chadian forces, demonstrating eligibility to "endure while sustaining high casualties".⁸⁵ More recently, in April 2021, the successes of Chadian forces include repelling an attack against a MINUSMA base in Aguelhok, Kidal region.⁸⁶ While criticism has mounted over the blurring of lines between the different Chadian units across the various operations

83 Cedric De Coning, *et al.*, 'Understanding Ad-Hoc Security Initiatives in Africa', 2021, *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*. Available at: <https://www.nupi.no/en/publications/cristin-pub/understanding-ad-hoc-security-intitatives-in-africa> (accessed on 19 August 2022). (NUPI, Oslo).

84 John Irish *et al.*, 'Chad emerges as African power broker as France steps back', 2018. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-chad/chad-emerges-as-african-power-broker-as-france-steps-back-idUSBRE94707C20130508>. (accessed on 19 August 2022).

85 Thomas G. Weiss and Martin Welz, 'The UN and the African Union in Mali and beyond: A shotgun wedding?' *International Affairs*, 90, 4, 2014, p. 897.

86 United Nations News, 'Four peacekeepers killed in complex attack on UN base in Mali', 2021. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/04/1088982> (accessed 08 November 2022).

(different forces and mandates) in Mali (MINUSMA and the JF-G5S), Chad has continued to demonstrate its ability to respond and even increased its commitment to UN PKO following France's withdrawal of its troops from its Operation Barkhane.⁸⁷

Implications for the African Peace and Security Architecture

While some scholars characterise African armies as backward, unprofessional, and lacking structure and western standards of civil-military relations,⁸⁸ Chad's example demands a reappraisal.⁸⁹ Chad's ability to embed in regional and international deployments—gaining experience through local warfare tactics and national conflicts—utilising nomad and warlord structures and attributions, contributed to the Chadian forces' success. This helped Déby to solidify alliances and support from external partners, while receiving international economic and political support; in turn facilitating external partners to achieve their objective—the waging of the war on terror. In exchange, for protection and averted international criticism, Chad has been able to project power and force in the region, avoiding censure from RECs and the AU.

Nomad and warlord structures deployed by Chadian forces and used to support western counterterrorism goals allowed Déby to strengthen his agency. Through local and regional counterinsurgency and counterterrorism deployments and the use of force, Déby continued his patronage system with tribal and other alliances and loyalties. While the focus has often been on larger national aspects of African armies or Chad's military success observed through the lens of external influences or occurrences of foreign intervention, the above analysis has sought to demonstrate that local internal influences have unmistakably shaped Chadian armed forces, and contributed to their success as a force.

However, the last decades of investment in Africa's security architecture have predominately been channelled to traditional security structures,

87 Radio France Internationale, *Chad to add troops to UN mission in Mali following France's withdrawal*, 2022. Available at: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20220222-chad-to-add-troops-to-un-mission-in-mali-following-france-s-withdrawal> (accessed 10 November 2022).

88 Colin Robinson, 'Where The State Is Not Strong Enough: What can Army Reconstruction tell us about change necessary to the OECD DAC SSR Principles?', 2011. Available at: <https://dspace.lib.cranfield.ac.uk/handle/1826/9404> (accessed on 23 September 2022).

89 Sunday A. Ochoche, 'The Military and National Security in Africa', 1998. In *The Military and Militarism in Africa*, eds. Hutchful, E. and Bathily, A., CODESRIA, Dakar, pp. 105–128; Samuel Decalo, 'Civil-Military Relations in Africa', 1998, Florida Academic Press, Gainesville, FL.; Edward Onwudiwe, E., 'Military Coups in Africa: A Framework for Research. In *The Military and Politics in Africa: From Engagement to Democratic and Constitutional Control*, eds. G. K. Kieh Jr and P. O. Agbese. Ashgate, Aldershot, 2004, pp. 17–37.

particularly military missions, with an increasing number of operations not falling within the remit of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) components before they are deployed. The rise of regional operations such as the MNJTF, JF-G5S, the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and the East African Community (EAC) regional force to the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo raises questions over the success of these operations, the relevance of the AU in modern conflicts, especially given that these operations are heavily militarised, and the lack of oversight and reporting mechanisms to hold states or regional blocs accountable. Nevertheless, Chad demonstrates a level of effectiveness by forces unconstrained by the standards, structures and rules that govern UN PKO, AU PSOs and Western TCCs that have been ineffective in the Sahel. The case of Chad demonstrates that the APSA can allow for a broad range of tools that can manage a wide variety of challenges which are not suited for predetermined structures and solutions imposed above by the AU and RECs. Chad further demonstrates that to manage African insecurities, highly context-specific adaptations and tools are needed to enhance force effectiveness, and their capacity to manage regional security challenges. This methodology appears rather more effective than the Nigerian army's approach (modelled on British and United Kingdom doctrine) to fighting Boko Haram, because its way of fighting closely resembles Boko Haram, its tactics and equipment are better suited to the terrain, and forces are closer to the challenges on the ground. While the deployment of Chad's army has witnessed noticeable success, caution must be taken to ensure better accountability is in place when these deployments occur, and when these forces are used to deal with internal challenges.⁹⁰ Finally, with the use of bilateral agreements on the rise, it is clear that states like Chad may opt out of the APSA when it is in their interest, or to play a double role, at times contributing to the APSA but at other times acting independently.

Conclusion

Over the past decade, the ability to deploy Chadian forces to external theatres of operations have left Chad in a leading position and increased its stature on the African scene. Part of this lies in deploying nomads and warlords into the

⁹⁰ Human Rights Watch, 'Chad: Security Force Abuse Amid National Dialogue', 2022. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/09/23/chad-security-force-abuse-amid-national-dialogue> (accessed 19 October 2022).

army with high-risk tolerance, who are deployed to protect and promote the interests of their regimes in their neighbouring strategic space, and to establish and maintain partnerships with permanent members of the UNSC (the US and France), to protect and support their regimes. By absorbing various militias into a large army that fed off the population, Chad's former president built a compelling force used to dealing with terrorists through various operations and missions. However, participating in active campaigns abroad can be seen as an opportunity to deflect attention away from failures at home, while simultaneously bolstering Chad's image among international players.

Since the nature of conflicts (intra-state armed conflicts to violent extremism, terrorism and organised crime and banditry) continue to evolve and advance organically, African-led PSOs (AU, RECS and ASIs) are increasingly being deployed to border areas and peripheral regions of states, but to an extent circumventing the ASF concept and its development. The primary purpose of these operations have shifted from managing challenges linked to political instability and election monitoring, to terrorism and violent extremism—the Gambia, the Comoros and Lesotho are exceptions. Therefore, the case of Chad raises several challenges for scholarship, as it disrupts the narrative that regimes like Chad gain their military capabilities exclusively from donor training and bilateral support. In fact, Chad demonstrates how locally driven tactics built into society, military structures, and state formation process, can be used to build an army and develop force capability. Chad challenges existing scholarship, which often measure forces' effectiveness through the lens of western military frameworks. Finally, the paper furthers debates on Chad in its finding that the forces' success cannot solely be a derivative of the training and bilateral agreements extended to the Chadian forces but originate from being embedded in socio-political life. Local or traditional nomad and warlord strategies and internal conflicts solidified a political economy of conflict which increased the risk-tolerance of Chadian forces and allowed Déby to deliver one of Africa's most adaptable and agile forces dealing with ongoing challenges faced by the region.

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