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Country Report on Terrorism 2020 - Chapter 1 - Chad

Overview: In 2020, Chad experienced persistent terrorist attacks against military and civilian targets in the Lake Chad region. In March, suspected Boko Haram (BH) militants killed 98 Chadian soldiers near Boma in the Lake Chad region, the deadliest single attack in Chad's history. In April the Chadian government's "Wrath of Boma" military offensive, which stretched across Niger's and Nigeria's borders, repulsed BH fighters but failed to establish security in areas bordering Lake Chad. BH continued employing suicide bombers and IEDs, including the first documented use of a maritime IED in Chad. BH continued to be the most active terrorist organization in Chad, and ISIS-West Africa also maintained a presence. The Chadian government remained a reliable partner of U.S. and other CT missions even as the COVID-19 pandemic depressed government revenues. Security forces and basic government services remained underfunded, which limited the Chadian government's effectiveness, but Chadian armed forces led missions within the region to maintain security in the Sahel. Chad maintained a strong commitment to fight terrorists by deploying soldiers to Mali to support MINUSMA, bolstering the Lake Chad Region's MNJTF, and committing forces to the G-5 Sahel Joint Force. Chad continued to host the French Operation *Barkhane*, France's CT mission for the Sahel. The United States remained the largest direct supporter of Chadian security forces.

2020 Terrorist Incidents: BH and ISIS-WA continued attacks around the eastern and northern shores of Lake Chad. Many of these were small raids to plunder supplies, but terrorist groups also mounted several larger attacks on Chadian military outposts involving 100 or more terrorist fighters. Terrorists employed a host of techniques, including suicide bombings, IEDs, ambushes, and kidnappings. The following list details only a fraction of incidents that occurred:

- On January 20 a suspected BH female suicide bomber killed nine persons in Kaiga Kindjiria.
- On March 23, suspected BH militants killed 98 Chadian soldiers near Boma in the Lake Chad region, the deadliest single attack in Chad's history.
- On November 25, terrorists killed 4 Chadian soldiers and severely injured 16 others by employing a maritime IED, the first recorded use of this method against Chadian forces.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: On May 20, President Déby signed a new terrorism-related law banning capital punishment for terrorist acts. COVID-19 disruptions and capacity constraints limited the use of the law to investigate or reintegrate terrorist suspects.

Securing borders remains difficult. Porous borders, particularly across Lake Chad, provided easy passage for terrorists and criminal entities. Border security remained a shared task of the Gendarmes, Army, Customs, and the National and Nomadic Guard (GNNT), none of which was resourced sufficiently. The Army and GNNT comprised the front line in nearly all major incidents involving BH and ISIS-WA. At official ports of entry, both air and ground, Chad was a partner in the PISCES program, a border security platform to counter terrorist travel. The Chadian government launched biometric passports featuring public key infrastructure chips containing 16 biometric data points in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and Central African Economic and Monetary Community standards.

Following the Wrath of Boma military operation, the Chadian government transferred 58 suspected terrorists to a Gendarmerie prison in N'Djamena. On April 16, 44 prisoners were found dead in their cell, a single room housing all 58 suspects. Chad's National Commission on Human Rights attributed the 44 prisoners' deaths to overcrowding in a cell designed for 20 people, the oppressive heat of Chad's dry season, and lack of adequate food and water. The Chadian government has yet to publish the results of its investigation, and the 14 survivors have yet to face trial.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: There were no significant updates in 2020. Chad is a member of GABAC. Chad's FIU, the National Agency for Financial Investigation, is a member of the Egmont Group.

Countering Violent Extremism: Chad undertook efforts to counteract violent extremism. The High Council of Islamic Affairs promoted peaceful coexistence and tolerance, and diverse faith groups engaged the Interfaith Dialogue Commission to mitigate conflict. The national coordination office for the G-5 Sahel stood up a violent extremism radicalization prevention unit that initiated coordination meetings of CVE practitioners. The Chadian government warned citizens of the dangers of communitarianism. In response to a violent incident in N'Djamena that sparked communitarian commentary on social media, including by and against the influential Zaghawa ethnic group, the Chadian government took the drastic step of banning social media and cutting internet access from July to October.

International and Regional Cooperation: Chad engaged actively in CT activities of the United Nations, the MNJTF, the G-5 Sahel, and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. Surrounded by conflict, Chad is a leader in exporting security throughout the Sahel. Chad supported CT and peacekeeping forces and provided many of the most effective military units in the most dangerous parts of central Africa. Chad contributed 1,425 soldiers trained by the United States to the most challenging regions of Mali as part of MINUSMA, 2,000 soldiers in Chad and episodic commitments of up to 1,600 soldiers in northern Nigeria in support of the MNJTF, 1,450 soldiers in northern Chad as part of the G-5 Sahel, and 600 soldiers as part of the joint border security force with Sudan.

Chad maintains close working relationships with France, and the French Operation *Barkhane* launches CT missions throughout the Sahel from its base in N'Djamena. Several other European nations engaged militarily with Chad in 2020 as well, and the Chadian government also sought security support from near-peer competitors.

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