

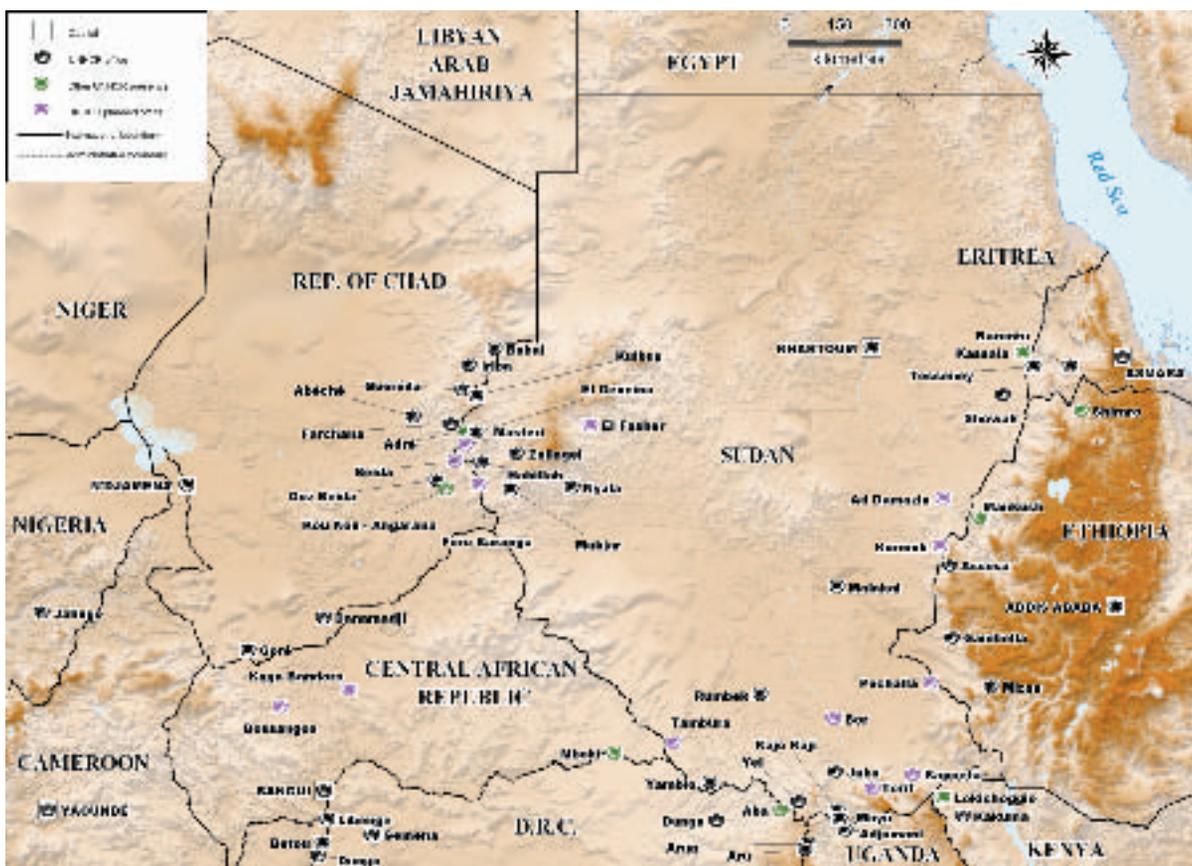
Chad / Sudan situation

Recent developments

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in January 2005 boosted hopes for the recovery and reconstruction of South Sudan and for the return of those displaced by the conflict (refugees and internally displaced persons - IDPs). On 30 July 2005, former SPLM leader Dr. John Garang died in a helicopter crash only three weeks after being sworn in as First Vice-President of the Republic of Sudan, sparking riots in Khartoum and in the southern cities of Juba and Malakal. However, calm returned with the naming of his successor, General Salva Kiir. The death of Dr. Garang also caused a brief delay in the formation of the new Government of National Unity, but by 20 September the SPLM took up nine of the 29 ministerial portfolios, with the former ruling National Congress Party retaining 16.

These events, however, have not affected the intentions of those refugees who wish to return to South Sudan. Refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) are particularly eager to return.

Darfur
Republic of Chad
Sudan
South Sudan



At the time of writing, UNHCR was planning the organized voluntary repatriation of 5,000 refugees from DRC and 10,000 from CAR and 2,000 from Kenya following the completion of the registration and verification exercises and the provision of documentation to refugees prior to their departure (such as birth, school, marriage certificates and medical records). Preparation for the organized return of some 20,000 refugees in Ethiopia had also begun. During surveys in September 2005, Sudanese refugees in Uganda renewed their interest to return. However, due to insecurity and scarcity of basic services in intended areas of return, the number expected to actually repatriate after the rainy season may be limited.

In 2006, UNHCR expects to repatriate a total of 140,000 Sudanese refugees; the Office will organize the return of some 55,000 among them from CAR, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. UNHCR does not expect large numbers of returns from Egypt and Eritrea. The refugee population in Egypt is urban-based and it is anticipated that refugees will want to wait and assess the progress of the reconstruction effort before opting to return.

In general, Chad enjoyed general political stability during 2005. A change of government in August saw new ministers appointed in most major portfolios, including interior, foreign affairs and security. Chad continued to provide a protection environment conducive to the stay of refugees from Sudan and the CAR as well as asylum-seekers. More than 20,000 Sudanese in eastern Chad are residing in 12 camps, benefiting from assistance from UNHCR and protection from the Government of Chad. As a result of the deterioration in security in northern CAR, an additional 12,500 refugees made their way to southern Chad. The new arrivals, like the pre-existing population of approximately 30,000 CAR refugees, will be oriented quickly to self-reliance activities. Amboko settlement, near Gore, in southern Chad, is nearing its capacity of 27,000 refugees. The Government of Chad has approved a new site at Gondje to which the newly arrived refugees will be relocated. UNHCR is seeking an additional site for contingency purposes.

In Darfur, the political situation remains uncertain. Peace talks are ongoing in Abuja, Nigeria.



Chad: Despite enormous logistical problems, 10,000 refugees from the Central African Republic are being transferred further away from the border to Goré. *UNHCR / C. Pryce*

Protocols have been signed but differences exist between the Government of Sudan and the rebel movements. However, the signing of a CPA for South Sudan, after seemingly intractable differences, does suggest that hopes for a similar achievement in Darfur might not be misplaced. It is estimated that up to 40,000 Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad could repatriate in 2006 if the peace agreement for Darfur is signed.

Meanwhile, UNHCR's protection monitoring activities in Darfur continue to be strengthened. In 2005, the opening of seven additional field offices was approved. Four of these were opened in 2005 and the remaining three will be opened in 2006. Monitoring missions to various field locations are hampered by the generalized deterioration in security. The Government of Sudan has been urged to play its rightful role in the provision of security.

Strategic objectives

The overall objective for UNHCR's programmes in Chad and Darfur is to ensure the protection of refugees and IDPs, and to achieve durable solutions for as many of them as possible.

Whenever the situation in countries of origin allows, UNHCR will facilitate the repatriation of refugees. Likewise, UNHCR will facilitate the return of IDPs willing to return to their homes within Sudan.

Operations

The UNHCR office in Sudan was responsible until recently only for the protection and assistance of Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees in eastern Sudan. It now has to deal with two other situations: Chadian refugees and internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur, as well as returning refugees and IDPs in South Sudan. In a country twice the size of Western Europe, the Office has had to quickly adjust its structure and expand its field presence to cope with the considerable logistical and resource challenges.

Many roads in the west and south of Sudan become unusable during the rainy season. Despite the CPA, travelling to Government and SPLM-held areas requires separate travel permits and flying between the two areas is restricted to members of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). Despite these challenges, UNHCR has been able to open 12 offices in strategic locations in Darfur and South Sudan (for details, see South Sudan/Darfur chapters).

The needs in South Sudan and Darfur are immense and it is only through inter-agency

efforts that the challenges ahead can be tackled. UNHCR has been given the responsibility to provide protection to IDPs and returnees in both West Darfur and South Sudan, as part of a UN collaborative effort to deal with the internal displacement in the two areas.

The Office will also ensure that coordination between the operation in Sudan and those of the countries of asylum is further strengthened. In the west, UNHCR in El Geneina (Sudan) and Abeche (Chad) will hold regular coordination meetings to prepare for the possible return of the more than 200,000 Sudanese refugees currently living in Chad (if a peace agreement is signed and implemented).

For the South, draft tripartite agreements have been prepared in anticipation of voluntary repatriation, and cross-border meetings will continue. UNHCR will pursue its efforts to create an effective transition from relief to recovery, laying the foundations for development in affected areas.

Cooperation with the AU will be a crucial element in UNHCR's operations both in eastern Chad and in Darfur. UNHCR's relationship with the AU will be strengthened, especially with regard to the security of humanitarian personnel, refugees and IDPs.

UNHCR's operations are described in detail in separate country chapters.

Budget: The annual programme budgets for Chad and Sudan can be found under the respective country chapters. While the budgets for the supplementary programmes for Darfur and South Sudan are being finalized, the budget table for Sudan includes the supplementary budget for the repatriation and reintegration of Congolese (DRC) refugees from Sudan.