

## EUFOR TCHAD/RCA : The high stakes of a temporary mission

*France finally announced on January 10, through its Foreign Minister, its decision to provide the last human support and material to the European military transition mission in Eastern Chad and the North-Eastern Central African Republic, an action expected last November. The Foreign Ministers of the European Union should be able to send troops in February.*

EUFOR TCHAD/RCA(1) is a temporary military operation approved by the United Nations Security Council(2) and designed to support the multidimensional presence of the UN in the region (MINURCAT). The mandate given to the European Union aims to secure this border zone by protecting refugee camps, facilitating the humanitarian aid shipments, and allowing the UN dispatch to set up.

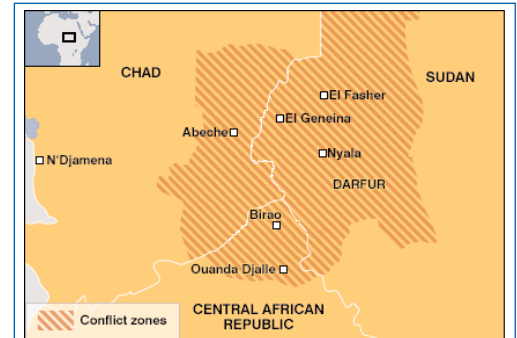
Four years after the ARTEMIS mission in DRC, there is much at stake in this new European mission in Africa, for the future of the European defence as much as the relationship between the two continents.

### The credibility of the European defence

The European security and defence policy is the policy area the integration of which has developed the most within the last five years, and the only one not to suffer from the identity crisis that faces the European project. After having tested out its doctrinal basis, its military and civilian command structures and deployed its first contingents, Europe has definitely proven its potential. According to the High Representative for the CFSP(3), the mission has two challenges : to define true European interests and to make a significant contribution to the multilateral system. It seems that we are already there. Europe has an excellent occasion to demonstrate its utility, on a well-known field and on the fringe of a crisis that is closely followed by the public opinion.

However, in the light of the recent difficulties since the signing of the common action for assembling the necessary means of the deployment, there is reason to fear the worst. France, who launched the mission, appealed incessantly to its partners, officially lamenting their reservations(4), but eventually had to use this threat as a last resort. It is not the first time that France has to heavily engage itself to involve its partners in issues of the African continent. As a reminder, it managed to achieve the association of its "Overseas Countries and Territories" to the Community thanks only to its threat not to sign the treaty of Rome. It appeared that most of the member states knew nothing about Africa and that some were engaged elsewhere. Such hesitations, a few weeks after the Europe-Africa Summit, are deeply regrettable, but some of the European's fears seem to be legitimate. The rebel movements are a constant reminder that the French army is actively supporting the Chadian or Centrafrican regimes, both largely contested and directly involved in the regional crisis. Despite the official "support without participation" position, it seems natural such conditions would make country members already reluctant to engage in the region fear that France is looking for a multilateral excuse to protect its interests.

Today it is essential that EUFOR rapidly wipe away the memories of delay and deploy quickly. American voices have already been raised in doubt of Europe's capacity to lead this operation, saying that the operation is an "adventure" regarding logistic. The terrain is anything but easy, and is probably one of the most enclosed areas in the world(6), but it is well-known by the mili-



ZONE D'INTERVENTION DE L'EUFOR TCHAD/RCA

### MANDATE AND OBJECTIVES

EUFOR Tchad/RCA is a bridging operation which closely coordinates 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. More specifically, the EU operation has the following objectives :

- to contribute to protecting civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons ;
- to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel by helping to improve security in the area of operations ;
- to contribute to protecting UN personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and to ensuring the security and freedom of movement of its staff and UN and associated personnel.

The Joint Action adopted by the Council of the EU on 15 October 2007 officially appointed Lieutenant General Patrick NASH (Ireland) as EU Operation Commander and Brigadier General Jean-Philippe GANASCIA (France) as EU Force Commander. It is located at the Mont Valérien (France).

EUFOR Tchad/RCA has an appropriate mandate allowing the use of armed force if necessary. It is independent, impartial and neutral.

The financial reference for common spending is 99.2 millions EUR

The establishment of EUFOR Tchad/RCA forms part of a comprehensive package of enhanced EU commitment to a solution to the crisis in Darfur. All EU instruments - diplomatic, political and financial - will be mobilised in support of this effort. The main components, all interlinked, will comprise:

- increased support for African Union (AU) and UN efforts to revitalise the political process with a view to finding a lasting solution ;
- speeding up establishment of UNAMID in Darfur ;
- increased mobilisation to finance humanitarian aid, but also to secure humanitarian access.

Source : [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/backgroundChad\\_Decembre2007FRversion.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/backgroundChad_Decembre2007FRversion.pdf)

tary staff, security risks don't seem to be too high, and it will only be necessary to deploy about 3000 and 4000 men. This mission is no Headline Goal of 2003(7).

Besides, it seems important to underline the fact that the European Union has a major interest in the success of this operation and that this interest goes far beyond that of France. This is the second significant military operation for the European Union and it takes place once again in Africa. It is no surprise. Nowhere else can France demonstrate its ability to reinforce multilateralism. Africa is the region where Europe has the oldest and the most storied relationship. Only a few weeks after the Europe-Africa Summit, when strategic interest in the region is getting stronger, it would be a disaster if Europe didn't take the place it has earned. Nowhere else does she have such comparative advantages. The lesson made is that a support to the African Union for a settlement of the disputes was necessary, but not sufficient, and the necessity of a European engagement is obvious. The promises of any partnerships or of future Europe-Africa Summits would not hide the failure of this mission for a long time.

### France's engagement in Africa

France will have a special responsibility in this operation. It appears to be both the best and worst country to lead an intervention. Indeed, it is the only one with the ambition and the means to manage the situation, but it has its own interests in the region and is almost considered to be a belligerent in the eyes of the public opinion and rebel movements. The point here is not to question if France is leading a post or neo-colonial policy in the region, but one cannot deny its involvement in those countries' politics. Near the end of 2006, President Nicolas Sarkozy announced the end of the Françafrique system and promised during his speech to the press the formation of a European defence policy by the end of the French presidency of the EU. Hence, the game is a tough one, and the actors numerous, but everything seems to indicate that France is playing a home-game.

### The gauntlet of reconstruction

The EUFOR Tchad/RCA will last a year after its deployment. The issue finally seems to go beyond the security of Darfur's borders. The area's situation is critical in many ways, and the operation appears to be a golden opportunity for abandoned regions in Chad and in the Centrafrican country of Vakaga. The UN and European Union deployment is already bringing more attention and means to the region than it ever has. Its situation is particularly critical and presents several analogies with that of Darfur: an enclosed minority, totally ignored and barely represented by a central regime, few resources, demographic pressure, porous borders with both Chad and Sudan and militarization of the protests. Any intervention in this region thus could not restrict itself to its initial objective of securing the refugee camps. It is already planned that the Community will finance the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the zones by the 10th EDF.

The military adventures in Iraq, Afghanistan or Democratic Republic of Congo clearly demonstrated that the condition for leaving a crisis zone is not only the area's stabilization but to its reconstruction. And everything must be rebuilt. One year from now, if the Lisbon Treaty is ratified, Javier Solana will not be the High Representative for the CFSP but will exert the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy created to promote a better relationship between the CFSP and the development cooperation. The conjunction of our civilian, political and military tools thus provides a rare opportunity to demonstrate the pertinence of Europe's ambitions.

### By Roland SOURD, Research fellow, IRIS

(1) Common action 2007/677/CFSP adopted on October 15 2007. JOUE, L 279, 23.10.2007, page 21

Council page: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?id=1366&lang=FR](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1366&lang=FR)

(2) Résolution 1778 (2007) of September 25 2007

(3) Annual conference of the European Union Institute for Security Studies, speech of the High Representative for the European Security and Defence Policy, Javier Solana, Paris, November 22 2007. <http://www.iss-eu.org/activ/content/ac07-02.pdf>

(4) Interview with the Monde de Hervé Morin, December 20 2007

(5) "African Adventure ?" Assessing the European Union's Military intervention in Chad and the Central African Republic, par Bjoern H. Seibert, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. [http://web.mit.edu/ssp/Publications/working\\_papers/WVP\\_07-1.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/ssp/Publications/working_papers/WVP_07-1.pdf)

(6) See the MIT study

(7) During the Finnish presidency semester in 1999, the heads of states and governments agreed on the development of the crisis management military capacities. The global objective (Headline Goal) was to be able to deploy 60,000 men from the Union in sixty days and for a year at least, within 2003. The corps would be able to accomplish Petersberg's missions (humanitarian and country-fellows evacuation missions, peacekeeping or combat missions for crisis management, including peacemaking operations).

(8) For a synthesis of French policy in the Central African Republic, see the International Crisis Group report: Central African Republic: Anatomy of a Phantom State, Africa Report N° 136, December 13 2007.

#### USEFUL LINKS

##### THE COUNCIL'S FILE ON THE OPERATION :

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3\\_fo/showPage.asp?id=1366&lang=FR](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1366&lang=FR)

##### MINURCAT :

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minurcat/>

##### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EU AND CHAD :

<http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/countries/chad.htm>

<http://www.deltcd.ec.europa.eu/fr/index.htm>

##### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EU AND CAR

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/countries/central\\_african\\_republic.htm#](http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/countries/central_african_republic.htm#)

<http://www.delcaf.ec.europa.eu/fr/index.htm>