

## **Chad-Sudan V**

### **Background:**

A crisis occurred between Chad and Sudan from 5 May 2009 to 9 February 2010. Since 2004, tensions had been high between Chad and Sudan. Chad accused Sudan of supporting Chadian rebels, and Sudan accused Chad of supporting Sudanese rebels. Previous crises erupted between the two states in 2005, 2006, and twice in 2007.

The most recent crisis between Chad and Sudan terminated on 1 August 2008 with the reestablishment of diplomatic ties following efforts of multiple mediators (see case #455; the other crises between Chad and Sudan are cases #447, #449, and #453). Earlier in that crisis, in March 2008, Chad and Sudan signed the Dakar Agreement, a broader accord in which they agreed to stop supporting each other's rebel groups, resolve their overall differences with one another, and commit to upholding a series of previous failed peace agreements. The primary mediation effort in that crisis was conducted by a large "contact group" consisting of several African states and a group of high-profile international guarantors and was tasked with helping to implement the Dakar Agreement. This effort ultimately failed to achieve its objective: the contact group met a number of times in the months following the crisis but then failed to meet again after 11 November 2008 despite several attempts. Qatar began a separate mediation effort in early 2009, meeting with Sudan in late February and then Chad in early March. But a definitive resolution of the conflict between Chad and Sudan remained elusive, as the overall peace process between Chad and Sudan once again stalled and the two sides continued to support each other's rebel groups.

### **Summary:**

The crisis began on 5 May 2009 when the Sudanese-backed Union of Resistance Forces (URF/UFR) crossed the border from Sudanese to Chadian territory. This triggered a crisis for Chad. Chad's major response consisted of both an accusation toward Sudan that same day and, most importantly, a military attack against the rebels two days later. On 5 May, Chad publicly accused Sudan of backing the rebel incursion. This triggered a crisis for Sudan. Sudan's major response was to deny that it supported URF the following day; URF also denied that it was receiving support from Sudan. Then, on 7 May, Chadian military forces engaged the URF in the Battle of Am Dam. The battle resulted in more than 200 deaths and a victory for the Chadian government. Sudan claimed that the Chadian Air Force also conducted strikes against URF rebels within Sudanese territory. Sudan characterized these airstrikes as "acts of war" and threatened to shoot down Chadian planes if they crossed into Sudanese airspace again.

In the months that followed, Chad and Sudan engaged in several exchanges of air strikes, and Chadian troops conducted several incursions across its border with Sudan. Chad also continued to intermittently clash with URF, albeit at a lower level than in May. Tensions between Chad and Sudan remained high, and Sudan continued to deny that it was supporting Chadian rebels. On 25 December, Chad and Sudan agreed to implement previous protocols that addressed controlling the border between the two countries. There were no more major clashes after this point. On 15 January 2010, another agreement was signed by Chad and Sudan, this time mediated by Libya. The agreement reduced tensions somewhat but did not terminate the crisis.

On 9 February 2010, Chadian President Idriss Deby visited Sudan and met with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. During the visit, Chad and Sudan signed a formal agreement in which they agreed that neither would support rebel organizations targeting the other. This returned the perceived level of threat to pre-crisis level, terminating the crisis for both sides.

Libya and Qatar coordinated in mediating between Chad and Sudan during the crisis. Qatar originally began its mediation effort alone and prior to the crisis period, but it was eventually joined by Libya. Qatar was more active early and for most of the crisis, but Libya was more active at the end. The Qatarese Emir, Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, led the Qatarese part of the effort, and Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi led the Libyan part of the effort. Libya's mediation of the 15 January 2010 agreement between Chad and Sudan had a marginal positive effect on crisis abatement, reducing tensions between the two countries to some degree less than a month before they bilaterally terminated the crisis. Both Qatar's and Libya's mediation was facilitative in nature.

The United States was also involved in the crisis as a mediator of the conflict between the Sudanese government and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group in Darfur. US President Barack Obama's special envoy to Sudan, retired Air Force General J. Scott Gration, led this effort. The US effort was effective and also had a positive indirect influence on the resolution of the international crisis between Chad and Sudan because Chad was supporting JEM. However, the US did not directly mediate the international crisis between Chad and Sudan.

The United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) were minimally involved in the crisis. Rodolphe Adada, the UN-AU Joint Special Representative (JSR) in Darfur and head of the joint UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), called on Chad and Sudan to end their hostile interactions and resolve their conflict peacefully via negotiations. The AU also condemned the two sides' use of force to resolve their differences.

### **References:**

Human Security Baseline Assessment; Mail & Guardian; New York Times; Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre; Sudan Tribune; The Telegraph; US Department of State; Voice of America.