**Link 8: http://www.ecoi.net/local\_link/196298/300274\_en.html**

**The Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT), especially the date of its first military confrontation with government forces, subsequent clashes and present situation; whether membership in the MDJT can be confirmed for MDJT fighters and non-combatants, and how confirmation could take place [TCD33346.E]**

The earliest record of armed conflict involving the MDJT, in which the MDJT is mentioned by name, that was found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate was in IRIN's West Africa Update of 22 December 1998, in which it is stated that the Chadian government had denied reports of armed conflict in the north of the country by the MDJT, and that the MDJT itself claimed that it had begun military operations against the Chadian government in October, in the Tibesti region, resulting in the deaths of 100 government troops, the wounding of 12 others, and the capture of weapons. A report by Radio France Internationale (RFI) dated 16 October 1998 reported that there had been armed conflict between government forces and rebels in the Zouar region of the Tibesti mountains (*Keesing's* Oct. 1998, 42541). Chadian government sources denied that a confrontation had taken place (ibid.). Although the MDJT is not mentioned, the report states the rebels were led by Youssouf Togoimi (ibid.).

A 3 March 1999 RFI broadcast stated that in January 1999 the Chadian government had admitted that there was a rebellion in Tibesti under Youssouf Togoimi's leadership, but claimed that the number of rebels was very small. The following was RFI correspondent Christophe Boisbouvier's assessment of the situation at the time:

The Movement for Democracy and Justice says that its Toubou fighters control all the access roads to the Bardei oasis in Tibesti, and that several offensives by the Chadian army have been successfully repulsed. The Chadian government denies that any such clashes occurred. However, one thing is for sure, for the first time in his life, Youssouf Togoimi, a Toubou, joined the rebel movement in September last year, and the Chadian authorities are taking this seriously. Proof of this is the fact that the Chadian representative of the Community of Sahel and Saharan States, with its headquarters in Libya, has called for dialogue (ibid.).

A former rebel leader from Tibesti, Adoum Togoi, is quoted as stating that the MDJT did not receive help from Libya, but that they probably were receiving support from the Toubou in Niger (ibid.).

In March 1999 the Chadian government admitted that the MDJT existed, but Chadian President Idriss Deby stated on 10 March 1999 that the rebels were too weak to pose a threat to the country (IRIN 11 Mar. 1999). A MDJT spokesman in Paris, Ahmed Kailan, stated that the MDJT had clashed with Chadian government forces 15 times since the MDJT was created in October 1998, and the the MDJT had recently captured Zoumri and Omou in the Tibetsi region (ibid.).

On 10 March 1999 Chadian government forces intercepted a column of Toubou fighters from Niger, of the "Barka Wardougou group" who had crossed the border to support the MDJT rebels in Chad, according to the Chadian defence minister, Oumar Kadjalami (AFP 11 Mar. 1999). The minister stated that 28 rebels were killed and four government soldiers were wounded in the clash (ibid.).

A 23 March 1999 AFP report stated that the MDJT rebels were using land-mines to good effect against government forces, and quoted unnamed sources in Ndjamena who estimated that about 300 people had been killed in the uprising since it began in October 1998. Other sources indicate that the figure of 300 included wounded as well as dead combattants (Africa No. 1 Radio 23 Mar. 1999), and that the government had sent about 3,000 soldiers to fight the rebels (ibid.; AFP 23 Mar. 1999).

On 23 March Chad's military chief of staff, General Moussa Haroun Tirigo, stated that MDJT rebels numbered no more than 40, that they were armed only with Kalashnikovs, and that government losses due to mines were mainly the result of anti-tank mines left over from the Libyan occupation (AFP 28 Mar. 1999). The general also stated that local informants had told the authorities that the only support the MDJT was receiving from Libya and Niger was a small number of Toubou officers who had deserted from the Libyan army, and Barka Wardougou rebels from Niger (ibid.). Tirigo added that 15 MDJT rebels had been killed in an 8 March 1998 confrontation (ibid.).

On 20 April 1999 RFI reported that three rebel groups in Chad had agreed to join forces in their fight against the government. The three were the MDJT, the Movement for Democracy and Development, led by Moussa Medella, and the Democratic Revolutionary Council led by Acheikh Ibn Oumar (ibid.). However, on 4 July 1999 the Movement for Democracy and Development signed a reconciliation agreement with the Chadian government in Khartoum (AFP 4 July 1999).

In June 1999 MDJT leader Youssouf Togoimi was quoted as stating that his forces controlled "the small localities, oases and military posts of Omou, Ombchi, Moussou, Goboun and all the tracks up into the Tibesti" (AFP 7 June 1999). Togoimi also predicted that his forces would reach Chad's capital city, Ndagema, by the end of 1999 (ibid.).

On 23 August 1999 RFI reported that a colonel in the Chadian army, Sougui Anar, had defected to the MDJT, along with about 10 members of his staff, according to MDJT sources. Government sources reportedly denied that the colonel had taken staff members with him when he defected (ibid.).

In November 1999 the Chadian government admitted that eight government troops were killed and 28 wounded in a battle with the MDJT in Oumou on 2 November 1999 (RFI 25 Nov. 1999). Later in November another confrontation with the MJDT occurred in Aozou, but the MDJT was not occupying the locality, according to a government source (ibid.).

On 2 December 1999 the MDJT claimed to have shot down a government aircraft that was flying supplies to Bardai (Africa No. 1 Radio 2 Dec. 1999). On 1 December the foreign minister of Chad, Mahamat Saleh Annadif, stated in Paris that the government was in complete control of the north of Chad and that the government was always ready to negotiate with Youssouf Togoimi in Njamena (ibid.).

No information on means of identifying MDJT members could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Response.

References

Africa No. 1 Radio. [Libreville, in French]. 2 December 1999. "Opposition Militia Claim Downing of Army Plane; Minister Reacts." (BBC Summary 4 Dec. 1999/NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 23 March 1999. "Troops Sent to Tibesti to Counter Rebel Advance." (NEXIS)

Agence France Presse (AFP). 4 July 1999. "Chad Opposition Chief Signs Reconciliation Pact with Government." (NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 7 June 1999. "Chadian Rebel Leader Vows to Be in Capital by Year's End." (NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 28 March 1999. Herve Bar. "Chadian Army Claims Full Control of North, Plays Down Rebellion." (NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 23 March 1999. Herve Bar. "Chadian Rebel Activity Government Forces Kill 28 Rebels: Official." (NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 11 March 1999. "Minister Says Government Forces Kill 28 Rebels." (FBIS-AFR-1999-0311 11 Mar. 1999/WNC)

IRIN. 11 March 1999. "Update 420." <http://cygnus.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Newsletters/irinw420.html> [Accessed 7 Dec. 1999]

\_\_\_\_\_. 22 December 1998. "West Africa Update 365." <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Newsletters/irinw365.html> [Accessed 7 Dec. 1999]

*Keesing's Record of World Events* [Cambridge]. October 1998. Vol. 44, No. 10. "Chad: Reports of Clashes with Rebels."

Radio France Internationale (RFI). 25 November 1999. "Government Says Eight Dead, 28 Wounded in Clash with Rebels in Oumou." (BBC Summary 27 Nov. 1999/NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 23 August 1999. "Army Colonel Reportedly Defects to Rebel Movement." (BBC Summary 25 Aug. 1999/NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 20 April 1999. "Chad: Three Rebel Movements Decide to Join Forces." (BBC Summary 21 Apr. 1999/NEXIS)

\_\_\_\_\_. 3 March 1999. "Chad: Former Tibesti Rebel Calls for Negotiations." (BBC Summary 4 Mar. 1999/NEXIS)

Additional Sources Consulted

IRB databases

REFWORLD

**Internet sites including:**

Africa News

Africa Online

Africa Policy

BBC

Index on Africa

REFWORLD

**Search engines including:**

Dogpile

MetaCrawler

Northern Light