

The Sudanese Civil War: Implications for Chadian National Security



Moudassir Hafiz Oumar

Academic Degree: PhD in International Relations

Graduated Kocaeli University, Institute of Political Science, Department of International Relations.

Kocaeli, Türkiye.

ABSTRACT: The outbreak of the Sudanese Civil War on April 15, 2023, has dramatically transformed the regional security environment in Central Africa, with far-reaching consequences for Chad's national security. This article analyzes these multidimensional pressures on Chad in the context of the war, focusing on humanitarian, military, social, economic, and geopolitical dimensions. The article examines the roots and actions of Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) as well as the wider theoretical abstraction of the Sudan Conflict through a conceptual lens of complexity in regional security dynamics and conflict analysis, with pointed repercussions for Chad's solubility to that conflict.

The RSF's evolution from Janjaweed militias to its current strength as a formidable paramilitary force illustrates some of the structural and systemic weaknesses in Sudan that have led to the current conflict. The article studies the Sudanese Civil War as a struggle for political power, competing resources, ethnic tensions, and external involvement, and emphasizes especially how they contribute to a destabilization of neighboring states, like Chad. The analysis highlights Chad's five pillars of national security—military capabilities, border integrity, social cohesion, economic strength, and foreign engagement—assessing both their strengths and weaknesses within the context of the current crisis and how they intersect.

The stakes of the conflict to Chad are dire: the inflow of refugees has strained humanitarian infrastructure and stretched thin host communities, while border insecurity has grown in the wake of militant incursion and cross-border attacks.

A rising crescendo of ethnic tensions related to competition for resources pose a threat to social cohesion, while economic disruptions include the pausing of trade routes or reallocation of government funds. Geopolitically, Chad's stabilization efforts must not only balance their role as an effective stabilizing actor, but also to navigate a complex landscape of broken regional alliances and ruptures. The recommendations outlined in the article for Chad include enhancing regional cooperation, strengthening humanitarian and security responses, economic diversification, and trying to develop diplomatic initiatives to manage the crisis. Primarily, the solutions promote cooperation to mitigate risks and promote a long-term agenda to protect Chadian stability for the benefit of peace and security across Central Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Definitions of National Security

National security refers to the ability of a state to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and peoples from threats that can come from internal or external sources. It draws upon a range of factors such as political stability, economic strength, military capability, and social cohesion. For Chad, a country located in a geopolitically vulnerable region of Africa, national security is no different in terms of protecting internal stability, but experiences greater influence from external factors, combined with the regional conflicts, movement of borders, and refugees (Collins, 2019:112).

The History of Armed Conflict in Sudan

Sudan's military past is long-standing and rooted in the nation's struggle to consolidate ethnic, religious, and political variations. From the First Sudanese Civil War (1955–1972) to the conflict in Darfur during the 2000s, Sudan has witnessed recurring violence fueled by debates over resources, governance, and identity. At independence in 1956, Sudan inherited structural problems that obstructed the consolidation of a unified state (Johnson, 2011:45). Consecutive governments tended to marginalize outer regions, heightening ethnic and regional tensions (Ahmed, 2020:67). The Second Sudanese Civil War (1983–2005) once more reaffirmed the north-south fissure, and it eventually came to a culmination in the 2011 secession of South Sudan. Even after this large-scale geopolitical readjustment, though, Sudan has continued to grapple with domestic instability in the form of ongoing conflict in Darfur as well as chaos in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan states (Smith, 2015:89).

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Governance and Conflict Management

Since gaining independence to the present day, Sudanese governments have attempted various ways of addressing these conflicts, ranging from suppression by the military to negotiated settlements. These efforts, however, have been typically marked by concealed suspicion, superficially negotiated peace, and absence of comprehensive efforts towards addressing deep-seated issues. Reliance on para-military groups such as the RSF has also added to the complexity of Sudan's conflict landscape by bringing new dynamics and struggles for power (Deng, 2023:29).

Current Warring Parties

Sudanese Civil War on 15th April 2023 is the latest chapter in the nation's chronology of conflicts. The conflict is essentially a struggle for domination between Sudan's Armed Forces (SAF) and General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and RSF led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti). The origins of this conflict can be traced back to disagreements on the integration of the RSF into the permanent army—a controversial matter under Sudan's transitional structure aimed at civilian rule (Taha, 2024:55).

The SAF and RSF have since engaged in fierce combat within strategic urban centers, including Khartoum. The conflict has caused devastating destruction, displacement, and humanitarian emergencies, displacing millions of Sudanese from their homes. Surrounding countries such as Chad have not been spared the impact, as refugee movements and security concerns escalate (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Analytical Framework

Section One: The Rapid Support Forces (RSF)

This essay takes a regional security analysis model in examining the interlinked dynamics of the Sudanese Civil War and its impact on Chadian national security. The model identifies how instability in one state has the potential to destabilize other neighboring states through dynamics like refugee flows, border insecurity, and the diffusion of insurgent groups. Through these, the essay aims to provide an overall appreciation of the dilemmas Chad faces in coping with Sudan's civil war consequences (Williams, 2021:96).

Historical and Geographical Background

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are a central element in the security and political landscape of modern Sudan. Their origins can be traced back to the Janjaweed militias that were infamous for their role in the Darfur conflict that erupted in 2003. The militias were comprised largely of nomadic Arab tribes, many of whom had been traditionally marginalized and were seeking ways of economic and political advancement. Mobilized by the Sudanese government under the leadership of President Omar al-Bashir, the Janjaweed militias were let loose to suppress rebellions spearheaded by insurgent movements such as the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The insurgent movements had risen up in arms against what they felt was marginalization by the central government (Flint, 2008:34).

The Janjaweed's actions were marked by extreme violence, including mass killings, forced displacement, and destruction of entire villages. They were involved in what the world recognized as a genocide in Darfur. Despite international outcry, the Sudan government continued to employ these militias as a cheap method of counter-insurgency, owing to the challenges of keeping a large, centralized army in a state as vast and heterogeneous as Sudan (De Waal, 2015:78).

In 2013, in a bid to formalize and centralize these militias in order to exert more control, the Sudan government established the Rapid Support Forces. This was also with a view of integrating the RSF into Sudan's national security structure while still maintaining a paramilitary force that enjoyed some level of autonomy. The RSF's early operations were focused in Darfur, but their geographical span soon expanded to South Kordofan, the Blue Nile state, and then Khartoum. The RSF's capacity to operate in different terrains—from the arid deserts of western Sudan to the dense urban areas of the capital—has been one of the central reasons for their operational success (Ahmed, 2020:45).

Origins and Financing

The RSF's formalization as a paramilitary force was deeply rooted in Sudan's extensive history of employing militias as a tool of regime perpetuation. By outsourcing war to semi-autonomous militias, the Sudanese state managed to suppress opposition without involving the state directly. This also replicated a complex, and often unstable, security landscape, since such militias had often had their own agendas, sometimes at odds with the central state (Deng, 2023:29).

The RSF's financial independence has been the source of their power. Their principal sources of finance are Sudan's lucrative gold mining industry, particularly in Darfur. The leader of the RSF, Hemedti, has vast mining interests that provide him with significant proceeds. This financial autonomy has enabled the RSF to recruit and arm its militia without relying on state finance entirely, which positions it to negotiate with the Sudanese government from a position of strength (Taha, 2024:55).

The RSF has also received international financial and logistical support. The Gulf states of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have offered financial support in exchange for the participation of the RSF in the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. This has not only deepened the strength of the RSF but also the profile of Hemedti as a key regional actor. The RSF's foray into Yemen underscores its transformation from a local paramilitary force into a force of international clout (Williams, 2021:96).

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Leadership and Hierarchy

Leadership has been a defining feature of the RSF, and at the forefront of this has been Hemedti. Born into a Chadian Arab family who were camel traders, Hemedti's rise to power is indicative of the RSF's local origins. He began as a commander of the Janjaweed militia during the Darfur war and quickly earned a reputation for strategic thinking and resource mobilization. By allying with the central government, Hemedti positioned himself as an indispensable ally for President Omar al-Bashir, who progressively trusted him with additional tasks (Flint, 2008:34).

Under Hemedti's leadership, the RSF developed a centralized hierarchical command system that emphasizes loyalty and operational efficiency. The force is divided into regional units, which are commanded by senior officers that oversee operations in their respective regions. Through this command system, the RSF is capable of controlling Sudan's vast and diverse territories and guaranteeing the effective implementation of orders from the central command (Smith, 2015:89).

The RSF's recruitment tactics have also facilitated its growth. The RSF recruits' fighters from a wide range of ethnic and tribal groups, including previously marginalized ones. Such inclusivity, whatever its pragmatism, has allowed the RSF to build a diverse and numerically powerful force. However, incorporating such varied groups has also created internal tensions, particularly as struggle for resources and influence increases (Collins, 2019:112).

Section Two: Sudanese Civil War Analytical Framework

Political Power Struggles

The Sudanese Civil War that erupted on April 15, 2023, has its origins strongly rooted in a fierce battle for political dominance between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The war is not an arbitrary eruption of conflict but the boiling over of a festering dispute over power sharing in Sudan's transitional government. By the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir from office in 2019, Sudan embarked on a fragile transition to civilian leadership. This called for the RSF to be integrated into the SAF, a move to unify the country's security machinery under a single command (Deng, 2023:29).

The integration plan was, however, marred by challenges. For the SAF, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the integration of the RSF was a bid to consolidate power and ensure the military's predominance in the transitional government. For the RSF, led by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemedti), the process represented an existential danger. The RSF's autonomy, financial independence, and influence—built over decades of existence as a quasi-autonomous paramilitary force—were at stake. Hemedti's resistance to the integration plan reflected broader fears of marginalization and loss of power within Sudan's evolving political landscape (Collins, 2019:112).

The breakdown of negotiations over the integration plan served as the immediate trigger for the conflict, but the underlying causes run much deeper. The SAF and RSF represent two distinct power bases within Sudan, each with its own constituencies, resources, and strategic objectives. The SAF is rooted in Sudan's traditional military elite, which has historically been associated with the central state and urban elites. Conversely, the RSF grounds its power in marginalized rural constituencies, particularly in Darfur, and has utilized its control over natural resources to build a solid power base (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Resource Competition

Sudan's natural resource wealth, particularly gold, has been among the principal drivers of the conflict. The RSF has emerged as a power to contend with in Sudan's gold-mining industry, and Hemedti is reported to have seized control of tactical mining operations in Darfur. The mines have accrued enormous proceeds for the RSF, which has enabled it to operate independently of the state and challenge the SAF's authority. The RSF's access to financial independence has allowed it to recruit and equip a large and well-armed force, cementing its position further as a key actor in Sudan's security landscape (Taha, 2024:55).

The SAF, in turn, has sought to restore its access to these resources in order to finance its own operations and secure its economic footing. Resource competition between the SAF and RSF has thus been a primary driver of the conflict, with both sides viewing economic control as central to their survival and ability to garner public support. The struggle over gold has also attracted external actors, who understand the strategic importance of controlling Sudan's resource wealth. For instance, Gulf nations such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have provided financial support to the RSF in exchange for its participation in the Saudi-led Yemen coalition, contributing to the dynamics of the conflict (Williams, 2021:96).

Ethnic and Social Factors

Cleavages along ethnic lines have been the cause of friction in Sudan for decades, and the current civil war is not an exception. The RSF is also highly heterogeneous in make-up, as recruits are drawn from numerous tribes and ethnic groups, particularly the peripheral ones like Darfur. This heterogeneity is due to the RSF's roots in being a militia army recruited overwhelmingly from those previously disenfranchised by the central state. While this broad ethnic support base has contributed to the rapid expansion of the RSF, it has also introduced internal strife, as different groups within the RSF struggle for influence and resources (Smith, 2015:89).

Conversely, the SAF's leadership and rank-and-file personnel are largely rooted in Sudan's established military traditions, perceived as being more centralized and ethnically homogeneous. This dynamic has also served to fuel perceptions of division between the SAF and RSF, with the latter positioning itself as a force for inclusion and regional representation. Yet these claims are discredited by the RSF's own complicity in fueling violence against marginalized groups during the Darfur conflict (Flint, 2008:34).

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The ethnic and social dimensions of the conflict have also been amplified by the broader political and economic marginalization of Sudan's peripheral areas. Historical neglect by the government has given fertile ground for grievances that have been exploited by both SAF and RSF to mobilize support. This has also exacerbated cleavages and rendered reconciliation attempts even more difficult (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Wider Regional and International Environments

The Sudanese Civil War is not a unique event but rather a part of a greater regional and global security environment. Being located at the crossroads of Africa and the Middle East, Sudan has found itself in the midst of rival interests ranging from natural resource extraction to counter-terror initiatives. Regional neighbors, including Chad, Egypt, and Ethiopia, have equally expressed fears over the ability of the war to destabilize the region. The flow of refugees, arms trafficking, and expansion of militant networks are some of the key risks emanating from the conflict (Williams, 2021:96).

The foreign players have also had a significant role to play in shaping the dynamics of the conflict. The RSF's ties to the Gulf powers have given it the financial and logistical resources, whereas the SAF has worked towards solidifying its bond with Egypt and other neighboring powers. These outside forces have introduced additional layers of complexity, and with competing agendas and interests, it has become more difficult to achieve a consensus-sought resolution of the conflict. Global actors, like the United Nations and African Union, have also attracted more international interest in Sudan's stability (Taha, 2024:55).

Section Three: Chadian National Security

Foundations and Pillars of Chadian National Security

Chad's national security framework is multi-layered, a reflection of the country's unique geopolitical situation and historical challenges. Its pillars of strength are military capacity, political stability, social cohesion, economic resilience, and regional diplomacy. These interdependent factors have allowed Chad to ride out internal instability and external threats successfully.

Military Capability and Strategic Defense

Chad's military is one of its most precious assets, forged through decades of war and the necessity of defending its sovereignty. The country's military forces are famous for their effectiveness in operations, highlighted in confrontations with insurgent groups, national insurgencies, and terrorist groups. For example, Chad's role in counterterrorism operations, particularly against Boko Haram, has established its military as a central player in regional security (Collins, 2019:112). Chad has been a vanguard against terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin area and has gained international acclaim and support for its activities.

This focus on strategic defense is perhaps most apparent in Chad's border security policy. With borders shared by several war-torn countries such as Sudan, Libya, and the Central African Republic, Chad's borders are very permeable with the passing of refugees, arms, and militants across them. To address such concerns, Chad spends a lot of money on patrols along the borders and on surveillance technology and fosters cooperation between neighboring states and global actors (Ahmed, 2020:67). However, the governance of these borders is a demanding and resource-intensive activity, worsened by the ongoing Sudanese Civil War.

Political Stability and Governance

Political stability forms part of Chad's national security because the country has had repeated occurrences of coups, civil wars, and government crises since it became independent from France in 1960. Existing efforts at stabilizing the political landscape have been towards power-sharing pacts, constitutional reforms, and inclusivity in governance. These measures would seek to temper tensions among Chad's different regional and ethnic groups as well as consolidate state institutions. That notwithstanding, there are external conflict threats through Sudanese Civil War that threaten to stabilize Chad through spillovers in refugee flows as well as insurgent cross-frontier movements (Smith, 2015:89).

Chad's political stability is also linked with its ability to maintain equilibrium in external alliances. The nation's government has established strong diplomatic ties with the local and international players, including France and America, in order to utilize these alliances for its security and economic interests. Political stability, however, requires a continuous equilibrium as domestic strife and foreign pressures are bound to disrupt the equilibrium (Flint, 2008:34).

Social Cohesion and National Unity Social cohesion

Is the cornerstone of Chad's stability, considering its ethnically and culturally diverse population. Over 200 ethnic groups are represented in the country, comprising a rich multicultural fabric of cultural identities, but also potentially giving rise to conflicts. Historically, tensions between the predominantly Muslim north and predominantly Christian and animist south have been the biggest challenge to national unity. In order to address these issues, Chad has implemented policies that encourage inclusivity and balanced growth, although enormous inequalities persist (Deng, 2023:29).

The influx of refugees from Sudan, spurred by the ongoing civil war, brings a fresh layer of sophistication into the social structure of Chad. Refugee camps on the border are overcrowded with limited access to basic commodities such as food, water, and medical care. Despite being funded by the government and other foreign aid agencies, tensions between host populations and refugees have increased. These need to be controlled at all costs lest social disintegration and regional and ethnic disunity is further entrenched by relief measures (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

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Economic Resilience and Development

Economic stability forms the bedrock of national security since it provides the foundation upon which the ability of the state to deal with security issues as well as the general welfare of its people improves. Chad's economy is also greatly dependent on oil exports and is therefore vulnerable to the prices of oil globally. There has been an effort to diversify the economy via agriculture, infrastructure development, and education, but all these areas are underdeveloped due to limited resources and ongoing problems of governance (Taha, 2024:55).

The economic impacts of local conflicts, such as the Sudanese Civil War, complicate Chad's security environment. Refugee inflow has strained resources at the local level, while disruptions in cross-border trade have had negative effects on economic growth. Greater economic resilience through strategic investment and improved international coordination is required in overcoming such impacts and triggering long-term stability (Williams, 2021:96).

Regional Alliances and Geopolitical Strategy

As a landlocked country surrounded by volatile regions, Chad's foreign policy of national security is greatly reliant on regional alliances and diplomacy. Chad is an active member of organizations such as the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, engaging in collective security and counter-terrorism. These have been pivotal in mitigating the threat from Boko Haram and other insurgent movements, while encouraging cooperation within the region on themes such as climate change and resource management (Collins, 2019:112).

Chad's foreign policy strategy also involves diplomatic relations with other powerful global allies, including France, the United States, and the Gulf states. These alliances provide Chad with military aid, economic support, and political clout, enabling it to cope more effectively with internal and external challenges. However, regional conflicts like the Sudanese Civil War threaten the stabilization of these alliances by introducing new security challenges and hindering cooperation (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Historical and Geographical Context of Chad

The history of Chad has been dominated by spasmodic violence and instability, and Chad's national security concerns have therefore changed over time. In the post-independence period, Chad saw a string of civil wars and coup d'états, representing deep ethnic, regional, and economic cleavages. Amidst it all, though, Chad has gradually built up its state institutions, if unevenly (Flint, 2008:34). Geographically, Chad is situated in a situation of strategic position in Central Africa, with the borders shared by Libya in the north, Sudan in the east, Central African Republic to the south, and Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon to the west. With this placement, Chad stands at the intersection of various regions of conflict and hence both victim of outside conflict as well as central power in regional security. Chad's diverse landscape—desert in the north and savannah and wetlands to the south—poses operations challenges to security operations but offers a natural resources base to which its economy is anchored (Smith, 2015:89).

This such proximity to Sudan is particularly pertinent, given the two nations have a long and interconnected history of wars. Cross-border insurgency, arms smuggling, and refugee emergencies have typically characterized their relationship, presenting them with each other's vulnerabilities. The ongoing Sudanese Civil War has also escalated such dynamics further, rendering effective security responses and effective diplomatic interventions important in ensuring Chad's stability (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Section Four: The Impacts of the Sudanese Civil War on Chadian National Security

Refugee Crisis: Scale, Challenges, and Multidimensional Risks

The refugee crisis caused by the Sudanese Civil War has imposed a significant burden on Chad. Chad has so far absorbed hundreds of thousands of displaced Sudanese, with even more still escaping the conflict on a daily basis. This makes Chad one of the major refugee-hosting nations in Central Africa. The recently opened camps on Chad's eastern frontier are struggling to contain the influx of arriving refugees, who arrive traumatized and destitute after fleeing atrocities. The majority of these refugees include women, children, and the elderly, which makes it even more necessary to offer specialized healthcare services, protection, and long-term support systems (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

The issues in the refugee camps are multifaceted. The unavailability of fundamental needs like water, food, and medicare is very much a problem of great urgency. International non-governmental bodies, including the UNHCR, have struggled to aid Chad but with funds and capacity. The scope of the crisis overwhelmed what funds and capacity are at hand. The refugees generally stay in camps where the protection for the vulnerable weather is very much limited, exhibiting other weaknesses (Collins, 2019:112). Furthermore, the inadequate sanitation facilities are resulting in the rapid increase of such diseases as cholera, and this further amplifies the health condition (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Displacement has also caused friction among Chadian native populations and displaced populations. Chad border communities already possess economically underdeveloped sites, and the native communities solely depend on pastoralism and subsistence farming. The refugee presence has escalated land, water, and employment competition, which translates into wars that sometimes erupt in violence. Local resentment stems not just from resource competition but also from feelings of injustice regarding governance and assistance distribution. Locals are predominantly upset that their interests are relegated behind those of the refugees, thus producing social cleavages (Smith, 2015:89).

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Border Insecurity: An Emerging Challenge

The Sudanese Civil War has transformed Chad's eastern boundary into a zone of security concern. The fact that the boundary is so porous and in a state of war-torn instability within Sudan translates to the fact that there has been room for such operations by armed groups, militias, and organized crime syndicates. Weapons traffic, smuggling operations, and border crossing raids have been routine work and further make security harder within Chad. Rebel groups, both autonomous and in the service of the Sudanese belligerents, habitually utilize Chad's border zones as operational logistical bases or springboards for missions into adjacent countries (Flint, 2008:34).

Chad's army has intensified the sealing of the border by deploying additional troops and reinforcing checkpoints. However, the territory's size and inaccessibility make extensive surveillance extremely difficult. Militias generally use paths around security checkpoints, using the ruggedness of terrain and lack of technological infrastructure. Refugee camps along the border compound these difficulties by providing cover for criminality because militants can blend into civilian crowds to avoid detection (Deng, 2023:29).

One such major security threat is the increasing possibility of spillover violence. Armed militias and groups have already made cross-border incursions, with instances of raiding, looting, and targeted killings that have been documented. These operations risk pulling Chad further into the conflict and increasing the instability of the region. Possibilities of direct clashes between Sudanese factions and Chadian forces risk destabilizing Chad further and invoking retaliatory measures from groups working on either side of the border (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Social Cohesion: Challenges to National Cohesion

The social fabric of Chad is being greatly tested as a direct result of the Sudanese Civil War. Chad is ethnically and culturally heterogeneous, with historical cleavages on regional, religious, and ethnic lines. The arrival of Sudanese refugees has heightened these cleavages, particularly in eastern Chad where various communities have ethnic or tribal connections with the displaced communities. While these bonds can foster solidarity in some cases, they can also increase conflict if the locals see the refugees as rivals for resources (Collins, 2019:112).

Already tenuous social cohesion in Chad is compounded by the risk of ethnic conflict. The country has long had trouble bringing its northern, predominantly Muslim populations, and its southern, predominantly Christian and animist populations, together. Regional economic development inequalities and political representation have also added to the grievances, rendering Chad vulnerable to social disintegration. Externally, pressure from the Sudanese crisis represents an added risk of deepening such conflicts, particularly if the government fails to address local grievances (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Furthermore, indignation among host communities is growing since they view foreign relief operations disproportionately flowing to the refugees. The majority of the residents of border regions feel excluded from such initiatives and thus believe there is partiality that erodes confidence in the government and aid agencies. Such attitudes may even develop into mass unrest unless checked by outreach among the community and equitable distribution of resources (Smith, 2015:89).

Economic Strain: Developmental and Strategic Impacts

The economic consequences of the Sudanese Civil War are both short and long term. At the national level, Chad has been compelled to divert huge sums of money in a bid to fund humanitarian interventions and reinforce security along the frontier. The expenses have strained the national budget, rendering fewer funds for development programs in the areas of healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Along border regions, the economic shock is more pronounced, with host local economies finding it difficult to cope with increased demand for goods and services, leading to inflation and price rises (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Interruption of the trade between Sudan and Chad has significantly impacted businesses and the government's revenue sources. Sudan was one of Chad's major trade partners, exporting farm products and used as a transit route for export and imports. Disruption of these corridors has led to a loss of revenues to the traders and truncated the access of essentials to the residents along the border. Reviving these routes would depend not only on resolving Sudan's conflict but also restoring infrastructures and fomenting cooperation in the region (Collins, 2019:112).

Long-term economic impacts are the costs of assimilating refugees in local economies. Despite refugees bringing skills and labor that can benefit Chad in the long term, short-run costs of creating jobs, health, and education greatly outweigh the benefits. To counteract the costs, Chad shall require international financial support and investment in sustainable development initiatives (Taha, 2024:55).

Regional Stability: Chad's Place within the Geopolitical Context

The Sudanese Civil War has created ripple effects across Central Africa, destabilizing the continent and complicating further movement towards collective security. Chad has historically been a pillar of regional efforts towards stability, offering troops and equipment to counterterrorism and peacekeeping missions. The present conflict in Sudan risks undermining this, as Chad needs to redirect its resources in order to deal with internal problems created by the war (Williams, 2021:96).

Chad's diplomatic efforts have also been put under pressure. The government has talked to the neighboring nations, including Egypt, Libya, and the Central African Republic, in order to coordinate a response to the crisis. However, the conflicting interests between these nations have made it difficult to develop a coordinated approach. For example, Egypt's alliance with the Sudanese Armed

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Forces (SAF) and other nations' alliance with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have added more layers of tension that Chad must navigate carefully (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Internationally, Chad has turned to institutions such as the African Union, the United Nations, and the Gulf Cooperation Council for assistance. These engagements reflect Chad's role as a regional stabilizer but also the challenges of prioritizing domestic agendas alongside regional and international obligations. Chad's ability to balance these conflicting pressures will be crucial in achieving its own stability as part of broader peacebuilding processes (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

CONCLUSION

The Sudanese Civil War, declared on April 15, 2023, has taken an unprecedented toll on Chad, straining several facets of its national security. As events unfold more disaster fully in Sudan, Chad continues to struggle with the fallout of this civil war within the region, with its multi-dimensional problems ranging from humanitarian aid to military readiness, social integration, economic sustainability, and global diplomacy. A closer look at each dimension points to the depth of Chad's interdependence with events in Sudan and emphasizes the need for concerted responses.

Humanitarian Fallout: A Strained System

The most obvious outcome of the Sudanese Civil War is the overwhelming surge of refugees into Chad. With an estimated hundreds of thousands of Sudanese driven out by fighting, Chad is now a vital haven, hosting one of the region's biggest groups of Sudanese refugees. The crisis has stretched beyond to exceed humanitarian capacities, with camps on the border straining to meet such simple needs as food, clean water, medicine, and shelter. International organizations like UNHCR have come out in solidarity, but the scale of the crisis overpowers capacity, leaving several needs unmet and aggravating vulnerabilities, particularly among women, children, and the elderly (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

Besides the supply-side pressure, the refugee crisis also poses the long-term social and economic challenges. The increasing competition between locals and refugee groups for access to resources has also increased tension, with conflicts emerging over access to land, water, and livelihood. While these tensions are contained in the target areas, they have the potential to overflow into wider social upheaval unless effectively addressed. Moreover, the instant emergence of the camps along the border with Sudan has created a breeding ground for health crises, with cholera and other illnesses rapidly spreading due to congestion as well as poor sanitation facilities (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Border Security Challenges: An Expanding Frontline

The Sudanese-Chad eastern border, already difficult to defend, has emerged as the most vulnerable flaw as a consequence of the war. The porous nature of this border has enabled the unregulated movement of armed groups, criminal networks, and traffickers who make money out of the instability in Sudan. This has led to increased instances of arms trafficking, cross-border incursions, and the potential infiltration of militants into refugee communities. The spillover dynamics of the conflict are clear, with cross-border attacks threatening not just civilian security but also Chad's territorial integrity as a whole (Flint, 2008:34).

Attempts at securing borders by the Chadian forces have been foiled by the vastness and isolationist character of the land. Deploying effective vigilance in such difficult terrain requires enormous investment of resources, of the kind in terms of technology and advanced-level intelligence networks—resources not yet available to Chad. Refugee camps along the border are an additional complicating factor, as militant groups can use these camps as bases or recruitment centers (Deng, 2023:29). Moreover, heightened violence along the border is a sign of the continued threat of the conflict spreading into Chad far within its borders and possibly initiating direct conflict with groups involved in the Sudanese Civil War.

Social Fragmentation and National Unity Under Threat

Chad's own internal social fabric, already ethnically and regionally diverse, has been subjected to great stress by the influx of Sudanese refugees. Eastern Chad, where the majority of the refugees have settled, has communities ethnically and tribally linked to Sudan. While these ethnic ties in some instances have generated solidarity, they have also further intensified the pre-existing cleavages and competition for resources. Resentment has increased at the local level as host populations feel marginalized in the allocation of government and foreign assistance, generating a perception of unfairness that heightens social tensions (Smith, 2015:89).

Moreover, Chad's weak national cohesion is put to its ultimate test as wider ethnic and regional cleavages are exacerbated by the crisis. Chad has had difficulty in the past harmonizing differences between Muslim groups in the north and Christian and animist communities in the south. The burden of the Sudanese Civil War—particularly in the economically poor and ethnically mixed eastern regions—presents the danger of reactivating long-standing grievances. These pressures underscore the necessity of government policies that tread the fine line between short-term refugee relief and satisfying host community demands to ensure equitable resource allocation and prevent localized tensions from flowing over into national conflicts (Ahmed, 2020:67).

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Economic Disruption and Long-Term Strain

Economic impacts of Sudanese Civil War in Chad run deep, building on pre-existing vulnerabilities in a petroleum-based economy. Refugee movements have severely undermined local economies, particularly at points of border that are the foci of farm and informal retail livelihoods. Basic goods and services have come at higher costs due to escalated demand, making refugees and locals alike unable to adapt to everyday needs. Additionally, the sudden closure of borders with Sudan has severed important supply routes, adding to Chad's economic systems and slicing revenue for border communities and traders (El-Bashir, 2023:80).

At a national level, the crisis has forced the government to redirect significant funds into emergency responses, including border defense and humanitarian aid, with less money available for infrastructure development, education, and healthcare. Long-term economic damage can also result from the burden on domestic agriculture, foregone trade, and increased food insecurity. Economic resilience initiatives will require significant investments in diversification, infrastructure, and international partnerships in order to shore up Chad's economy and meet these cascading effects (Taha, 2024:55).

Geopolitical Dynamics: Balancing Regional and International Pressures

Regionally and globally, Chad's role as a stabilizing force in Central Africa has been threatened by the Sudanese Civil War. Chad has historically been an active player in regional security policy, including peacekeeping missions and anti-terrorism efforts. However, the strains of dealing with its internal problems—stemming from the refugee crisis, border insecurity, and social tensions—have stretched its capacity to play its leadership role to the best of its ability (Williams, 2021:96).

The conflict in Sudan has introduced new complicities into Chad's diplomatic landscape. The regional states of Egypt and Ethiopia, and the Gulf states of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have aligned themselves on either side of the conflict in Sudan, creating a fractured regional peacebuilding approach. Chad has been compelled to walk this intricate web of relationships delicately, juggling the necessity of preserving robust global partnerships with the need to protect its own national interests (Ahmed, 2020:67).

Chad's interaction with global institutions, such as the United Nations and the African Union, has been pivotal in obtaining humanitarian assistance and diplomatic backing. Still, the capacity of these institutions to organize effective responses to the Sudanese Civil War is hampered by conflicting geopolitical interests. Chad's foreign policy will have to concentrate on using its role as a dominant regional player to shape collective security initiatives and lobby for more integrated international intervention.

Wider Implications and the Way Forward

The Sudanese Civil War has illustrated the extent to which security, humanitarian, and economic problems in Central Africa are interconnected, and the extent to which Chad has emerged as a central actor in solving the crisis. The multi-faceted implications in Chad emphasize the need for a coordinated action encompassing humanitarian assistance, enhanced border security, economic stability, and diplomatic initiative. The government must prioritize equal policies that suit the interests of host communities as well as refugees, in such a way that social stability is not sacrificed on the altar of seeking short-term solutions.

In addition, international cooperation will play an important role in assisting Chad to navigate the complexity of Sudan Civil War challenges. Greater financial investment, technological cooperation in border control, and longer-term development will be required in order to stop the cascading effects of conflict. Chad's ability to recreate itself for the new environment not only will condition its future stability but also hold significant implications for regional peace-building and security.

In the end, Chad's resilience in this crisis will shape not only its own trajectory but also the broader geopolitical tides of Central Africa. By navigating the short- and long-term dilemmas of the Sudanese Civil War, Chad can emerge as a model for managing complex crises in a region of volatility and interdependence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sudanese Civil War has presented Chad with an unprecedented challenge in various dimensions. To ensure national security and deliver long-term stability, Chad must adopt a holistic strategy with short-term and systemic reforms. The following is a more detailed set of recommendations based on the complexity of the crisis:

1. Strengthen Regional Alliances and Collaborative Frameworks

1.1 Enhance cross-border coordination with neighboring countries

- Establish bi- and multilateral security agreements with Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Central African Republic, focusing on intelligence sharing, joint patrolling of shared borders, and the formation of rapid response units to fight trans-border threats in real-time.
- Establish collective mechanisms for managing movement of refugees for equitable burden sharing of humanitarian needs among border states.

1.2 Mobilize regional institutions to act collectively

- Call for a more significant role of the African Union (AU) to address the crisis, including AU peacekeeping troops' deployment in the border zones and mediation among Sudanese players.
- Use the Lake Chad Basin Commission to conduct cross-border operations against networks of smuggling and armed groups based in border areas.

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1.3 Form a Regional Security and Development Alliance (RSDA)

- Recommend the creation of an RSDA among conflict-torn Central African countries to aggregate resources for collective security and economic resilience efforts. This alliance could access international financing and offer a platform for solutions to interlinked challenges.

2. Enhance Humanitarian Relief Infrastructure and Services

2.1 Accelerate the construction of permanent refugee camps

- Invest in converting existing refugee camps to semi-permanent settlements with sound infrastructure, e.g., hospitals, schools, and sanitation. Make them designed to sustain long-term flow of refugees.
- Leverage international alliances for co-sponsoring the settlement-making, taking help from the UNHCR, World Bank, and donor nations.

2.2 Put maximum emphasis on health and nutrition programs

- Provide emergency healthcare services tailored to the refugee crisis, including mobile health clinics, vaccination campaigns, and malnutrition interventions. Collaborate with international NGOs to deploy health professionals into the field.
- Provide funding for long-term mental health interventions for refugees and host communities, addressing trauma resulting from violence and displacement.

2.3 Host community welfare promotion

- Provide host populations with equal access to public amenities and infrastructure development. This will reduce bitterness and improve social cohesion between local communities and displaced people.
- Launch collective development programs that benefit both the host and refugee communities, such as joint farm schemes, vocational centers, and public works schemes.

3. Strengthen Border Security and Intelligence

3.1 Utilize innovative technological solutions

- Deploy drones and satellite surveillance to monitor border movement and detect unauthorized crossing. Create an integrated command center to coordinate responses using these technologies.
- Deploy biometric checkpoints at strategic border crossing points to monitor and verify individuals crossing the border, reducing militant infiltration.

3.2 Create specialized border security units

- Train and deploy specialized units to combat arms trafficking, cross-border raids, and smuggling operations. The units should be equipped with sophisticated weapons, communication devices, and vehicles suitable for the country's rugged terrain.
- Establish an emergency fund to enable the rapid expansion of military and security operations when cross-border threats increase.

3.3 Improve cooperation with international security partners

- Enhance alliance cooperation with allies like France and the United States to access intelligence networks, counterterrorist training, and high-tech surveillance capacities. Conduct joint exercises to increase operational preparedness.

4. Achieve Social Cohesion and Community Resilience

4.1 Set up a Social Integration Council

- Set up a council of local leaders, government officials, and refugee representatives to facilitate dialogue and settle differences between host communities and refugees. The council may provide practical suggestions for the settlement of grievances.

4.2 Begin programs to build the community

- Carry out intercultural education programs in schools and refugee camps to promote mutual understanding and tolerance between different ethnic and cultural groups.
- Establish volunteer-based conflict resolution teams to intervene and solve incipient conflicts between host populations and displaced people.

4.3 Implement equitable resource-sharing programs

- Establish open systems of distribution of humanitarian aid, proportional to host communities and displaced persons. Provide regular feedback to the public to gain trust.

5. Improve Economic Growth and Resilience

5.1 Encourage agricultural innovation

- Improve investments in climate-resilient agricultural practices such as drip irrigation, drought-tolerant food crops, and farmer cooperatives. This will ensure food safety in border districts while creating job opportunities for both locals and refugees.

5.2 Diversify the national economy

- Reduce dependence on oil exports through emphasis on the sectors of renewable energy, mining (excluding oil), and light manufacturing. Expand partnerships with foreign investors to attract funds into such sectors.

5.3 Tap international finance instruments

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- Ask for debt relief or international financial institution rescheduling to free up resources for crisis intervention. Recommend special economic zones near frontier regions to enhance trade and foreign direct investment.

6. Step Up Diplomatic Effort and International Representation

6.1 Act as a stabilizing diplomatic force in Sudan

- Leverage Chad's past relations with Sudanese groups to facilitate peace negotiations and promote sustainable conflict resolution mechanisms. Have Chad's security interests represented in such negotiations.

6.2 Encourage increased international engagement

- Promote more international engagement, calling on major powers to offer economic assistance, technical assistance, and logistical support for refugee management. Highlight the common regional and global interests in stabilizing Sudan and Chad.

6.3 Spearhead multilateral advocacy

- Work with the African Union, United Nations, and regional organizations to bring the world's attention to the plight of the refugees and elicit an unified action. Call on these agencies to negotiate long-term implications for Central Africa from the Sudanese Civil War.

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