



STILL IN NEED OF SAFETY

THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED
IN EASTERN CHAD

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



“The site here is more secure than our villages of origin. We have here basic stuff like schools, health centres, access to drinking water. We... would like to go back, but the insecurity prevailing there is too high.”

A representative of internally displaced people at Koubigou camp, June 2010

More than four years after internal conflict, inter-ethnic violence and attacks by bandits forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes in eastern Chad, around 170,000 people, most of them women and children, are still internally displaced and unable to return home in safety and dignity.

According to the UN, by September 2010 about 48,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) had been able to return to their villages of origin, mostly in the Ouaddai and Dar Sila regions.

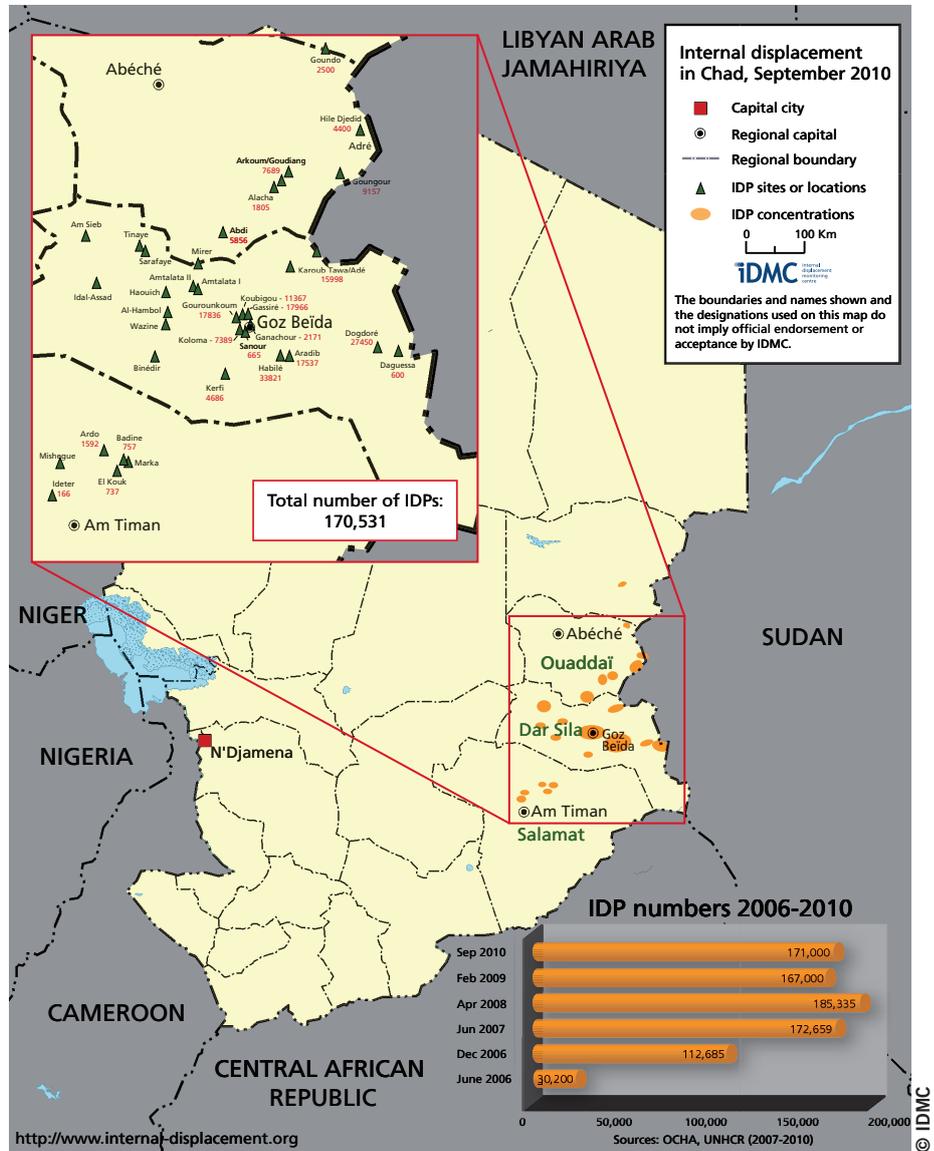
Insecurity in their villages and the proliferation of small arms are preventing them from returning home. The lack of basic services such as access to drinking

water, health and education in their villages of origin is another obstacle.

The presence of the UN mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) has helped to reduce insecurity and human rights violations in some areas of eastern Chad, including in IDP camps. Although human rights abuses by Chadian and Sudanese armed groups and Chadian security forces have continued, including the recruitment of child soldiers and sexual and gender-based violence, the incidence of these crimes has reduced. Now there are fears that the planned withdrawal of MINURCAT by 31 December 2010 will jeopardize these improvements in security.



An Amnesty International delegation spent three weeks in eastern Chad in May and June 2010. The delegates met women and men representing internally displaced people in six camps: Gassire, Koubigou, Koloma, Gouroukoun, Ganashour and Sanour near Goz Beida. As in most of the IDP camps in eastern Chad, people are grouped by their villages of origin. For example, in Gouroukoun, the delegates met scores of people representing 25 villages near Moudeina.



Left: Internally displaced women in Gassire camp talk to Amnesty International's delegates, May 2010.

Above: Location and size of camps for the internally displaced. OCHA map adapted by IDMC.

STILL NOT SAFE TO RETURN HOME

Most of the internally displaced fled their homes in 2006, when civilians in eastern Chad suffered an increasing number of deliberate and targeted attacks committed by "Janjawid" militias crossing over from Sudan and by local Chadian armed groups. The term "Janjawid" is used by representatives of the internally displaced to refer to anyone armed and riding a horse.

In Gouroukoum IDP camp, representatives told Amnesty International that since arriving in 2006, no one has left to go back to their home villages because of insecurity

and because their villages are about 200km away – it would take about three days to walk back there.

Interviewees described how some people tried to go back to their home villages, mainly to grow crops, but many of them were intimidated, threatened, attacked, raped and even killed by members of other ethnic groups, including some they identified as "Arabs", who graze animals on their land.

The plight of those who have returned is making others fearful of going home in case they too are attacked.

WHO IS AN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON?

According to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people forced to flee their homes because of armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights abuses or natural or human-made disasters, who have not crossed an international border. They have the same rights and freedoms as other people in their country – they are protected by domestic law, international human rights and humanitarian law, and regional law. They do not have the same protection under international law as refugees and do not have a specific international treaty to protect them.

4 **Women in Koloma camp for the internally displaced wait in the shade of a tree for a meeting with Amnesty International's delegates, June 2010.**

"We know of four people who went back to the villages in August 2009 and were killed by bandits. These are Lemoun Adam (50 years old), Isakha Mahamat (45 years old), Abdelrahim Oumar (60 years old) and Abbas Dalma (27 years old). They all went back to the village of Tissi to try to grow crops and settle back.

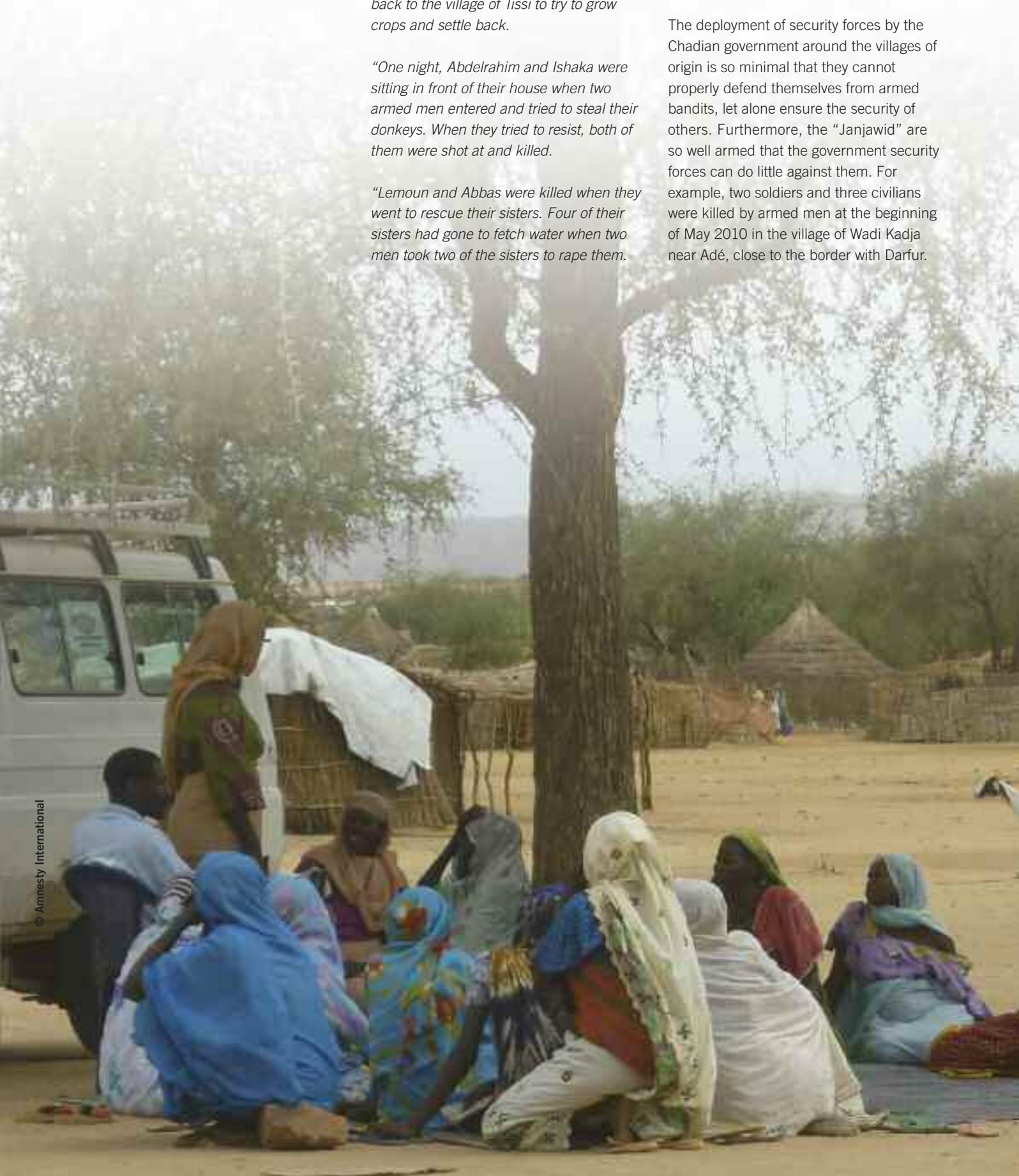
"One night, Abdelrahim and Ishaka were sitting in front of their house when two armed men entered and tried to steal their donkeys. When they tried to resist, both of them were shot at and killed.

"Lemoun and Abbas were killed when they went to rescue their sisters. Four of their sisters had gone to fetch water when two men took two of the sisters to rape them.

The other two sisters went back home to tell their brothers. Lemoun and Abbas went after the two men and the latter shot them. Since those two incidents, no one has returned there."

An IDP representative in Ganashour camp, June 2010

The deployment of security forces by the Chadian government around the villages of origin is so minimal that they cannot properly defend themselves from armed bandits, let alone ensure the security of others. Furthermore, the "Janjawid" are so well armed that the government security forces can do little against them. For example, two soldiers and three civilians were killed by armed men at the beginning of May 2010 in the village of Wadi Kadja near Adé, close to the border with Darfur.



The Chadian soldiers had tried to arrest the bandits following a complaint from a returnee that the bandits had stolen goods from him.

The failure by the government of Chad to take adequate action to bring to justice those responsible for human rights abuses against the internally displaced has allowed a climate of impunity to persist in eastern Chad.

“The government may promise that there will be security but it isn’t true. They constantly fail to take action – don’t arrest criminals, sometimes arrest them but then let them go. There is such widespread impunity”

A representative of the internally displaced in Koloma camp, May 2010

FEW BASIC SERVICES IN THE VILLAGES

“When we arrived here, we discovered things we never had in our villages in addition to the relative security we are enjoying. Here we have water, health centres and schools for our children that we never had before. We discovered here that we are human and our rights are respected.”

A representative of the internally displaced in Gouroukoum camp, June 2010

In the IDP camps, humanitarian organizations and UN agencies provide for basic needs such as water, health care, food and education. Many people in the camps said that the government had not provided them with the same basic services

when they lived in their villages. They wanted assurances before they left the IDP camps that they would receive the same level of basic services once they returned to their villages.

However, despite this, some people have returned, especially to areas far from the Sudanese border and with easy access to humanitarian centres such as Kerfi, Goz Beida and Koukou-Angarana. Louboutigue in Dar Sila is one of the villages where internally displaced people have returned because according to the Chadian authorities, assistance and security have been co-ordinated to ensure they are safe and have access to basic services.

“Since we left our villages in 2006 and 2007, we don’t really feel like security has improved at all”

Representatives of internally displaced people at Koloma camp, May 2010





NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

In August 2010, the Chadian Ministry of Economy and Planning approved a programme developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the Chadian government and the humanitarian and development community. The UNDP Global Programme of Recovery in eastern Chad forms the framework for responses to the multiple challenges faced by people affected by the conflict in eastern Chad, many of whom are internally displaced. The strategy aims to find durable solutions for the internally displaced, including the creation of conditions favourable to a safe and dignified return. Any return must respect criteria developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the body which coordinates humanitarian assistance. The IASC criteria are long-term safety, security and freedom of movement, and an adequate standard of living, including access to food, water, housing, health care and basic education.

On 20 October 2010, Chad's representative to the UN Security Council affirmed his country's commitment and resolve to protect civilians, including the internally displaced. He stressed that the implementation of the updated plan for a security force known as the Integrated Security Detachment, *Détachement Intégré de Sécurité (DIS)* would enable that force to guarantee security in IDP camps and provide security escorts. It would also maintain security in the area in co-ordination with other security forces, the *Gendarmerie Nationale* and the *Garde Nationale et Nomade du Tchad*.

GOVERNMENT OBLIGATIONS

"The government should provide security to our villages of origin and treat all citizens of this country equally."

A young internally displaced person in Koloma camp, June 2010

The government of Chad bears the primary responsibility for ensuring security on its territory, including the security of the internally displaced, and for the protection of their human rights, in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The Guiding Principles are

recognized as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced people. The African Union (AU) Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), adopted by the AU in October 2009, is the first legally binding regional instrument to focus explicitly on the rights of the internally displaced, and will enter into force once ratified by 15 African states. Chad has signed but not ratified the Kampala Convention.

The UN Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention identify rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of internally displaced people in all phases of displacement. They provide protection against arbitrary displacement, offer a basis for protection and assistance during displacement, and set forth guarantees for safe return, resettlement and reintegration. Although the Guiding Principles are not legally binding, they reflect and are consistent with international human rights and humanitarian law.

The UN Guiding Principles reaffirm the following internationally guaranteed human rights:

- The right to enjoy the same rights as all and not to be discriminated against because of displacement (Principle 1).
- The right not to be arbitrarily displaced (Principle 6).
- The right to food, water, shelter, health care and education. If national authorities cannot provide these they should accept the assistance of the international community (Principles 8 and 18).
- The right to freedom of movement and freedom to choose one's place of residence, including "the right to move freely in and out of camps or other settlements" (Principle 14).
- The right to return home voluntarily, in safety and dignity, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country (Principles 28 and 29).

Representatives of the internally displaced in Koubigou camp talk to Amnesty International's delegates, May 2010.

The Chadian government's obligations to the internally displaced also arise from the country's Constitution. The Constitution states in article 17 that the human being is sacred and inviolable. Each individual has the right to life, personal integrity, security, freedom, the protection of private life and possessions.

The Chadian authorities should, with the support of the international community, step up efforts to ensure that the internally displaced have adequate living conditions, including access to health care, food, water and education, as well as guarantees for a safe return in line with the UN Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The UN and the rest of the international community have a responsibility to ensure that all civilians in eastern Chad, including the internally displaced, are effectively protected and they should provide full support for such efforts by the Chadian government.



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Above: A representative from Gouroukoum camp for the internally displaced writes the word "Janjawid" in Arabic in the sand as he explains the threat that these armed horsemen

pose to their security, June 2010.

Cover: Women in Koloma camp for the internally displaced, Chad, June 2010.

ACT NOW

Please write to the Chadian authorities calling on them to:

- Ensure that internally displaced people are not coerced or forced to return to areas where they might be at risk of serious human rights violations and abuses, and that the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Kampala Convention are fully respected, including the right to freedom of movement and to choose one's place of residence.
- Restore security in villages of origin by deploying sufficient security personnel and police in those areas to protect civilians against attacks by ethnically based armed groups and bandits.
- End impunity for human rights abuses by ensuring that all human rights violations and abuses against internally displaced people

are promptly, effectively, thoroughly and impartially investigated, and that those responsible are brought to justice in trials which comply with international standards.

- Ensure that basic services such as schools, health centres and water are made available and accessible in the villages of return.
- Ensure that internally displaced people are fully informed about their rights to voluntary and safe return to their villages of origin or to resettle elsewhere in the country. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure all displaced people are provided with adequate information about the security and material conditions in their villages of origin. The authorities must also ensure the full participation of internally displaced people in the planning and management of their return or resettlement.

Please send your appeals to:

HE Idriss Déby Itno
President of Chad
Présidence de la République
BP 74
N'Djamena,
Chad
Fax: + 235 22 51 45 01

Mr Mahamat Ali Hassan
Minister of Economy and Planning
BP 286
N'Djamena,
Chad
Fax: + 235 22 51 45 87

**AMNESTY
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Amnesty International is a global movement of 2.8 million supporters, members and activists in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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Amnesty International
International Secretariat
Peter Benenson House
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 0DW
United Kingdom
www.amnesty.org