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policy BRIEF 8-04

Porous Borders and the Insecurity of Civilians: Cross-border Violence in Darfur and Eastern Chad

by Daniel S. Carik

SUMMARY:

This is the fourth in a series of policy briefs published by the Ford Institute examining the role of peacekeepers in enhancing the security of civilian populations displaced by conflict in Africa. This brief will explore the relationship between increased border security and the impact of peacekeepers on civilian security in Darfur and Eastern Chad. In it, Daniel Carik argues that 1. although mandated to do so, the UNAMID force in Darfur has been unable to control the border region; 2. the unsecured border has led to a dramatic increase in the size of the population of displaced persons in Chad; and 3. the unsecured border between Darfur and Chad has facilitated the spread of violence.

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Cross-border violence carried out against civilians is a common problem in African conflicts. A March 2004 Security Council report states that "although cross-border problems[...]are important contributory causes of conflict in West Africa, their relationship with the endless cycle of violence and instability is primarily symptomatic, not causal." (1) Yet, research conducted by Daniel Carik at the Ford Institute suggests that cross-border violence may be a driver for, and not merely symptomatic of, protracted conflicts. When national governments are unable or unwilling to secure their borders, outside parties may arrive to fill the security vacuum (2). There are several historical examples of UN peacekeeping operations monitoring and securing borders in an effort to deter criminal activity and cross-border attacks (3). Although Ford Institute researchers fully recognize that borders in Africa are often tenuous and difficult to guard and patrol, peacekeepers nonetheless have done so successfully in the past. One particular instance of successful monitoring by a UN peacekeeping mission is the UNOMUR mission to Uganda that was credited by the Secretary-General as having been "a factor of stability in the area [...]playing a useful role as a confidence-building mechanism." (4)

In contrast, the conflict in Darfur underscores the human security challenge posed by porous, unsecured borders in the context of African civil conflicts. The arbitrary nature of African borders is problematic from both a geostrategic and humanitarian perspective. When ethnic groups are divided by national borders, the likelihood that an "internal" or "civil" conflict will become a regional security

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1. Security Council Report S/2004/200. 12 March 2004.

2. UN Resolution 1674 S/Res/1674 (2006). 28 April 2006.

3. Burundi (2005), DRC (2008), Liberia (2004), Macedonia (1999). Please see final report for a complete list of citations.

4. UN Resolution 891 S/Res/891 (1993). 20 December 1993.

ABOUT THE FORD INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SECURITY

The Ford Institute for Human Security was established in 2003 at the University of Pittsburgh through the generosity of the Ford Motor Company. The Ford Institute is committed to identifying, studying, and advocating action-oriented policy proposals that address internal and transnational threats to the human rights of civilian populations, specifically as those threats relate to the following issues:

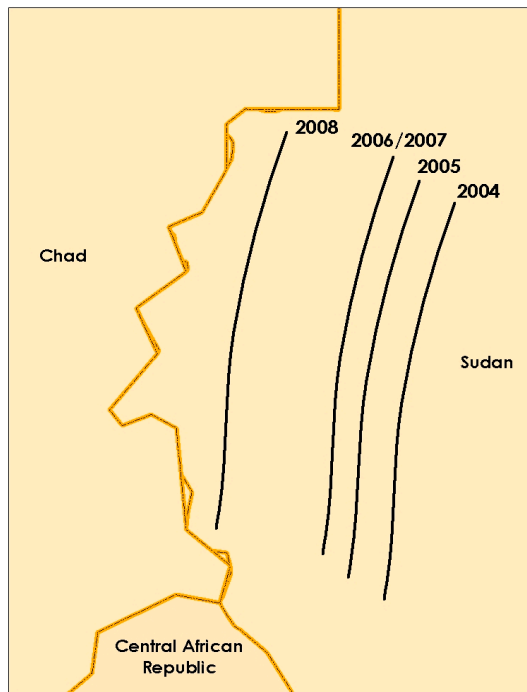
- genocide;
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- intrastate conflict and human rights;
- internal displacement, forced migration, and refugees, and
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Under the direction of Professor Simon Reich, the Ford Institute disseminates policy papers and advocates non-partisan policy proposals. It makes its findings available to national and international policymakers, nongovernmental organizations, corporations, and other interested parties.

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Map 1: The Westward Shift in the Center of Violence in Darfur (by year)



Map created by Kathryn Collins

the center of violence in the region for the years 2004-2008. As illustrated by the map, the center of violence in the region has gradually moved westward, closer to the Chad/Sudan border, as the conflict has unfolded. This movement towards the border reflects the fact that the percentage of the camp attacks, rapes, child abductions, and skirmishes between government forces and rebel groups is increasingly located in the western sector of the conflict region. **Table 1** illustrates that violent incidents on the Chadian side of the border have grown from 3.87 percent to 33.33 percent of all violence recorded by Carik over the last four years. The westward movement of the conflict has, therefore, created greater insecurity for civilians fleeing the violence and has led to increased numbers of displaced persons in eastern Chad.

A defining characteristic of violent conflict in Africa has been the massive displacement of civilians and non-combatants. **Table 2** illustrates the trend that the percentage of internally displaced persons (IDP) and refugee camps located in Chad as a percentage of the total camps in the conflict region has steadily increased from four percent in 2005 to over 31 percent as of July 2008. However, the growth of the displaced population has not resulted in a proportionate increase in the size of the peacekeeping operation in eastern Chad. Nor has

problem increases. Unsecured borders allow for the free movement of not only refugee populations but also militants and criminal actors who spread violence and insecurity from state to state. The governments of Chad and Sudan do not have the means or capacity to adequately secure their common boundary. In this environment, the only actor potentially capable of regulating the border region is the UNAMID peacekeeping force. Yet insufficient forces and lack of a coherent strategy have sabotaged this effort.

Daniel Carik has compiled a database of violent incidents, cross-referenced with IDP/refugee camp populations and geo-coordinates for the Darfur conflict. **Map 1** above illustrates the shift in

Table 1: Violence against Civilians on the Chadian Side of the Border as a Percentage of Total Violent Attacks

Year	Total Violent Incidents	Violence in Chad	% of Total
2004	181	7	3.87
2005	158	9	5.7
2006	325	62	19.08
2007	101	21	20.79
2008	99	33	33.33

Table 2: Civilians Relocating from Darfur to Chad

Year	Total # of Camps in Darfur and Chad	Camps in Chad	% of Total
2004	92	14	15.2
2005	378	15	4
2006	435	46	10.6
2007	214	48	22.4
2008	177	55	31.1

border security been enhanced (5). Militants and criminal groups now operate in eastern Chad at will, destabilizing the surrounding country and crossing back and forth into Sudan. Although the UNAMID force is mandated "to monitor and report on the security situation at the Sudan's borders with Chad and the Central African Republic" (6), according to

one UN report, it is currently understaffed by approximately 50 percent and has thus far been unable to execute this aspect of its mission (7).

The inability of UNAMID to regulate the Chad/Sudan border is best illustrated by the increase of cross-border violence in the region. **Map 2** plots cross-border attacks in the greater Darfur region identified by Carik between January 2004 and July 2008. Of the 867 violent incidents against civilians recorded during this time period, 80 (9.2%) were identified as cross-border attacks. As the size of the displaced population has grown in Chad, so has the number of cross-border incidents. In 2004, there were approximately 240,000 displaced persons and four cross-border incidents. By 2006, that number had grown to 370,000 IDPs and refugees set against 20 cross-border attacks. Between January and July 2008, 26 cross-border attacks were recorded, corresponding with the growth in the total displaced population to approximately 500,000 people. The growth in both cross-border attacks and displacement has corresponded with the splintering of the Darfuri rebel groups (8) and the movement of janjaweed militia into Chad (9).

Militant groups regularly cross the border with impunity, attacking civilian populations on both sides. Additionally, violence and insecurity that threatens civilians is not limited to the border region itself. Both Khartoum and Ndjamenā have been attacked by militants who staged their actions from the opposite side of the border.

The transnational nature of this conflict has severe repercussions on the safety and security of displaced persons. Eastern Chad no longer offers a haven to refugees from Darfur. Similarly, militants and criminal elements have begun staging raids on civilian targets in Sudan from within Chad.

The Principal Investigator for this project is Professor Simon Reich who can be contacted at reichs@pitt.edu.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel S. Carik graduated cum laude from Allegheny College in 2007. He is currently continuing his studies at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and began working at the Ford Institute in the fall of 2007. He is currently leading a research team focusing on the conflict in Darfur and eastern Chad. Daniel may be contacted at dsc17@pitt.edu.

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Map 2: Cross-border Attacks in Chad and Sudan (January 2004 - July 2008)



Map created by Cathleen Marcks

5. Please see Brief 08-01.

6. Darfur - UNAMID - Mandate: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamid/mandate.html>.

7. Darfur - UNAMID - Facts and Figures: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unamid/facts.html>.

8. See BBC.com "Q&A: Sudan's Darfur Conflict" - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3496731.stm>.

9. See HRW report—"Darfur Bleeds: Recent Cross-Border Violence in Chad" <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/backgrounder/africa/chad0206/chad0206.pdf>.



policy BRIEF

The Ford Institute's full analysis on the issues described in each of the policy briefs will be published in a report available in winter 2009.

The preliminary findings of this policy brief therefore suggest that:

- The UNAMID peacekeeping operation, though specifically mandated to secure the borders of the Darfur region, has thus far been unable to fulfill this aspect of its mission. This is most likely a function of troop over-extension induced by severe understaffing.
- A porous, unsecured border has facilitated the spread of violent conflict from Darfur into areas of eastern Chad.
- The rise in cross-border violence corresponds with the rapid increase in the total displaced population in eastern Chad.

The next policy brief published in this series will address a peacekeeping mission's role in the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation (DDR) programs.

