

## **Blood flows as red in Chad as in Darfur**

By Mia Farrow  
an actor and UNICEF ambassador

November 28, 2006

KOUKOU ANGARANA, Chad -- In Goz Beida hospital near the Chad-Sudan border, three men lie side by side, bloodstained gauze covering where their eyes once were. All were attacked by the janjaweed, Arab militia who ride from across the nearby border with the Darfur region of Sudan to brutalize Chadian villages.

Only Abdullah Annour was left with one eye. When the janjaweed attacked him, they noticed his sightless, cataract-whitened left eye.

They cut out his good eye instead.

Mr. Annour is one of the lucky few to have a bed. Most of the wounded at Goz Beida hospital lie on the ground outside, the hospital's six small rooms swollen beyond capacity. I met elderly Djidde Zakaria, lying under a tree nearby. Obviously suffering, her back was wrapped in pus-soaked gauze. "They burned me in my home," Zakaria said.

After just three days in Goz Beida hospital, she was sent away.

Mallah Ndjonki, the only doctor in attendance, is doing what he can, but he has had to turn out many of the injured. New victims flood the hospital every day, casualties of brutal violence familiar to Darfur and now engulfing neighboring Chad. In 2003 the government of Sudan enlisted the janjaweed militia to launch a genocidal campaign upon their own black African villagers in Darfur. The systematic attacks have left more than 400,000 people dead, a figure supported by many international aid organizations.

In the last three years more than 200,000 Darfurians have fled here, to Chad. But crossing the border no longer offers any safety.

This year 90,000 Chadians have been forced to flee their homes as Sudanese Arab militia have joined Chadian Arabs in a new frenzy of bloody attacks. Dazed and terrified survivors cluster under trees while aid agencies struggle to respond to the latest rampage of terror. In eastern Chad, 60 villages have been destroyed since Nov. 5. In one of those villages, Tamadjor, I met Josef Oumar, searching through the ashes of his village. "Janjaweed came from three sides. They were wearing uniforms of the Sudanese army.

They attacked us with Kalashnikov rifles. We had only our bows and arrows. Three small children were thrown into flaming huts and burned alive."

The Chadian government is more concerned with protecting itself than its displaced citizens. Chadian President Idriss Deby is in the throes of an insurrection from rebel groups that he believes are supported by Khartoum. The Chadian government declared a state of emergency throughout most of the country Nov. 13. The emergency measures provide security for Deby's presidential compound. But the displaced people along Chad's eastern border have been left defenseless in the face of escalating violence between rebel forces and the Chadian army.

Abeche, the largest city in eastern Chad, was recently overrun by rebels. Family members of UN staff are being evacuated, and aid workers themselves may follow. This would leave thousands of displaced survivors utterly helpless and without hope.

The displaced people of eastern Chad and the refugees from Darfur urgently need a UN presence with a mandate to protect the civilians.

At a meeting about Darfur held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, earlier this month, France suggested deploying troops along Darfur's long western border to stem the flow of violence into Chad. Sudan promptly rejected the suggestion. However, if the deployment takes place within Chad then Sudan's consent is not determinative.

Politically, a deployment from within Chad is feasible, both from the perspective of the African Union and the UN. African Union Chairman Denis Sassou-Nguesso, has stated, "We agree with the idea of sending UN troops to ensure security on the borders of Chad." The UN Security Council resolution that authorized a UN force to protect Darfurians also decided that the mandate of the UN mission in Sudan shall include "the establishment of a multidimensional presence consisting of political, humanitarian, military and civilian police liaison officers in key locations in Chad, including in internally displaced persons and refugee camps."

That may be the only remaining hope for the anguished people of eastern Chad. For three years we have watched and done little as Darfur burned. We cannot continue to stand by as the same fate befalls eastern Chad. A robust UN-backed force must be deployed to halt these atrocities.

*Copyright © 2006, [Chicago Tribune](#)*