



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA

*2932nd GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 16 March 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. In accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1778 (2007), 1834 (2008) and 1861 (2009), the transfer of authority between EUFOR Tchad/RCA and MINURCAT took place, as planned, on 15 March 2009, one year after the declaration that EUFOR had achieved its initial operating capability.
2. The Council welcomes the fulfilment of EUFOR's mandate and underlines the exemplary cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations from the launching of the operation to its successful handover. It stresses that the planning of this transition was carried out smoothly in order to avoid a security vacuum. Lessons will have to be learned from that cooperation, but can already serve as a basis for future collaboration.
3. The Council notes that, throughout its mandate, EUFOR has made a tangible contribution towards protecting civilians in danger, and in particular refugees and displaced persons who have been profoundly affected by the neighbouring crisis in Darfur. EUFOR, in observance of its mandate, has acted in an impartial, neutral and independent manner. In helping to improve overall security in its operational area, EUFOR has also facilitated the activities of humanitarian workers. It has contributed towards protecting the staff of the United Nations and humanitarian organisations, thereby enabling relations of trust to be established with the latter. Moreover, the EUFOR patrols have helped to deter attacks against the civilian population in the operational area. Security in the area has also been improved through the establishment of the Chadian "*Détachement Intégré de Sécurité*" (DIS) supported by MINURCAT.

P R E S S

4. In addition to the 23 Member States, three third countries (Albania, Croatia and Russia) have taken part in this operation; up to 3 700 men have been involved in what was the first autonomous military operation of this scale, conducted in a particularly wide area under difficult overall conditions. The lessons from an experience of this kind need to be learned.
 5. The Council welcomes the global and regional approach which has been followed by the European Union in planning and conducting this operation. The actions of EUFOR in the framework of the ESDP in the political and diplomatic fields, on the one hand, and in the humanitarian and development fields, on the other, have been both complementary and coordinated, thereby maximising the EU's impact on the ground.
 6. The Council would point out that EUFOR's redeployment does not mark the end of the European Union's involvement in Chad, in the Central African Republic or in the region as a whole. Around 2 000 soldiers currently serving under EUFOR will in future come under the MINURCAT banner, which further underlines European support to UN peacekeeping operations. Moreover, the European Union will remain active at a political and diplomatic level in Chad, in the Central African Republic and especially in Sudan, where the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Darfur peace process is crucial to the stabilisation of the region. The European Union will also continue to be active in the region in the field of humanitarian and development activities."
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