

Information Sheet

Chad

The scant information that reaches us from a country that is undergoing one of the most forgotten conflicts in the world, tells us that in the first days of August, 44 people were killed in just three days due to clashes between different ethnic groups fighting for land in the eastern province of Ouaddie, on the border with Sudan. According to the head of state, Idriss Déby, the country is "witnessing a terrible phenomenon" and "the conflict between communities has become a national concern, especially in the eastern part of the country".

The president, who came into power in a coup in 1990 and was reconfirmed by elections that international observers judged to be gravely irregular, pointed out that the police who intervened came under fire. "The gun owners did not hesitate to shoot the police. It is a war. We must act against these armed people who kill people", said Déby, attributing the responsibility for the tension to the influx of arms from neighbouring countries in conflict, such as Libya, Nigeria, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. Conflicts over land then become part of regional conflicts. Chad interferes with the conflict in Libya, in the Fezzan, where weapons come from. In Nigeria, farming populations accuse the Fulani nomads of having contact with the formation of jihadist terrorism operating in the region (Source: Africa - The magazine of the black continent).

On August 13, at least six people were killed following a suicide attack carried out by a kamikaze woman in the west of the African country. This was reported by the AFP news agency, citing a Chadian army official who stated that the attack, which took place around one o'clock in the morning, was due to the Nigerian Islamic group Boko Haram. The number of victims was also confirmed by a local NGO, which chose to remain anonymous. According to the same sources, five soldiers were injured. The attack took place in the district of Tatafiromou, in the sub-prefecture of Kaïga-Kindjiria in the Lake Chad region, an

area in which Boko Haram attacks have increased in 2019. The area has been hit by the terrorist group since June 2018 and, in most cases, the victims have been part of the armed forces. Last March, twenty-three soldiers died in an attack on a military base on the northwestern shore of the lake. On June 21, another Boko Haram attack claimed the lives of at least eleven Chadian soldiers. In the country, the suppression of the terrorist group has caused at least 27,000 deaths and more than a million displaced persons. The Nigerian terrorist group is being pursued by a multinational force comprising, in addition to the Nigerian army, troops from Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Benin (Source: TPI News). If we consider the whole area around Lake Chad, the data is even more disastrous: according to the data of the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Affairs, the desertification of Lake Chad together with terrorism has caused 2.3 million refugees, while 10 million people are living in need and 500,000 children are suffering from malnutrition. The surface area of Lake Chad has shrunk by 90% compared to the 1960s and the Jihadist war of Abubakar Shekau has made this land a fortress of terror. Four countries are touched: Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad. And it is in Chad that the crisis is flaunted in all its ruthlessness. The damage caused by desertification is evident. The refugees tell tales of how today there is only sand where there once were fields, cattle and nets sparkling with fish. It is a past lost forever, understandable only by sifting through the memories of refugees. Instead, the present is a harsh reality of deprivation: food supplies continue to decline and the water they drink comes from the lake, which they say causes pain and disease (Source: Daniele Bellocchio, Africa). There are more than 200 ethnic groups in Chad. The most widespread religion is Muslim (53.10%, mainly in the north), followed by Christians (35%, who like the animists 10%, are mainly in the central south) and finally atheists (2.90%). Although the official languages are Arabic and French, there are more than 100 tribal languages spoken.