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Chad-France

Macron on the side of the Chadian dictatorship

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Macron supports the dictatorship in Chad in order to preserve French military bases despite growing opposition from the population.

Chad is the perfect illustration of the double standards of the French authorities on the question of democracy in Africa. While they are quick to condemn coups d'état in Sahelian countries, they support the dynastic seizure of power by Mahamat Idriss Déby, whose late father ruled the country for more than thirty years.

Dark Thursday

The seizure of power by Déby's son in April 2021 is the result of a constitutional coup d'état led by a clique of generals who have appropriated the country for decades. From the outset, Déby's son established himself through repression. To put on a brave face, he promised an eighteen-month transition and convened a sovereign national conference boycotted by the opposition. This conference will act on the junta's wishes. The junta announced that it would extend its rule by two years.

In response, the political opposition and militant civil society organisations called for people to take to the streets on Thursday 22 October 2022. The crackdown on the demonstration amounted to a massacre and will be remembered as Black Thursday. More than two hundred people were killed, and hundreds were arrested over the following weeks. The aim was to decapitate the opposition. Most were deported to Koro Toro prison, 600 kilometres from the capital N'Djaména. Those who returned tell of how bodies were dumped on the way there, and of the inhumane treatment in this prison run by former Boko Haram prisoners.

Sahelian pivot

The repression on the ground continues, two months ahead of a referendum on amending the Constitution to reinforce the centralist nature of power in a country whose great religious and community diversity would, on the contrary, merit a more federal organisation.

From the Black Thursday massacre to the many human rights abuses, French diplomacy remains silent. Its aim is to preserve the stability of the country, which it associates with the regime in power. As a result, the French authorities did not hesitate on several occasions, in the absence of any parliamentary control, to commit French forces against rebel attacks threatening the government. Chad remains a decisive country in France's military architecture in Africa. During Operation Barkhane, Chadian soldiers were sent to the front line against the jihadists. Today, it is the only country in the Sahel that still accepts the positioning of the French army on its soil.

This is a precarious situation, given the growing number of protests against France's military presence. This is a struggle that needs to be taken up and supported in France, because the departure of French troops from Chad would also mean the fall of a regime that has lasted far too long.

10 November 2023

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Translated by *International Viewpoint* from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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