

We are deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of assembly, the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the high levels of impunity enjoyed by members of the transitional council – the Conseil Militaire de Transition, (CMT). We are further alarmed by the killings of journalists in the line of duty and the arbitrary arrests and judicial persecution of human rights defenders.

KEY CONCERNS



FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

The Chadian authorities regularly imposed blanket bans on protests to prevent protesters from raising concerns about issues related to elections and governance and calls for an inclusive political transition that lead to a transfer of power to civilian rule. The authorities have on several occasions imposed arbitrary restrictions on protests before they happen and banned demonstrations by civil society and the political opposition, while those organised by the sympathizers of the transitional authorities have been allowed to take place without violence.

Since April 2021, security forces have used lethal forces to disperse peaceful pro-democracy protests leading to deaths of the protesters and many others injured. During protests held in October 2022 against the extension of the CMT for a further two years, more than 50 people were killed and more than 300 injured and those responsible have not been held accountable for their actions. In January 2022, more than 13 people were killed and 80 others injured as the authorities used violence to disperse community-led protests.

The authorities continue to arrest protesters and subject them to judicial prosecution in highly flawed trials accusing them threatening public order or destroying property. During the “black Thursday” protests in October 2022, hundreds of protesters were detained and 261 people sentenced after they were tried at the Correctional Chamber in Koro Toro. In September 2022, more than 80 protesters were arrested, a majority from the of Les Transformateurs political party after they called for a more inclusive National Dialogue.



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The Haute Autorité des Médias et de l’Audiovisuel (HAMA) – the body set up to regulate the media is used to target independent media outlets and ban and suspend them. Some media outlets are threatened with suspension if they report on certain issues.

At least two journalists have been killed over the last year while they covered protests or conflict in communities. There are high levels of impunity that persist because those are behind the killing of journalists have not been brought to justice. The deaths of journalists Narcisse Oredje and Evariste Djailoramdji have not been investigated.

Journalists are targeted, arrested and detained for covering protests or reporting on issues considered sensitive by the government.



FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Ordinance No. 023/PR/2018 of 27 June 2018, which regulates associations, prohibits ‘regional or community-based associations’ and imposes a ban on associations that join national and international confederations. It empowers the authorities to cancel the registration of an association if, for example, it is deemed to undermine territorial integrity or national unity.

Article 8 of the Ordinance states that the founding of an association may not in any circumstances be interpreted to mean the authorisation can start operating.⁴³ It further prohibits the involvement of human rights organisations, religious associations and student associations from engaging in what it terms ‘political’ activities but does not define what ‘political’ activities entail.

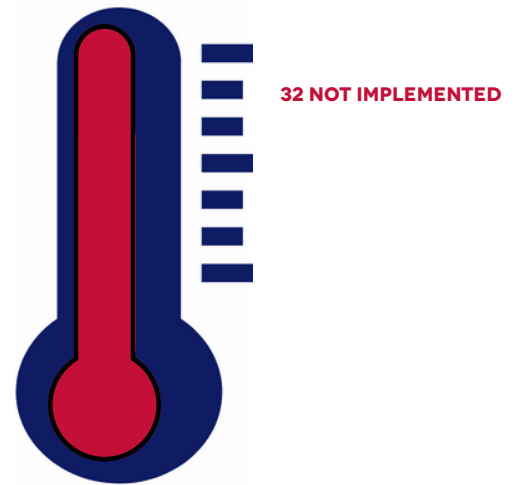
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COMMON VIOLATIONS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS INCLUDE:

HRDs are physically attacked, threatened with death and shot at with live ammunition, subjected to arbitrary arrests, detention, accused of defamation, disturbing public order and of breaching national security.

PREVIOUS UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW PROCESS

Chad received 32 recommendations relating to the space for civil society (civic space). 31 noted.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Stop targeting HRDs, activists and members of the political opposition who express concerns over the actions of the CMT and call for elections to facilitate a political transition to civilian rule.
- 2 Carry out independent investigations into attempts to assassinate HRDs and bring the perpetrators to justice to deter others.
- 3 Ensure freedom of expression and media freedom by all bringing national legislation into line with international standards.
- 4 Ensure that journalists and writers may work freely and without fear of retribution for expressing critical opinions or covering topics that the government may deem sensitive.
- 5 Take steps to lift restrictions on freedom of expression and adopt a framework for the protection of journalists from persecution, intimidation and harassment.
- 6 Carry out independent investigations into violence used to target protesters in October 2022 and bring all perpetrators to justice.
- 7 Repeal Ordinance No. 023/PR/2018 of 27 June 2018 on associations and consult with civil society to replace the Ordinance with laws and policies that promote and enhance freedom of association, in line with Chad's regional and international human rights obligations.
- 8 Stop imposing bans and restrictions on the activities of CSOs and political formations and stop raids on the premises and homes of civil society groups and political parties.

Civic space in Chad is currently rated “**REPRESSED**” by the CIVICUS Monitor