

CHAD

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Chad has approximately 6.8 million inhabitants and covers an area of 1.3 million km². Since coming to power in late 1990, after decades of political instability and civil war, President Idriss Deby has successfully managed a difficult transition to political reconciliation, peace and democracy. The country is currently exhibiting signs of stability, and of political, social and economic recovery. The government is awaiting a significant improvement following the green light given by the World Bank to the construction of a pipeline between the Doba oilfield in southwest Chad and the Kibri seaport in Cameroon. So far, the Chadian economy is heavily reliant on the cotton sector, and agriculture generates 40% of GDP and provides a livelihood for 85% of the population.

The mining sector is still poorly developed. The resources mined in Chad are quite limited, with some small-scale mining of alluvial gold, and production of sand and gravel for the local market. Occasional artisanal diamond production is reported from a few locations (Baïbokoum and Guera) but no figures are available.

Chad is a landlocked country, and gold and diamonds appear to have the most development potential, although many other mineral occurrences, both metallic and industrial minerals, are known in the country. Exploration carried out in the late 1980s and early 1990s by UNDP/DRGM confirmed that the greenstone belts of the Mayo Kebbi and

Ouaddaï regions, in the southwest and northeast of Chad respectively, were similar to, and had the same gold potential as, the Birimian greenstone belts of West Africa. To date, two foreign companies are prospecting in Chad; an Italian firm and Afko Corea Co. Ltd are holding one and 15 exploration licences respectively. The latter also has three mining leases and a 100 t/d placer gold operation under construction on its Gamboke concession.

Chad is endowed with petroleum deposits, and two projects were started in the period under review. The 5,000 bbl/d produced by the Sedigui oilfield, near Lake Chad, is to be piped 330 km to a small refinery in Farcha, near N'Djamena. This output will cover the needs of the local market and supply a new 12 MW power station, thus doubling the current power production. The building of the small refinery is to be completed in 2001.

The larger Doba crude oil project comprises three oilfields, which are reported to contain close to 1 billion bbl of oil. Some 300 wells will provide a peak production of 225,000 bbl/d, to be pumped to the Kribi seaport in Cameroon via a 1,050 km long pipeline. The project was eventually launched by a consortium, comprising US companies Exxon (40%) and Chevron (25%), and the Malaysian company Petronas (35%), with the blessing of the World Bank. Construction of the pipeline has begun at the Cameroon end and the first contractual payments have been made to the Government of Chad.