

## Summary

The presidential elections in Chad have resulted in the victory of Mahamat Idriss Deby with reportedly more than 61% of the vote. This result, however, is disputed by the opposition led by Succes Masra, as the run-up to the elections saw political violence against Deby's political opponents and alleged election tampering. Therefore, the opposition has called for peaceful demonstrations and unsuccessfully challenged the election results in the Constitutional Court. Due to this, the army has been deployed in the capital to counter potential violent civil unrest.

## Recent events and developments

On May 6, presidential elections have transpired in Chad. The presidential elections have concluded with the confirmed victory of interim President Mahamat Idriss Deby. Deby has ruled the country since 2021 and has won the election with more than 61% of the national vote while his closest contender, Prime Minister Succes Masra of the Les Transformateurs party, received 18.5% of the vote. Although the voting has been largely peaceful, the run-up to the elections was riddled with irregularities and alleged foul play. On February 28, Yaja Dillo, the leader of the Socialist Party Without Borders, was killed after the security services attacked its headquarters in the capital. As a result, 3 other presidential candidates withdrew, fearing the same fate. Furthermore, 76 supporters of Masra were arrested for alleged forgery on election day while others were threatened. The results of the vote were also announced 2 weeks early. Masra claimed victory and stated that the election was rigged. The opposition has challenged the election in the Constitutional Court. This attempt was unsuccessful as the court confirmed Deby's victory on May 16. Masra did not agree with this result but admitted that there is no other legal recourse and called for his supporters to "remain mobilized" but "peaceful". The government has deployed troops in N'djamena since May 6 to maintain order. However, gunfire on election night has already been reported in the capital, resulting in 9 deaths and 90 injured. Although the gunfire was reportedly caused by celebrations, a clash between armed supporters has not been ruled out.

## Impact assessment

Although the presidential elections in Chad were meant to provide democratic legitimacy to the government, ease social tensions, and prevent social unrest, they may have the opposite effect. Despite the opposition's emphasis on peaceful protest, the country has a history of violent riots and government crackdowns on protestors. In October 2022, opposition leader Succes Masra and the Wakit Tamma platform called for protests against the extension of Mahamat Deby's military rule, demanding democratic elections. The demonstrations led to riots in N'djamena and other southern cities, with protestors storming government buildings. Security forces responded with a crackdown, resulting in around 50 deaths, 300 injuries, and 600 arrests. An internet blackout was imposed, Masra was exiled, and all political parties were suspended for three months. The Les Transformateurs party has substantial support and has the means of mobilizing their supporters, especially in major cities. At the moment, peaceful protests have taken place on May 10, 11, and 12 without reported incidents. However, the opposition's appeal to the Constitutional Court to annul the vote has failed as it has confirmed Deby's victory. This might lead to a potential escalation. With no other avenue of legal recourse to challenge the results of the election, pro-Masra protests are likely to occur in N'djamena and other major cities such as Moundou, Doba, and Sahr. A possibility for the protests to turn to riots exists as the opposition feels that they were unfairly denied victory. This might result in the security services to once again use lethal force to disperse the rioters and regain control of the situation.

## Advice from Forth Global

- Ensure that all employees travelling to Chad receive a three-day HEAT training prior to deployment.
- Employees should avoid all protests and other public gatherings.
- Employees should refrain from sharing their opinions on the political situation in Chad.
- Closely monitor the local and international media for updates on the political situation and potential protests, with an emphasis on N'djamena and Moundou.

## Customized advice

Please contact us for specific advice:

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