



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**Javier SOLANA,
EU High Representative for the CFSP,
comments on the situation in Chad
and Operation EUFOR TCHAD/RCA**

In response to questions from reporters about Operation EUFOR TCHAD/RCA following the rebel assault on N'Djamena at the weekend and the heavy fighting that followed, Mr SOLANA today underlined the importance of Chad for the stability of the region and the vital role of the EUFOR operation which would be deployed as soon as circumstances permitted:

"We took the decision to launch an operation in Chad because we knew very well that Chad is an important country for the stability of the region. Today, as you know, the situation is not yet clear, as far as the situation on the ground is concerned. As far as the political outcome is concerned, we continue to maintain the operation in readiness.

We have halted deployment in the last few days in order to see how the situation evolves on the ground and to have more clarity concerning the political developments. But our intention is to maintain the operation.

These events prove the need for an operation of this nature, not only for Chad but also for relations between Chad and Sudan. The operation is aimed at protecting people, who are displaced, in camps, or in other places in Chad. This is more important than ever."

Mr SOLANA explained that the majority of EU Member States participate in this EU operation, which is mandated by a UN Security Council Resolution and is a bridging operation pending engagement by the UN in Chad.