

Chad's Presidential Election: A Critical Juncture for Stability and Regional Influence

Chad recently concluded its presidential elections on 06 May 2024, marking a pivotal moment in the nation's political landscape. Mahamat Idris Deby emerged victorious with 61.3% of the vote, after years under military control led by Interim President Mahamat Deby Itno. This election, delayed for three years, was conducted amid heightened expectations of violence, prompting the deployment of extensive security forces across the country to ensure a peaceful process.

With a population of approximately 18 million, Chad has struggled to achieve a smooth and democratic transfer of power since its independence in 1960, following decades of French colonial rule. The country's position is particularly significant in a region beset by military juntas and insurgencies. Additionally, the rising cost of living, exacerbated by global events like the Ukraine war and the persistent threat from Boko Haram, underscores the urgency for credible elections to maintain peace and foster development in this oil-exporting yet less developed nation.

The stability of Chad is of paramount importance to Western nations, especially the United States and France, due to its central role in counter-terrorism operations in the Sahel region. Chad remains one of the last stable allies in the Sahel, a critical factor as neighboring Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger have experienced military coups, leading to the expulsion of French troops and the engagement of Russian mercenaries for security. In this context, Western countries are inclined to support the current leadership under Mahamat Idris Deby, who is seen as pro-West and vital for maintaining regional stability and security efforts in the Sahel.

Understanding the geopolitical and economic implications of Chad's elections is essential in a time marked by political instability and regional turmoil.