

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 18, 2023

Dear Secretary Blinken and Administrator Power,

We are writing to urge you to take bold action in response to the dire humanitarian crisis in Chad's Lac province. Nearly a decade after violent attacks from groups like Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa spilled into Chad, resulting displacement continues to rise. Alarming, the government of Chad continues to shirk its responsibility to provide for its internally displaced citizens. We applaud the Department of State and USAID for spearheading U.S. efforts to address Chad's ongoing humanitarian and displacement crisis, but the U.S. government should now urgently take actionable steps in humanitarian diplomacy efforts and additional funding support.

We urge the U.S. government to support the people of Chad by calling on Prime Minister Saleh Kebzabo to lead the process of codifying into law Chad's obligations to protect and assist its internally displaced people, in accordance with the African Union's Kampala Convention.

As international attention has dwindled in recent years, the number of internally displaced Chadians has [quadrupled since 2018](#). Across the country, [6.1 million people](#) require humanitarian assistance, but chronic underfunding limits the reach of aid groups. At present, [381,289 people are internally displaced](#)—most of them in the Lac province, where food insecurity and the lack of shelter are acute and government-provided services non-existent. Moreover, flooding caused by erratic rainfall over the last few months has impacted [one million people](#); destroying property, disrupting livelihoods, and displacing more than 88,000 people in the capital N'Djamena alone.

Worryingly, the 2022 UN Humanitarian Response Plan was only [46 percent](#) funded. Insufficient resources are forcing aid groups to make impossible choices about which communities to serve. As you know, the United States has the humanitarian response's leading donor since its outbreak. We applaud U.S. leadership in the response, and we hope to work with the Department of State in the next budget cycle to ensure that U.S. humanitarian funding levels are maintained, at the very least, going forward.

The [Lake Chad Basin Conference](#), taking place later this month in Niamey, Niger, is another opportunity for the U.S. to commit to long-term solutions to the issues faced by the region. The conference will bring together the Governors of the affected region, international donor governments, and humanitarian and development experts to raise funds and create a consensus on shared goals and priorities for the coming years. The U.S. must use this event as platform to signal its renewed commitment and encourage regional authorities to better respond to the issues faced by their populations.

The U.S. government has the opportunity to work with Chadian authorities to more proactively engage on these matters. As a recent [report](#) from Refugees International argued, international humanitarian efforts to address displacement can only be truly effective and sustainable if Chad

shoulders some of the responsibility. National authorities have largely neglected this responsibility until recently.

Over the summer, the Chadian authorities finally made progress on fulfilling their commitments under the [African Union's Kampala Convention](#) for the protection and assistance of internally displaced citizens which they [signed](#) onto in 2010. After years of inaction, the government worked alongside humanitarian organizations to draft a law to protect and provide for the internally displaced. Passing this law will legally codify the government's responsibility to prevent, mitigate, and eliminate the causes of internal displacement, and its duty to protect and assist its internally displaced citizens. Unfortunately, the adoption process is now stalled.

We call on the Administration to strongly urge Prime Minister Saleh Kebzabo to reinitiate the process by presenting the law to parliament for their approval, and then to the National Assembly for its adoption. At the same time, we must prioritize the UN Humanitarian Response plan with our donor partners, ensuring that Chad has the resources it needs to fully respond to the crisis.

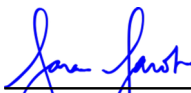
As the humanitarian situation deteriorates, the United States has an obligation and moral responsibility to take stronger action to ensure protection of displaced people in Chad.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Cc: Alexander Laskaris, Ambassador to Chad

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Ambassador to the United Nations