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## Interview: Gen. Revault d'Allones

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# What Chad needs is economic development

*France's General Revault d'Allones, a Compagnon de la Libération (the group of the late Gen. Charles de Gaulle's closest associates), is general secretary of an association called Support to Free Chad, formed to defend Chadian sovereignty and to assist that African nation in its efforts toward economic development.*

**EIR:** Why was your association founded?

**Revault d'Allones:** Our association was formed on Sept. 30, 1987, in the midst of the conflict between Libya and Chad. Our aim is and has been to provide Chad the support it needs to safeguard its national independence, secure its territorial integrity, and help in the country's economic development. In short, to help sustain the unity of the country in freedom and fraternity, as stated in our statutes.

The idea was born during the big Libyan offensives in the north of Chad. Our idea was to complement, on a private level, what the French government had committed itself to at the time; we thought that a private association could act in various ways to help the effort. The group, small at first, grew rapidly. It includes eminent personalities such as Mrs. Marie Madeleine Fourcade (who led the Allied intelligence and resistance organization during World War II).

**EIR:** There is a long history of Libyan aggression against Chad—

**Revault d'Allones:** —which is continuing. Aouzou is still occupied, for example. From the standpoint of international law, the sovereignty of Chad over Aouzou is incontestable. But Qaddafi does not recognize international law. He invents his own. . . . As a matter of fact, he denies not only international law, but Koranic law as well.

**EIR:** Some Western observers have recently raised the idea that Qaddafi was shifting, changing—flirting with both Washington and the new French government.

**Revault d'Allones:** His changes are episodes. . . . Like *glasnost*: Those who want to, will believe in it.

**EIR:** What is the situation now in military, political, and economic terms?

**Revault d'Allones:** First, militarily: There exists a permanent Libyan threat against Chad. The concentration of Libyan forces in the north and the recent buildup in Darfour province

of Sudan speaks for itself. We are quite aware of the capacities of the Chadian Army—they have proven themselves—and have faith in their fighting ability. With sufficient support, they can face the threat. We would like the French government to pursue the policies of strong support that France was previously committed to. The Chad war and the spectacular defeats suffered by the Libyan Army and Islamic Legion tremendously weakened Qaddafi. He lost face, not only in black Africa, but also in the Arab World. Libyan losses of equipment in Chad are calculated at over \$1 billion! All of this demoralized the Libyan Army.

Second, politically: The reconquest of Chadian sovereignty during the war created a strong sentiment of national union in Chad and stabilized the government of President Hissene Habré. The war helped to recreate national unity. North and south both helped to repulse the invader. Prior to Chad's victories on the field of battle, there were dangers of splintering. But the war is not over, and the crucial question is how to maintain stability and forge national unity now. This depends largely on the third point, the economic situation.

We and our Chadian friends are conscious that the territorial integrity of Chad depends on economic development. Furthermore, the lessening of immediate military pressure has forced the economic situation to the fore. If Chad is not aided appropriately, national unity could be put into question. Two levels of aid are required: emergency food and economic aid, and longer-term aid. The international community and the West must become aware of this. This is needed to win the peace. Chad is the Sahelian country which receives the least direct economic aid—I am not talking about military assistance.

The priority now must be economic support. Our association has engaged in modest but important aid programs. One of these was to provide milk powder for orphaned babies in Abeche, transported by the French Air Force. We brought the milk in within 24 hours. Another demonstration of solidarity: The Chadian embassy informed us that the Libyans had burned all French schoolbooks in public libraries in the parts of the country they had occupied. We, along with the Alliance Française, the Chadian embassy, the Chadian students association, and with the help of the French Army and Air Force, sent in a large quantity of schoolbooks for the north.

We are now orienting toward other projects, around the capital of N'djamena. It needs a modern hospital, and we intend to deal with this problem. . . . We intend to create a mobile dispensary, and will search for the financing necessary to the construction of a hospital.

All of these are urgently necessary measures, but cannot replace in-depth economic development. A broader and longer-term effort for agricultural and industrial investment is needed, for Chad and its friendly neighbors. Military support must be combined with measures designed to win the peace.