



International Boundary Study

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Central African Republic – Sudan Boundary

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INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - SUDAN BOUNDARY

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - SUDAN BOUNDARY

I. BACKGROUND

The Central African Republic - Sudan boundary as presently constituted was determined by an exchange of notes between the United Kingdom and France on January 24, 1924¹ (see boundary map). The exchanged notes agreed to the ratification of the protocol delimiting the boundary between the Anglo - Egyptian Sudan and French Equatorial Africa.² With the independence of the Sudan (formerly Anglo - Egyptian Sudan) on January 1, 1956 and the formation of an independent state of the Central African Republic (previously Ubangi-Shari, a part of former French Equatorial Africa) on August 13, 1960, the boundary as determined by the exchange of notes in 1924 was inherited by the two newly independent states.

Previous to the delimitation of the present boundary, the Anglo - French Convention of June 14, 1898 and the Anglo - French Declaration of March 21, 1899, which completed the above convention, established French and British spheres of influence in central Africa and the Sudan respectively.³ Article IV of the Declaration of 1899 determined the general alignment of that part of the Anglo - French frontier which comprises the present Central African Republic - Sudan boundary. The declaration stated that "the line of frontier shall start from the point where the boundary between the Congo Free State (became Belgian Congo and is presently the Republic of the Congo, Leopoldville) and French territory meets the water-parting between the watershed of the Nile and that of the Congo and its affluents. It shall follow in principle that water-parting up to its intersection with the 11th parallel of north latitude."⁴

¹ "Notes exchanged between the United Kingdom and France agreeing to the Ratification of the Protocol defining the Boundary between French Equatorial Africa and the Anglo - Egyptian Soudan, together with the Protocol, London, January 21, 1924, Treaty Series No. 28 (1924), Command 2221.

² This boundary also included that part of the Anglo - Egyptian Sudan - French Equatorial Africa boundary which now comprises the Chad - Sudan boundary.

³ "Convention between the United Kingdom and France. Delimitation of their respective possessions to the West of the Niger, and of their Respective Possessions and Spheres of Influence to the East of That River (signed at Paris, June 14, 1898). Together with a declaration Completing the Same (signed at London, March 21, 1899." U.K. Treaty Series No. 15 (1899), Command 9334. Both the Anglo - French Convention and Declaration were ratified in Paris on June 13, 1899.

⁴ North of the parallel of 11° North, the frontier (present Chad - Sudan boundary) was in principle drawn as far as the parallel of 15° North between the Kingdom of Wadai (in Chad) and the Province of Darfur (in Sudan). In accordance with Article IV of the Declaration of 1899, "north of the 15th parallel the French Zone shall be limited to the north-east and east by a line which shall start from the point of intersection of the Tropic of Cancer with the 16th degree of longitude east of Greenwich, shall run thence to the south-east until it meets the 24th degree of longitude east of Greenwich, and then shall follow the 24th degree until it meets, to the north of the 15th parallel of latitude, the frontier of Darfur as it shall eventually be fixed."

The Chad Tripoint is located one kilometer east of the Mare de Tizi at the point where a small westward-flowing stream crosses the former Anglo - Egyptian Sudan - French Equatorial Africa boundary. From this point the Central African Republic - Chad administrative boundary follows the stream westward to the Mare de Tizi, passes through the Mare de Tizi, and then follows a second stream to the Bahr Aouk.⁵ The Mare de Tizi constitutes a major surface obstacle to the north-south movement; therefore, both Chadien and Central African authorities by tacit accord adopted the Mare de Tizi as the administrative boundary between the two states.⁶ The area to the north of this lake is administered from Goz Beida and that to the south of the lake from Birao.

Historically, the Chad tripoint and the Central African Republic (Ubangi-Shari) - Chad boundary have not been located consistently on all maps. In accordance with a text published in the Journal Officiel du Congo Français (Office Journal of the French Congo) on September 27, 1909, the eastern part of the Chad - Ubangi-Shari boundary was to follow the Bahr Aouk to the frontier of the Anglo - Egyptian Sudan. However, the boundary was not precise because several tributaries of the Bahr Aouk extend to the frontier. This has led to several different interpretations of the boundary. A boundary commonly shown on maps locates the tripoint at Nzili Pool and then follows the Bahr N'zili downstream to the Bahr Aouk; another boundary sometimes shown locates the tripoint on a small stream north of Am Dafok and then follows the Bahr Oulou downstream to the Bahr Aouk.

II. ANALYSIS OF BOUNDARY

The Central African Republic - Sudan boundary has a length of approximately 725 miles and is delimited throughout. In general the boundary follows the water divide between the Congo and Nile drainage areas, typical of which are hill lands and plains with scattered hills. Along the boundary precipitation ranges between 40 and 80 inches and the dominant vegetation is tall grass savanna, although in places there are dense stands of trees. Except for the southern part, most of the boundary traverses areas of sparse population, and the principal economic activity is shifting cultivation with some rudimental sedentary cultivation and livestock grazing.

An Anglo - French Boundary Commission surveyed the boundary between 1921 and 1923. Triangulation methods were used to determine the exact position of the northern parts of the boundary, and initial points of triangulation chains were fixed latitudinally by astronomical observations and longitudinally by time signals.⁷ Because of dense stands of

⁵ For the alignment of the administrative boundary refer to the Carte De L'Afrique Centrale (Map of Central Africa), sheet Birao-Am Dafok (NC-34-XVII-XVIII, published at Brazzaville in June 1960). The Chad tripoint is located at approximately latitude 10°57' North and longitude 22°52.5' East.

⁶ "Note concerning le Tripoint Tchad - Republique Centre Africaine - Soudan" (Note concernant the Chad - Central African Republic - Sudan Tripoint), prepared by the Institut Géographique National (National Geographic Institute), forwarded from Paris February 1, 1962.

⁷ Captain P.K. Boulnois, "Field-Longitudes by Wireless," The Geographical Journal, Vol. LXIII, No. 4 (April

trees and the lack of elevations for vision, triangulation methods were abandoned for the southern 300 miles of the boundary. In this case traverses were made by use of the compass and perambulator, which in turn were adjusted by stations of established geographic coordinates determined from astronomical observations and time signals. The boundary was not demarcated by boundary markers, although the Congo (Léopoldville) tripoint (latitude 05°01' North and longitude 27°26'37" East) is located by a heap of stones five meters high.⁸ From the tripoint the Central African Republic - Congo boundary extends northwestward to the M'Bomou river (drains into the Oubangui which in turn drains into the Congo), and the Congo - Sudan boundary follows the water divide between the Congo and Nile rivers.

III. DELIMITATION OF BOUNDARY

The following text is taken from the protocol (see footnote 1) delimiting the boundary between the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and French Equatorial Africa. Those parts of the protocol applicable to the present Central African Republic - Sudan boundary are quoted starting with Section I through Section II, paragraph (e.).

Section I.

"(a.) The frontier of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and French Equatorial Africa starts from a beacon made of a heap of stones about 5 metres high, called "The meeting point of the three frontiers." The co-ordinates of this beacon are Latitude 05°01'10" North and Longitude 27°26'37" East of Greenwich. From this point the frontier follows the water-parting between the basin of the Nile and that of the Congo, as described below.

(b.) The frontier passes 200 metres to the west of the astronomically fixed beacon of Yubo (Youbo), Latitude 05°23'26" North and Longitude 27°14'52" East.

(c.) Thence it continues towards the north, passing about 200 metres to the west of the large heap of stones which marks the astronomically fixed point of Kumu (Koumou), Latitude 05°50'19" North and Longitude 27°01'28" East.

(d.) From this point it proceeds in the direction of the astronomically fixed beacon of Komo and passes about 150 metres to the south of the heap of stones which marks that beacon at Latitude 06°01'44" and Longitude 26°34'47" East. Thence, bending to the west, the frontier follows the watershed as far as the sources of the river Pilliamo. It leaves Hagar Daragumba (Daragoumba) to the east and again bends westwards to pass to the east of the point called Gangura (Gangoura) which lies in French territory. Thence, keeping always to the water-parting, the frontier passes between the sources of the Busseri (Bousseri) and the Golinga to Goz Bondi; thence to about 3 kilometres

1924), pp. 318 - 340; and "On the Western Frontier of the Sudan," Vol. LXIII, No. 6 (June 1924), pp. 465 - 479.

⁸ In some cases triangulation beacons located on the boundary by coincidence serve as markers.

south of the beacon on Goz Dengwiri (Dinguiri) which is formed by a tree and a small heap of stones and whose co-ordinates are Latitude $06^{\circ}43'51''$ North and Longitude $26^{\circ}19'36''$ East.

(e.) The frontier then runs to a point 1 kilometre south-west of the Bira beacon, Latitude $07^{\circ}01'$ North and Longitude $26^{\circ}01'$ East, leaving the sources of the Warra (Ouara) to the west.

(f.) From this point it runs about 2 kilometres south of the Bibi beacon, Latitude $07^{\circ}10'49''$ North and Longitude $25^{\circ}46'18''$ East.

(g.) Keeping always to the water-parting, the frontier then runs to about 2 kilometres south of the Robo beacon, Latitude $07^{\circ}14'02''$ North and Longitude $25^{\circ}37'42''$ East.

(h.) Thence it runs to a conspicuous rock, a point in the French chain of triangulation, whose coordinates are Latitude $07^{\circ}20'54''$ North and Longitude $25^{\circ}23'50''$ East. Thence, separating the valley of the Sopo from that of the Vovodo, it reaches another point in the same chain of triangulation situated on a laterite outcrop whose co-ordinates are Latitude $07^{\circ}50'34''$ North and Longitude $25^{\circ}14'34''$ East.

(i.) From this point it passes about 2 kilometres east of the Kurumwa (Kourouma) beacon and then about 2 kilometres north of the triangulation beacon on Jebel Amborogo.

(j.) It then runs about 1 kilometre north of the Kudungeri (Koudomguéré) beacon. Thence it runs to the Ambuyuju (Ambouyoudiou) beacon, leaving the sources of the Duyu (Douyou) on the French side, and thence to Jebel Gngamba (Djimgamba). Thence, separating the valley of the Boro from that of the Wadi Va, it passes through a triangulation beacon in Latitude $08^{\circ}26'43''$ North and Longitude $24^{\circ}09'51''$ East. It then passes through the triangulation beacon of Abu Rasein (Abou Rassein).

(k.) It then passes round the sources of the Wadi Va and runs about 4 kilometres north of the beacon of Kiuku (Kioukou). It then runs about 3 kilometres south of the triangulation beacon of Jebel Hamid and thence to the triangulation beacon on Jebel Gawarra (Gaoura). Thence, passing round the sources of the Adda, it runs to the beacon of Rumbukindi (Roumboukindi).

(l.) Thence it runs to the beacon on Jebel Busu (Bouzou). From this point it passes to the west of the beacon in the English triangulation chain called Jebel Moho and reaches the French triangulation beacon which has as co-ordinates Latitude $09^{\circ}04'58''$ North and Longitude $23^{\circ}27'42''$ East.

(m.) It separates the sources of the Umbelasha (Oum Balatcha) from the sources of the Kotto or Meini, and after passing about 6 kilometres south of Jebel Guma (Gouma), reaches Jebel Tinga, upon which is a triangulation beacon.

Section II.

- (a.) Thence it follows the water-parting between the Wadis Umbelasha (Oum Balatcha) and Khudra (Khadra) on the one side and the River Kara or Yata on the other in a northerly direction to the beacon on Jebel Kumu, Latitude 09°33'33" North and Longitude 23°37'49" East.
- (b.) Thence it runs in a straight line in a north-north-easterly direction to the beacon on Jebel Mishmira (Michemir), Latitude 09°40'17" North and Longitude 28°41'48" East.
- (c.) Thence it runs in a straight line a little west of north to the beacon on Jebel Yarra.
- (d.) Thence it runs in a northwesterly direction in a straight line to the chief watering place on the east side of the depression of Um Dafog (Am Dofog).
- (e.) From this point the frontier line runs in a north-westerly direction at a distance of 1 kilometre to the east of, and parallel to, the road which passes from Um Dafog (Am Dofog) to Lake Tisi (Tizi) by Rahad Dihn (Dihin) Rahad Sahabaia (Sahabeia), Rahad Sumua (Soumou), Rahad Kujufu (Koudiougou) and Rahad Boarig (Boarit) to a point 1 kilometre east of the eastern extremity of Lake Tisi (Tizi)."

IV. CONCLUSION

There are no known negotiations in progress or commissions active on the boundary at the present time. The East Africa map series⁹ of the U.S. Army Map Service and the Carte De L'Afrique Centrale (Map of Central Africa) series¹⁰ are both recommended for coverage of the boundary. The East Africa series is partially compiled from surveys made by the Anglo - French Sudan Boundary Commission; however, the Carte De L'Afrique Centrale series is more recent than the East Africa series and aerial photography has been utilized in the compilation of the topography.

⁹ United States Army Map Service, East Africa map series, scale 1:250,000, 2nd edition published 1951 - 1952, Y 501 (Geography Section, General Staff, 8003), compiled 1928 - 1942 by the Survey Office, Khartoum. Map sheets indicating the boundary are listed in order from north to south:

64-H (Umm Dafog), 64-L (Birka Khadra),
64-P (J. Rumbukindi), 65-M (Sa'id Bundas),
77-A (Angoforo), 77-B (Deim Zubeir),
77-F (Qoz Dengwiri), 77-J (Goubere), 77-F (repeat),
77-J (repeat), and 77-K (Tambour).

¹⁰ Carte De L'Afrique Centrale series, scale 1:200,000, compiled and published 1948 - 1962 by the Service Géographique (Geographical Service), Brazzaville. Map sheets containing the boundary are listed in order from north to south: XVII and XVIII (Birao-am-Dafok), XII (Ramela), VI (H¹⁰ Kotto), I (M'Abourassein), XIX (Ancien-Zemogo), XX (Dj Kwoungo), XIV (Djema), XV (Feme), and IX and X (Obo-Bambouti).

This International Boundary Study is one of a series of specific boundary papers prepared in the Office of the Geographer, Department of State, in accordance with provisions of Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-16, Exhibit D.

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