



International Boundary Study

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Chad – Nigeria Boundary

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INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

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CHAD - NIGERIA BOUNDARY

I. BRIEF

Located in Lake Chad, the Chad - Nigeria boundary is about 47 miles in length. It consists of a straight line between the Niger tripoint at 13° 42' 29" N. latitude and approximately 13° 38' E. longitude and the Cameroon tripoint at 13° 05' N. and approximately 14° 05' E. The boundary trends in a northwest - southeast direction and passes through the salt encrusted islands of the Archipel de Bogomerom.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Lagos area of Nigeria was ceded to the United Kingdom by a local king in 1861, and was named the Settlement of Lagos and Dependencies. In 1863 the Settlement of Lagos was made a part of the West African Settlements under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Sierra Leone. During 1874 both the Settlement of Lagos and the Gold Coast Colony were detached from the West African Settlements. The Settlement of Lagos then was administered by the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony for the next 12 years until the Settlement was made a separate colony 12 years later.

In 1885 the General Act of the Berlin Conference recognized that the French sphere of influence included the upper valley of the Niger river. As of July 1886, the British chartered the Royal Niger Company which was given authority to administer those parts of the interior of Nigeria held by treaties and concessions.

The Royal Niger Company surrendered its charter in 1899, and the British Government assumed control of the Company's territorial acquisitions in the south by annexing them to the Niger Coast Protectorate which was renamed the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in January 1900. To the north the Royal Niger Company's holdings became the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.

In 1903 French Congo consisted of the colonies of Gabon and Middle Congo, the territory of Ubangi-Chari, and the military territory of Chad. Two years later the territory of Ubangi-Chari and the military territory of Chad were merged into a single territory. The colony of Ubangi-Chari - Chad was formed in 1906 with Chad under a regional commander at Fort-Lamy subordinate to Ubangi-Chari. The commissioner general of French Congo was raised to the status of a governor generalship in 1908, and by a decree the name of French Equatorial Africa was given to a federation of the three colonies in 1910. During 1914 Chad was detached from the colony of Ubangi-Chari and made a separate territory; full colonial status was conferred on Chad in 1920. Also in 1914, the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria were amalgamated to form a single state called the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.

Following the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations on July 22, 1922 conferred a mandate on the United Kingdom for the administration of the western part of the former German Kamerun (Cameroon) adjacent to Nigeria; the remainder of Kamerun was made a French mandate. The Cameroons under British mandate were administered as two entities known as the Northern Cameroons (which extended into Lake Chad) and the Southern Cameroons.

Following World War II, Chad became an overseas territory of France, an autonomous member of the French Union in 1958, an independent on August 11, 1960. Meanwhile, the Cameroons under British mandate were confirmed as a British trusteeship in 1946. The Federation of Nigeria was organized in 1954, and the state became independent on October 1, 1960. The Northern Cameroons voted in a plebiscite for union with Nigeria, which was accomplished on June 1, 1961. However, the Southern Cameroons voted by plebiscite to join the newly independent state of Cameroon on October 1, 1961.

III. TREATIES

An Anglo - French declaration of August 5, 1890 established a boundary between their respective territories from Say to Lake Chad. However, the boundary was not extended into Lake Chad.

II. The Government of Her Britannic Majesty recognizes the sphere of influence of France to the south of her Mediterranean Possessions, up to a line from Saye on the Niger, to Barrawa [Baroua] on Lake Tchad drawn in such manner as to comprise in the sphere of action of the Niger Company all that fairly belongs to the Kingdom of Sokoto; the line to be determined by the Commissioners to be appointed.

On November 15, 1893, an Anglo - German agreement extended the Kamerun - Nigeria boundary into the southern part of Lake Chad.

II. The boundary determined in the preceding Article shall be continued northward as follows:--

A line shall be drawn from the point on the left bank of the River Benue fixed in that Article, which crossing the river, shall go direct to the point where the 13th degree of longitude east of Greenwich is intersected by the 10th degree of north latitude. From that point it shall go direct to a point on the southern shore of Lake Chad, situated 35 minutes east of the meridian of the centre of the town of Kuka [Kukawa], this being the distance between the meridian of Kuka and the 14th meridian east of Greenwich measured on the map published in the German "Kolonialatlas" of 1892.

A Franco - German convention of March 15, 1894 established a boundary between the colony of the French Congo (included the southern part of present-day Republic of Chad)

and Kamerun. Relative to Lake Chad the convention stated that the boundary would follow the 10th parallel to the Chari river, and then it would continue along the course of the Chari to Lake Chad. Paragraph 5 of the Annex to the convention affords the following details of the boundary.

In the event that the Chari, from Goulfeï to the point where it empties into the Chad, should be divided into several branches, the boundary would follow the main navigable branch to the point where it flows into the Chad, with reservation that in order that this line may be definitive, the difference in longitude between the point thus reached by the boundary on the south bank of the Chad and Kouka [Kukawa], the capital of Bornou, taken as a fixed point, shall be one degree.

If subsequent duly verified observations should show that the difference in longitude between Kouka and the aforesaid mouth of the river is 5 minutes of a degree more or less from that which has just been indicated, it would be appropriate to alter, by an amicable understanding, the line of that part the two countries will continue to have, from the viewpoint of access to the Chad and the territories that are recognized as theirs in this region, advantages equivalent to those that are granted to them by the plotting shown on the map annexed to this Protocol.

Article IV of the Anglo - French Convention of June 14, 1898 extended the boundary between their respective spheres of influence eastward into Lake Chad and then southward in the lake to connect with the Kamerun - Nigeria boundary determined by the Anglo - German agreement of November 15, 1893. The 1898 Convention stated:

...then due north until it [the Anglo - French boundary] regains the 14th parallel of north latitude; then eastwards along this parallel as far as its intersection with the meridian passing 35' east of the centre of the town of Kuka [Kukawa], and thence this meridian southward until its intersection with the southern shore of Lake Chad.

The Anglo - French Convention of April 8, 1904 revised the 1898 boundary relative their spheres of influence in Lake Chad as follows:

Thence it [Niger - Nigeria boundary] will follow the degree of latitude passing through the thalweg of the mouth of the said river up to its intersection with the meridian running 35' east of the centre of the town of Kouka, and will then follow this meridian southwards until it intersects the southern shore of Lake Chad.

...It is further agreed that, on Lake Chad, the frontier-line shall, if necessary, be modified so as to assure to France a communication through open water at all seasons between her possessions on the north-west and those on the south-east of the Lake, and a portion of the surface of the open waters of the Lake at least proportionate to that assigned to her by the map forming Annex 2 of the Convention of the 14th June, 1898.

Similar to the Anglo - French Convention of April 8, 1904, the Anglo - French convention of May 28, 1906 extended the Niger - Nigeria boundary eastward into Lake Chad along the latitude passing through the thalweg of the mouth of the Komadugu Yobe to its intersection with the meridian running 35' east of the center of Kukawa. The Anglo - French agreement of February 19, 1910 established the exact parallel of the boundary in Lake Chad as 13° 42' 29" N.

In the meantime the Anglo - German agreement of March 19, 1906 (confirmed by an Anglo - German exchange of notes February 22 - March 5, 1907) stated the Cameroon - Nigeria boundary in Lake Chad was as follows:

V. Thence it will follow the median line of the Yedersam into Bornu, as far as a point about 1 kilom. south-west of the village of Gorege [Gworege]. This point was defined in 1905 by the local officers of both sides by a mark cut on a large tree.

VI. From this point it will run due north-west until it intersects a line drawn due north and south, and 9 kilom. west of the entrance gate of Rabah's Palace, now the barracks of Dikoa. It follows this line northward until it intersects a line drawn due east and west, and 9 kilom. north of the same gate. It then follows this last line eastward until it intersects the line of the German claim as defined on the attached maps.

VII. The boundary then follows the line of the German claim in a straight line until it intersects the meridian 35' east of Kukawa, which was marked by the Boundary Commission by two posts above high-water mark. Thence it shall follow that meridian northward.

The Franco - German Convention of April 9, 1908 extended the Kamerun - French Congo (now Chad) boundary specifically into Lake Chad for the first time as follows:

(K) From the point where the principal navigable branch of the Chari River empties into Lake Chad, as shown on the map annexed to this Protocol, the boundary shall extend to the intersection of the meridian 12° 8' east of Paris (14° 28' east Greenwich) with parallel 13° 5' N. and then follow that parallel westward to the French and British boundary (Convention between France and Great Britain of May 29, 1906).

Northward from the Chad - Niger - Nigeria tripoint to Molo, the Chad - Niger boundary was determined initially in accordance with a convention signed by the Commanding Officers of the Chad and Niger military territories. It was approved on February 11, 1912, subject to adherence by the Governors General of French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa. Although the convention is not available in Washington, a letter written by Colonel Hocquart, Commanding Officer of the Niger military territory, to the Governor General of French West Africa affords the text the convention as follows:

The administrative boundary starts from the Anglo - French border at the point where the latter dips toward the south-east after following the parallel at the confluence of the Komadougou [with Lake Chad]. It runs in the direction of Karam through the Island of Binger and Garoa to the dune line forming the northern boundary of the Chad Basin.

An Anglo - French exchange of notes on January 9, 1931 delimited a boundary between their respective mandates of former German Kamerun and defined the Cameroon tripoint with Chad and Nigeria:

The boundary starts from the junction of the three old British, French and German boundaries at a point in Lake Chad $13^{\circ} 05'$ latitude north and approximately $14^{\circ} 05'$ longitude east of Greenwich. From there the boundary has been determined as follows:--

- (2) On a straight line as far as the mouth of Ebeji [El Beid].
- (3) Thence from this mouth along the course of the River Ebeji,...

IV. ALIGNMENT

The Chad - Nigeria boundary is a straight line with its bearing determined by the position of the tripoint with Niger in the north and the tripoint with Cameroon in the south.

The Anglo - French Agreement of February 19, 1910 determined the latitude of the Niger tripoint from the location of an iron telegraph pole at the mouth of the Komadugu Yobe situated at $13^{\circ} 42' 29''$ N. The longitude was to be determined from the location of the telegraph pole eastward along the parallel of $13^{\circ} 42' 29''$ N. for a distance of 26,700 meters to the point on the parallel 35 kilometers from the center of Bosso. The exact meridians to be used for measurement from the telegraph pole and Bosso were not given in the agreement, therefore, the precise longitude of the tripoint is subject to several interpretations. It is estimated that the longitude would be approximately $13^{\circ} 38' E$.

The exact latitude of the Cameroon tripoint appears to have been spelled out first in the Franco - German convention of April 9, 1908, as the parallel of $13^{\circ} 5' N$. In the same convention, reference to the longitude of the tripoint is made to the effect that the parallel of $13^{\circ} 05' N$. would be followed westward to the French and British boundary as determined by the Anglo - French Convention of May 29, 1906. However, the convention of 1906 did not afford a definite latitude for the thalweg of the Komadugu Yobe, a definite longitude for Bosso, and a definite longitude for Kukawa as would be required to establish a specific meridian for the Cameroon tripoint.

From the mouth of the Komodugu-Yobe in Lake Chad the frontier will follow towards the east the parallel of latitude, passing through the thalweg of the mouth of the said

river as far as a point situated at a distance 35 kilom. from the centre of the village of Bosso.

From this point it will run in a straight line to the point of intersection of the 13th parallel of north latitude with the meridian running 35' east of the centre of the town of Kukawa, the meridian mentioned in the Convention of the 14th June, 1898, and the 8th April 1904.

An Anglo-French exchange of notes, dated January 9, 1931, relative to the boundary between their respective Cameroonian mandates gives a more definitive location of the Cameroon tripoint as 13° 05' N. and 14° 05' E.

APPENDIX

I. Documents

1. Declaration between the British and French Governments, respecting Madagascar and the French Sphere of Influence South of Her Mediterranean Possessions. London, August 5, 1890. Edward Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty, 3 vols. 3rd Edition (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909). Vol. 2, pp. 738 - 739.
2. Agreement between Great Britain and Germany, respecting Boundaries in Africa. Berlin, November 15, 1893. British and Foreign State Papers (BFSP) Vol. 85 (1892 - 3), pp. 41 - 43.
3. Convention between the French Republic and Germany for the Delimitation of the Colony of the French Congo and the Colony of Kamerun and the French and German Spheres of Influence in the Lake Chad Region. Berlin, March 15, 1894 [Ratifications exchanged at Paris on August 10, 1894] BFSP, Vol. 86 (1893 - 4) pp. 974 - 978.
4. Convention between Great Britain and France, for the 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. Paris, June 14, 1898 [Ratifications exchanged at Paris, June 13, 1899]. BFSP, Vol. 91 (1898 - 9), pp. 38 - 54.
5. Convention between Great Britain and France, respecting Newfoundland, and West and Central Africa. London, April 8, 1904 [Ratifications exchanged at London, December 8, 1904]. BFSP, Vol. 97 (1903 - 4), pp. 31 - 38.
6. Agreement between Great Britain and Germany, respecting the Boundary between British and German territories from Yola to Lake Chad (Nigeria and Cameroons). London, March 19, 1906. BFSP, Vol. 99 (1905 - 6), pp. 366 - 370; also United Kingdom Treaty Series No. 17 (1906), Cd. 3260 (with 4 maps).

7. Convention between Great Britain and France respecting the Delimitation of the Frontier between the British and French Possessions to the east of the Niger (confirming Protocol of the 9th April, 1906). London, May 29, 1906 [Ratifications exchanged at London, August 29, 1906]. Vol. 99 (1905 - 6), pp. 194 - 202. Also United Kingdom Treaty Series No. 14 (1906), Cd. 3158.
8. Convention between France and Germany confirming the Protocol and its Annex of April 9, 1908, defining the Boundary between the Colonies of the French Congo and the Camerouns. Berlin, April 18, 1908. [Ratifications exchanged at Berlin, July 28, 1908]. BFSP, Vol. 101 (1907 - 8), pp. 1003 - 11.
9. Exchange of Notes between the United Kingdom and Germany confirming Protocols defining Boundaries between British and German Territories in Africa: (1) Garege [Gwarege] to Lake Chad (February 12, 1907), (2) Uba to the Mao Tiel (March 11, 1907). February 22 - March 5, 1909. Treaty Series No. 17, 1909, Cd 4699 (with map).
10. Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting the Delimitation of the Frontier between the British and French Possessions east of the Niger (In continuation of United Kingdom Treaty Series No. 14, 1906). London, February 19, 1910. Treaty Series No. 1, 1912, Cd. 6013.
11. Exchange of Notes between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government respecting the Boundary between British and French Camerouns. London, January 9, 1931. United Kingdom Treaty Series No. 34 (1931, Cmd. 3936 (with maps).
12. Delimiting Administrative Districts. Letter of Colonel Hocquart, Commanding Officer of the Military Territory of Niger, to the Governor General of French West Africa, Dakar, April 15, 1912.

II. Maps

1. Republiques du Niger et du Tchad: scale: 1:200,000; published 1959 - 61 by Institut Geographique National (Service Geographique a Brazzaville); sheets ND-33-XIV (Ngigmi) and ND-33-VIII (Boso).
2. Afrique Centrale (Republique du Tchad, Republique Federale du Cameroun); scale 1:200,000; published 1966 by Institut Geographique National (Annexe a Brazzaville); sheets ND-33-IX (Bol) and ND-33-III (Makari).
3. Afrique Centrale (Republique du Tchad, Republique du Niger, Republique Federale du Cameroun): scale 1:500,000; published by Institut Geographique National (Annexe a Brazzaville); sheet Lac Tchad (Maine-Soroa).

4. Nigeria: scale 1:500,000; published 1960 by Federal Surveys, Nigeria; sheet 4.
5. Northern Nigeria--Anglo - French Boundary East of the Niger (to accompany Report of Joint Commission of Delimitation signed at Koua, 25th February 1908): scale 1:250,000; published 1900 by United Kingdom Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton; T.S.G.S. No. 2388 (9 sheets indicating location of boundary pillars 1 through 148).

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