

Beyond Darfur: A Tragedy Spills Over

March 6, 2006
New York Times

To the Editor:

"Refugee Crisis Grows as Darfur War Crosses a Border" (front page, Feb. 28) captures the tragic reality of a region that urgently needs sustained global attention.

The spillover effect into Chad of the Darfur conflict in Sudan is a glaring example of forced population displacement as an objective of conflict rather than merely a consequence.

In January, António Guterres, the United Nations high commissioner for refugees, cautioned the Security Council that "if there is no physical protection for those in need, the risk is a much greater calamity than what we have seen so far."

To add to the continuing challenges faced by humanitarian workers in the region is the situation in southern Chad, where 40,000 people from the lawless northern Central African Republic have sought refuge, including 5,000 in February alone.

This presents an additional dilemma for the international community in establishing peace and security in the region.

Pierre Bertrand
Director, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in New York
New York, March 1, 2006