

Rebel leader asks Chad to keep refugees

by UPI

KHARTOUM, Sudan - A rebel leader in Darfur asked the president of Chad to not return Sudanese refugees fleeing the conflict in western Darfur. The United Nations said thousands of refugees trying to escape attacks in Darfur streamed into Chad, The New York Times reported Monday. Abdel-Wahid al-Nur, the leader of the Darfur rebel group, Sudan Liberation Movement, appealed to Chadian President Idriss Deby to not expel the refugees. The prime minister of Chad, Delwa Kassire Coumakoye, said earlier the refugees were "harmful" for our people," the Sudan Tribune said Tuesday. "I appeal on the President Idriss Deby to not send these innocent people who have succeeded to escape (the) ethnic cleansing practiced by the Khartoum regime," Nur said. He said Chad can provide a safe haven for the refugees "by virtue of neighborhood and kinship" adding "if they are forced to return home their lives will be at risk." Nur said efforts to end the crisis in Darfur should be focused on deploying peacekeeping forces and establishing conditions that help foster an end to the violence, the Tribune said Monday.

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