

Report: Chaos in Central African Republic

by UPI

LONDON - The Central African Republic is collapsing in chaos as the world looks the other way, Amnesty International reported Tuesday.

Godfrey Byaruhanga, a researcher for the British-based organization, said rebels have been killing civilians who do not join them, while the government kills civilians suspected of sympathy with the opposition. Government troops and armed opposition militants from Chad also have been infiltrating the Central African Republic.

"The northern areas in particular have become a free-for-all -- a hunting ground for the region's various armed opposition forces, government troops and even armed bandits -- some of whom come from as far away as West Africa to kidnap and loot in local villages," Byaruhanga said.

The Central African Republic, a former French colony with a population of about 4 million, is one of the poorest countries in Africa.

Byaruhanga said the violence in the republic could cause the region to become even more unstable.

"Civilians are trapped in a lose-lose situation, with many so afraid that they are actually fleeing into Sudan, Cameroon and southern Chad -- effectively moving from the frying pan into the fire out of sheer desperation," he said.

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