

Chad's President Idriss Deby, who ruled his country for more than 30 years and was an important Western ally in the fight against Islamist militants in Africa, has been killed on the frontline against rebels in the north.

Deby's son, Mahamat Kaka, was named interim president by a transitional council of military officers, spokesman Azem Bermendao Agouna said in a broadcast on state television.

Deby, 68, came to power in a rebellion in 1990 and was one of Africa's longest-ruling leaders, surviving numerous coup attempts and rebellions.

His death was announced the day after he was declared the winner of a presidential election that would have given him a sixth term in office. Most of the opposition, which had long complained of his repressive rule, boycotted the vote.