

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Cameroon** Violence continued in Anglophone and Far North regions, while also flaring in previously calm North region; restrictions on critics continued ahead of 2025 election.

Amid Anglophone separatist-related violence, UN rights chief urged dialogue. In Anglophone regions, Ambazonia rebels 7-9 Aug killed four police officers and one civilian in Bamenda town (North West, NW); military retaliation left at least one commercial motorbike rider dead. Suspected rebels 15 Aug burned five taxis in Bamenda. Roadside bombs 16-17 Aug exploded in Jakiri town (NW), killing one police officer. Rebels 24 Aug killed three police officers in Buea city (South West, SW) while military same day killed separatist fighter in Bambui township (NW). Anglophone rebels plan two-week lockdown around 9 Sept school resumption. UN human rights chief Volker Türk 5-7 Aug met with PM Ngute and key ministers, denouncing both separatist and army violations and lack of accountability, urged improved humanitarian access and dialogue; separatists criticised Türk for not visiting Anglophone regions.

Jihadist-related insecurity continued in Far North. In Mayo-Sava department, soldiers 16 Aug killed suspected jihadist in Kolofata town while Boko Haram 22 Aug killed four civilians in Keraawa town; insurgents carried out raids to steal food, cattle and motorbikes in department throughout month. Militants 28 Aug reportedly killed seven special forces soldiers around Djibrilli locality, Mozogo commune, Mayo Tsanaga division, burning three patrol vehicles.

Violence flared in North region. Bandits 20 Aug kidnapped seven farmers in Touboro commune along Central African Republic border but abandoned them after meeting military patrol; some eight others kidnapped in area in Aug.

Political climate remained tense ahead of 2025 presidential election. Regulator early Aug banned two debate programs on private Équinoxe Télévision. Lawyer of social media activist Ramon Cotta 21 Aug confirmed client held by gendarmes in capital Yaoundé, following alleged late July extradition from Gabon. Meanwhile, apparent public calls by supporters endorsing President Biya in cities of Buea and Mamfe (both SW) 13 and 17 Aug respectively and Mokolo (Far North) 28 Aug suggested plans for his candidacy for 2025 poll. Electoral commission reported 7.9mn registered, under half of total eligible, ahead of 31 Aug registration deadline.

➡ **Central African Republic Prospect of ceasefire created cracks among rebel alliance; deadly violence on civilians persisted and govt postponed local elections.**

Ceasefire opportunity sparked divisions among rebels and govt. In 26 July document circulating publicly 4 Aug onwards, Gen. Ali Darassa, founder of Fulani-led Unity for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC) armed group, announced ceasefire and expressed willingness to seek compromise with govt “aimed at restoring peace, security and social cohesion”. Darassa’s decision, however, caused discord within Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) rebel alliance – which includes UPC and five other armed groups; some factions favour continuing violent struggle rather than entering dialogue. CPC general coordinator and former President Bozizé – in exile in Guinea-Bissau – 5 Aug dismissed Darassa as alliance’s chief of staff for high treason, saying Darassa’s move did not bind coalition, exposing rifts among rebels. Opinions also divided within President Touadéra’s circle; presidential advisor Fidèle Gouandjika 6 Aug argued for continued military action, but disarmament and reintegration minister Jean Wilibiro Sacko 8 Aug affirmed govt’s decision to pursue dialogue with Darassa. Govt also engaged in talks with representatives of Movement for Central Africa, armed group reportedly 1,000-strong based along border with Chad.

Armed groups continued to cause harm to civilians. CPC fighters 8 Aug killed five traders in ambush in Gambo sub-prefecture, Mbomou prefecture. Despite formal incorporation into army, ethnic Azandé militia fighters pursued aggressive stances against civilians; combatants 8 Aug conducted searches in Zemio town, Haut-Mbomou prefecture, arresting at least ten civilians, mostly Muslim traders, accusing them of collaborating with UPC rebels. Meanwhile, Return, Reclamation, Rehabilitation rebel group 13 Aug killed two Russian paramilitaries in ambush near mining site in Markounda sub-prefecture, Ouham prefecture.

Govt postponed local elections over financial issues. Govt 22 Aug announced postponement of local and municipal elections – originally scheduled for Oct – to April 2025; decision related to funding challenges, as electoral body only raised around half of required budget. Although some opposition leaders welcomed decision and pressed for dialogue, opposition coalition Republican Bloc for the Defence of the Constitution continued to call for boycott of polls, demanding reform of electoral body.

➡ **Chad Govt tightened its authoritarian grip as debate over constituencies and parliament continued; local elections called for December.**

Authorities silenced dissent following adoption of several bills. Controversy continued over late July laws on electoral boundaries and composition of parliament – both promulgated 16 Aug – that critics claim gerrymander in favour of northern provinces loyal to current regime, highlighting divisions between regions. Security forces 5 Aug stormed Catholic church in capital N’Djamena and arrested Father Madou Simon-Pierre, southerner and critic of new law. Arrest sparked outrage, forcing authorities to release him next day. Govt 9 Aug banned conference of opposition coalition Federal Bloc – which advocates federalism – for disturbing public order. In further sign of regime’s authoritarian drift, armed men 7 Aug

arrested Oumar Ali Badour, editor-in-chief of Tchadinfos news site. Authorities did not comment on arrest, sparking outrage among journalists; Badour released next day.

Intercommunal violence continued. Altercation between herder and farmer 10 Aug after cattle destroyed latter's field left farmer injured in Bouna sub-prefecture, Mandoul region; clash between farmers and herders 27 Aug killed civilian and wounded others near Mao city, Kanem region.

Local elections called for Dec. Electoral body 21 Aug announced legislative, provincial and municipal elections will be held 29 Dec. Authorities said existing electoral register will be used due to lack of time, material and financial resources. Ruling-Patriotic Salvation Movement party said elections would allow return to constitutional order by year-end but opposition criticised timing as rushed without fully resolving long-standing issues including constituency boundaries.

In other important developments. Rights group Human Rights Watch 6 Aug released report accusing army of torture, inhumane treatment and forced labour at Koro-Toro prison, 600km north of N'Djamena in desert; govt next day rejected report, calling it diplomatic conspiracy and threatening legal action. Meanwhile, Mediapart newspaper 23 Aug reported French authorities had opened investigation into Déby's property holdings in France, allegedly valued at €30mn, reportedly fuelling N'Djamena-Paris tensions. Aid trucks began crossing border into Sudan's Darfur region after agreement by various Sudanese parties (see Sudan).

Great Lakes

➔ **Burundi Preparations for 2025 elections continued amid further efforts to sideline opposition; concerns rose over condition of Burundian refugees in Tanzania.**

Measures for 2025 legislative polls faced scepticism. Electoral commission 2 Aug asserted readiness for upcoming 2025 legislative elections, citing sufficient budget. Concerns persisted, however, over underrepresentation of Muslim community members in electoral commission, absence of Catholic Church representatives and perceived short timeframe for appointing independent electoral commissioners. Meanwhile, opposition and local residents accused ruling CNDD-FDD party youth wing Imbonerakure of 19 Aug onwards forcibly coercing financial contributions to CNDD-FDD electoral campaign in Bujumbura, Makamba and Rutana provinces.

Opposition continued to face state-sponsored harassment. Opposition coalition CNARED-GIRITEKA 13 Aug accused CNDD-FDD of disseminating false leaflets to discredit them and of escalating ethnic tensions. Security forces also continued repression of opposition; intelligence agents 2-3 Aug abducted three individuals in Bujumbura city, including opposition activist; SOS Media Burundi 7 Aug reported Imbonerakure members in Giharo district, Rutana, had raped wife of former ruling party activist who joined opposition UPRONA party. Amid oppressive climate, rights group Amnesty International 21 Aug issued report criticising "wave of repression".

Condition of Burundian refugees in Tanzania came to fore. Amid mid-Aug reports of detention and assaults of Burundian nationals near Nduta and Nyarugusu refugee

camps, joint Burundian-Tanzanian delegation 6-7 Aug visited camps, affirming plans to repatriate tens of thousands by year's end. Meanwhile, locals 8 Aug reported Rwandan armed group presence in Bukinanyana district, Cibitoke province, alleging their involvement in extortion and theft near Kibira natural reserve, causing displacement among locals. More Imbonerakure members reportedly received paramilitary training in Cibitoke early Aug onwards, ahead of suspected deployment to DR Congo.

In another important development. President Ndayishimiye 14 Aug granted presidential pardon to journalist Floriane Irangabiye, imprisoned since Jan 2023 for criticising govt, sparking hope of potential other amnesties.

➡ **DR Congo** Amid ongoing foreign mediation efforts, ceasefire in North Kivu province suffered violations as M23 rebels gained further territory; court handed death sentence to dozens of M23-linked figures.

Army-M23 clashes resumed despite govt-Rwanda ceasefire. While M23 rebels claimed compliance with Kinshasa-Kigali ceasefire that came into effect 4 Aug, group continued advance in North Kivu. Rebels 3-7 Aug captured Ishasha, Katwiguru, Kisharo, Nyamilima and Nyakakoma towns with minimal resistance, taking control of southern and eastern shores of Lake Edouard and areas along Ugandan border; 20 Aug captured Kikuvo settlement in Lubero territory. Govt also reported 15 Aug clashes between M23 and pro-govt Wazalendo militias killed 16 villagers in Rutshuru territory. Fighting between army and rebels resumed 25 Aug with clashes in Kikubo village, Lubero, as both blamed the other for violating ceasefire. Meanwhile, Angolan-led mediation continued amid tensions (see Rwanda); Congolese FM Wagner 20-21 Aug met Rwandan counterpart Nduhungirehe in Angolan capital Luanda, with further meeting scheduled for Sept. Kinshasa 29 Aug announced it filed case against Kigali at East African Court of Justice, accusing Rwanda of violating its sovereignty and of crimes against civilians.

Court sentenced tens of M23 affiliates to death. Military court 8 Aug sentenced in absentia Corneille Nangaa, head of pro-M23 politico-military group Congo River Alliance (AFC), to death for "high treason", alongside 25 others including M23 head Bertrand Bisimwa; EU reiterated opposition to capital punishment while Nangaa dismissed verdict. Meanwhile, President Tshisekedi 6 Aug accused predecessor Kabila of supporting AFC and boycotting elections to prepare insurgency, claims Kabila's allies 8 Aug rejected.

Other armed groups remained active, particularly in Ituri province. In Ituri, Islamic State-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) militants 14-15 Aug launched assaults in Mambasa territory, killing at least 15 civilians. Meanwhile, army 27 Aug announced it had freed some 40 ADF hostages after operations in Mambasa and North Kivu's Beni territory.

In other domestic developments. Following intense political negotiations, former PM Sama 12 Aug sworn in as senate speaker. Meanwhile, Tshisekedi's party faced internal strife as senior party members 11 Aug ousted Sec Gen Augustin Kabuya, who refused to leave.

➡ **Rwanda Regional diplomatic efforts to ease tensions with DR Congo (DRC) intensified amid continued war of words between Kigali and Kinshasa.**

Angolan mediation continued to gain some traction despite persistent aggressive Rwandan and Congolese rhetoric. During inaugural address as he was sworn in for fourth term, President Kagame 11 Aug criticised Kinshasa's handling of crisis in eastern DRC, although he praised mediation by Angolan President Lourenço and Kenyan President Ruto. Earlier, Congolese President Tshisekedi 6 Aug called Kagame "criminal" and said he wanted to ask him "why he is killing in my country". In continued Angolan-led efforts, Lourenço met with Kagame on sidelines of inauguration and following day met Tshisekedi in DRC capital Kinshasa; members of southern African regional body SADC – which has deployed security force in eastern DRC – 17 Aug endorsed Lourenço's peace diplomacy. Series of further tri-lateral meetings took place in Angolan capital Luanda; intelligence experts from Angola, DRC and Rwanda 7 Aug reviewed joint plan to combat anti-Rwandan militia Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, key Kigali demand. Later, Rwandan FM Nduhungirehe and Congolese counterpart Wagner 20-21 Aug met for third ministerial meeting, amid hopes engagement could lead to Kagame-Tshisekedi summit; event, however, ended without any compromise, with further ministerial meeting scheduled for 9-10 Sept in Luanda. As fighting continued on ground in DRC, Kinshasa 29 Aug announced it filed case against Kigali at East African Court of Justice, accusing Rwanda of violating its sovereignty and of crimes against civilians.

➡ **Uganda Govt faced discontent over corruption and parliamentary expenditures, as authorities suppressed protests; feud emerged among President Museveni's family.**

Public mistrust over legislature's spending grew, protest crackdown continued. Parliament's plans to spend roughly \$5.4mn on four regional sessions outside capital Kampala sparked renewed public and political division; some opposition MPs 28-30 Aug boycotted inaugural session in northern city of Gulu, citing misuse of taxpayer funds. After large anti-corruption protests that saw hundreds of arrests in July, President Museveni 12 Aug urged activists to combat corruption without resorting to "riots", while security forces denied having physically abused detained demonstrators. Repression of protests continued; notably, police in Kampala 5 Aug arrested 14 opposition officials and supporters protesting their colleagues' detention and deportation from Kenya; 26 Aug arrested 18 students delivering petition against proposed pipeline to Energy Ministry. Meanwhile, collapse of rubbish dump in Kampala 9 Aug killed 35, with 28 missing, sparking internal govt dispute over accountability.

High profile clash highlighted mounting tensions within Museveni family. Dispute emerged between head of army and Museveni's son Lt-Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, and president's son-in-law and advisor, Odrek Rwabwogo; both seen as potential successors to Museveni. Muhoozi 16 Aug accused Rwabwogo of corruption, labelling him "biggest thief in Uganda" and setting off days of reciprocal rounds of public accusations and insults. Museveni 17 Aug obliquely referred to dispute, urging parties to avoid "unprincipled conflicts".

In other important developments. South Sudanese officials alleged Ugandan soldiers crossed into South Sudan 11 Aug, detaining and flogging six locals for suspected illegal entry to Uganda; Kampala did not respond to allegations. Meanwhile, amid renewed refugee influx due to deteriorating security situation in North Kivu province in neighbouring DR Congo, military 16 Aug returned some 100 Congolese security personnel who early Aug fled across border. Court 23 Aug sentenced three Islamic State-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces members to between five- and ten-years imprisonment for foiled 2021 suicide bomb attack.

East and Southern Africa

➡ **Kenya** **Protests subsided amid govt restrictions, anti-Al-Shabaab operations continued, and international police mission to Haiti remained challenging.**

Demonstrations faded although political tensions stayed high. Nationwide protests against proposed finance bill that began in June and morphed into wider anti-govt movement gradually reduced throughout month. Decline partly due to authorities' restrictions, notably, police 8 Aug closed major roads in capital Nairobi and fired tear gas to disperse few dozen protesters gathering as new cabinet sworn in; govt pressure on media groups may also have stymied local reporting during Aug. Political tensions, however, remained high over direction of President Ruto's govt; court 2 Aug paused parliamentary nominations to selection panel which will choose electoral commissioners – part of concessions to protesters – after complaint from opposition Azimio coalition politician who was replaced as nominee. New finance minister John Mbadi 18 Aug said some tax proposals would be re-introduced while MPs 25 Aug began debate on controversial bill restricting protests. Meanwhile, Ruto 29 Aug said he was not aware of any abductions during finance bill demonstrations; rights groups reported dozens.

Attacks bearing Al-Shabaab hallmark persisted in north east. Gunmen 10 Aug killed driver for govt official in Kamor area, Mandera county, in attack authorities blamed on Al-Shabaab. Security forces continued anti-militant operations including 5 Aug in Garissa, Mandera and Wajir counties and 15 Aug in Fafi district, Garissa, that killed two suspected Al-Shabaab members.

Kenyan police continued mission in Haiti. 400-strong force – expected to eventually total 1,000 – carried out more joint patrols and targeted operations near their base in Haitian capital Port-au-Prince (see Haiti). But challenges persisted including limited resources, uncertain funding, salary payment issues and need for reinforcements, including from other countries.

➡ **Mozambique** **Govt and Rwandan forces continued offensive against Islamic State militants in northern Cabo Delgado province; court barred opposition coalition from October elections.**

Counter-insurgency operations focused on coastal district Macomia. Rwandan and govt forces continued offensive against Islamic State Mozambique Province (ISMP) that began late July; though Maputo and Kigali communicated very little publicly about operations, forces reportedly targeted militant strongholds along coast and in

Catupa forest. Area of fighting reportedly stretched from south of north-lying Mocímboa da Praia district down throughout Macomia to southern parts of district, as well as westward to areas along Messalo river and Catupa forest; conflict zones included strategically located Mucojo town which ISMP has occupied for several months. Early unconfirmed reports suggested insurgents may have suffered heavy casualties. Offensive included use of Rwandan combat helicopters, notably targeting insurgent positions in Mucojo; potential civilian casualties could damage Rwandan military's good standing with local communities.

ISMP remained threat in Muidumbe, Nangade districts. Explosive planted by militants on N380 road 9 Aug killed police truck driver in Muidumbe district. Group also maintained presence in Nangade district bordering Tanzania, with Tanzanian forces clashing with insurgents outside Nangade town; ISMP and joint Tanzanian-govt force 2 Aug reportedly fought around Namuine village; details remained unclear.

Court confirmed opposition coalition banned from legislative and provincial ballot. Constitutional Council 1 Aug upheld July decision by electoral commission to bar opposition coalition Coligação Aliança Democrática (CAD) from 9 Oct polls because its registration was invalid; CAD leader Venâncio Mondlane, however, still allowed to run in presidential vote. Meanwhile, election observers criticised parliament's 8 Aug law that removed power of district courts – some of which overturned results favouring ruling FRELIMO party in 2023 municipal elections – to order recounts. Campaigning began 24 Aug.

➡ **South Africa Deputy leader of EFF opposition party defected to MKP party; gunmen targeted and killed local politicians.**

Opposition parties faced shake ups. Floyd Shivambu, deputy leader and co-founder of populist opposition party Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), 15 Aug announced he had resigned from party and was joining largest opposition uMkhonto weSizwe party (MKP) led by former President Zuma to serve as national organiser; EFF leader Julius Malema's refusal to join President Ramaphosa's unity govt reportedly informed Shivambu's decision. MKP continued to face internal power struggles as party 8 Aug fired 15 MPs amid accusations of cronyism.

Local govt representatives threatened by criminal violence. Amid continued worries over nexus between politics and organised crime, gunmen 19 Aug killed African National Congress (ANC) municipal executive at his home in KwaBhaca town, third murder of ANC leader in Eastern Cape province since Jan. Unknown gunmen 14 Aug shot and wounded Patriotic Alliance party councillor in drive-by after he attempted to mediate gang dispute in Kensington suburb, Cape Town city. Earlier in Johannesburg city, EFF ward councillor shot dead 4 Aug during protest against social housing evictions, with exact circumstances around death unclear; EFF leader Malema 9 Aug alleged councillor was "assassinated".

↓ **Tanzania Police arrested hundreds of opposition members ahead of December local elections and 2025 general elections, sparking political tensions.**

Authorities 11-12 Aug detained hundreds of opposition figures from Chadema party including former presidential candidate Tundu Lissu, as well as multiple journalists,

on eve of youth rally in Mbeya town (south west); police 13 Aug said in total 520 people were arrested for intending to hold “prohibited conference”, having previously banned rally for supposed security reasons. Authorities same day released on bail Chadema leaders and supporters, but party said some members of its youth wing (Bavicha) were still being held; Chadema 19 Aug reported and denounced new arrest of three party leaders in Temeke region previous day. Court 28 Aug ordered police to investigate whereabouts of disappeared Bavicha members, while police 30 Aug alleged Chadema were mobilising against them and warned actors not to “disturb the peace”. Arrests caused widespread consternation ahead of Dec local and 2025 general elections. Sec Gen of ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party 12 Aug urged govt to consider release of detainees. Rights group Amnesty International same day described arrests as “arbitrary”, said authorities intensifying “intimidation” of political opposition in run-up to elections; Human Rights Watch next day said detentions were “bad omen” for upcoming polls. U.S. embassy 14 Aug called for “safe and open political space” and criticised alleged “excessive police force” during arrests, saying it had resulted in injuries. Chadema 22 Aug and other main opposition ACT-Wazalendo party same day called for President Suluhu Hassan’s govt to reform police.

➡ **Zimbabwe Worsening human rights situation and widespread repression overshadowed annual regional SADC summit in capital Harare, drawing international criticism.**

Authorities continued crackdown on critics. Govt 17 Aug hosted summit of heads of state of southern African regional body SADC in capital Harare, with President Mnangagwa elected as organisation’s new chair. Ruling party ZANU-PF officials several times ahead of meeting said govt would take strong actions to prevent opposition from damaging Zimbabwe’s reputation by disrupting summit with protests. Security forces stepped up presence around meeting as tanks and anti-riot police reportedly patrolled city; increased security forces also present in Gweru, Kwekwe, Mutare cities and Chitungwiza town. Govt also continued repression in lead-up to summit; rights groups Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch reported authorities 1-9 Aug arrested 30 people including political figures. Police 15 Aug arrested former opposition MP and 11 others for allegedly attempting to spark protests in Gokwe town, Midlands Province, with eight remanded in custody after 27 Aug being denied bail; security forces 17 Aug arrested another former MP, Prince Dubeko Sibanda, at Beitbridge border with South Africa for inciting public violence and transported him to Harare, where he remained in custody.

International actors condemned crackdown around summit. UN human rights office 14 Aug said it was “concerned by reports of arrests, harassment and intimidation”. U.S. embassy next day released statement affirming support for SADC summit goals of improving economic development and security, but said “intimidation, torture and prolonged pre-trial detention...runs counter to these principles”. Earlier, EU, UK and U.S. missions noted and criticised that lead-up to summit had seen intensified crackdown. SADC member states, however, including regional powerhouse South Africa, remained largely quiet on rising repression.

Horn of Africa

➡ **Eritrea** Asmara strengthened relations with Cairo and Moscow; authorities reportedly arrested 31 Yemeni fishermen over disputed Hanish islands issue.

Asmara's ties with Cairo and Moscow deepened. FM Osman Saleh 8 Aug met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt's capital Cairo to discuss "issues and threats in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea"; Egyptian FM Badr Abdel-Aty and Director of Egyptian General Intelligence Service Abbas Kamel also attended. Govts, both of which have uneasy relations with Ethiopia, expressed commitment to continued coordination in addressing regional threats. Comments follow Feb meeting between Sisi and President Isaias Afwerki, in which they stressed need to protect Somalia's sovereignty following Ethiopia-Somaliland port deal. Meanwhile, Russian Deputy FM Mikhail Bogdanov and Eritrean Chargé d'Affaires Naizghi Hagos 12 Aug met in Russian capital Moscow; pair confirmed "their focus on deepening political dialogue and close coordination of approaches" in international fora.

31 Yemeni fishermen reportedly detained over disputed Hanish islands issue. Amid long-running dispute between Yemen and Eritrea over Hanish islands, Asmara 22 Aug reportedly released 31 Yemeni fishermen detained three days earlier; fishermen accused authorities of "torture and starvation" during their detention.

➡ **Ethiopia** Leadership of Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) fractured, violence in Amhara and Oromia regions remained rampant, and relations with Mogadishu and Cairo grew more strained.

TPLF leadership splintered. National Election Board of Ethiopia 9 Aug registered TPLF as new party under "special conditions", saying it must conduct general assembly within six months and choose new leadership to finalise registration. Ruling fractured TPLF, with faction led by party chairman Debretsion Gebremichael 11 Aug rejecting decision and insisting on restoration of party's former legal status; faction led by Tigray Interim Administration President Getachew Reda, meanwhile, advocated closer ties with federal govt. Debretsion's faction 13-19 Aug held party congress despite national election board warning it did not comply with body's ruling; congress ended with election of new leadership that excludes Reda and his allies (who boycotted conference and held their own meeting), marking major shift within party's power structure. Tigray military leaders 8 Aug warned they will not tolerate anything that undermines peace.

Amhara region remained wracked by govt-insurgent fighting. Clashes between security forces and Fano militants occurred in West Gojjam, East Gojjam, North Wello, North Shewa, Central Gondar, North Gondar and South Gondar zones as hopes for peace talks faltered amid tensions among Fano groups. Meanwhile, UN 14 Aug reported unidentified armed group killed humanitarian worker in North Wello.

Conflict persisted in Oromia amid tensions within Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). Federal-OLA clashes persisted in region's West Guji, North, South West and East Shewa, and West, Kellem and Horo Guduru Wollega zones, with civilians frequently targeted. Govt made little effort to resume talks despite insecurity, while tensions

within OLA worsened; notably, OLA leader Jaal Marroo Dirribaa 14 Aug accused elements within insurgency of collaborating with govt.

Tensions with Somalia and Egypt intensified over defence pact. In context of heightened tensions between Mogadishu and Addis Ababa over latter's port deal with Somaliland, presidents of Egypt and Somalia 14 Aug signed defence pact; weeks later, Cairo 27 Aug delivered weapons to Mogadishu, prompting Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry 28 Aug to accuse latter of "colluding with external actors to destabilise the region". Addis Ababa next day sent new ambassador to Somaliland.

➡ **Somalia** Al-Shabaab launched major attack in capital Mogadishu as post-AU mission security framework became clearer; Türkiye's mediation between Somalia and Ethiopia progressed slowly.

Militants conducted largest attack in over year in capital. Al-Shabaab 2 Aug carried out complex attack including suicide bomb at beach restaurant in Mogadishu, killing at least 37 civilians and wounding over 200 in deadliest attack in city since Oct 2022; president's office said it would design plans to strengthen capital's security. Also, suicide vehicle bomber 21 Aug killed at least five at security checkpoint on Mogadishu's outskirts. Govt continued anti-Al-Shabaab operations including 13 Aug in Galcad district, Galmudug state (centre), killing ten militants and same day in Badhade district, Jubaland state (south), claiming to have killed 32.

Replacement for AU mission (ATMIS) announced. AU 1 Aug approved plans for successor to ATMIS; AU Support Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) to have some 12,000 personnel across 23 locations and run from Jan 2025 until Dec 2029; meanwhile, UN Security Council 15 Aug authorised ATMIS mandate extension until 31 Dec when it is replaced. Key questions, however, remain over transition from ATMIS to AUSSOM including financing and which countries will contribute troops.

Clan violence persisted. Rival groups 19 Aug onwards clashed in Bidhaan-dheere area, Galgaduud region (Galmudug), reportedly killing at least four, including local mediator.

Tensions with Ethiopia continued. Türkiye 12-13 Aug hosted second round of indirect talks between FM Fiqi and his Ethiopian counterpart Atskeselassie; although reports of positive progress emerged, discussions ended without deal as both Mogadishu and Addis Ababa stuck to positions regarding latter's Jan announced agreement with Hargeisa; third round due to begin 17 Sept. Immediately after talks, President Mohamud 14 Aug travelled to Egypt to sign defence cooperation agreement in signal of govt's continuing attempts to bolster international support; Cairo 27 Aug delivered military equipment to Mogadishu, prompting criticism from Addis Ababa (see Ethiopia). Meanwhile, govt late Aug began pressuring businesses including airlines and remittance companies to stop using Somaliland name (see Somaliland).

➡ **Somaliland** New opposition alliance emerged ahead of November elections; govt defended agreement with Ethiopia.

Main opposition party formed major political coalition, electoral tensions fuelled deadly clash. Opposition Waddani party and Kaah political association 4 Aug formalised long-rumoured alliance to challenge President Bihi's Kulimye party in 13

Nov concurrent party and presidential elections; Kaah will support Waddani's presidential candidate Abdirahman Irro. Campaigning picked up mid-Aug onwards as Kulmiye and Waddani officials began regional tours. Meanwhile, electoral body 22 Aug reached agreement with govt and opposition on use of biometric voter verification system, removing previous point of contention. Clan militia allegedly upset with electoral proceedings 25 Aug clashed with security forces in Baligubadle town, Maroodi Jeex region with reportedly one killed; armed group stood down after quick intervention of elders.

Security forces clashed with Dhulbahante clan in Sanaag region. Govt forces and Dhulbahante members 27 Aug clashed in Erigabo town; further clashes erupted between opposing clans in Goof village next day, leaving at least five dead. Authorities from both Somaliland and SSC-Khatumo (self-declared administration for Dhulbahante community) blamed each other for violence.

Govt responded to Turkish mediation of Ethiopia-Somalia dispute (see Somalia). Amid talks in Türkiye's capital Ankara aimed at resolving tensions over Jan-announced Ethiopia-Somaliland Memorandum of Understanding over sea access and diplomatic recognition, govt 13 Aug criticised Türkiye for "lack of impartiality" and aiming to "interfere", reiterating commitment to Ethiopia deal; Bihi 29 Aug accepted credentials of new Ethiopian ambassador. Meanwhile, Bihi 26 Aug denounced Somalia's pressure on businesses including airlines and remittance companies to stop using Somaliland name. Earlier, govt 1 Aug established ministerial committee to promote recognition.

➡ **South Sudan** **Nairobi talks remained frozen after VP Machar's party withdrew from initiative, 2018 peace deal signatories held talks about December elections, and border conflict with Uganda simmered.**

Nairobi peace talks remained stalled. Talks between govt and several opposition groups not party to 2018 peace agreement, dubbed "Tumaini", remained on hold after Machar's Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO) withdrew in July amid concerns initiative undermined 2018 deal. Kenyan mediation team and members of President Kiir's SPLM held talks late July-early Aug in capital Juba in hopes of persuading Machar to return to negotiating table. Other officials echoed Machar's concerns, however; notably, Cabinet Affairs Minister Martin Elia Lomuro 8 Aug warned initiative risks dismantling peace deal's achievements and urged better alignment between agreement and Tumaini. Kiir 28 Aug held talks with Tumaini delegates in Kenya, who reportedly sought to address Machar's concerns in effort to resume talks. Meanwhile, representatives from govt and rebel group National Salvation Front (NAS) led by Thomas Cirillo 12-14 Aug discussed latter's possible inclusion in Tumaini initiative, but Cirillo 17 Aug rejected invitation.

Peace deal signatories discussed contentious December elections. Parties to 2018 peace agreement 13 Aug met to discuss elections, currently scheduled for Dec, amid disagreement about whether they should be postponed due to delays in preparation, lack of political consensus, scarce funds and insecurity. At request of peace deal signatories, institutions charged with organising polls 22 Aug submitted their report on feasibility of holding elections in Dec.

Ugandan forces reportedly crossed into South Sudanese territory. On-off border conflict between South Sudan and Uganda, which resurfaced late June, continued

amid reports of incursions by Ugandan forces into South Sudanese territory. Notably, Ugandan forces 11 Aug allegedly entered Kajo-Keji County (Central Equatoria State) and flogged six civilians for entering Ugandan territory. Authorities in Magwi County (Eastern Equatoria State) 27 Aug claimed Ugandan forces were encroaching on their land and harassing civilians.

Economic crisis persisted. South Sudan's main oil pipeline running through Sudan remained in disrepair, exacerbating economic crisis. Malaysian oil company Petronas 9 Aug announced it would exit country after 14 years, in part due to mounting costs incurred by rupture, marking major financial blow.

➡ **Sudan Fighting between Sudanese Army (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) escalated in North Darfur, clashes subsided in east amid seasonal rains, and U.S.-led peace talks led to outcomes on aid deliveries amid deteriorating humanitarian crisis.**

North Darfur once more became epicentre of conflict. Hostilities escalated in North Darfur capital, El Fasher, as RSF early Aug launched major assault on city, reportedly killing and displacing hundreds. Other areas of North Darfur remained wracked by insecurity amid intensifying SAF bombardments. Notably, SAF mid-Aug bombarded Fasher and several other locations, including Taweisha town, resulting in significant casualties and retaliatory RSF strikes. SAF and allied Darfuri armed groups repeatedly attacked Kutum city, RSF stronghold with significant Arab population, raising risk of intercommunal clashes. SAF aerial bombardments also targeted East Darfur capital, Ed De'aein, killing and wounding dozens. Meanwhile, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification 1 Aug declared famine in North Darfur's Zamzam camp as humanitarian crisis worsened, exacerbated by heavy rains, which triggered displacement and cholera outbreaks.

RSF made small advances further east as fighting slowed due to rainy season. Fighting further east persisted, though at slower pace amid seasonal rains. In El Gezira state, RSF 1 Aug killed dozens during attack on El-Adanab village, while SAF aerial bombardments in Hassaheesa town resulted in numerous casualties. In Blue Nile and White Nile states, RSF continued to advance slowly, 5 Aug attacking several villages in White Nile's Al Gitaina locality; offensives indicate White Nile will likely become key RSF target when rainy season ends. In North Kordofan state capital, El Obeid, multiple RSF-SAF clashes left dozens dead.

U.S.-led peace talks yielded outcomes on aid deliveries despite SAF's absence. Peace talks co-hosted by U.S., Switzerland and Saudi Arabia 14-23 Aug were held in Geneva, Switzerland; AU, UN, UAE and Egypt attended as observers. SAF was notably absent after insisting that talks focus on implementing May 2023 Jeddah Agreement and objecting to participation of UAE, RSF's main backer. While SAF's absence hindered progress toward national ceasefire, mediators 23 Aug announced they had secured commitments from parties to allow aid to flow into Darfur from Chad and enhance civilian protection.

Sahel

➡ **Burkina Faso** Large-scale violence continued while President Capt. Traoré reported recent coup; military authorities continued with authoritarian tactics.

Large-scale attacks underscored widespread violence and high civilian casualties. Suspected al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) jihadists 9 Aug attacked military convoy carrying over 1,000 civilians between Ougarou and Boungou towns, East region; local sources reported at least 130 soldiers, military auxiliaries and civilians killed or missing, with significant military equipment seized. JNIM 24 Aug attacked villagers digging trench to protect Barsalogho town, Centre-North region, reportedly killing hundreds; UN Sec Gen Guterres 27 Aug “strongly condemned” attack, which provoked domestic uproar. Other violence reported throughout month, in particular in Centre-North, East, Centre-East, Boucle du Mouhoun and Sahel regions. In East, unconfirmed local reports claimed at least 80 civilians killed during military 6-10 Aug anti-JNIM operations in Manni commune, East region.

Amid insecurity, president talked of “destabilisation” attempt. During national TV broadcast, Traoré 6 Aug alleged he had been subjected to and overcome recent coup; without providing specific details, president claimed security officials collaborated with jihadist groups supported by Western intelligence working from neighbouring country. Allegations remained unconfirmed but reports have emerged for several months of unrest within army, and July arrest of former senior military official may be related to incident; rumours of military instability likely to continue amid inability to address insecurity.

Govt’s repressive tendencies persisted. Traoré govt continued to silence dissent and any opposition to its interests; police 1 Aug arrested lawyer and civil society figure Guy-Hervé Kam – for third time in 2024 – for alleged involvement in “destabilisation”. Forcible enrolment in security forces continued; authorities 12 Aug ordered seven judicial officials to frontlines to fight jihadists; officials had reportedly been involved in recent legal decisions that went against figures close to govt. Magistrates union 15 Aug said decision intended as “humiliation and intimidation” and “sabotage of the authority of justice”. Unconfirmed social media reports mid-Aug alleged journalist previously sent to frontline had been killed.

In another important international development. Denmark 26 Aug announced closure of embassies in Burkina Faso and Mali (see Mali).

➡ **Mali** Amid persistent violence, impact of deadly July attack in north continued as govt severed relations with Ukraine; political climate remained tense.

Fallout out from killings in Kidal region continued, including internationally. Following July attack around Tinzaouaten town – which was perhaps deadliest incident to date for Russian paramilitary group Africa Corps (formerly Wagner Group) in Mali – separatist Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP) armed coalition 1 Aug claimed to have killed 84 Russian and 47 Malian troops. Full picture of events remained unclear, including who inflicted most casualties between CSP and al-

Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) – both involved in clashes but at different stages. Conflict continued in area with military carrying out multiple airstrikes near Tinzaouaten. Meanwhile, govt 4 Aug cut diplomatic relations with Kyiv after Ukrainian military official claimed support role in Tinzaouaten, including providing intelligence and training; authorities called this “clear aggression” and received support from Sahelian neighbours (see Niger). Ukraine 5 Aug said decision to cut ties was “short-sighted and hasty” without “any evidence”. Meanwhile, govt 23 Aug suspended French broadcaster LCI for two months after program covered attack.

Jihadist-related violence persisted across north and centre. In north, Islamic State Sahel Province 16 Aug killed three civilians in Arhabou village, Gao region. In centre, JNIM 15 Aug killed at least 15 soldiers on patrol near Diallassagou town, Mopti region. Reports of abuses against civilians continued; Russian paramilitaries 5 Aug allegedly killed at least ten civilians in Toule village, Segou region (centre).

Political climate remained tense as repression continued. Collective of lawyers 3 Aug expressed concern over disappearance of legal official from prison cell while PM Maïga 5 Aug publicly criticised May arrest of political ally. Head of High Islamic Council 17 Aug called for dialogue with armed groups; draft charter from inter-Malian dialogue that ended in May – due to be submitted to govt in Sept – could open window for talks, although prospects remained uncertain.

In other important international developments. Govt 9 Aug expelled Swedish ambassador after Sweden two days prior announced “phase out” of development aid; Denmark 26 Aug said it would close embassies in Mali and Burkina Faso (see Burkina Faso).

► **Niger Relations with Benin warmed, while govt continued diplomatic realignment; jihadist insecurity persisted in south.**

Beninese-Nigerien ties slowly improved. Despite positive bilateral visits in July, President Gen. Tiani 3 Aug reiterated claims Beninese govt was hosting French “subversive elements” working to destabilise govt, said restoring relations would depend on assurances Benin posed no security threat. Steady de-escalation, however, continued despite rhetoric, with Nigerien authorities 6 Aug accepting credentials presented by new Beninese ambassador. In another sign of warming ties, Benin 16 Aug authorised resumption of trade transporting Nigerien crude oil through its Sémé port; land border, however, remained closed.

Diplomatic realignment continued. Govt 6 Aug cut diplomatic ties with Ukraine over its supposed support to armed groups involved in fighting in Mali (see Mali); military authorities said move was in “solidarity” with Bamako, who cut ties with Kyiv two days prior. Ukraine 8 Aug said decision was “regrettable” and accusations “groundless and untrue”. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger – who make up regional body Alliance of Sahel States – 19 Aug sent joint letter to UN Security Council condemning Ukraine’s “open and assumed support for international terrorism” and calling on body to “take appropriate measures”. In sign of rapprochement after months of heightened tensions, defence chief 28 Aug hosted Nigerian counterpart in capital Niamey. Meanwhile, U.S. military 5 Aug completed withdrawal from Agadez drone base, month earlier than Sept deadline, while last German troops 30 Aug left country; Washington left door open to future non-military cooperation, but

withdrawals and tensions with Kyiv highlighted Niamey's shift away from Western partners and toward Moscow.

Jihadist violence persisted in Diffa and Tillabery regions. In Tillabery (south west), al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims 2 Aug claimed to have taken hostage two Russian citizens working for Russian company in Mbanga area – rich with gold mines – at unspecified date; militants likely from the Islamic State Sahel Province 13 Aug attacked several villages in Ayorou district, leaving 23 civilians dead. In Diffa (south east), suspected Islamic State West Africa Province fighters 14 Aug attacked military escort on road between Mainé-Soroa and Diffa town, killing four civilians and wounding several soldiers and civilians.

West Africa

➡ Benin Diplomatic relations with Niger continued to warm; jihadist insecurity persisted, particularly in transboundary parks.

Beninese-Nigerien ties slowly improved. Despite positive bilateral visits in July, Nigerien President Gen. Tiani 3 Aug reiterated claims Beninese govt was hosting French “subversive elements” working to destabilise Niger, said restoring relations would depend on assurances Benin posed no security threat. Steady de-escalation, however, continued despite rhetoric, with Nigerien authorities 6 Aug accepting credentials presented by new Beninese ambassador. In another sign of warming ties, govt 16 Aug authorised resumption of trade transporting Nigerien crude oil through Sémé port; land border, however, remained closed.

Jihadist violence continued in northern departments. Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims 9 Aug killed two soldiers near Porga town, Atacora department; Porga one of main entrances to Pendjari National Park which remains vulnerable, along with W Park, to jihadist infiltration from Burkina Faso and Niger despite ongoing deployment of troops in area.

In another important development. Beninese security forces 12 Aug reportedly seized and extradited govt-critical blogger alias “Brother Hounvi” from Togo's capital Lomé; opposition 19 Aug criticised arrest of blogger, whose trial on charges of publishing false news due to begin 7 Oct. Incident sparked tensions with Togo, as Beninese authorities allegedly did not inform Togolese counterparts about planned arrest (see Togo).

➡ Côte d'Ivoire Opposition parties displayed unity as political jockeying continued ahead of 2025 presidential election.

Opposition parties jointly called for electoral reforms. Exiled political leader and former PM Soro 9 Aug said his Generations and Peoples in Solidarity (GPS) party ready for “sincere collaboration” with former President Gbagbo's African People's Party-Côte d'Ivoire (PPA-CI) party. Announcement followed Gbagbo's July call for opposition to unite; both Gbagbo and Soro, however, are currently ineligible to run because of previous convictions. Representatives of GPS and PPA-CI, along with largest opposition party Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire and several other opposition figures, same day held joint press conference; parties called for electoral reforms ahead of 2025 presidential election, including extension of period for

revising electoral list and inclusive national dialogue before vote. Long-term solidarity between opposition leaders remained uncertain as elections approach. President Ouattara yet to announce who will be candidate for ruling Rally of Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace; speculation that he will run for controversial fourth term continued.

Govt maintained hard line against Soro's allies. Authorities 9 Aug arrested GPS party official Mamadou Traoré for “inciting hatred” following 7 Aug social media posts criticising Ouattara. Authorities 14 Aug detained Kando Soumahoro, another GPS party leader, for illegal participation in political party and disturbing public order after he attended 9 Aug opposition press conference; GPS party officially dissolved in 2021 after Soro and 19 allies convicted of “insurrection”. Court in Abidjan city 16 Aug sentenced Traoré and 21 Aug sentenced Soumahoro to two years in prison each.

➡ **Guinea Debates over transition to civilian rule continued after draft constitution unveiled; civil society leaders remained missing.**

Draft sparked concern over President Gen. Doumbouya's potential candidacy in future polls. After late July long-awaited presentation, govt 11-12 Aug publicly released new draft constitution to be submitted to referendum before end 2024. Civil society and opposition including coalition National Alliance for Alternation and Democracy (ANAD) questioned certain proposed measures. While draft includes limiting presidential terms to two, creating new bicameral legislature and allowing independent candidacies for first time, it does not bar transition's head Doumbouya from running for president in future (unlike transitional charter), potentially paving way for him to stay in office. Meanwhile, new age limit provision disqualifies Doumbouya's opponent, former President Condé, who he deposed in 2021 coup. Transitional official 8 Aug remained vague on prospect of Doumbouya's candidacy.

Opposition called for shutdown, two civil society leaders still missing. Main opposition collective Forces Vives de Guinée (FVG) 6 Aug called for 12 Aug general strike in capital Conakry to protest against military authorities and for return to civilian rule by 31 Dec, also denouncing continued mystery surrounding July disappearance of civil society leaders Foniké Menguè and Mamadou Billo. Strike, however, only marginally observed, amid heavy police presence and govt ban on demonstrations in place since 2022. Meanwhile, govt made no progress in reconciliation with exiled political leaders including former PM Diallo.

In another important development. Lawyers for former President Camara 1 Aug said they would appeal his previous day conviction of 20 years imprisonment for crimes against humanity; case related to 2009 massacre of some 150 protesters in capital Conakry.

➡ **Nigeria Urban protests against economic and food crisis saw unrest amid looting and security forces' crackdown; jihadist, bandit and other armed group violence persisted.**

Youth-led demonstrations turned violent amid mob looting and govt repression. Youth organisations 1 Aug began planned ten days of protests against govt's handling of economic and food crisis. While demonstrations in northern cities and federal capital Abuja flustered authorities, leaderless nature of movement led to looting in

some places; in response, authorities sought to suppress protests, including through curfews, arrests and use of tear gas and live ammunition. Rights group Amnesty International said demonstrations left at least 22 people dead by 7 Aug, while organisers reported over 1,400 arrested as protests lost steam. President Tinubu 4 Aug called for dialogue but offered no response to protesters' demands.

Army reported gains against jihadists in ongoing North East operations. In Borno state, air strikes 16 Aug killed at least 37 militants near Lake Chad; troops 17 Aug raided Boko Haram camp near Sambisa forest, killing three fighters including prominent commander Abu Rijab. Jihadists remained threat to civilians; in Yobe state, suspected Boko Haram fighters 30 Aug killed at least three students at religious school in Geidam area.

Banditry remained widespread in North West and North Central. Notably in Benue state, gunmen 8 Aug killed 74 in Ayati town, Ukum area. In Niger state, bandits 19 Aug killed 13 farmers in Shiroro area. In Sokoto state's Sabon Birni area gunmen 20 Aug killed emir of Gobir town, kidnapped in July. In Zamfara state, residents 28 Aug repelled attack in Talata Mafara area, which killed at least 37 bandits. Over 200 persons abducted for ransom during month.

In other important developments. In Imo state, gunmen 3 Aug killed community leader and six village heads in Onuimo area. Enugu state govt 21 Aug said security forces in previous two weeks killed 27 including members of factional Biafra separatist group led by Finland-based agitator, Simon Ekpa. Members of Muslim sect 25 Aug clashed with police in Abuja; two police and unconfirmed others killed. In sign of rapprochement after months of heightened tensions, defence chief 28 Aug met Nigerien counterpart in Niger's capital Niamey.

► **Togo Jihadist violence continued to plague north; tensions with Benin flared over blogger's arrest.**

Northern regions remained vulnerable to jihadist activity, particularly along Burkina Faso border; homemade bomb planted by al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims 7 Aug killed three soldiers in Kankanti area, Savanes region. Meanwhile, bilateral tensions with Benin flared after Beninese security forces 12 Aug reportedly seized and extradited Beninese blogger from capital Lomé without communicating with Togolese counterparts (see Benin); govt 25 Aug announced it had detained one Togolese and one Beninese national in relation to incident.