

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Burundi** Fighting again flared between military and rebels in eastern DRC and coalition of opposition parties in exile continued to collapse. Seventeen people reportedly killed in Kaberagure, Uvira territory in eastern DRC near Burundian border 16 Jan in fighting between, on one side, rebels including from RED-TABARA and National Liberation Forces (FNL) groups backed by local Mai-Mai militants and, on other, army and ruling party's Imbonerakure youth wing backed by different Mai-Mai militants. Grenade attack in bar in capital Bujumbura 27 Jan wounded at least eight people. Govt 8 Jan confirmed its refusal to dialogue with opposition politicians it accuses of orchestrating 2015 coup attempt and asked member states of regional bloc East African Community to extradite them to Burundi. Four opposition parties and former first VP Frederic Bamvuginyumvira withdrew from coalition of opposition parties in exile CNARED Giritika throughout month blaming coalition's presidency for diverting from platform's main mission, namely reestablishment of 2005 constitution and 2000 Arusha peace agreement. Ahead of 2020 general elections, leaders of nineteen parties (33 are recognised by law) analysed draft law amending electoral code in Gitega 4 Jan; opposition parties not invited. Some politicians criticised limited time available and called meeting "façade". Proposed amendments roughly tripled presidential candidates' deposit and stipulated that independent parliamentary candidates would have to win at least 40% of votes in their constituencies to be elected. Govt 3 Jan said 84 of 130 foreign NGOs previously operating in country had registered before 31 Dec deadline and fulfilled new conditions including ethnic quota for staff; some NGOs that reject conditions began to leave.

↓ 🗡️* **Cameroon** Authorities ramped up repression of opposition heightening risk of worse unrest in Feb, violence rose in Anglophone areas and Abubakar Shekau's Boko Haram (BH) faction continued attacks in Far North. Security forces forcibly dispersed opposition protests in several cities 27-28 Jan called by opposition leader Maurice Kamto to protest allegedly rigged elections in Oct and express solidarity with Anglophones; security forces reportedly used live rounds against protestors in Douala, injuring at least six, and arrested some 200. Authorities arrested Kamto and senior members of his party in Douala 28 Jan triggering protest, which security forces dispersed. More intense violence in Anglophone regions in west left over 90 people dead, including civilians, separatists and security forces. Anglophone separatists 3 Jan cut off fingers of six Cameroon Development Corporation staff in Tiko, Southwest; same day burnt house of Anglophone politician, soon-to-be-appointed PM, Dion Ngute in Ekondo Titi, Southwest; same day attacked gendarmes in Brakah in Francophone West region. Separatists 16 Jan temporarily abducted 36 civilians in Ediki, Southwest; same day killed soldier in Ngouh, Northwest and 17 Jan beheaded two soldiers in Northwest. In Bamenda, Northwest, suspected separatists killed at least six military 18-27 Jan and policeman 28 Jan. Military reportedly killed at least 68 suspected separatists in Southwest and Northwest 4-28 Jan, separatists claimed at least fourteen were civilians. In Far North, BH attacked five villages in Kolofata, Mayo-Sava department 4-11 Jan killing

two civilians; killed two civilians in Ldengla and Talla-Made, Mayo Tsanaga 12 and 17 Jan; about 50 militants attacked Achigachia, Mayo Tsanaga 17 Jan, injured nine civilians. BH 23 Jan killed four civilians in Satomi, Mayo Tsanaga, and Meri, Diamare department; and attacked Gossi and Toufou, 25 Jan, Mayo Tsanaga, burning 200 houses. BH killed three people in Kordi and Goumouldi, both Mayo Sava 31 Jan. Shekau faction said it would spare some villages if inhabitants agreed to disband vigilante groups and host logistical bases. Criminal groups based in neighbouring Central African Republic continued to launch attacks in Adamawa, North and East regions. President Biya 4 Jan established new govt, appointing sixteen new members, maintaining 50; reshuffle saw promotion of hardliners, including new Anglophone PM Dion Ngute.

➡ **Central African Republic** Peace talks between govt and armed groups began in Sudanese capital Khartoum late month, but armed groups continued attacks in rural areas. Following joint high-level African Union (AU)-United Nations mission to capital Bangui 8-10 Jan to revive African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in CAR, AU-led talks between govt and fourteen armed groups opened in Khartoum 24 Jan; negotiations due to conclude 2 Feb. Armed groups 31 Jan suspended their participation in talks for two days to press govt to accept their demands including for general amnesty and creation of national unity govt with rebel representatives. Ex-Seleka armed group Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) 10 and 25 Jan attacked Bambari 400km north east of Bangui targeting police station; Portuguese troops of UN mission (MINUSCA) repelled UPC fighters; fighting left several people dead and several dozen wounded. Ex-Seleka armed group Popular Front for the Central African Renaissance (FPRC) withdrew from Bakouma in south east night of 15-16 Jan after fighting anti-balaka militiamen 31 Dec; over a dozen killed in fighting. PM Sarandji 28 Jan led rally in capital Bangui and reiterated govt's call for lifting of UN arms embargo. UN Security Council 31 Jan agreed to review arms embargo by end Sept if CAR makes progress, including on security sector reform.

➡ **Chad** In Tibesti region in north, situation remained tense between govt forces, local armed groups and communities. In Miski area, amid signs of temporary truce between govt forces and ethnic Tebu self-defence groups, soldiers withdrew in Dec, but regrouped 100km from Miski and continued to block access in Jan. In Kouri Bougoudi area, new fighting reportedly erupted 12 Jan between on one side army and Libya-based Sudanese fighters and on other Libya-based Chadian rebel group Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic (CCMSR) and gold miners; a dozen people killed. Libyan Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) 16 Jan deployed to Sebha in south west Libya and said it would "rid the south of terrorists and foreign armed groups". Tripoli-based Attorney General 3 Jan issued arrest warrants for fourteen Chadian rebels; some living in Paris and Doha, others already arrested. Tripoli authorities 3 Jan said they had arrested CCMSR "Defence Minister" Mohamad Taher Cheick who, according to his group, disappeared three months before. Amid protests and growing calls for Sudanese President Bashir to step down, Sudanese deputy president Ousman Mohamed Youssouf Kibir led govt delegation to N'Djamena 29-30 Jan to exchange views with President Déby and govt. Ceremony held in N'Djamena 28 Jan in honour of ten Chadian UN peacekeepers killed 20 Jan in Aguelhok, northern Mali; 54 of 181 peacekeepers killed in Mali since UN mission launched in 2013 are Chadian.

Following Déby's visit to Israel in Nov, Israeli PM Netanyahu visited capital N'Djamena 20 Jan to renew diplomatic ties, cut since 1972; leaders signed agreements including on military and intelligence support.

➡ **DR Congo** Opposition candidate in late Dec polls, Félix Tshisekedi, installed as president 24 Jan in first peaceful transfer of power in country's history amid strong concerns of vote rigging; and UN reported at least 535 people killed in ethnic violence in west mid-Dec. Electoral commission (CENI) published provisional results 10 Jan declaring Tshisekedi winner with small margin ahead of opposition Lamuka alliance's candidate Martin Fayulu and ruling coalition's candidate Ramani Shadari in third place. Amid strong concerns of vote rigging constitutional court 19 Jan confirmed Tshisekedi winner; Fayulu declared himself president. Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other African countries including Egypt, incoming AU chair, took lead in welcoming decision; others, including EU, took note. Former President Kabila's coalition, Common Front for Congo (FCC), won majorities in national assembly (335 of 485 seats) and in most of 26 provincial assemblies. While security situation remained largely calm, results triggered protests in Kikwit, Kwilu province, Fayulu stronghold, and less so in Kisangani, Mbandaka, Goma and Kinshasa. Police 21 Jan dispersed small Fayulu-led rally in Kinshasa. Govt shut down SMS and mobile internet services 31 Dec-19 Jan, until just before confirmation of results. UN late Jan said at least 535 people were killed in clashes between Banunu and Batende communities in four villages in Yumbi territory, Mai-Ndombe province in west 16-18 Dec; some 465 houses and buildings reportedly burned down or pillaged, estimated 16,000 fled across border into Republic of Congo. UN 29 Jan said violence appeared to have been started by dispute over burial of local chief. In South Kivu, Burundian army backed by Burundian ruling party's Imbonerakure youth wing and local Mai-Mai militants 16 Jan launched operations in Kaberagure, Uvira territory against Burundian rebels including from RED-TABARA and National Liberation Forces (FNL) groups backed by local Mai-Mai militants; seventeen people reportedly killed. In North Kivu, army 19 Jan clashed with splinter group of Rwandan Hutu rebels Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) near Katale, Masisi territory; army clashed with Allied Democratic Forces rebels in Mapobu, near Beni 21 Jan. In Ituri province, army 22 Jan reported killing of leader and six members of Simba armed group and ethnic Lendu militia attacked army position. Govt 28 Jan said it had extradited to Rwanda two FDLR members.

⬇ **Gabon** Small group of soldiers 7 Jan took over state radio station and broadcast statement saying they were seizing power "to restore democracy" and calling on people to "rise up" while President Bongo was still recuperating in Morocco following stroke late Oct. Govt a few hours later said situation was "under control", said two coup plotters had been killed and eight others arrested. Bongo 12 Jan named new PM as part of regular govt renewal following Oct legislative elections, 15 Jan returned from Morocco and swore in new govt largely identical to previous one, and same day returned to Morocco to continue recovery.

➡ **Rwanda** DR Congo 28 Jan said it had extradited to Rwanda two members of DRC-based Rwandan rebel group Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR).

Horn of Africa

➡ **Eritrea** President Afwerki and Ethiopian PM Abiy 7 Jan reopened border crossing between Humera in Ethiopia and Oum Hajer in Eritrea as part of ongoing reconciliation. Kenyan President Kenyatta 24 Jan visited Eritrea for first time since 1999. Sudan 31 Jan reopened border with Eritrea, shut for a year to combat trafficking of weapons and foodstuffs.

↓ **Ethiopia** Govt airstrikes against Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) rebels marked escalation in intra-Oromo power struggle. Military 12-13 Jan carried out airstrikes in western Oromia region targeting members of rebel group Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), reportedly killing seven civilians. Govt denied airstrikes but said security forces conducted “stabilising operation” following request from Oromia regional govt. Despite ceasefire agreement 24 Jan between Oromia regional govt and OLF, with OLF fighters agreeing to encamp, disarm, demobilise and reintegrate, OLF gunmen 28 Jan killed two farmers in Amaro district. In north east, after clashes between ethnic Afars and Issa Somali left a dozen dead in Dec, demonstrators 13-18 Jan blocked main road to Djibouti to protest surging ethnic violence. President Afwerki and Ethiopian PM Abiy 7 Jan reopened border crossing between Humera in Ethiopia and Oum Hajer in Eritrea as part of ongoing reconciliation.

↓ **Kenya** Al-Shabaab carried out terror attacks in capital Nairobi. Six Al-Shabaab gunmen (at least three of Kenyan origin) 15 Jan attacked hotel and office complex in Westlands area of Nairobi, detonating suicide bomb in hotel foyer and holding civilians captive inside. Seventeen-hour siege ended with security forces killing remaining assailants. 21 civilians killed and at least 30 injured during attack. Suspected Al-Shabaab bombing in central Nairobi 26 Jan also injured two people. Police removed box left at same location 28 Jan. In Garissa county in north, six unidentified armed men attacked road construction site in Shimbirey along Garissa-Madogashe road, police repelled assailants, guard and wife sustained gunshot wounds.

➡ **Somalia** Federal govt expelled UN envoy to Somalia and Al-Shabaab continued attacks on Somali and international forces. Govt 2 Jan expelled UN Special Representative for Somalia Nicholas Haysom accusing him of undermining Somalia’s sovereignty; Haysom had publicly questioned legal basis for arrest of South West state’s presidential candidate and former Al-Shabaab deputy leader Mukhtar Robow in Dec. UN said it would replace Haysom. Al-Shabaab 15 Jan attacked Ethiopian forces in African Union mission in Somalia (AMISOM) near Bur Hakaba in Bay region of South West state; casualties undisclosed. Al-Shabaab 19 Jan overran Somali army base in Sanjuni village, near port city Kismayo in south east, later claiming it killed 40 Somali forces; in response U.S. same day carried out airstrike on Al-Shabaab militants, killing 52. U.S. 23 Jan carried out two more airstrikes near Jilib, Middle Juba region in south east, casualties undisclosed. Suspected Al-Shabaab car bombing near petroleum ministry in capital Mogadishu 29 Jan killed at least two. U.S. airstrike near Shebeele, Hiraaan region 30 Jan killed 24 militants. Al-Shabaab militants 15 Jan launched terror attack in Kenyan capital Nairobi (see Kenya). Former federal planning minister Said Abdullahi Deni elected president of semi-autonomous Puntland 8 Jan.

➔ 🌟 **South Sudan** Fighting between main parties reduced as they began to implement Sept 2018 peace deal, but clashes rose in south west between signatories on one side and non-signatory armed group on other, raising risk of escalation in Feb. Peace monitors reported reduction in violence between main signatories of Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan – govt forces and main rebel group Sudan People’s Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO) – including in former hotspots, Wau in north west and Bentiu in north. But monitors 22 Jan said they were still barred access to some areas including Luri training site near Yei in south west, where security forces detained and beat monitors in Dec; govt has not yet held anyone responsible. Amid delays in reaching Pre-Transitional Period security benchmarks, parties 13 Jan agreed to launch pilot project to canton and train 3,000-strong joint unit in Kajo-Keji county, Yei River state in south, but plan faces opposition from local authorities and parties did not agree on unit’s mandate or funding source. Fighting erupted 9 Jan between SPLA-IO and non-signatory armed group National Salvation Front (NAS) led by Thomas Cirillo in Kozi county, Maridi state in south west. Further clashes broke out between army and NAS near Yei 19-20 Jan, leaving three soldiers dead. NAS 21 Jan said it had lost control of positions in stronghold Mukaya, north of Yei. Ugandan forces briefly deployed to Yei 17 Jan in violation of UN Security Council arms embargo; Ugandan deployment appeared linked to govt offensives against NAS. Intercommunal violence and banditry continued: cattle raid in Padiak county, Bieh state in north east 7 Jan left one dead and 105 people reportedly killed in cattle raids in Tonj state, centre-west 14 Jan. Ambush in Jonglei state in centre 8 Jan left five people dead and another in Duachan area, Akobo state 19 Jan killed at least four people. In support of Sudan, govt 7 Jan ordered Al Watan newspaper to stop publishing articles on protests in Sudan.

↓ **Sudan** Security services responded with greater brutality to continued protests across country calling for President Bashir to step down. Security services 6 Jan arrested a number of prominent academics from Khartoum University. Despite Bashir’s 9 Jan speech blaming rebels from Darfur and outside powers for unrest, further protests reported 13 Jan in Khartoum North, Wad Medani, capital of Gezira state and Nyala, main city in South Darfur and 22 Jan in Khartoum and Omdurman. Security forces reportedly used live rounds and tear gas to disperse protests and targeted medical practitioners providing care to injured protesters. Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors 20 Jan called for general strike after security forces killed one doctor 17 Jan and carried out repeated attacks on hospitals. Authorities 25, 26 and 28 Jan arrested six journalists covering protests. After intelligence chief 29 Jan ordered release all detained in recent incidents, authorities released 186 protestors. Army 30 Jan said it would not let state collapse. Human rights groups claim at least 40 killed and 2,000 detained. Govt 31 Jan reopened border with Eritrea, shut for a year to combat trafficking of weapons and foodstuffs.

➔ **Uganda** Riots erupted late Dec in Bidi Bidi refugee camp in West Nile region after World Food Programme (WFP) decided to change location of food distribution points increasing their distance from camp residents; army deployed to contain unrest, WFP 3 Jan reverted its decision. After armed South Sudanese men suspected to be army soldiers hoisted South Sudan flag 6km south of Uganda-South Sudan border, Ugandan govt 14 Jan reportedly issued them 72-hour ultimatum threatening military intervention. Mediation initiated between Lamwo district local govt and

South Sudan counterpart to resolve persistent disputes over border demarcation. Police 6 Jan blocked annual concert of singer-turned-opposition MP Robert Kyagulanyi, known as Bobi Wine.

Southern Africa

➔ **Madagascar** Following victory of former President Andry Rajoelina in Dec presidential run-off elections, thousands of supporters of his opponent former President Marc Ravalomanana 2 Jan protested alleged voting fraud in capital Antananarivo; police fired tear gas to disperse them. High Constitutional Court 8 Jan confirmed Rajoelina as winner, rejecting Ravalomanana's appeal for cancellation of results. Rajoelina sworn in as president 19 Jan.

➔ **Malawi** Ahead of May presidential and parliamentary elections, suspected youth members of ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) 20 Jan assaulted members of newly formed opposition party United Transformation Movement (UTM) and forced some members, including one woman, to undress in Mangochi; 23 Jan beat up member of opposition Malawi Congress Party (MPC) in Blantyre. President Mutharika 23 Jan condemned political violence, including acts aimed at humiliating women in political arena and urged police to stamp down on any DPP "rogue elements". UN 25 Jan welcomed statement, but expressed concerns that no perpetrator had been held accountable in past year and called on govt to step up efforts to protect victims. Six main political parties, including DPP, 26 Jan issued joint communiqué calling police to bring culprits to justice.

➔ **Mozambique** Suspected Islamist militants continued attacks in Cabo Delgado province in far north. Militants 6 Jan attacked minibus in Nangade district, killing driver and six passengers and attacked another vehicle in Palma town 12 Jan, killing fifteen. Assailants 10 Jan beheaded four people in Manila village in Mocimboa da Praia district and same day killed man in neighbouring Palma district. Govt 9 Jan said it had recently destroyed eight militant training camps, giving no further details. Some 200 residents of Palma town demonstrated 13 Jan, demanding that construction of liquefied natural gas plants on coast be suspended until attacks stop. Police 5 Jan arrested and detained journalist covering displacement of people due to attacks. Former armed opposition movement Renamo 17 Jan elected former guerrilla commander and MP Ossufo Momade as leader; Momade same day said Renamo was committed to peace.

↓ **Zimbabwe** Amid economic crisis, authorities violently repressed mass protests triggered by rise in fuel price. President Mnangagwa 12 Jan announced 200% hike in fuel price in response to fuel shortages and currency crisis. In response, trade unions 13 Jan called for general strike 14-16 Jan, to which civil society groups lent support. Widespread anti-govt demonstrations took place 14-15 Jan concentrated in and around main opposition strongholds of capital Harare, Bulawayo and other cities but also in many small towns nationwide. Security forces including military and paramilitary forces violently repressed protests. Human Rights NGO Forum 18 Jan reported some twelve deaths, 78 gunshot injuries, 242 cases of assault and almost 500 arbitrary arrests and detentions. During unrest some protestors engaged in looting and unidentified men burnt down office of opposition

Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in Harare. Govt 14 and 18 Jan shut down internet. Govt accused MDC, trade unions and civil society of orchestrating protests to undermine govt and install MDC's leader Nelson Chamisa as president. UN human rights office 18 Jan denounced security forces' "excessive use of force" against protesters. Govt 20 Jan described crackdown as "just a foretaste of things to come" and said it would hold opposition "fully accountable". Civil servants 25 Jan held another general strike to protest low salaries following failure of 23 Jan salary renegotiations with govt. Mnangagwa 20 Jan broke off foreign tour to attend to crisis and 22 Jan said "misconduct by our security forces is unacceptable" and would be investigated. South African President Ramaphosa 22 Jan called for lifting of U.S., EU and others' sanctions on govt, while MDC same day demanded regional bloc Southern African Development Community, African Union and international community to intervene to stop harassment of civilians and party members.

West Africa

↓ **Burkina Faso** Jihadist attacks provoked rise in intercommunal violence in north, attacks by communal armed groups and suspected jihadists rose in south west, and suspected jihadists maintained insurgency in east. In north, suspected Islamist militants 1 Jan killed seven civilians in Yirgou village, Centre-North region, including local Mossi chief; Mossi community accused Fulanis of complicity with Islamist assailants and subsequent attacks left 39 Fulanis dead. President Kaboré and three ministers 5 Jan visited Yirgou and urged dialogue. Suspected Islamist militants attacked Gasseliki village, Sahel region 10 and 15 Jan, killing twelve civilians in first attack and seven in second. Unidentified gunmen 27 Jan attacked market in Sikiré village, Sahel region, at least ten civilians killed. Unidentified gunmen 28 Jan attacked military base in Nassoumbou, Sahel region, at least four soldiers killed. Canadian geologist kidnapped 15 Jan at gold mine near border with Niger in north east found dead next day in Siega, Soum province, Sahel region. In south west, Dozo hunters of Dogon community 7 Jan clashed with suspected Islamist militants in Trimbio, South West region, at least one militant injured. Police 12 Jan clashed with villagers of Nafona, Cascades region over land dispute, one woman and two policemen killed. Suspected Islamist militants night of 14-15 Jan attacked police station in Yendéré, Cascades region in south west on border with Côte d'Ivoire, at least one civilian injured. Security minister 16 Jan said Canadian Edith Blais and Italian Luca Tacchetto who disappeared 15 Dec near Bobo-Dioulasso, Hauts-Bassins region in south west had been kidnapped. In west, police 18 Jan clashed with youths in Orodara town, Hauts-Bassins region after young man was shot dead, five other people killed. In east, unidentified gunmen 30 Jan attacked Kompianbiga military base, East region, at least one injured. Fulani NGO Kisal continued to report alleged extrajudicial killings by military, including killing of seven civilians between Tanwalbougou and Piega, East region 15 Jan and killing five civilians in Pama area, East region same day. National Assembly 11 Jan extended state of emergency in fourteen provinces in north by six months. PM Paul Kaba Thiéba 18 Jan resigned along with cabinet, no official reason given. Kaboré next day appointed former Health Minister Christophe Dabiré as PM. With armed forces struggling to stop rise in jihadist attacks, Kaboré 10 Jan replaced army chief of staff.

↓ **Côte d'Ivoire** International Criminal Court (ICC) 15 Jan acquitted former President Gbagbo and co-defendant youth leader Charles Blé Goudé, rekindling divisions, especially between northerners and pro-Gbagbo westerners. Gbagbo supporters 15 Jan took to streets in Gagnoa in west and Yopougon municipality in economic capital Abidjan welcoming acquittal and demanding his return. Opponents of Gbagbo 17 Jan protested against his release in northern city of Korhogo and Bouaké in centre in heart of former rebellion. ICC appeals chamber 21 Jan ruled that Gbagbo and Blé Goudé would stay in detention in the Hague as judges considered prosecution's appeal and scheduled hearing on appeal to start 1 Feb. Govt made contradictory statements on Gbagbo's possible return if he is released: spokesman said decision up to Gbagbo but another govt official said he might be arrested if he returned. Head of opposition Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) and former President Henri Konan Bédié continued to build opposition coalition against President Ouattara ahead of 2020 presidential election. Bédié started negotiations with Gbagbo about possible alliance. Secretary General of Gbagbo's party, Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), 9 Jan denied any formal agreement between Bédié and Gbagbo. Parliamentary speaker Guillaume Soro signalled closer alignment with Bédié and opposition to Ouattara: in speech in Ferkessédougou in north 3 Jan, Soro accused ruling coalition Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP) of sowing division between regions and called for inclusive governance. Authorities 15 Jan arrested Soro's closest collaborator and historic figure of rebellion MP Alain Lobognon despite his parliamentary immunity for "spreading false news" and "incitement to hatred". Parliamentary session, in which Soro faced up against presidential party members, maintained Lobognon's immunity, but he remained in detention. Lobognon 21 Jan said he was going on hunger strike. RHDP held congress in Abidjan 26 Jan to transform coalition of parties into single party, Ouattara said RHDP would elect its presidential candidate in 2020.

➔ **Guinea** Govt and teachers' union 10 Jan signed deal to end strike that has been ongoing on and off for a year; govt pledged to raise teachers' pay by 40% as agreed in 2017 but only partially implemented since then; talks toward establishing base monthly salary of 8mn Guinean francs (\$880) planned for May. Classes in primary and secondary schools resumed 14 Jan for first time in three months.

➔ **Guinea-Bissau** 24 parties registered candidates ahead of 10 March legislative elections.

➔ **Mali** Ethnic violence continued in centre raising pressure on govt to act, military and French forces pursued counter-terror operations in centre and ethnic violence continued in east. In centre, suspected Dogon militiamen (Dozos) 1 Jan stormed Koulogon village in Mopti region, killing 37 Fulani civilians they accused of supporting jihadist militants. President Keïta 4 Jan visited Koulogon and said crime would be punished. MPs 7 Jan urged PM Maïga to take action to stop conflict. France 2 Jan pressed govt to "take strong action" to stop violence. Fulani activists accused Dozos of genocide against Fulanis, while some in govt accused Fulani activists of not doing enough "to demarcate" themselves from jihadists. Also in centre, unidentified gunmen 18 Jan attacked Djéri village in Mopti region, two villagers reportedly killed including local imam. Roadside bomb 25 Jan killed two Sri Lankan peacekeepers and injured six others near Douentza, Mopti region. French and Malian forces

continued counter-terror operations in Mopti region, killing about twenty suspected jihadists and arresting five 4-9 Jan in Serma forest; killing fifteen suspected jihadists 10 Jan in Dialloubé. Unidentified assailants 21 Jan attacked Toye, Ségou region in centre, killing one; govt said thirteen assailants also killed. Roadside bomb 28 Jan killed gendarme and injured two others in Toyé, Ségou region. In north, attack on camp of UN mission (MINUSMA) in Aguelhoc, Kidal region 20 Jan claimed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) left ten Chadian peacekeepers dead and 25 others wounded. Unidentified assailants 29 Jan attacked military base in Tarkint, Gao region in north, two soldiers killed. In Ménaka region in east, clashes continued between Fulani armed groups close to Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and, on the other side, mainly ethnic Dossaak Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA) and Self-Defence Group of Imrad Tuareg and Allies (GATIA), both allied with French forces. Notably, suspected Fulani militants 15 Jan attacked MSA post, killing at least 34, including many Dossaak civilians. Main workers' union National Union of Workers of Mali (UNTM)'s nationwide strike 9-11 Jan partially paralysed both public and private sectors.

➔ **Niger** Security forces continued to counter threats in south east and south near Nigerian and in south west near border with Burkina Faso. In Lake Chad area in south east, govt said week-long operation ending 3 Jan involving 700 troops and air support killed 287 "presumed members of Boko Haram". Boko Haram militants 28 Jan attacked town of Bosso, Diffa region in south east, killing at least four. In border area of Maradi in south, joint operation with Nigeria against "group of extremist-infiltrated bandits" reportedly left five Nigerien and five Nigerian soldiers dead 1 Jan. In south west near border with Burkina Faso, unidentified armed men 3 Jan attacked security post in Torodi region, killing National Guard and wounding another.

↓ 🇳🇮* **Nigeria** Ahead of Feb-March polls, election-related violence rose, heightening risk of worse incidents in coming weeks, resurgent Boko Haram (BH) faction increased attacks in north east, and criminal violence in north west killed dozens. Election-related violence comprised over a dozen serious incidents, including attacks by thugs on campaign offices, vehicles and rallies. Notably, thugs 12 Jan attacked home of Senate President and member of main opposition Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) in Ilorin, Kwara state, wounding at least eleven; supporters of ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and rival Allied Peoples' Movement (APM) fought in Abeokuta, Ogun state 31 Jan, ten people wounded. President Buhari 25 Jan suspended chief justice who faced charges of declaring assets fraudulently; tension rose sharply as opposition and others protested move as threat to electoral justice. BH increased attacks in Borno and Yobe states, most thought perpetrated by faction Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). In Borno state, BH 14 Jan attacked Rann briefly overrunning military base, reportedly killing fourteen people, including three soldiers. BH 17 Jan attacked military post in Kamuya village, six soldiers and unspecified number of insurgents killed. Military 19 Jan repelled attacks on Baga and Kajeri, killing ten insurgents. BH reportedly attacked several military bases late Jan, including in Ajiri 24 Jan, killing three soldiers. Air force 29 Jan bombed BH camp at Limberi. In Yobe state, army repelled BH attack on base in Buni-Yadi 20 Jan, killing several insurgents; four soldiers reportedly killed. In north west, violence involving bandits, communities and security forces continued in Zamfara, Sokoto and Katsina states, over 120 people killed. In Zamfara state, air force 3 Jan attacked bandits in Doumbourou hills, reportedly killing group's leaders and others; army 20

Jan killed 58 bandits, rescued 75 captives in Dumburum and Gando forests, two soldiers and two vigilantes killed; gunmen 26 Jan kidnapped seven men in Birnin Magaji; 28 Jan kidnapped thirteen women in Majema. In Sokoto state, about 75 gunmen 13 Jan attacked three villages in Rabah area, killing at least 26 people. Army reported 21 bandits killed, 89 captives freed in Zamfara and Katsina states 22-29 Jan, said bandits killed eleven civilians and one vigilante in same period. Katsina state governor 2 Jan said state was “under serious siege”. To curb herder-farmer violence in Middle Belt, federal and state govts 17 Jan approved national plan to confine livestock to ranches and grazing reserves within next ten years. Niger Delta remained fragile: new armed group claimed responsibility for blowing up pipeline in oilfield in Bayelsa state 4 Jan.

➡ **Senegal** Ahead of Feb presidential elections, Constitutional Council 14 Jan confirmed two main opposition candidates barred from running; Karim Wade, son of former President Abdoulaye Wade, and former mayor of capital Dakar Khalifa Sall imprisoned for corruption in 2015 and 2018 respectively. Police 25 Jan blocked planned opposition march against Constitutional Council’s ruling.

➡ **Togo** Over 1,000 supporters of opposition coalition 26 Jan demonstrated in capital Lomé to protest Dec legislative elections results, denouncing “irregularities”.