

# Africa

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## Central Africa

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➔ **Burundi** Authorities continued clampdown on opposition and France revealed it had resumed bilateral support to govt in late 2018. Security forces 3-25 July arrested at least 49 supporters of leading opposition party National Congress for Freedom in multiple provinces including Rumonge, Bururi, Gitega and Kirundo. Security forces 11 July reportedly executed two opposition party members in Gihanga, Bubanza province. Youth wing of ruling party CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure also continued to assault opposition supporters. UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi 2 July said fair and transparent elections could not be held in 2020 in current conditions of shrinking democratic space. President Nkurunziza 3 July appointed former leader of Imbonerakure to head of national broadcaster. After govt withdrew BBC's license to operate in country in March, BBC 16 July said it would close its bureau and operations in Burundi after failing to reach agreement with govt. French ambassador to Burundi 12 July revealed France had resumed bilateral support to govt late 2018 in defence and education sectors having severed cooperation following Nkurunziza's 2015 decision to run for third term, and encouraged govt to maintain current "positive dynamic" by ensuring all parties can take part in elections set for May 2020.

➔ **Cameroon** Opposition kept up pressure on govt, fighting between Anglophone separatists and security forces continued to take heavy civilian toll in Northwest and Southwest regions, and Boko Haram (BH) kept up attacks in Far North. Following series of anti-govt protests in Western capitals in June, authorities 12 and 17 July released some 60 activists of opposition party Movement for the Renaissance of Cameroon (MRC), but its leader Maurice Kamto remained behind bars. In capital Yaoundé, hundreds of prisoners, mainly Anglophone separatists and MRC members, rioted night of 22-23 July in protest at their detention and living conditions; injuries reported. In Northwest region, soldiers 4 July killed civilian in regional capital Bamenda; separatists ambushed military in Ndop 9 July killing two soldiers and security operation in Bamenda 10 July left two civilians dead; in Bui, fighting left at least five separatists and one soldier dead 17 July, and security forces killed at least three civilians 19 July. Separatists 14 July briefly kidnapped some 30 travellers in Belo. Unidentified men 17 July kidnapped lawyer representing detained separatist leaders in Bamenda, released him next day. Fighting in Donga-Matung 29 July left four separatists dead. In Southwest region, separatists 3 July attacked military boat in Manyu reportedly leaving several soldiers dead; clashes between security forces and separatists in Eyumojock 21 July left one gendarme dead. Organisers of Anglophone General Conference 24 July said conference would be held 30 Nov. In Far North, violence involving BH militants in Amchide, Goudouboul, Masla and Gakara 21-30 July left at least eleven dead. During Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum in Niger's capital Niamey 17-19 July, UN Development Programme 17 July launched Regional Stabilization Facility for Lake Chad region to scale up stabilisation at cost of \$100mn for Sept 2019-Aug 2021.

➔ **Central African Republic** Violence between armed groups continued in capital Bangui and provinces, while efforts to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate rebel fighters advanced slightly in west. Clashes between traders and self-defence

groups in PK5 neighbourhood of capital Bangui 10-11 July left eleven dead. In north east, fighting between armed groups Popular Front for the Central African Renaissance (FPRC) and Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice (MLCJ) in Am-Dafock, Vakaga prefecture 14 July left between nine and 23 dead. Armed group Union for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC) 26 July attacked Ngoulaka village, Ouaka prefecture and abducted 25 people. In west, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process progressed: 167 members of armed group Democratic Front of the Central African People (FDPC) 2-3 July disarmed in Beloko, Nana Mambere prefecture. UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) 17 July said that since process began in Dec 2018 over 450 combatants had disarmed in Nana Mambere prefecture. MLCJ 11 July said it had removed all its roadblocks. Ali Darassa, leader of UPC, 15 July ordered his men to remove roadblocks in several villages of Ouaka and Haute Kotto prefectures. FPRC leader Nourredine Adam 26 July announced immediate and complete cessation of hostilities. FDPC leader Abdoulaye Miskine 30 July called on President Touadéra to immediately resign, if not, he threatened to remove him by force. France 7 July took lead of EU Training Mission and increased troops in mission from 80 to 140; French General Franck Chatelus appointed MINUSCA chief of staff 8 July. EU foreign policy chief Mogherini 12 July announced EU would put additional €55mn in fund for CAR and extend it until 2020.

➡ **Chad** Boko Haram (BH) continued to attack security forces in west and President Déby held talks with political parties on electoral process. In Lake Chad province in west, BH militants attacked gendarmerie in Meliya village night of 7-8 July killing three civilians and one gendarme. During Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum for regional cooperation on stabilisation, peacebuilding and sustainable development held in Niger's capital Niamey 17-19 July, UN Development Programme 17 July launched Regional Stabilization Facility for Lake Chad region to scale up stabilisation at cost of \$100mn for Sept 2019-Aug 2021. In south, clashes between nomadic herders and sedentary farmers 20 July left at least six dead in Tchiré, Tandjilé province. Déby late June reshuffled govt, notably appointing Mahamat Abali Salah as defence minister and shifting responsibility for police and nomadic guard from territorial administration ministry to defence ministry. Déby held meetings with political parties 10 and 16 July to discuss legislative elections which he has committed to organising this year. Opposition parties failed to agree on list of members to be included in renewed National Framework for Political Dialogue, platform comprising ruling majority, opposition and civil society to discuss conduct of elections. Déby 13 July lifted restrictions on social media networks, which govt imposed in March 2018 citing security reasons.

➡ **DR Congo** President Tshisekedi continued to negotiate govt formation with former President Kabila; Kabila faced challenge from within his Common Front for Congo (FCC) coalition; violence continued in Ituri in north east; and World Health Organization (WHO) declared Ebola outbreak a global public health emergency. Senator Bahati Lukwebo, president of Alliance for the Democratic Forces of Congo and Allies (AFDC-A), major party within Kabila's coalition, 10 July declared himself candidate for senate presidency, challenging dominance of Kabila's party within coalition. FCC expelled Bahati, prompting AFDC-A politicians and activists to stage protests in Bukavu in east 11 July. In senate council elections 27 July, Kabila's candidate former Minister Alexis Tambwe Mwamba won presidency, but AFDC-A candidate Samy Badibanga won vice presidency. In Sankuru province in centre,

provincial parliament 20 July elected Joseph-Stéphane Mukumadi, nominally independent candidate but reportedly close to Tshisekedi, as governor, beating Kabila ally Lambert Mende. In Ituri province in north east, violence continued in Djugu, Mahagi and Irumu territories as armed groups continued to target civilians and military. Eight headless bodies discovered 10km from provincial capital Bunia 18 July, prompting youth to protest against insecurity. 200 additional police deployed to shore up security 8 July. In east, first person in Goma, North Kivu provincial capital, to have tested positive for Ebola 14 July, died next day while being transferred to Butembo. WHO 17 July declared Ebola outbreak in Congo a global public health emergency, noting that Goma is “a city of almost two million people on the border with Rwanda, and the gateway to the rest of DRC and the world”. Tshisekedi 20 July placed Ebola response under presidency’s supervision and same day created seven-man technical secretariat to lead on it. Health Minister Oly Ilunga 22 July resigned in protest.

➔ **Rwanda** Tensions between Rwanda and Uganda remained tense despite steps to improve relations. Rwandan President Kagame 3 July received Ugandan FM in Rwandan capital Kigali. Following 12 July summit between presidents of Rwanda, Uganda, DR Congo and Angola in Angolan capital Luanda, heads of state appointed Angola as mediator between Uganda and Rwanda with support of DR Congo. Ugandan security forces 23 July arrested at least 40 Rwandans reportedly on suspicion of espionage in Ugandan capital Kampala.

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## Horn of Africa

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➔ **Eritrea** President Afwerki received Ethiopian PM Abiy in capital Asmara 18 July one year after they signed peace agreement and discussed deepening cooperation, no substantial outcome. Russia 22 July lifted sanctions, which it imposed on govt in 2009, to conform with Nov 2018 UN Security Council resolution that called for lifting sanctions on Eritrea following its normalisation of relations with Ethiopia and Somalia.

➔ **Ethiopia** Deadly clashes erupted in south between security forces and ethnic Sidama protesting delay of referendum on creation of Sidama state, and Tigrayan and Amhara parties in ruling coalition blamed each other for late June high-level killings. Ahead of Sidama movement’s unilateral declaration of statehood planned for 18 July, electoral board 16 July said it would hold referendum on creation of Sidama federal state by 20 Nov, thereby indicating 18 July deadline set by Sidama movement was invalid. Sidama Zone administrator and some Sidama movement leaders 18 July accepted new schedule, fuelling tensions with those who rejected it. Other Sidama activists, including part of youth movement Ejetto, opposed delay and took to streets. Clashes between security forces and protesters in Hawassa in south 17 July left at least four dead and soldiers next day reportedly killed thirteen people in nearby Wotera Rassa. Reports suggested dozens of people were killed in total, including when Sidama attacked minorities, but internet blackout (lifted 29 July) restricted information. Security forces reportedly arrested some 150 protesters. National Security Council 22 July placed Sidama and all other southern districts under temporary oversight of federal security forces. Regional govt 25 July suspended senior leaders of Hawassa city and Sidama and Hadiya zones for playing

“major role” in violence. Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) 10 July called on Amhara Democratic Party (ADP), both members of ruling coalition, to admit responsibility for 22 June killings of high-level officials and called for investigation. Next day ADP condemned TPLF allegations and claimed latter was responsible for overall political crisis. ADP 15 July nominated as Amhara state leader National Security Advisor Temesgen Tiruneh, replacing Ambachew Mekonnen who was killed in June attacks. Seven opposition parties 25 July called for independent investigation into 22 June killings and subsequent arrests. Govt 27 July released 57 people arrested in connection with attacks.

➡ **Kenya** Al-Shabaab kept up attacks in east and relations between Kenya and Somalia remained fraught over contested status of Somaliland. In Lamu county in east: suspected Al-Shabaab militants 15 July ambushed police in Kiunga, fighting left three attackers dead and two police wounded; suspected Al-Shabaab bombing on road between Ishakani and Ras Kamboni 20 July reportedly left two dead. In Marsabit county in north, unidentified gunmen killed one person and took 250 cattle in Elle-Bor 3 July. Following late June tweet by Kenyan FM referring to Somaliland as a country, Somalia 1 July called tweet affront to its sovereignty and summoned Kenyan ambassador to Somalia. Govt 1 July agreed to establish joint border commission with South Sudan to help settle conflict between communities in disputed Ilemi Triangle.

⬇ **Somalia** Al-Shabaab stepped up attacks in capital Mogadishu and elsewhere in south, tensions persisted between federal govt and federal member states and between it and breakaway Somaliland. In Mogadishu, two Al-Shabaab attacks 8 July left nine dead; suicide car bombing near airport 22 July killed at least seventeen; suicide bombing in municipal govt HQ 24 July killed six and seriously wounded others including city’s mayor (Al-Shabaab said suicide bombing target was U.S. diplomat recently appointed U.N. envoy to Somalia). Al-Shabaab kept up attacks elsewhere in south, notably Al-Shabaab militants 12 July stormed hotel in Kismayo, Jubaland state capital, killing at least 26. Attacks also reported in Middle Juba, Lower Juba, Gedo and Lower Shabelle regions killing at least 50 civilians and soldiers. U.S.-backed security forces continued offensives against Al-Shabaab: notably, unclaimed airstrikes 11 July reportedly killed dozens of Al-Shabaab militants in Jilib, Middle Juba. In north, unidentified gunmen opened fire on vehicle in Galkayo, Puntland 11 July killing at least five civilians. U.S. airstrike 27 July killed one member of Islamic State (ISIS)-Somalia. Jubaland federal member state 8 July rejected federal govt’s announcement previous day that it would help identify elders who would select Jubaland’s assembly members in Aug polls; 25 July suspended co-operation with govt accusing it of interfering in electoral process. Govt 1 July called Kenya’s late June reference to Somaliland as a country an affront to Somalia’s sovereignty. Govt 4 July cut diplomatic ties with Guinea after it gave Somaliland President Bihi official welcome 2 July. President Farmajo 17 July appointed six-member committee to represent govt in any new talks with Somaliland; latter 19 July rejected committee reportedly because it included members from Somaliland whose legitimacy it does not recognise. Puntland federal member state 19 July also rejected committee since govt had not consulted federal member states before forming it.

➡ **Somaliland** Fighting flared in several areas, political parties struck deal unblocking electoral process, and relations with Somalia, which claims sovereignty

over Somaliland, remained fraught. In Sanaag region (disputed between Somaliland and Puntland), rival clan militias clashed in Duud Arraale and El Afweyn 7-8 July leaving at least 25 dead. Also in Sanaag, Somaliland forces clashed with those loyal to Colonel Arre, who defected from Somaliland to Puntland in 2018, near Dhoob 10 July leaving three Somaliland soldiers and one of Arre's soldiers dead. After Arre's forces 26 July took Karin village, clashes broke out there next day between them and Somaliland troops, reportedly leaving two Somaliland soldiers dead. Country's three political parties 27 July agreed way forward to holding long-delayed parliamentary and municipal elections this year, including by increasing number of members of electoral commission from seven to nine. Govt early July filed complaint at UN following late June agreement between Somalia and international civil aviation authorities that sees Somalia take over managing airspace over Somalia and Somaliland from agencies neglecting previous agreement between Somalia and Somaliland to manage airspace jointly. After Somaliland President Bihi visited Guinea 2 July and received welcome befitting head of state, Somalia 4 July cut diplomatic ties with Guinea on grounds that invitation to Bihi violated Somalia's sovereignty; Guinea apologised. Somalia President Farmajo 17 July formed committee to represent govt in renewed dialogue with Somaliland; Somaliland 19 July rejected it reportedly because it included members from Somaliland whose legitimacy it does not recognise.

► **South Sudan** Rebel leader Riek Machar indicated his willingness to resume direct talks with President Kiir, as implementation of 2018 Sept peace deal continued to lag ahead of Nov deadline to form interim govt. Machar 8 July told govt he was willing to hold face-to-face talks with Kiir on condition that regional bloc Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) lift travel restrictions imposed on him and that an IGAD head of state broker meetings with Kiir. Body tasked with command and control of all forces during pre-transitional period Joint Defence Board (JDB) 21 July ordered all govt and rebel forces to report to cantonment sites by 31 July, which reportedly they did. Army clashed with non-signatory armed group National Salvation Front (NAS) in Lobonok, Jubek 22-23 July, resulting in unconfirmed number of casualties. UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) 3 July released report indicating that security forces and rebel groups had killed 104 civilians between signing of peace deal in Sept 2018 and April 2019 in Central Equatoria region in south. Unidentified gunmen 16 July killed one UN peacekeeper and six civilians in Abyei region, disputed between South Sudan and Sudan. Govt 1 July agreed to establish joint border commission with Kenya to help resolve conflict between ethnic communities in disputed border territory Ilemi Triangle. Kiir 27 July facilitated talks in Juba between, on one side, Sudanese rebel groups active in border areas Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) Hilu and SPLM-N Agar and, on other, joint delegation of Sudanese ruling Transitional Military Council and opposition coalition Forces for Freedom and Change led by TMC deputy head "Hemedti"; parties renewed ceasefire agreement.

► **Sudan** Ruling military council and opposition coalition signed political agreement for three-year transitional period, but continued to negotiate over constitutional declaration that will govern power structures; military reportedly foiled coup attempt and mass protests continued. Transitional Military Council (TMC) and opposition coalition Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) resumed talks mediated by African Union and Ethiopia 3-4 July. TMC 4 July released 235 members of rebel faction Sudan Liberation Movement led by Minni Minnawi. TMC and FFC 5

July reached provisional agreement on transitional arrangements. U.S. Assistant Sec State for African Affairs Tibor Nagy 8 July tied lifting of Sudan's "state sponsor of terror" designation to implementation of power-sharing agreement. Military officers 11 July allegedly attempted coup to block agreement; in response TMC arrested sixteen military personnel. TMC and FFC 17 July signed political agreement: joint military-civilian sovereign council to rule for 39 months until elections; eleven-member council to comprise five civilians from FFC, five TMC officers, and one consensually selected civilian. TMC to chair council for first 21 months, civilian for eighteen months. Agreement called for national investigation into 3 June attack on protesters. FFC 27 July rejected findings of TMC-appointed inquiry into 3 June attacks, which implicated eight RSF officers but exonerated TMC leadership. In Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, political opposition and rebel alliance Sudan Revolutionary Front 25 July agreed to set up FFC-led body to formulate common vision on constitutional declaration and to start talks on agreement between govt and rebel groups after transition to civilian rule. In South Sudan capital Juba 27 July TMC and FFC discussed implementation of political agreement with other Sudanese rebel groups, parties renewed ceasefire. Paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) 29 July reportedly killed at least five protesters in North Kordofan's capital el-Obeid, prompting nationwide protests. Tens of thousands demonstrated countrywide 11 July to commemorate those killed 3 June and thousands demonstrated in Khartoum 25 July to demand experts, not political parties, make up transitional govt.

➔ **Uganda** Diplomatic efforts to improve relations between Uganda and Rwanda accelerated and musician-turned-opposition leader Bobi Wine announced he would run for president in 2021. Ugandan FM 3 July met Rwandan President Kagame in Rwandan capital Kigali in bid to improve relations. At summit in Angolan capital Luanda 12 July, presidents of Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo and Angola decided Angola would mediate between Uganda and Rwanda with support of DR Congo. Security forces 23 July arrested at least 40 Rwandans reportedly on suspicion of espionage in capital Kampala. MP Robert Kyagulanyi, known as Bobi Wine, 24 July announced he would contest 2021 presidential polls.

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## **Southern Africa**

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➔ **Angola** Armed Forces of Cabinda (FAC), armed wing of movement for secession of Cabinda exclave Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), 4 July claimed to have killed nine soldiers 1-2 July in exclave's northern Massabi region, one FAC combatant killed. Following Feb arrest of supporters of smaller secessionist organisation Cabinda Independence Movement (MIC), police 4 July released ten detained activists.

⚡ **Malawi** Protests against President Mutharika's 21 May re-election escalated and in places turned violent, and authorities continued to arrest movement's leaders. Thousands took part in demonstrations organised by NGO Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC) in capital Lilongwe 4 July to protest Mutharika's re-election and alleged electoral fraud. After Mutharika 6 July warned that authorities would take action against protest leaders, police following day arrested at least 68 protesters for alleged "criminal acts". Authorities 9 July arrested Gift Trapence and McDonald Sembereka, HRDC's vice chairman and member respectively. In Blantyre, ruling

Democratic Progressive Party youth cadets armed with knives 19 July attacked protesters in Chichiri Upper Stadium, police nearby failed to intervene; in city's outskirts youths suspected to belong to opposition Malawi Congress Party blocked roads. In Lilongwe, opposition protesters 25 July damaged and torched part of govt office complex and attacked head office of Japan International Cooperation Agency. In Mzuzu, protesters 25 July burned down offices of govt and ruling Democratic Progressive Party and police unit. HRDC 29 July announced postponement of demonstrations on following day in order to prepare upcoming "One million march" 6 August against Malawi Electoral Commission chairperson Jane Ansah.

➤ **Mozambique** Suspected Islamist militants continued attacks against civilians and security forces in Cabo Delgado province in far north where Islamic State (ISIS) claimed its second attack and frictions continued within former armed opposition Renamo. Police 3 July said it had arrested several Ahlu Sunnah Waa-Jama'a (ASWJ) gunmen after militants 26 June reportedly killed eleven civilians in Itole, Palma district. Militants 4 July reportedly beheaded three people in Chamala, Miudumbe district; 3 July attacked Lidjungo in Nangade district, killing one police and six civilians; ISIS 5 July claimed responsibility. After group claiming to be Renamo's military wing from Sofala province threatened to kill party leader Ossufo Momade in June, another group of alleged Renamo fighters in Funhalouro, Inhambane province in south east early July threatened to derail implementation of disarmament agreement signed with govt 2 June if Momade did not step down, Renamo's leadership called group "deserters". Constitutional Council 9 July declined to hear Renamo's complaint against electoral commission for allegedly inflating number of voters registered in Gaza province in south; Renamo said it would file criminal charges and request independent audit. Parliament 29 July passed amnesty bill that exempts from prosecution govt forces and Renamo fighters for crimes committed since 2014. Renamo's armed wing 30 July started disarmament process. President Nyusi 31 July said govt would next day sign peace agreement with Renamo to put formal end to military hostilities. Newly appointed South African Justice Minister Ronald Lamola 13 July said he would ask courts to reverse his predecessor's May ruling to extradite former Mozambican Finance Minister Manuel Chang to Mozambique, citing concerns that Chang still enjoyed political immunity; same day said he would consider extraditing Chang to U.S., where he is wanted for alleged involvement in Mozambique govt's undisclosed \$2bn loan that U.S. says was fraudulent. Chang 24 July resigned from parliament, losing his immunity.

➤ **Zimbabwe** Amid continuing economic crisis, power shortages and rising inflation, attempts to initiate political dialogue remained deadlocked. Nelson Chamisa, leader of main opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), 11 July warned party would organise protests against govt but did not say when. Chamisa called for seven days of prayer 26 July, "before undertaking crucial and decisive next steps" which remain undefined. Police 9 July charged MDC deputy Chairman Job Sikhala with attempting to overthrow govt after he allegedly vowed MDC would overthrow President Mnangagwa before 2023 election. Police 10 July arrested MDC Youth Assembly Sec Gen Gift Ostallos Siziba for allegedly inciting subversion of govt. Confederation of unions Civil Service Apex Council 18 July said it would not call for strike as threatened after govt same day agreed to provide "cushioning allowances". Court 26 July ruled that Tourism Minister Prisca Mupfumira be detained for 21 days while anti-corruption commission investigates

corruption allegations. Unidentified gunmen 31 July made failed attempt to abduct MDC officials in capital Harare.

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## Sahel

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➡ **Burkina Faso** Insecurity persisted in north and east, especially in Centre-North, East and Sahel regions, and also in south, and govt organised political dialogue with opposition. In Centre-North region, unidentified gunmen raided several villages in Dablo, Sanmatenga province in two attacks 21 and 26 July, killing at least 26; 22 July attacked Sagho and Toékodogo, Barsalogo province, killing fifteen. In Sahel region, unidentified assailants 18 July reportedly attacked Béléhédé, Soum province, killing seventeen. In East region, unidentified gunmen 15 July reportedly killed four soldiers in Natiaboani; fighting left seven assailants dead. In Centre-South region, unidentified assailants 5 July attacked ranger station in Nahouri province, near Ghanaian border, wounding four civilian guards; 16 July killed two gendarmes between Po and Guiaro. Govt 11 July renewed state of emergency in fourteen provinces until 12 Jan 2020. President Kaboré 15-22 July held political dialogue to ease tensions with opposition and address concerns over security, constitutional reform and electoral code. After parliament 21 June adopted amendments to penal code, which civil society warned could criminalise work of journalists and advocacy groups, Constitutional Court 22 July declared amendments constitutional; for amendments to take effect, President Kaboré must sign them into law. EU foreign policy chief Mogherini in Ouagadougou 10 July pledged additional €138mn to G5 Sahel joint force. Govt and Niger 10 July signed agreement to improve cooperation between local authorities on management of common border.

➡ **Mali** Communal and jihadist violence continued in centre despite intensification of military operations and mediation initiatives, and insecurity persisted in north. In Mopti region in centre, suspected ethnic Dogon militants 30 June attacked Fulani villages of Bidi and Saran in Bankass circle, killing 23. Explosion same day between Guiri and Yoro in Koro circle killed eleven Fulanis. Security forces stepped up operations against Dogon militias in Bandiagara circle, near Mopti, destroying check points and seizing weapons. Security forces 10 July bombed camp of Dogon militia Dan Na Ambassagou in Wadouba, no casualties reported; group same day condemned attack and called for govt to cooperate with it. Security forces 11 July disarmed Dogon militants near Diombolo Kanda, seizing 28 hunting rifles. Govt and civil society launched several peace initiatives. Dan Na Ambassagou and Fulani-dominated militia in Mopti signed peace agreement 1 July. Civil society group Faso Dambe Ton late June mediated dialogue between Dogon militias and jihadist group Katiba Macina; latter listed conditions for peace, including that Dogon militias stop collaborating with security forces, refer all legal cases to religious courts, and stop attacking Fulani civilians. In north, crime and jihadist violence continued in Gao, Menaka and on main roads. Notably, unidentified assailants 5 July reportedly killed eight people in Talataye, Ansongo circle and 17 July ambushed military convoy between Fafa and Bentia, killing one soldier; French airstrike same day killed nine people suspected of carrying out attack. Suicide car bombing on base of international forces in Gao 22 July injured at least five soldiers; jihadist Group to Support Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 25 July claimed responsibility. Armed group Movement for the Salvation of Azawad, formerly affiliated with ex-



rebel Coalition of Azawad Movements, 12 July said it had joined pro-govt Platform coalition. UN Security Council 10 July sanctioned five additional people for obstructing implementation of peace accord. UK 22 July said it would contribute 250 troops to MINUSMA peacekeeping mission in 2020.

➡ **Niger** Jihadist groups continued violent attacks, including suicide car bombing on military targets and abduction of civilians, in west near Mali and in south east near Nigeria. In Inates, Tillabery region in west, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) coming from Mali 1 July staged complex attack on military camp involving two suicide car bombs and dozens of militants on motorbikes, at least eighteen soldiers killed before U.S. and French airstrikes forced militants back across border to Mali. Also in Inates, suspected ISGS militants 15 July killed Tuareg leader Almoubacher ag Alamjadi. In Diffa region in south east, deadly attacks continued and kidnappings of women and girls increased. Suspected Boko Haram faction Islamic State West Africa Province 2 July reportedly abducted twelve people in Kolo Manga, including two women and four girls; 6 July kidnapped at least eight girls in Tchoungoua and one girl in Toumour next day. France 9 July said it had suspended military operations at its Madama outpost in far north and transferred personnel and equipment to restive Liptako-Gourma area that spans border areas of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. Niger and Burkina Faso 10 July signed framework to facilitate cross-border cooperation.

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## West Africa

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➡ **Benin** Following violent anti-govt protests in May-June, Church representatives 3 July began mediation between opposition and pro-govt parties, civil society and President Talon. Opposition insisted on dissolution of parliament and new elections. Following govt's decision to bar opposition parties from taking part in 28 April parliamentary election, Talon 15 July met representatives of eleven pro-govt and opposition parties in bid to establish roadmap for certification of opposition parties; opposition called meeting "disappointing" and called on Talon to lift "artificial blockages". Interior minister 18 July refused to legalise parties, insisting they required 1,155 founding members and not 120 as previously stated.

➡ **Côte d'Ivoire** Tensions persisted between President Ouattara's coalition Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP) and opposition Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire-African Democratic Rally (PDCI-RDA) led by former President Bédié. Following Nov 2016 recommendations from African Court on Human and People's Rights, govt 3 July proposed bill to reform electoral commission, decreasing number of members from seventeen to fifteen and reducing proportion of seats allocated to ruling coalition; parliament 30 July approved reform bill with 124 votes to 78, despite opposition MPs criticising govt for publishing final text day before vote. PDCI and other opposition parties and civil society following day protested against reform, arguing that, since executive's representatives were biased, commission's membership remained biased in favour of ruling coalition. Opposition also denounced 5,000 francs (about \$8.50) fee for identity card on grounds that it would disenfranchise poor voters; 6 July mobilised hundreds to protest in Abidjan against fee. Authorities continued to pressure Bédié's allies: 1 July arrested PDCI Youth President Valentin Kouassi, releasing him next day; 2 July sentenced in

absentia senior PDCI member and former mayor of Plateau district in Abidjan Noël Akossi Bendjo to twenty years in prison for embezzlement of public funds; Bendjo called decision “parody of justice”; 6 July arrested Bamba Moriféré after opposition meeting, charging him with “incitement to insurrection”.

➡ **Gambia** Hundreds 4 July marched in capital Banjul in support of victims of sexual violence demanding better laws to prevent abuse. Protests came a week after report from NGO Human Rights Watch detailed how former President Jammeh used his power as well as state institutions to entrap and sexually abuse young women. Jammeh’s party, Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction, called rape allegations against Jammeh by Fatou “Toufah” Jallow in *New York Times* “smear campaign”. Protests erupted 24 July in Serrekunda near Banjul, sparked by death in custody of young trader, during which protesters attacked police station and police fired tear gas at protesters. Same day another protest took place in Brikama, about 30km from Banjul against lack of development in area, some protesters reportedly injured in clashes with security forces.

➡ **Guinea** Tensions persisted between supporters and opponents of President Condé ahead of 2020 presidential elections. Following late June leak of official document that argued for president’s right to propose new constitution that would allow Condé to run for third term and submit it to referendum, FM Touré 5 July confirmed authenticity of document and vowed to track those responsible for leak, while opposition called document proof that govt was promoting “undemocratic project”. NGOs Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International 11 July criticised 25 June law that gives police “too much discretion to use firearms” and shields them from prosecution. Somalia 4 July cut diplomatic ties with Guinea after latter 2 July gave official welcome to President Bihi of Somaliland, over which Somalia claims sovereignty; Guinea apologised to Somalia.

➡ **Guinea-Bissau** Following 23 June reappointment of Aristides Gomes as PM, President Vaz 3 July nominated Gomes’s proposed cabinet and Ladislau Embassa as attorney general. New govt mainly comprising members of African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde’s (PAIGC) and its allies took office 4 July. PM Gomes same day nominated 21 new advisers, including PAIGC’s leader Domingos Simões Pereira as special adviser to PM and head of Office to Support Reforms; civil society organisations criticised appointments as “nepotism” and waste of public funds. After electoral commission 10 July set 24 Nov as date of presidential election, National Assembly President Cipriano Cassamá announced his candidacy, adding that if he won Pereira would be his PM; Pereira 11 July reminded Cassamá that PAIGC would opt for primaries to choose candidate. Former PAIGC leader and former PM Gomes Júnior 13 July also announced his candidacy.

➡ **Liberia** In capital Monrovia, electoral commission 31 July released preliminary results of by-election in Montserrado county pointing to victory of opposition candidate Darius Dillon of Liberty Party; announcement triggered clashes same day between opposition activists and supporters of ruling party Congress for Democratic Change, fourteen injured. Hundreds same day staged anti-govt protest in Monrovia against alleged corruption and economic mismanagement under President Weah, prompting police to use tear gas and arrest five.

↓ **Nigeria** Boko Haram (BH) increased attacks in north east, deadly bandit violence continued in north west, govt forces cracked down on Shiite Muslim protesters in capital Abuja, while herder-farmer tensions rose in centre and south. In north east, both BH factions continued insurgency: in Borno state, insurgents 17 July killed at least six farmers near state capital Maiduguri; 18 July ambushed humanitarian convoy near Damasak, killed driver, abducted six NGO staff; 25 July attacked displaced persons' camp in Maiduguri, killing two; 27 July attacked villages near Maiduguri, killing at least 70. Also in Borno state, BH faction Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) 4 July ambushed troops in Damboa, killing five; 17 July attacked army vehicle in Jakana town, killing four; troops repelled insurgent attacks in Baga and Benishiek 29-30 July, killing ten. In north west, Zamfara state govt's peace and reconciliation initiative led to bandits and vigilantes releasing over 100 captives. In Katsina state, over 300 bandits 13 July attacked Kirtawa, killing at least ten; over 200 bandits 21 July attacked Zango, killing at least ten. In Sokoto state, bandits 17 July attacked several villages in Goronyo area, killing 39. In capital Abuja, Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) protesters demanding release of their leader Sheikh Ibrahim el-Zakzaky and his wife marched to parliament 9 July; security forces dispersed march killing two. Further clashes 22-23 July left about fifteen dead, including senior policeman; govt 30 July declared IMN "terrorist organisation" and banned it. IMN suspended protests, but said it would challenge ban in court. In centre and south, herder-farmer tensions rose: federal govt 31 June said it had begun creating temporary settlements for Fulani herders in twelve of 36 states, but suspended plan 3 July following protests by state govts and ethnic leaders in south and Middle Belt. In south west, unidentified gunmen killed daughter of pan-Yoruba group leader in Ondo state 12 July, group alleged gunmen were Fulani herders, heightening anti-Fulani sentiment across region.

➔ **Togo** Electoral commission 5 July announced provisional results of 30 June local elections: President Gnassingbé's Union for the Republic party won more municipal councillor seats than any other party (60%); turnout was about 52% and particularly low in capital Lomé. Main opposition parties had boycotted Dec 2018 parliamentary elections, but most ran for municipal seats; Pan-African National Party was only opposition party not to run. Its leader Tikpi Atchadam continued to demand release of activists detained during anti-govt demonstrations 13 April.