

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Burundi** **Govt continued to mend ties with neighbours; clampdown on opposition persisted.** Following arrest of at least six members of main opposition party National Congress for Freedom (CNL) for alleged role in June deadly ambush in Muramvya province, CNL 3 July criticised “disguised way to harass [opposition] and thereby further lock down political space”. CNL 13 July said its leader in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura Rural province, had gone missing 9 July after boarding army vehicle, called for investigation and decried “arbitrary arrests” of party members. Meanwhile, govt officially engaged in regional security cooperation, notably hosting meeting of heads of intelligence and security from DR Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda 5-6 July; officials adopted two-year plan of action for Contact Group set to implement non-military measures to complement military efforts against armed actors in region from early Aug. During President Ndayishimiye’s visit to neighbouring DRC, Gitega and Kinshasa 13 July announced bilateral cooperation against armed groups in eastern DRC; agreement likely to lead to joint operations against Burundian armed groups in South Kivu province. Amid rapprochement with Rwanda, Rwanda’s PM Edouard Ngirente 1 July attended Burundi’s independence celebration; Gitega 4 July however did not attend Rwanda’s Liberation Day festivities, which marks end of genocide against ethnic Tutsis. Burundian FM Albert Shingiro 12 July said Kigali’s refusal to hand over those allegedly involved in 2015 failed coup against former President Nkurunziza remains final obstacle in rapprochement; Ndayishimiye 17 July expressed hope that solution is close. Kigali 30 July handed over to Gitega 19 RED-Tabara rebels captured in late 2020.

➔ **Cameroon** **Violent clashes continued in Anglophone regions between govt forces and separatists fighting for independent Southern Cameroon state; jihadists attacked govt positions in Far North.** In North West region, separatists 1 and 7 July used IEDs to ambush army patrols in Mezam and Boyo divisions respectively; 7 July attacked Njavnu checkpoint, Bui division, killing one policeman; 18 July killed five policemen after detonating IED in Mezam division; 24 July ambushed army patrol in double IED explosion in Mezam, death toll unknown. Govt forces 6 July killed two separatists in regional capital Bamenda, and 16 July clashed with separatists in Ngo-Ketunjia division, reportedly killing at least 15. In South West region, separatists 7 July kidnapped two policemen in Kumba city, Meme division; armed forces 18 July said they had killed separatist leader “General Rambo” in Kumba. In neighbouring Francophone West region, suspected separatists 14 July killed two soldiers in Babadjou town. Govt forces 24 July killed two women in Pinyin, Bamenda town. Nigerian President Buhari 13 July pledged support for Cameroonian institutions, said Cameroon’s stability was in Nigeria’s interest; move comes after Anglophone and Biafran separatist groups in April announced alliance. During visit of President Biya to Geneva city, Switzerland, where he was reportedly receiving medical treatment, over 100 protesters 17 July attempted to break police barricade at his hotel; incident raised tensions in Cameroon where govt supporters accused opposition leader Maurice Kamto’s ethnic group of

harassing Biya. In Far North, jihadists stepped up attacks against govt forces. In Mayo-Sava division, Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) 4, 12 and 14 July attacked military posts in Kolofata area. Govt forces 9 July killed two ISWAP militants in Fotokol town, Logone-et-Chari division, and two Boko Haram (BH) combatants in regional capital Maroua. BH militants 24 July attacked Sagme village, Logone-et-Chari division at border with Nigeria, killing eight soldiers, while armed forces reportedly killed 20 militants. Jihadist militants 26 July killed five soldiers and one civilian in raid on military outpost in Zigue village, Logone-et-Chari division; in response, armed forces killed 17 assailants. At least 60 BH militants 18 and 25 July surrendered in Kolofata town.

↑ **Central African Republic (CAR) Govt took steps to organise long-delayed political dialogue with opposition and civil society; govt forces along with foreign allies continued to clash with rebels.** After opposition 5 July criticised as biased committee which President Touadéra appointed late June to set up and run political dialogue, govt 9 July held talks with opposition and civil society representatives to reach compromise; main opposition coalition COD-2020 24 July said it would take part in dialogue, after govt agreed committee would no longer be placed under Touadéra's direct authority, raised number of political parties' representatives from one to four, and broadened choice of experts who can provide support. Long-delayed Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission, recommended in 2015 Bangui Forum and 2019 Khartoum peace deal, set up 2 July with swearing-in of all 11 commissioners. Meanwhile, army along with Russian security personnel pursued military offensive against rebel Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), who continued to harass govt forces and civilians mainly in areas left by Russian security personnel in recent months. Notably, CPC rebel groups reportedly killed three soldiers in Besson town, Nana-Mambéré prefecture 9 July, one civilian in Bédamara village, Ouham-Pendé prefecture 18 July, and another two in Naziboro village, Nana-Mambéré prefecture 20 July; CPC member 3R 26 July killed at least four Russian security personnel and two govt troops in Ndougué Douane village, Nana-Mambéré prefecture, and 31 July killed at least six civilians in Mann village, Ouham-Pendé prefecture. CPC also staged further ambushes along main roads, mainly in Ouham-Pendé and Lim-Pendé prefectures, notably killing three civilians in Ouham-Pendé prefecture first week of July. Unidentified assailants 21 July killed 13 civilians in Bongboto area, Ouham prefecture; govt immediately blamed CPC, which denied responsibility; UN peacekeeping force (MINUSCA) next day called for investigation amid persistent reports of abuses against civilians by all sides in conflict. Rebel group Union for Peace in Central Africa (UPC), which withdrew from CPC in April, 17 July offered to “definitively lay down arms” in exchange for concessions from govt, including two ministerial portfolios. UN Security Council 29 July renewed sanctions regime until 31 July 2022.

➡ **Chad Tensions ran high with African Union (AU) over appointment of High Representative for Chad; govt took steps toward organising national dialogue.** Following June appointment of former Senegalese FM Ibrahima Fall as AU high representative to support Chadian transition, senior govt official in French media outlet RFI 1 July ruled out collaboration, said Chad was “not under AU tutelage”. High-level AU delegation 7-9 July visited capital N'Djamena, met with Transitional Military Council (CMT) head Mahamat Idriss Déby and FM Cherif Mahamat Zene in attempt to resolve dispute. AU 23 July appointed its head

of Liaison Office in Chad, former Congolese FM Basile Ikouébé, as new high representative. Déby 5 July met French President Macron in first official visit to France; Macron reiterated support for transition. Meanwhile, presidential decree 2 July established Organising Committee of National Dialogue (CODNI) comprising 71 members including civil society and religious organisations' representatives; opposition and civil society platform Wakit Tama 8 July said process not inclusive, while prominent opposition figure Yaya Dillo 16 July decried CODNI as biased in favour of ruling party. Newly authorised opposition party Les Transformateurs 4 July held public gathering in N'Djamena. After transition authorities 12 July authorised for first time march of Wakit Tama (which includes Les Transformateurs), hundreds 29 July protested in N'Djamena against CMT rule and French influence.

➔ **DR Congo (DRC) Controversial nationality bill threatened to break up President Tshisekedi's Sacred Union coalition; meanwhile, armed violence continued unabated in east.** Tshisekedi 3 July signed law on organisation and functioning of Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) ahead of 2023 presidential election; two-thirds of members to come from political parties, same as previous CENI, despite calls from opposition and religious leaders for CENI to be composed mainly of civil society and electoral experts. Tshisekedi's Sacred Union coalition MP Nsingi Pululu 8 July introduced controversial nationality bill seeking to prohibit anyone born to a non-Congolese parent from accessing presidency and other sovereign functions. Bill drew widespread domestic and international criticism. Notably, Moïse Katumbi's party Ensemble pour la République next day criticised law for seeking to exclude Katumbi, whose father is Greek, from presidential election and threatened to leave Sacred Union coalition if bill passed; Archbishop of Kinshasa 11 July denounced bill as "instrument of exclusion and division". Meanwhile, in address to UN Security Council, head of UN mission 7 July warned of "potentially dangerous consequences of a divisive debate on nationality" ahead of next year's election. Amid ongoing and increasingly sophisticated violence in east, MPs 16 July approved fourth extension of state of siege. UN refugee agency same day said Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) had launched series of attacks in and around North Kivu's Beni city since 22 June, killing at least 14 and displacing 20,000; fresh ADF attacks 16, 19, 22 and 27-28 July reportedly left at least 29 civilians dead in Beni territory; armed forces 30 July reportedly clashed with ADF in Kilya locality leaving four ADF, one civilian and one soldier dead. In neighbouring Ituri province, armed violence notably by ADF continued, at times turning into inter-ethnic settling of scores in Irumu territory: mob 1 July killed nine Banyabwisha community members suspected of ADF connections in Komanda locality; ADF 10 July killed seven and kidnapped 30 civilians in Monge village; and armed forces 26 July clashed with ADF in Boga and Tchabi villages, reportedly leaving 15 ADF and seven soldiers dead.

Horn of Africa

➔ **Eritrea Govt continued to face international pressure to withdraw its forces from Ethiopia's Tigray region.** As violence in Tigray started to spread to other Ethiopian regional states (see Ethiopia), UN Human Rights Council 13 July passed resolution calling for "swift and verifiable withdrawal of Eritrean troops"

from Tigray; govt previous day had called on council to reject resolution, denouncing “unjust and unfair treatment [of Eritrea] by some western countries”. Meanwhile, allegations of rights violations against Eritrean refugees in Tigray mounted throughout month. Notably, UN refugee agency 13 July said it had received credible reports of “reprisal attacks, abductions, arrests and violence” meted out against Eritrean refugees there, with “hundreds” reportedly arrested in Tigray’s Shire town in previous weeks; 27 July said armed elements operating in and around refugee camps had killed at least two Eritrean refugees in Tigray’s Mai Tsebri area since 14 July. Tigrayan forces mid-month also allegedly abducted over a dozen Eritrean refugees in Tigray’s Adi Harush camp; Tigray leaders 22 July denied targeting Eritrean refugees. Some 300 Eritrean refugees 29 July demonstrated outside UN refugee agency office in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa demanding protection for fellow Eritrean refugees stuck in Tigray camps.

↓ 🌟* **Ethiopia** **Tigrayan forces advanced into neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions as federal and regional state govts took steps to reinforce their military capacity, making greater instability countrywide likely in coming weeks.** After capturing Tigray’s capital Mekelle from federal troops in June, Tigrayan forces 4 July set conditions for ceasefire negotiations with federal govt, including withdrawal of Eritrean troops and Amhara regional forces from Tigray, independent UN probe into alleged war crimes, and “procedures” for holding PM Abiy and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki accountable for their actions in Tigray. Tigrayan forces 12 July launched southward and westward offensives with apparent view to driving ethnic Amhara forces off disputed territory, reportedly seizing Korem and Alamata towns 12-13 July; Abiy 14 July vowed to repel Tigrayan “enemies”, effectively tearing up unilateral ceasefire declared by federal govt late June; most of country’s ten regional states in following days said they would send reinforcements. Tigrayan forces 17-19 July clashed with Afar regional forces and militias in Afar regional state, leaving at least 20 civilians killed and some 54,000 displaced; 25 July said they had seized Adi Arkay town in Amhara regional state, which latter denied; Afar and Amhara regional govts 23 and 25 July called on civilians to take up arms. Tigrayan forces mid-month allegedly abducted over a dozen Eritrean refugees in Tigray’s Adi Harush camp; Tigray leaders 22 July denied targeting Eritrean refugees. Federal authorities 30 June-2 July reportedly arrested at least 11 journalists, 15-21 July temporarily suspended license of Ethiopian magazine *Addis Standard* for allegedly advancing Tigray leaders’ agenda; police throughout month reportedly arbitrarily detained hundreds of ethnic Tigrayans and closed Tigrayan-owned businesses across country. Elsewhere, tensions between Afar and Somali regional states in east resumed: Somali region 27 July accused militia from neighbouring Afar region of killing hundreds of civilians in contested border area 24 July. Meanwhile, electoral commission 10 July said ruling Prosperity Party had won 410 of 436 seats in federal parliament in June elections. Tensions remained high between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt as Addis Ababa completed second filling of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (see Nile Waters).

➡ **Kenya** **Intercommunal violence flared up in north and by-election loss dealt new blow to President Kenyatta ahead of 2022 general elections.** Competition ahead of 2022 governorship poll fuelled intercommunal violence in Marsabit county in north; notably, clashes between ethnic Gabra and ethnic Borana 12-18 July left five dead. National Cohesion and Integration

Commission 12 July called for “ceasefire”, said it would convene peace dialogue to ease tensions between communities, while Kenyatta 15 July called on local leaders to use their influence to foster peace and reconciliation. In new blow to Kenyatta ahead of 2022 elections, ruling Jubilee Party 15 July lost parliamentary by-election in Kenyatta’s home county of Kiambu to candidate aligned with Deputy President William Ruto, who has long been locked in power struggle with Kenyatta. Electoral commission 23 July concluded interviews for four commissioner positions left vacant since 2018.

➡ **Nile Waters Regional tensions ran high as Ethiopia completed second filling of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).**

Egypt’s Irrigation Minister Mohamed Abdel Aati 5 July said he had received notice from Addis Ababa that it had begun filling GERD reservoir for second year in a row, expressed “firm rejection of this unilateral measure” and reassured citizens filling would not impact available water volumes yet. UN Security Council (UNSC) next day urged all parties to recommit to talks. Egypt’s FM Sameh Shoukry 8 July urged UNSC to help resolve dispute and approve draft resolution calling for legally binding agreement between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia within six months; U.S and Russia same day reiterated support for AU-led mediation efforts and opposition to any changes to current diplomatic framework. Ethiopia 19 July announced it had completed second filling of GERD; Khartoum same day rejected Addis Ababa’s “fait accompli policies” and Sudan’s Irrigation Minister Yasser Abbas 28 July said Khartoum would not resume negotiations without involvement of international quartet composed of U.S., UN, EU and AU.

➡ **Somalia As long-awaited elections faced new delays, Al-Shabaab attacks and counter-offensives continued, leaving scores dead.**

Most federal member states failed to form local selection committees and submit candidates’ lists in time for Senate election to take place 25-28 July as planned. Earlier in month, federal electoral commission 4 July elected Mohamed Hassan Irro as chair, finalising its composition. Electoral process continued to face several hurdles, however; notably, Senate speaker Abdi Hashi and Deputy PM Mahdi Guled throughout month continued to spar for control of local selection committee for Somaliland; opposition bloc of 15 presidential candidates 18 July expressed concern that electoral preparations remained incomplete and federal govt had not done enough to guarantee free and fair polls. Meanwhile, Al-Shabaab 20 July threatened to target electoral authorities and continued to launch deadly attacks. Notably, in capital Mogadishu, suicide bombings killed at least ten people 2 July and at least another nine 10 July; latter attack reportedly targeted Mogadishu police chief Farhan Qarole, who survived unharmed. In Jubaland state, suspected Al-Shabaab explosive device 30 July killed at least five civilians in Kismayo city. Clashes between suspected Al-Shabaab militants on one side and security forces and AU mission troops on the other 13 July reportedly left 11 militants and seven security forces dead in Kuday village, Lower Juba region. Security forces 4-29 July reportedly killed dozens of Al-Shabaab combatants in centre and south, including 15 in Galguduud region 4 July, 35 in Mudug region 19 July, and another 30 in Hiraaan region 26-29 July. Following six-month hiatus, U.S. airstrikes 20 and 23 July killed unknown number of Al-Shabaab militants in Galmudug state. Violence erupted in Hirshabelle state where forces reportedly aligned with renegade Gen. Abukar Huud 3 July clashed with Hirshabelle state forces and federal troops in state’s largest city Beledweyne; at least

two killed. Clashes between rival federal govt forces over control of checkpoint 24 July reportedly killed four civilians in Mogadishu. Federal govt 17 July rejected conclusions of AU report proposing four options for future of AU mission in Somalia (AMISOM), including transition to hybrid UN-AU mission.

➡ **Somaliland Top Court upheld results of May parliamentary and local elections and local NGO voiced concern over arbitrary arrests of civilians.** Supreme Court 7 July certified results of late-May parliamentary and local elections, dismissing 21 legal challenges brought by defeated parliamentary candidates; parliament's lower house expected to select new speaker within 30 days. Ruling Kulmiye party MP 26 July alleged opposition parties Waddani and Justice and Welfare Party (UCID) – which together won majority in parliament in May – tried to bribe him to vote for their candidate for speaker of parliament; both opposition parties 29 July accused President Bihi of harassing and bribing opposition MPs. Local NGO Human Rights Centre 18 July called on govt to release 42 people, most of them women, whom it said were arbitrarily detained for displaying Somalia's flag in June; authorities next day released most of them.

➡ **South Sudan Country marked tenth independence anniversary amid ongoing violence and delays in implementation of transitional agenda.** On tenth anniversary of South Sudan's independence, President Kiir 9 July lamented "lost decade" and warned against "ethnic and regional activism" but lauded "new spirit of dialogue" among civil war belligerents. Kiir 3 July replaced 35 MPs due to sit in Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA); govt 7 and 29 July postponed swearing-in of TNLA initially scheduled for 9 July, now expected for 2 Aug. Govt and factions of South Sudan Opposition Movements Alliance (SSOMA, coalition of non-signatory rebel groups) led by Paul Malong and Pagan Amum 15 July resumed talks in Italian capital Rome, 18 July agreed to incorporate Malong's and Amum's factions into ceasefire and transitional security arrangements monitoring body; also signed political roadmap scheduling three rounds of talks from Sept to Nov. However, attempts to restart peace talks between govt and SSOMA faction led by Thomas Cirillo, leader of rebel group National Salvation Front (NAS), remained stalled. Meanwhile, official body monitoring Sept 2018 peace deal implementation 22 July expressed "critical concern" over delays in setting up unified army, amid reports that soldiers keep abandoning cantonment and training sites over lack of food and medicine. Intercommunal violence persisted in centre, north and south. In Lakes state (centre), suspected armed youth from neighbouring Rumbek East county 13 July reportedly killed three people in separate attacks on Pulthib and Mayom-cuei villages, Yirol West county. In Warrap state (also centre), cattle raid in Tonj East county by suspected armed youth from Tonj North county 9 July left 14 dead. In Unity state (north), clashes between two ethnic Dinka Bek subgroups 13 July killed three in Mayiendit county. In Western Equatoria state (south), intercommunal violence and clashes between forces loyal to Kiir and those loyal to VP Riek Machar throughout month reportedly killed at least three and displaced over 4,000 in greater Tambura area. UN Mission in South Sudan 26 July said it was "deeply disturbed" by recent spate of extrajudicial executions of alleged criminals in Warrap and Lakes states that reportedly left at least 42 people dead since March.

➡ **Sudan Intercommunal violence left dozens killed in Darfur, violence persisted in al-Fashaga area along border with Ethiopia, and govt made some progress in implementation of Oct 2020 peace deal.** In West Darfur state, tribal clashes left over 20 people dead in Sirba locality 1-4 July and another 12 in Kereinik and Jebel Moon localities 2-5 July. In South Darfur state, unidentified gunmen 15-16 July killed three people in two separate attacks in Gereida locality. In North Darfur state, artillery shelling 17-18 July reportedly killed at least 17 in Sortony camp for displaced people, Kabkabiya locality. Alleged tribal violence also left at least four dead in Red Sea state's capital Port Sudan 10 July and another 13 in Qadir area of South Kordofan state next day, prompting Security and Defence Council 12 July to scale up security operations in both states. Meanwhile, authorities 5 July said long-delayed Transitional Legislative Council would hold its first session in August; Sovereign Council head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan same day issued decree to form long-awaited body in charge of supervising disarmament, demobilisation and integration into armed forces of rebel group signatories of Oct 2020 peace agreement, as well as ceasefire monitoring committees in Darfur. Hundreds of combatants affiliated with Minni Minnawi's Sudan Liberation Movement/Army faction 17 July deployed to North Darfur state to take part in joint forces aimed at protecting civilians following Dec 2020 pull-out of AU-UN peacekeeping mission UNAMID. Amid continued economic turmoil, international creditors 16 July cancelled \$14.1bn of Sudan's international debts and rescheduled another \$9.4bn. Meanwhile, tensions persisted with Ethiopia over disputed al-Fashaga border zone; army 11 July reportedly repelled cross-border attack by Ethiopian militia, number of casualties unknown; govt 20 July vowed to keep troops in border zone until area "regains its full security and stability"; Ethiopian militia 23 July reportedly abducted three Sudanese children, next day killed one Sudanese soldier. Tensions ran high between Sudan and Egypt on one side and Ethiopia on the other as Addis Ababa completed second filling of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (see Nile Waters).

➡ **Tanzania Authorities arrested main opposition party leader, prompting calls for protests.** Main opposition party Chadema 21 July said police and army officers overnight arrested its chairperson Freeman Mbowe alongside ten other party officials who had gathered in Mwanza city to discuss need for constitutional reforms; move follows 18 July arrest of dozens of Chadema members for holding public meeting without permission. Chadema immediately accused President Suluhu Hassan of prolonging late predecessor Magufuli's "dictatorship", with Chadema's former presidential candidate Tundu Lissu, who lives in exile in Europe, calling for "nationwide protests" and "international isolation" of Hassan's govt. Authorities 26 July charged Mbowe with terrorism-related crimes. Chadema 31 July called for protests on 5 Aug, announced it had filed legal challenge against prosecution of Mbowe, saying his legal rights were violated. Meanwhile, Hassan 16-17 July completed state visit to neighbouring Burundi at invitation of Burundian counterpart Ndayishimiye; both presidents agreed to implement infrastructure projects to facilitate movement of goods, services and people, strengthen bilateral ties and business relations.

➡ **Uganda Armed forces repelled attack by suspected Congolese rebels in north west, and President Museveni replaced top civil servants by close allies.** After assassination attempt against Transport Minister and former chief of defence forces Gen Katumba Wamala in June, police 1 July claimed attackers

had been trained in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)'s North Kivu province by armed group Allied Democratic Forces with alleged links to Islamic State (ISIS); eight suspects 15 July filed complaint against govt and deputy inspector general of police, claiming they were tortured while in police custody. In Zombo district (north west) at border with DRC, armed forces 16 July repelled attack by suspected Cooperation for the Development of Congo rebels; six assailants and one soldier killed. Following army and cabinet reshuffles in June, Museveni 15 July retired seven top civil servants and appointed several close allies to new positions, including his son-in-law Odrek Rwabwogo as presidential adviser for special duties. Meanwhile, govt 23 July signed deal with Russian company to install tracking devices on all public and private vehicles as part of anti-crime measures; opposition and rights activists immediately denounced plan as violation of individual rights and attempt by govt to watch over critics, while lawyer Hassan Male Mbirizi 26 July filed lawsuit against govt at High Court.

Southern Africa

➡ **Eswatini Tensions remained high in wake of anti-monarchy protests.** After authorities late June quashed days of protests against King Mswati III, Africa's last absolute monarch, UN Human Rights Office 6 July urged authorities to "fully adhere to human rights principles in restoring calm"; Local NGO reports late July said violence had left over 70 dead and 150 injured since late June. Southern Africa's regional bloc SADC 15-22 July deployed fact-finding mission to country; delegation met with civil society and church groups but not with main opposition force PUDEMO. King Mswati II 16 July appointed Cleopas Dlamini as new PM following death of predecessor Ambrose Dlamini in Dec 2020, called protests "satanic" in his first public address since June. Police same day fired tear gas and water cannon at anti-monarchy protesters who had gathered in Manzini city to denounce PM's appointment, reportedly leaving eight injured; right to democratically elect PM has been a core demand of protest movement. Authorities 24-25 July arrested pro-democracy legislators Bacede Mabuza and Mthandeni Dube on terrorism-related charges.

➡ **Mozambique Islamic State (ISIS) claimed several attacks in far north amid Rwandan offensives and arrival of Southern Africa regional forces to counter militants.** In far northern Cabo Delgado province, ISIS claimed several attacks for first time since siege of Palma town in March. Notably, ISIS 13 July claimed attack on Diaca town, Mocímboa da Praia district, which likely took place 2 July, said militants had repelled govt forces' advance on strategic Mueda-Mocímboa da Praia road; same day claimed killing soldier in Namacande district capital Muidumbe 12 July; 15 July said combatants had killed four civilians in Ncumbi village, Palma district, and clashed with govt forces on Palma-Mocímboa da Praia road in recent days; 29 July claimed six armed encounters with govt forces and self-defence militias in several districts 17-28 July, said several militia members killed. Suspected Islamist militants 2 and 18 July killed 13, mostly civilians, in Namande and Saba-Saba villages, both Muidumbe district; 15 July killed six civilians in Macomia district; and 17 July killed another five in Mitope village, Mocímboa da Praia district. In Nangade district, govt forces 13 July reportedly captured and executed 15 suspected militants attempting to cross into neighbouring Tanzania.

Rwanda 9 July started deployment of 1,000-strong joint army and police force to Cabo Delgado as part of bilateral agreement. Rwandan forces 20 July clashed with militants in Quionga village, Palma district; 23 July killed 26 militants in Mandela village, Muikumbe district; 24-25 July reportedly killed seven militants in Awasse town, Mocímboa da Praia district. Meanwhile, South African Special Forces 19 July arrived in Cabo Delgado's capital Pemba to pave way for deployment of Southern Africa regional block (SADC) Standby Force; South Africa's President Ramaphosa 23 July confirmed his country will send "up to" 1,495 troops as part of regional force. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process of former armed opposition movement Renamo forces continued, with 50 per cent threshold reached following demobilisation of 360 fighters in Tete province 11 July.

↓ **South Africa** **Most violent unrest since end of apartheid in 1991 killed over 300.** After former President Zuma 7 July began serving 15-month prison sentence for refusing to testify in corruption probe, riots next day erupted in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces, with mobs blocking major highways, looting shops and warehouses. Protesters 11 July marched through capital Johannesburg, with acts of vandalism reported. Rioters 13 July looted warehouses and supermarkets in port city of Durban, forcing country's largest refinery on city's outskirts to shut down temporarily, while roads to Durban's harbour – sub-Saharan Africa's largest – also closed, disrupting fuel and food deliveries as well as key exports. Army 13 July announced dispatch of 25,000 troops to provinces. President Ramaphosa 16 July said calm had been restored and unrest was "deliberate, coordinated and well-planned attack on our democracy"; also announced arrest of over 2,500 people for alleged involvement in violence. Govt 22 July said 337 people killed during unrest. Zuma 19 July sought further delay of corruption trial; High Court in Pietermaritzburg city next day granted request, adjourning proceedings by three weeks to 10-13 Aug.

↓ 🇿🇲* **Zambia** **Series of violent incidents pitting ruling party against opposition supporters heightened tensions in lead-up to 12 Aug polls; electoral violence could worsen.** Ahead of general elections scheduled for 12 Aug, climate grew increasingly tense amid reports of killings of political activists and violent clashes between supporters of incumbent President Edgar Lungu's Patriotic Front (PF) and opposition candidate Hakainde Hichilema's United Party for National Development (UPND). Police early July revealed investigation into Hichilema for allegedly spreading fake footage of violence against UPND supporters. Meanwhile, PF media director 22 July accused UPND of training 60,000 youths to cause violence on 10-11 Aug; UPND Sec-Gen Batuke Imenda same day denied claims. Despite official ban on political rallies to curb COVID-19 spread, reports revealed rival political parties clashed in different parts of Zambia throughout month. Notably, violence surged in Ikelenge district: as around 60 UPND supporters 23 July reportedly clashed with PF supporters, some UPND militants reportedly attacked and injured Victor Mwila, reporter of state-owned Zambia News and Information Services, who was photographing incident; authorities subsequently arrested 19 people, charging them with assault and damage to property; electoral commission 28 July banned UPND from campaigning in Ikelenge. Attackers suspected of affiliation with opposition party 30 July killed two PF supporters in Kanyama compound, Lusaka capital city; police subsequently arrested four suspects; police 13 July also revealed finding burnt body of Socialist Party candidate Stallon Chobe, who

had been vying for position of council chairperson for Chisamba district, in Kapiri Mposhi town.

➔ **Zimbabwe Legal battle over chief justice position continued as authorities sought to restrict space for NGOs.** Constitutional Court 16 July reserved judgment in case that challenges High Court ruling invalidating President Mnangagwa's five-year extension of Chief Justice Luke Malaba's term. Mnangagwa 25 July appointed Justice Mary Zimba-Dube as judge president, responsible for overseeing High Court; Zimba-Dube's predecessor was removed after justice minister accused him of assigning hostile judges to case in which govt was being sued. Harare High Court 14 July granted bail to Makomborero Haruzivishe, member of main opposition party faction led by Nelson Chamisa; Haruzivishe was sentenced to 14 months in prison in April for allegedly "inciting violence" and "resisting arrest". After ruling party ZANU-PF's Acting National Political Commissioner Patrick Chinamasa late June said party would not surrender its "unbreakable" bond with armed forces, Chamisa 4 July reproached ZANU-PF for treating military as party's armed wing in violation of constitution. UK govt 22 July imposed asset freeze and travel ban on businessman and presidential adviser Kudakwashe Tagwirei for alleged corruption; sanctions also apply to any entity Tagwirei owns or controls. After Harare provincial authorities 29 July said all NGOs that did not present credentials to his office by 30 June had to cease operations, two human rights NGOs 30 July filed High Court application seeking to overturn decision.

Sahel

➔ **Burkina Faso Thousands protested across country to denounce insecurity as jihadist attacks persisted in several regions.** Amid mounting pressure following Solhan massacre which left over 160 dead in early June, President Kaboré 1 July sacked defence and security ministers, assuming defence portfolio himself. Thousands 3-4 July protested in capital Ouagadougou and other cities across country against insecurity and to demand govt action. Meanwhile, violence persisted albeit at lower intensity in Sahel region. In Soum province, IED allegedly planted by jihadists 5 July killed two women and one child on Liki-Arbinda axis (Arbinda department). In Oudalan province, suspected Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) militants 5 July killed three people in Tin-Zalayanane village (Tin-Akof department). Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group to Support Islam and Muslims (JNIM) maintained attacks in North region, particularly Loroum province, notably killing four people and abducting two volunteers fighting alongside security forces (VDPs) in Nogo village (Titao department) 7 July; security forces and VDPs 13 July clashed with JNIM in Titao department, leaving two members of security forces and three VDPs wounded, and five VDPs missing. In Centre-North region, Sanmatenga province witnessed most violent incidents, including suspected JNIM attack on Niha-Mossi village (Pensa department) 10 July, which killed at least ten including seven VDPs. In East region, presumed JNIM militants 3 and 5 July killed three civilians and one VDP in Fada N'Gourma department, Gourma province. Military 26 July said troops had killed dozens of suspected jihadists in counter-insurgency operation in Kompienga province 19-25 July. Meanwhile, French Council of State 30 July cleared extradition of François Compaoré, brother of former President Blaise Compaoré, to Burkina Faso, where he is wanted in connection with 1998 murder of

journalist Norbert Zongo; François Compaoré's lawyers same day said he had appealed to European Court of Human Rights.

➡ **Mali Interim President Goïta survived apparent assassination attempt, while security situation remained fragile in north and centre.**

Armed individual 20 July reportedly attempted to stab Goïta in capital Bamako; authorities 21 July said they had opened probe into attack, 25 July said main suspect had died in custody; National Commission for Human Rights 26 July called for investigation into his death. Meanwhile, PM Choguel Maïga 8 July said govt would establish single election body ahead of presidential and legislative elections scheduled for Feb 2022; opposition politician Amadou Diallo and others immediately voiced concern that junta may use reform as pretext to prolong transition. Maïga 30 July presented interim govt's action plan, said he was mindful of "fixed timeline for the transition". Main signatories of 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement, rival armed groups Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) and Platform coalition 3-5 July gathered in Kidal city (north), vowed to accelerate agreement's implementation, coordinate and unify efforts to protect northern regions' populations. Security situation remained fragile in north and centre. In Timbuktu region (north), presumed al-Qaeda-linked Group to Support Islam and Muslims (JNIM)-affiliated Katiba Macina 4 July killed four soldiers in ambush near Diartou village (Niafunke district). In Mopti region (centre), suspected Katiba Macina militants 5 July attacked ethnic Dogon militia Dana Ambassador's position between Dourou and Yawa villages (Bandiagara district), killing six. In Ségou region (also centre), presumed Katiba Macina militants 3 July killed three ethnic Bambaras in Kourouma Koubé village, jeopardising local truce struck in April with Bambara "Donso" militiamen. In Koulikoro region (west), unidentified gunmen 17 July raided construction site, abducted three Chinese and two Mauritanian nationals. France 2 July announced resumption of joint military operations with Mali, suspended following Goïta's coup in May. During G5 Sahel summit, French President Macron 9 July detailed reconfiguration of French military presence in Sahel, said he would halve number of soldiers and close three military bases in Mali's north by early 2022. Civil society actors immediately expressed concern, citing risk of jihadist takeover of key towns. UN Sec-Gen Guterres 15 July called on Security Council to increase UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)'s authorised strength by 2,069.

➡ **Niger Niger emerged as France's new privileged security partner in Sahel region; jihadist violence continued unabated in south west.**

During G5 Sahel virtual summit, French President Macron 9 July detailed reconfiguration of French military presence in Sahel region (see Mali), said international Takuba Task Force's role will be enhanced and its command centre transferred from Mali to Niger; announcement, as well as Macron and Nigerien President Bazoum's post-summit joint press conference in France's capital Paris, signal greater role for Niger in regional security architecture. Bazoum same day criticised military junta's takeover in Mali, prompting Bamako to immediately blame him for going against "spirit of friendship" traditionally uniting both countries. Bazoum 12-13 July visited Algeria, secured agreement for enhanced security cooperation; deal may entail military assistance from Algeria including air support. Meanwhile, in Tillabery region (south west), suspected Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) combatants 11 July stormed Tchoma Bangou village, Ouallam department; military reportedly repelled attack, killing at least 40 militants including senior ISGS

commander Malam Younoussa; four soldiers and five civilians also killed. Suspected jihadists 25 and 28 July killed 33 civilians in two villages of Banibangou area, Ouallam department, and 31 July ambushed military supply mission in Torodi area, Say department, leaving 15 killed and six missing. In neighbouring Tahoua region's Tillia department, suspected ISGS militants 4 July killed civilian in Inizdan village, and ethnic Tuareg militia 6 July abducted two ethnic Fulani individuals between internally displaced person (IDP) sites of Telemces and Assagaygay. Bazoum 2 July toured Diffa region (south east) to bolster support for his plan to relocate 130,000 IDPs, most of whom have fled region in recent years due to repeated jihadist attacks; Local authorities 30 July said over 26,000 people already returned to their hometown. Niamey 9 July said it had reached agreement with Nigeria's Borno state to repatriate 130,000 Nigerian nationals currently living in Diffa by year's end.

West Africa

📌 **Côte d'Ivoire** **President Ouattara met with former President Gbagbo in strong symbolic step toward national reconciliation.** Following Gbagbo's return from ten-year exile in June, Ouattara and Gbagbo 27 July met in economic capital Abidjan for first time since 2010-2011 post-electoral violence that left over 3,000 dead; Ouattara, who has aimed to ease political tensions following his controversial re-election in 2020, said crisis was "behind" and called for "peace"; Gbagbo said he had urged Ouattara to continue reconciliation efforts by freeing his followers imprisoned since 2010-2011 violence. Earlier in month, prospects for reconciliation appeared to falter. Gbagbo 11 July visited former political rival, former President Bédié, in his hometown of Daoukro (centre) in "act of reconciliation and acknowledgment", said Ouattara's third term was unconstitutional; Bédié said meeting was "historic turning point" and called on govt to initiate "true national reconciliation project". National Assembly Deputy Speaker and ruling party Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace Executive Secretary Adama Bictogo next day dismissed Bédié's call, saying Côte d'Ivoire was "not in need of any national dialogue", and decried Bédié and Gbagbo's rapprochement as "deceitful alliance of two men of the past".

➡ **Guinea** **Authorities faced pressure to continue releasing political prisoners, and opposition remained divided.** After authorities in past two months released dozens of individuals arrested around Oct 2020 presidential election, National Assembly Speaker Amadou Damaro Camara 5 July exhorted President Condé to grant more presidential pardons; NGO Amnesty International 8 July welcomed recent release of 40 individuals who had been detained in election period, said 57 others including four prominent leaders of main opposition party Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG) remained incarcerated; all four granted parole 16 July. UFDG leadership 10 July announced resumption of anti-Condé demonstrations in Aug; party remains divided over strategy toward Condé, with several incarcerated leaders in favour of conciliatory approach while remaining segment of party's leadership, including its President Cellou Dalein Diallo, maintains anti-dialogue stance.

➔ **Nigeria Violence continued unabated in north west, while jihadist and separatist attacks ebbed in north east and south east respectively.**

Armed group violence left dozens dead and scores kidnapped in north west, notably in Zamfara state: 49 killed in Maradun area 8 July; 20 farmers kidnapped in Bakura area 16 July; 150 villagers kidnapped in Shinkafi area 16-17 July; and at least 13 police killed in Bungudu area 18 July. Air force Alpha jet same day crashed after coming “under intense enemy fire” in Zamfara, leaving no casualties; unprecedented incident confirms armed groups acquiring anti-aircraft capabilities. In Katsina state, armed group 4-5 July killed at least 20 in three villages in Batsari area. In Kaduna state, gunmen 5 July abducted 121 students near state capital; armed groups 8-13 July killed 33 in Zangon Kataf area. North east saw lull in Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) attacks in Borno state as group reportedly reshuffled its leadership as directed by Islamic State (ISIS); ISWAP notably reinstated Abbah Gana as leader of so-called Islamic Caliphate of Africa straddling Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon. Suspected Boko Haram (BH) militants 7 July killed at least 18 civilians in neighbouring Adamawa state. Security forces 16-28 July reportedly killed 16 ISWAP or BH combatants, arrested 29, and rescued 40 civilians in north east. Violence between govt forces and separatist group Indigenous People of Biafra and its armed wing Eastern Security Network ebbed in south east; at least ten policemen however killed in five states throughout month. In south west, state security forces 1 July raided home of ethnic Yoruba separatist agitator, Sunday Igboho, killed two aides and arrested 13, and declared him “wanted”; Igboho arrested in Benin 19 July. Meanwhile, gunmen 15 July killed army Major General Hassan Ahmed just outside Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; 18 July killed at least ten including two humanitarian workers in Guma area, Benue state; residents blamed attack on herders. Court 28 July acquitted Ibrahim Zakzaky, leader of outlawed Shiite group Islamic Movement in Nigeria, of all eight criminal charges against him; Zakzaky had been detained since 2015.