

# Africa

---

## Central Africa

---

➔ **Burundi** Govt continued crackdown on opposition, targeting in particular members of opposition party National Congress for Freedom (CNL) led by Agathon Rwasa. Police 3 May arrested six CNL members including local leader in Kirundo, Kirundo province; 8 May arrested and reportedly assaulted three CNL youth members in Muha commune of capital Bujumbura; same day arrested politician from FRODEBU opposition party in Butihinda, Muyinga province; 11 May arrested three CNL members in Bugarama, Rumonge province; 15 May arrested four CNL members in Rumonge, Rumonge province. Imbonerakure youth wing of ruling party CNDD-FDD 11 May forced local population including CNL members to take part in CNDD-FDD meeting in Nyamurenza, Ngozi province and beat 25 relatives of CNL members who refused. Internal and overseas-based opposition groups met in Ugandan capital, Kampala 3-5 May and discussed whether to take part in 2020 elections, but reached no conclusion; opposition parties Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (MSD) and FRODEBU notably absent. For first time, Tanzanian police 15 May arrested two Burundian National Intelligence Service (SNR) agents in Burundian refugee camp at Nduta, Tanzania. Southern Africa Development Community 27 May said it had rejected Burundi's application to join regional bloc for the second time due to country's unresolved democratic process.

➔ **Cameroon** Anglophone separatists continued to clash with security forces in Anglophone areas (Northwest and Southwest regions) and Boko Haram (BH) factions continued attacks in Far North. In Northwest region, violence reportedly left two soldiers, seventeen Anglophone separatists and three civilians dead 15-27 May. On National Day 20 May, separatists and two opposition parties boycotted processions in Anglophone areas; in Southwest region, fighting between separatists and military in Muyuka, Ndian department 20 May left four-month-old baby dead. In Far North, BH militants launched at least seven attacks on civilians and security forces mostly in Logone-et-Chari department, but also Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava, killing three soldiers and seven civilians 11-27 May; notably grenade explosion attributed to BH in Far North region capital, Maroua 19 May left two dead. Fighting over land in Mokolo, Mayo Tsanaga 7 May left six dead. Opposition leader Maurice Kamto, imprisoned since Jan, 6 May called for peaceful demonstrations across country 1 and 8 June; authorities 1 June arrested several hundred protesters including vice president of Kamto's party Movement for the Renaissance of Cameroon (MRC). UN Security Council 13 May held first meeting on humanitarian crisis in Cameroon; participants also addressed Anglophone crisis. U.S. Assistant Sec State for African Affairs 16 May expressed discontent with President Biya's management of crisis and said economic sanctions were possible. In Paris (France), thousands of Cameroonians 18 May protested to demand govt free Kamto and denounce killings in Anglophone regions and France's President Emmanuel Macron's support to Biya.

↓ **Central African Republic** Attacks on civilians spiked in north west leaving scores killed, as parties made some progress in implementing Feb peace agreement.

In north west, fighters of Return, Restitution and Rehabilitation (3R) armed group 10-12 May killed two civilians in Ouham-Pendé prefecture. In most deadly attacks since Feb peace agreement, 3R 21 May attacked four villages in Ouham-Pendé prefecture leaving 54 dead. Interior minister 31 May said 3R pledged to disarm within two weeks. Unidentified assailants 21 May killed two civilians in Batangafo, Ouham prefecture. In centre, members of rebel group Patriotic Movement for the Central African Republic (MPC) 5 May reportedly killed two civilians in Yagarandji, Nana-Grébizi prefecture. In south east, members of rebel group Union for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC) 22 May abducted seven people in Obo, Haut-Mbomou prefecture. In south west, beheaded body of French-Spanish nun found in Nola, Sangha-Mbaere prefecture 20 May. Govt made some progress in redeployment of army to provinces begun some four months ago. UN mission (MINUSCA) 5 May helped deploy around 40 troops to Kaga-Bandoro in north, but MPC leader objected, forcing army units to leave town hours later; 106 troops deployed to Kaga-Bandoro 18 May with MINUSCA support. President Touadéra 15 May launched executive implementation committee tasked with implementing Feb peace agreement. Consultative committee on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) 17 May said ten of fourteen armed groups had submitted lists of combatants to be reintegrated into civilian life; reintegration to start in June with rebels in west.

↓ **Chad** Intercommunal violence intensified in east leaving at least 34 people dead, Boko Haram (BH) continued attacks in west and govt took steps to avert protests over high cost of living. In east, Arab nomadic herders and ethnic Ouaddaï sedentary farmers clashed: Arab herders 16 May attacked Ouaddaï farmers in Katafa, leaving nine Ouaddaï and three Arabs dead; herders raided and burned villages of Amkaroka, Amsabarna and Amsiriye in Dar Sila province 19-20 May, leaving 22 people dead from both sides. In Lake Chad province in west, BH militants 16 May attacked Ceilia village, killing thirteen people. BH militants 25 May attacked army base in Ngouboua, leaving 23 BH combatants and at least one soldier dead; convoy travelling to scene of attack same day detonated mine, killing four soldiers and one journalist. One month after protests over high cost of living led to ouster of Sudanese President al-Bashir, Chadian govt 10 May removed import taxes on staple foods including rice, flour, cooking oil and dates to reduce prices and calm growing anger over high cost of living. Chair of National Framework for Political Dialogue (CNDP) Mahamat Zene Bada 13 May informed diplomats that legislative elections, initially scheduled for May 2019, would take place later this year without specifying exact date.

➔ **DR Congo** President Tshisekedi took further steps to open political space and improve regional and international relations, but insecurity persisted, especially in east. Moïse Katumbi, coordinator of opposition platform Lamuka and former Katanga governor, 20 May returned from three-year exile after court overturned conviction and prosecutors dropped investigation against him initiated by govt of former President Kabila. Ne Muanda Nsemi, leader of politico-religious movement Bundu Dia Mayala whom Kabila govt imprisoned but who escaped and disappeared in 2017, reappeared in Kinshasa 6 May, arrested 9 May but released next day at Tshisekedi's request. Body of Tshisekedi's father Etienne, opposition leader who died in Belgium in Feb 2017, repatriated 30 May, move previously blocked by Kabila. After months of negotiations between Tshisekedi and Kabila camps, Tshisekedi 20 May appointed Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba, member of Kabila's party, as PM. Martin

Fayulu, Lamuka's losing presidential candidate, continued to contest results and 15 May threatened to mobilise protests if Tshisekedi did not resign within weeks. Kabila's Common Front for Congo (FCC) coalition took four of five posts in North Kivu province's parliamentary bureau 14 May and won with significant margins in delayed senatorial elections in North Kivu and Mai-Ndombe provinces 18 May; FCC now has 86 of 109 senate seats. Tshisekedi continued to strengthen relations with regional and international partners: notably he received Rwandan army chief 10 May; Belgian political and security delegation 12 May; Ethiopian President Sahle-Work 18 May; and French FM 20 May, who promised €300mn for education, health and security sectors. In North Kivu, clashes between army and militia Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) caused displacement in Rutshuru territory, 2 May left eight dead; in Masisi territory, Nduma Defence of Congo-Renovated (NDC-R) militia continued to take ground from rival groups Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (APCLS) and Force for the Defence of Human Rights/Nyatara; in Beni territory, attack attributed to Allied Democratic Forces militia 17 May left at least five civilians and one soldier dead. In Ituri province, assailants attacked market on Lake Albert killing nineteen.

➔ **Republic of Congo** President Sassou-Nguesso met Russian President Putin in Moscow 23 May and signed agreement to strengthen military cooperation including Russian training of Congolese troops and inspection of previously delivered Russian-made military equipment.

➔ **Rwanda** Relations between Rwanda and Uganda continued to fray. Rwandan soldiers 24 May crossed into Uganda in pursuit of suspected smuggler, and shot dead one Rwandan and one Ugandan. Ugandan authorities 28 May arrested two Rwandans for allegedly entering country to gather intelligence.

---

## Horn of Africa

---

➔ **Eritrea** Govt early May increased security forces in capital Asmara without giving explanation and temporarily shut down Facebook and messaging apps. U.S. removed Eritrea from updated list of countries not cooperating with its counter-terrorism efforts 29 May.

➔ **Ethiopia** Intercommunal fighting continued, in north west and north east, and federal authorities sought to bring former officials to justice. In north west, after violence against ethnic Amhara in Metekel zone, Benishangul-Gumuz region 26-28 April left eighteen dead, allegedly retaliatory attacks against ethnic Gumuz in Agi Agew zone of neighbouring Amhara region 3 May reportedly caused over 200 deaths. Ministry of Peace said it would investigate violence. In north east, unidentified assailants reportedly killed eleven ethnic Somalis in Siti zone, Somali region 3 May; amid allegations that state police from neighbouring Afar region were responsible, Somali regional state withdrew from 2014 agreement with Afar region that allows latter to administer three disputed border areas. In south, fatal violence reported in Oromia region between security forces and rebel group Oromo Liberation Front, and ethnic Wolayta 17 May rallied in Sodo pressing claim for their own regional state. Executive Committee of ruling coalition Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) 16 May recognised danger of rising ethnic nationalism.

Federal Attorney-General 7 May charged in absentia former head of National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) Getachew Assefa and 25 other NISS officials on 46 counts of human rights violations including torture, forced confessions, rape, and arbitrary detention; Tigray regional govt reportedly continued to shield from arrest Getachew, adviser to Tigray region president and senior official in Tigray People's Liberation Front, one of four parties in ruling EPRDF coalition. Authorities in Somalia late May arrested and deported to Ethiopia Hassan Ismail Ibrahim, former commander of Jijiga Central Prison in Ethiopia's Somali region where he is accused of overseeing serious human rights violations. New party, Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice Party, created in Addis Ababa 9-10 May uniting seven opposition groups; veteran opposition figure Berhanu Nega elected leader.

➡ **Kenya** Al-Shabaab kept up attacks in north east and east, ethnic violence continued in north, and relations between Kenya and Somalia remained sour. In north east, Al-Shabaab fighters 4 May raided Hareri Hosle village in Mandera county, near border with Somalia, one police reservist injured in fire; Al-Shabaab ambush on patrol in Gumarey area, Wajir county 7 May left three officers injured. In east, suspected Al-Shabaab 5 May attacked camp of special police unit in Ishakani, Lamu county, nobody hurt. Police 15 May issued security alert of possible Al-Shabaab attacks during Ramadan (early May to early June) and announced extra security measures. In north, ethnic Borana attacked ethnic Gabra killing eleven in Marsabit county near Ethiopian border 6 May. Five people killed in two subsequent attacks involving same ethnic groups in Boru Haro and Shaba Manyatta Jillo, Marsabit county 23 and 24 May. Kenya 10 May suspended direct flights between Somali capital Mogadishu and Kenyan capital Nairobi until at least 9 Aug; flights are expected to land in Wajir in northern Kenya for security checks before proceeding to Nairobi. Kenyan authorities at Nairobi airport denied entry to three Somali officials travelling on diplomatic passports 20 May saying that after change in rules Somalis needed to obtain visa at Kenyan mission in Mogadishu.

⬇️ 🇸🇴 **Somalia** Relations between federal govt and federal member states deteriorated sharply raising risk of further instability in June, and Al-Shabaab stepped up attacks in capital Mogadishu and rural areas. President Farmajo and PM Khayre held talks with heads of federal member states in Garowe, Puntland 5-9 May, but failed to agree on way forward on critical issues including reform of electoral law and management of oil and gas. Puntland 27 May said it would stop cooperating with federal govt on matters of constitutional review, federal elections and national security and Galmudug state 30 May severed ties with federal govt. Govt 13 May cancelled ongoing national high school exams citing discovery of cheating racket, prompting thousands of students to protest in capital. In Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab 12 May detonated car bomb, killing Turkish citizen; suicide car bombing near president's residence killed four civilians 14 May; car bombing at security checkpoint 22 May killed at least nine including former FM Hussein Elabe Fahiye. In Middle Shabelle region in south, Al-Shabaab militants 6 May ambushed security forces killing four and clashes between security forces and Al-Shabaab militants 11 May left fifteen militants dead. Al-Shabaab 14 May kidnapped two local aid workers in Gedo region, Jubaland state; 16 May clashed with Somali forces in Gedo region, leaving at least seven militants and two soldiers dead. Fighting between Al-Shabaab and security forces in Middle Shabelle region 28 May left five militants dead. Senior Al-Shabaab leader Sidow Abdi Gedi 18 May contacted govt forces in Kismayo, Jubaland

requesting to surrender. U.S. claimed its airstrikes killed eleven Al-Shabaab militants and nineteen Islamic State (ISIS)-Somalia militants 5-26 May. Relations between Somalia and Kenya continued to sour following flare-up over disputed maritime border; Kenya 10 May suspended direct flights between Mogadishu and Kenyan capital Nairobi until 9 Aug and 20 May denied entry to three Somali govt officials who travelled to Kenya on diplomatic passports. UN Sec-Gen Guterres 30 May appointed U.S. diplomat James Swan as new UN envoy to Somalia. UN Security Council 31 May renewed for one year mandate of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

➡ **Somaliland** President Bihi called for resumption of Somaliland-Somalia talks on Independence Day 18 May. Somaliland and Puntland forces clashed in disputed Sanaag region 21 May, leaving unconfirmed number of soldiers dead.

➡ **South Sudan** Parties to Sept 2018 peace agreement agreed to six-month extension of pre-transitional period to Nov, allowing more time to carry out preliminary reforms before forming transitional govt. Parties convened in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa 2-3 May under auspices of regional bloc Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and agreed on six-month extension, as requested by main rebel leader Riek Machar in April. President Kiir 8 May publicly expressed doubt that parties would be able to form unity govt within six months, suggesting necessary security reforms would take one year. Security forces 10 May deployed in large numbers in capital Juba to prevent anti-govt protests that youth called for 16 May. Kiir 15 May warned that any attempt to seize power would be met with “violent resistance”; protests did not materialise. In south west, fighting reportedly resumed between govt forces and rebel group National Salvation Front (NAS) led by Thomas Cirillo in Yei River state 26-27 May. UN Security Council 30 May renewed for one year sanctions on govt officials and militia groups including arms embargo; govt described renewal as “anti-peace”.

⬇️ 🇸🇩\* **Sudan** Tensions rose as military council continued to resist opposition demands for civilian leadership and security forces reportedly attacked protesters, raising risk of more intense clashes in June. After talks between Transitional Military Council (TMC) and opposition coalition Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) were suspended late April, security forces fired gunshots and tear gas to disperse protesters in Nyala, South Darfur 4 May. TMC 7 May said it wanted Sharia law to guide legislation during transition. FFC 12 May called for civilian-headed transitional structure and escalation of protests; protesters expanded checkpoints outside army HQ in capital Khartoum, site of sit-in protest. Armed actors wearing uniforms of paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) 13 May opened fire on protesters in Khartoum, reportedly killing five; TMC and RSF denied responsibility. Talks resumed same day and by 15 May two sides agreed that transitional period before elections would last three years and agreed on duties of sovereign, executive and legislative councils, but failed to agree on composition and control of sovereign council. Security forces in RSF uniforms again shot at protesters 15 May; TMC head General Abdel-Fattah Burhan suspended talks until protesters removed barricades around sit-in. Talks resumed 19 May but made no breakthrough, and FFC called for two-day general strike. Thousands of public and private sector workers heeded call 28-29 May; in solidarity with protesters, workers at several key institutions including central bank, Port Sudan and oil ministry refused to work and flights out

of Khartoum's main airport were suspended 28 May. Tens of thousands protested in Khartoum 30 May and military called protesters' sit-in a threat to stability. Egypt, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia continued to give TMC strong support: General Burhan visited Cairo 25 May and Abu Dhabi 26 May and his deputy General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, RSF head, met Saudi Crown Prince in Jeddah 24 May.

➔ **Tanzania** Abduction of well-known opposition activist fuelled concerns for shrinking political space. Unidentified gunmen 4 May abducted Mdude Nyagali, high-profile member of main opposition party Chadema; Chadema 5 May accused security forces of kidnap, authorities dismissed allegation. Villagers 8 May found Mdude Nyagali in bush in Mbeya region in south west, he was unconscious and showing signs of torture. In capital Dodoma, authorities early May detained for one night Chadema MP Paschal Haonga after he reported Nyagali's abduction. Group of 38 international NGOs and regional organisations 13 May denounced deterioration of human rights in early 2019, called for action at forthcoming UN Human Rights Council 24 June-12 July.

➔ **Uganda** Relations between Uganda and Rwanda continued to fray. Rwandan soldiers 24 May crossed south west border into Uganda in pursuit of suspected smuggler, and shot dead one Rwandan and one Ugandan. Ugandan authorities 28 May arrested two Rwandans for allegedly entering country to gather intelligence. Govt 9 May said it planned to evict remaining residents of Apaa region, which govt seeks to turn into game reserve despite resistance by bordering Amuru and Adjumani districts. Following protests, President Museveni appointed new committee to seek solution to boundary dispute which has periodically erupted in violence. Opposition politicians Robert Kyagulanyi, known as Bobi Wine, and Kizza Besigye 8 May pledged concerted action ahead of 2021 polls. Zimbabwean authorities 25 May temporarily detained Bobi Wine at Harare airport when he visited to attend opposition congress.

---

## Southern Africa

---

➔ **Angola** Armed separatist movement Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) early May said Angolan soldiers had deployed several times in western DR Congo late April claiming to be looking for FLEC militants; FLEC denied presence of any of its militants in Congo.

➔ **Madagascar** Legislative elections held peacefully 27 May; results expected mid-June.

➔ **Malawi** President Mutharika was re-elected 27 May to second five-year term amid allegations of electoral fraud. Following allegations of vote-rigging in 21 May presidential elections, main opposition party Malawi Congress Party (MCP) 25 May obtained High Court injunction to delay announcement of final results; High Court 27 May lifted injunction and electoral commission same day announced results. Runner-up opposition candidate Lazarus Chakwera 31 May petitioned High Court to nullify results and called for protests; United Transformation Movement (UTM) leader and former VP Saulos Chilima same day also filed petition to have results annulled.

➔ **Mozambique** Suspected Islamist militants continued attacks in Cabo Delgado province in far north, disrupting voter registration for Oct general elections and prompting locals to hunt down suspected militants. Militants 3 May attacked voter registration post in Nacate, Macomia district, killing six people, vandalising equipment and burning several houses. Militants 5 May attacked Minhanha in Meluco district, killing three people and burning some 100 houses, leading to closure of five of 38 registration posts in Meluco. Militants 17 May attacked Ngalonga in Nangade district, burning 113 houses and disrupting registration. Villagers in Macomia district 4-5 May reportedly hunted down group of suspected militants, killing four. MPs from ruling Frelimo party 16 May demanded former armed opposition movement Renamo demobilise and disarm before Oct elections. In reversal of South African court's April ruling, South African justice minister 21 May ruled that former Mozambican Finance Minister Manuel Chang would be extradited to Mozambique instead of U.S., where he is wanted for alleged involvement in Mozambique govt's undisclosed \$2bn loan that U.S. says was fraudulent.

➔ **Zimbabwe** Amid economic crisis, govt continued attempts to initiate political dialogue. Main opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) 5 May said it was ready to engage in dialogue with govt if process was credible, calling for neutral external mediator. President Mnangagwa 17 May launched Political Actors Dialogue at ceremony in capital Harare, in which MDC refused to take part; at launch, South African ambassador urged govt to look for external mediator. High court 8 May declared Nelson Chamisa's position as MDC president illegitimate, ordering party to convene congress to choose new leader within one month; MDC appealed decision and elected Chamisa as permanent leader at pre-planned party congress in Gweru 24-26 May. Security forces at Harare airport 25 May temporarily detained Ugandan opposition leader Robert Kyagulanyi, known as Bobi Wine, and sec gen of Kenyan opposition Orange Democratic Movement, both visiting country to attend MDC congress. Govt 20-27 May arrested seven Zimbabwean activists at Harare airport after they attended workshop in Maldives on non-violent protest tactics and accused them of plotting to overthrow Mnangagwa. As economic situation continued to deteriorate, govt 21 May announced around 46% increase in fuel prices, raising concerns of future unrest.

---

## West Africa

---

↓ ●\* **Benin** After 28 April parliamentary elections from which govt banned opposition parties, security forces clashed with opposition protesters early May, raising risk of more intense clashes in June. In economic capital Cotonou, military 1 May deployed in Cadjéhoun district to break up protesters' barricades. Next day security forces twice stormed residence of opposition leader and former President Boni Yayi, reportedly shooting at crowd. Opposition leaders visited Boni Yayi 4 May and in joint statement called for military's withdrawal from Cadjéhoun, return of bodies to families and stop to arrests. Opposition 10 May said at least seven killed in violence. 83 MPs – all from factions supporting President Talon – took office 16 May amid heightened security; opposition refused to recognise parliament. Talon 20 May defended electoral process and reform of party system, accusing opposition of “lack of wisdom”; opposition 22 May rejected govt's offer of dialogue and called for new vote. In north near border with Burkina Faso, suspected jihadists 4 May kidnapped

two French tourists and killed guide; French military 10 May said it had freed both captives in operation in Burkina Faso.

➡ **Burkina Faso** Jihadist attacks, intercommunal violence and banditry continued especially in north and east, as growing number of attacks against Christians raised fears they would stir inter-religious tensions. Unidentified gunmen 12 May attacked church in Dablo in Centre-North region, killing six including priest; suspected jihadists 13 May attacked Catholic Christians in procession between villages of Singa and Kayon in Centre-North region, killing four civilians; 26 May attacked church in Touffé in North region, four killed. Unidentified assailants 13 May abducted and killed imam and his son in Seno, Sahel region in north. Army vehicle ambushed 23 May near Wamou forest in east, one forest warden killed. Health worker abducted 6 May in Nafo in Centre-East, released next day. French military carried out operation in north with support of Burkinabè and Beninese forces 10 May freeing four abductees, including two French tourists kidnapped in northern Benin 1 May, reportedly by Islamist group Ansarul Islam; two French soldiers killed during operation. President Kaboré early May replaced governors of East, North, Centre-North, Sahel and Centre-South regions. Army 11 May launched Operation Ndoufou to counter spread of militant groups in Sahel, Centre-North and North regions. Former general and PM under Michel Kafando's transitional govt Yacouba Isaac Zida early May said he would come back from exile and run for office in 2020 presidential elections.

➡ **Côte d'Ivoire** Parties and coalitions continued efforts to strengthen positions ahead of 2020 presidential elections and ethnic violence flared in centre. Thirteen MPs from ruling coalition Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP) 8 May launched Synergie 2020 movement to support President Ouattara's candidacy, which next day started tour in Hambol region in north, where former National Assembly Speaker and now opposition leader Guillaume Soro recently toured. RHDP continued to poach Soro's supporters and those of opposition Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI)'s leader Henri Konan Bédié. PDCI delegation mandated by Bédié 8 May met former President Gbagbo – on conditional release from International Criminal Court (ICC) – in Brussels (Belgium) to discuss joint action for “return of a lasting peace in Côte d'Ivoire”, recognising Gbagbo's leading role in party he founded Popular Ivorian Front (FPI) and of which he has been trying to regain control; Gbagbo reportedly agreed in principle to join Bédié's opposition platform. In response, FPI's legally-recognised President Pascal Affi N'Guessan 8 May said he was party's one and only president. Indigenous (Baoulé) and non-indigenous (Malinké) populations 16 May clashed in town of Beoumi in centre allegedly after altercation between Malinké taxi driver and Baoulé motorbike taxi driver, eleven reportedly killed and more than 100 injured.

➡ **Gambia** Security forces 10 May dispersed demonstration in capital Banjul against alleged attempts by President Barrow and his allies to retract election promise he made in 2016 to step down after 36 months in office. Govt 11 May said fifteen demonstrators had been charged as protest lacked authorisation. Court martial 27 May sentenced seven former soldiers to nine years in jail and another to three years for plotting to overthrow Barrow in 2017 with help of his ousted predecessor Jammeh.



➔ **Guinea** Ahead of 2020 presidential elections, presidential camp's project to amend constitution and enable President Condé to run for third term faced growing opposition, and authorities along with Condé supporters upped violent repression of opposition. Let's Save Guinea movement created 10 May to increase youth and women's participation in decision-making bodies and fight against constitutional reform enabling third term. Members of National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC) – coalition launched in April by leading opposition and civil society figures to oppose constitutional reform – demonstrated in Kindia in west 4 May during President Condé's visit, seven arrested. Court in Kindia 7 May sentenced them to three months' in prison for "obstructing freedom to demonstrate" and "disturbing public order"; Appeal Court of Conakry acquitted them 13 May. Supporters of presidential party and opposition reportedly clashed in Kouroussa 3 May. Women and youth 9 May blocked traffic in Conakry's Matam neighbourhood to protest power cuts, lack of drinking water and Condé's possible third term. During general assembly 18 May, ruling party Rally for the Guinean People (RPG) confirmed project to draft new constitution and submit it to referendum.

➔ ●\* **Guinea-Bissau** After ruling party won 10 March legislative elections, tensions persisted as President Vaz resisted pressure, including protests organised by ruling party, to name PM to form new govt; further protests could face violent repression in coming weeks especially around end of Vaz's term 23 June. Ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and opposition continued to contest appointment of two vice presidents of parliament, which Vaz made a precondition for him to name new PM and cabinet. In capital Bissau, thousands of PAIGC supporters protested 14, 22 and 25 May calling on Vaz to name party leader Domingos Simoes Pereira as PM. Supreme court 15 May rejected appeal by two opposition parties allied to Vaz, Movement for a Democratic Alternative G-15 (MADEM G-15) and Party for Social Renewal (PRS), against PAIGC's alleged attempts to block their nominees for first and second vice presidents of parliament, opening way for nomination of parliament's bureau and govt. PAIGC leader Pereira 30 May insisted President Vaz nominate PM before end of his presidential term 23 June. P5 group that comprises African Union, Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, ECOWAS, EU and UN 27 May called for immediate nomination of PM and formation of govt. Public and utilities sector workers 22 May started new three-day strike over unpaid wages and poor working conditions.

➔ **Liberia** Coalition of opposition parties Council of Patriots called for protest 7 June to demand that President Weah "resign or find a solution to the appalling economic situation". Weah 14 May met with Council of Patriots' leaders, no compromise reached. UN envoy for West Africa Mohamed Ibn Chambas visited capital Monrovia 24-25 May to try to mediate.

➔ **Mali** Appointment of new broad-based govt divided opposition, while violence continued in centre and north. After consultations with political and religious leaders and civil society, PM Cissé 5 May formed 38-member cabinet, including three opposition members. But major opposition parties Union for the Republic and Democracy (URD) and African Solidarity for Democracy and Independence (SADI) refused to join, citing lack of agreement over power-sharing. Railway workers 13 May ended strike after govt agreed to pay wage arrears. Teachers' union 20 May ended five-month strike after govt agreed to satisfy eight of ten demands. New govt kick-

started discussions with several parties over implementation of 2015 peace agreement, continuation of political dialogue and organisation of legislative elections. Insecurity persisted in centre, particularly Gourma area. Suspected jihadists staged ambush near Mondoro 11 May, eighteen reportedly killed, mostly civilians. Suspected jihadists ambushed and killed four soldiers in Diafarabé, Mopti region 16 May. UN mission (MINUSMA)'s 3 May report on Ogossagou massacre that killed at least 160 Fulanis in March pointed to responsibility of Dozos (Dogon militants). Violence also continued in north. Ex-rebel Coalition of Azawad Movements and former ally Movement for the Salvation of Azawad clashed several times 3-12 May in Talataye, Ménaka region over control of districts and key trafficking routes, death toll unknown. MINUSMA vehicle hit explosive device near Tessalit, Kidal region 18 May, three Chadian peacekeepers injured. Unidentified assailants 18 May killed Nigerian peacekeeper in Timbuktu city.

↓ **Niger** Suspected jihadists ramped up attacks in Tillabery region in west bordering Mali and Burkina Faso, killing dozens of soldiers, and insecurity persisted in Diffa region in south east. In Tillabery region, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara claimed attacks against high security prison at Koutoukale in which national guard officer killed and against church at Dolbel both 13 May; same day a hundred militants reportedly ambushed security forces in Baley Beri area as they pursued perpetrators of attacks, killing at least 28 soldiers. Also in Tillabery, explosive device killed six civilians near Inates 3 May. UN and NGO Doctors Without Borders (MSF) early May suspended humanitarian operations in parts of Tillabery and Diffa regions after several incidents: militants reportedly linked to Boko Haram attacked MSF office in Maine Soroa, Diffa region night of 25-26 April; in Tillabery region armed assailants 2 May stole two MSF vehicles and unidentified individuals 7 May stole two vehicles from refugee camp of Tabarey Barey. General Salou Djibo, who led 2010 coup and presided over peaceful transition, mid-May requested and was granted his retirement, sparking speculations that he may run for president in 2021.

➡ **Nigeria** Serious security challenges persisted including Boko Haram (BH) insurgency in north east, bandit violence in north west, and herder-farmer tensions in north central, which altogether killed over 200. In north east, army 10 May reported it killed at least seven BH militants in Gulwa area, Borno state; air force reported strikes killed scores of insurgents. BH continued attacks on civilians, killing at least 31 mainly in Borno state but also Adamawa 7-27 May. Insurgents, mostly from BH faction Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), also continued to target military: notably militants killed fifteen soldiers at base in Magumeri area, Borno state 3 May; Islamic State (ISIS) 11 May said ISWAP killed eleven soldiers in Gajiganna, Borno state 10 May, army denied. ISWAP 20 May attacked base in Gubio, killing at least three soldiers; ISIS 22 May said twenty soldiers killed. In north west, security forces stepped up ground and air operations against bandits, including air strikes on Kamuku forest, Kaduna state 10 May and Doumbourou forest, Zamfara state 25 May, killing scores. But bandits continued attacks in Zamfara, Katsina and Sokoto states, killing over 130 people. Notably, in Zamfara state, attacks left over 50 killed in several villages 3-4 May; at least eighteen killed in three places 18-19 May; at least 23 killed in Tunga and Kabaje 28 May. In Katsina state, bandits killed at least 34 people 20-21 May. In Sokoto state, bandits 3 May raided home of former state governor in Bafarawa, killed security guard; 7 May killed district head in Balle. In north centre, herder-farmer clashes and communal violence killed over 30 people in

Kogi, Plateau and Kaduna states. In Kogi state, clashes in several areas 18-19 May left fifteen herders dead. In Plateau state, communal clash in state capital Jos 26 May killed seven. In Kaduna state, gunmen kidnapped seventeen including pastor at Dankade 19 May.

➡ **Sierra Leone** High Court 31 May revoked parliamentary seats of ten MPs from main opposition party All People's Congress (APC) for breaches of electoral law during March 2018 legislative elections. Same day police clashed with APC supporters protesting outside party offices in capital Freetown, firing tear gas into offices, injuring several people and arresting dozens, including senior party executives and former ministers.

↓ **Togo** Parliament passed law approving constitutional changes that could see President Gnassingbé stay in power until 2030, and military conducted joint military operation with neighbours to prevent jihadist insurgency spreading south from Sahel. MPs 8 May voted in favour of constitutional reform that limits presidential mandate to two five-year terms, but does not count three terms Gnassingbé has already served, thereby allowing him to run in two more elections in 2020 and 2025 and potentially stay in power until 2030; C14 opposition coalition 10 May denounced reform. Electoral commission late April announced local elections would be held 30 June for first time in 32 years; after boycott of Dec 2018 legislative elections C14 14 May announced it would take part in June elections. Militaries of Togo, Burkina Faso, Benin and Ghana conducted joint military operation in border areas 15-18 May and arrested some 200 suspected jihadists, of which 95 Togolese.