

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Cameroon** **New Canada-sponsored dialogue initiative between govt and Anglophone separatists kicked off as violence persisted in Anglophone regions.**

Tensions remained high in Anglophone regions. Anglophone separatists held armed marches in North West and South West regions on 1 Oct anniversary of self-proclaimed Federal Republic of Ambazonia. In North West, govt forces 1-2 Oct carried out punitive actions following pro-independence demonstrations in Boyo division, reportedly burning homes and arresting dozens of civilians. Separatists 4 Oct launched explosive device attack on military patrol vehicle in Boyo, with unspecified casualties; 16 Oct killed two gendarmes in Ndu town, Donga-Mantung division. Soldiers 19 Oct clashed with separatists in Bali and Batibo areas (Mezam and Momo divisions respectively) to clear road blocks; at least one civilian killed. Ambazonia militia group 26 Oct ambushed govt convoy on Alabukam-Mbengwi road (Mezam and Momo respectively), leaving unknown casualties.

New dialogue initiative started as civil society called for peace. On third anniversary of 2019 govt-sponsored peace talks, thousands – women in majority – 30 Sept-4 Oct took part in daily marches in capital Yaoundé to call for peace in Anglophone regions. After Swiss-led mediation in Sept ended at Biya's request, govt officials and representatives of several Anglophone separatist groups 10-14 Oct met in Canada as part of new initiative to negotiate peace process. Meanwhile, former separatist rebels 3 Oct protested difficult living conditions in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) centre in South West regional capital Buea, alleged embezzlement of funds dedicated to DDR process.

Sporadic jihadist violence persisted in Far North. Defence Minister Joseph Beti early Oct met with regional authorities in Far North regional capital Maroua, hailed successful military operations against Boko Haram (BH) and said it is safe for 40,000 villagers displaced by violence to return home. Attacks however persisted. Notably, BH militants 15 and 17 Oct killed two civilians in Mora town, Mayo-Sava division; 22 Oct took control of army's advanced post in Djibrilli locality, Mayo-Tsanaga division near Nigerian border.

➔ **Central African Republic** **Face-off persisted between govt and Constitutional Court over proposed constitutional reform that would allow President Touadéra to run for third term; rebel groups continued to pose security threat in several regions.**

Touadéra sacked top judge amid dispute over new constitution. Following Constitutional Court's 23 Sept invalidation of presidential decrees creating constitutional drafting committee, civil service ministry 10 Oct decreed retirement

from teaching positions, effective 31 Dec, of 40 civil servants including Constitutional Court President Danièle Darlan, claiming this would entail her leaving court. Darlan 19 Oct refused retirement, said she cannot be removed before end of mandate in 2024. Touadéra 24 Oct dismissed Darlan by presidential decree; Darlan 28 Oct rejected dismissal, said decree had no legal value. Meanwhile, pro-Touadéra civil society movements renewed calls for constitutional referendum. Notably, Republican Front-led demonstration 22 Oct reportedly gathered thousands in capital Bangui to demand Touadéra organise referendum within 30 days to endorse constitutional reform.

Violence at hands of 3R rebels and anti-balaka militias persisted notably in west. In Ouham-Pendé prefecture, International Organization for Migration vehicle 3 Oct hit explosive device likely planted by 3R rebel group near Kouï bridge, leaving three peacekeepers dead; 3R rebels 19 Oct killed one civilian and injured six people, including two soldiers, in attack on armed forces position in Mann village. In Nana-Mambéré prefecture, 3R elements 13 Oct attacked Chinese-operated mining site in Ndiba Molé village, killing four including one soldier. Meanwhile, in Basse-Kotto prefecture, two anti-balaka militia factions 4-11 Oct fought over control of Ndjoukou village; clashes left at least ten killed, including three civilians.

Missériya Arab-Sara tensions flared in north near border with Chad and Sudan. In Vakaga prefecture, suspected Missériya Arab tribe individuals 5 Oct held up traders and injured one on Sikidébé-Chad axis; amid inter-community tensions since 14 Oct, suspected Missériya Arabs 20-21 Oct reportedly kidnapped 13 ethnic Sara individuals in Matala village, 18km from Vakaga's capital Biraou. In Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture, unidentified individuals 23 Oct killed three traders returning from Chad near Bangbali village, 6km from Bamingui-Bangoran's capital Ndélé.

↓ Chad Authorities brutally repressed countrywide protests after national dialogue extended transition period to civilian rule by two years, leaving at least 60 dead, while herder-farmer conflict killed dozens.

National dialogue concluded, prolonging transition by 24 months. National dialogue's plenary session 1 Oct adopted final resolutions extending transition by 24 months, maintaining Transitional Military Council leader Mahamat Déby as head of state and allowing him to run for president at next elections (despite earlier pledge not to). Déby 8 Oct issued revised transitional charter, 10 Oct took office as transitional president, and 14 Oct appointed members of "national unity" govt, including former rebel and opposition leaders.

Violent crackdown on opposition protests left dozens dead. Despite govt's ban, civil society and opposition 20 Oct led demonstrations in capital N'Djamena and several other cities calling for return to civilian rule. Security forces violently cracked down on protesters; authorities reported 60 dead and over 300 wounded, while opposition parties said over 100 killed. PM Saleh Kebzabo same day blamed opposition for attempted "armed insurrection", announced curfews in four cities and three-month suspension of seven opposition parties involved in protests. NGO International Federation for Human Rights around 23 Oct said hundreds of people detained since

20 Oct had been taken to unknown location in country's north; NGO Human Rights Watch 26 Oct called for independent investigation of security forces over crackdown.

Deadly intercommunal conflict broke out in centre. Herder-farmer clashes 30 Sept-1 Oct left at least 76 and up to 90 people dead in Mangalmé and Kouka Margni sub-prefectures of Guéra region (centre).

Boko Haram attacks continued in west. In Lake region (west), suspected Boko Haram militants 2 Oct abducted six people in Kadoua village, eventually killing four of them; 7 Oct attacked regional governor's convoy near Kinasserom Island, leaving three injured. Governor of Hadjer-Lamis region (also west) replaced 5 Oct after Boko Haram in Sept launched first attacks in region in five years, briefly seizing two villages in Karal sub-prefecture.

Great Lakes

➔ **Burundi Security forces launched deadly offensive against Kinyarwanda-speaking rebels as govt reopened land border with Rwanda; authorities faced resistance over land expropriations.**

Security forces clashed with Kinyarwanda-speaking rebels near Rwandan border. After armed forces late Sept launched offensive against National Liberation Front (FNL) – Hutu-led group of Rwandan origin – in Kibira forest, Cibitoke province, security source mid-Oct reported at least 42 rebels and a dozen soldiers killed; fighting reportedly displaced unspecified number of residents. Meanwhile, govt late Oct announced reopening of border with Rwanda after years-long closure; Bujumbura had previously conditioned border reopening to extradition by Kigali of 2015 coup plotters.

Land expropriations sparked tensions across country. Local media 6 Oct reported over 100 households dispossessed of their land over past week by ruling party youth wing Imbonerakure in Rugombe commune, Cibitoke province (north west), so local administration can reallocate land to ruling party members. In Bubanza province (west), over 200 people 10 Oct observed sit-in before governor's office, protesting against authorities' expropriation of 5,000 households from their lands in August to make way for construction of military camp. Meanwhile, in Muyinga province (north east), Imbonerakure 9 Oct reportedly arrested 70 supporters – most of them Muslims – of opposition Union for Peace and Democracy-Zigamibanga party for allegedly holding illegal gathering; 50 remained detained by police as of 18 Oct.

In other important developments. Fuel was back at petrol stations 5 Oct after President Ndayishimiye ended months-long standoff with country's biggest oil distribution company Interpetrol that caused fuel shortages across country. European Union 25 Oct announced lifting sanctions on three senior officials, including PM Gervais Ndirakobuca and Senior Presidential Adviser Gen. Godefroid Bizimana, following "intensified dialogue" with Bujumbura on human rights record.

↓ **DR Congo Tensions between Kinshasa and Kigali reached new heights after M23 rebels made dramatic gains in eastern North Kivu province.**

M23 rebels gained territory in east, Kinshasa expelled Rwanda's ambassador. After fighting 20 Oct resumed between govt forces and M23 rebels in North Kivu province's Rutshuru territory, rebels 23 Oct captured Ntamugenga village, near strategic RN2 highway linking North Kivu's capital Goma with province's north and Uganda. Fighting subsequently spread to several localities along highway: rebels 29 Oct took over Kiwanja and Rutshuru towns, cutting off Goma from upper half of North Kivu. Govt, which accuses Kigali of supporting M23, same day expelled Rwanda's ambassador to Kinshasa. Thousands of anti-Rwanda protesters 31 Oct demonstrated in Goma, demanding weapons to fight amid fears that M23 could target city. African Union 30 Oct called for ceasefire and negotiations during third inter-Congolese peace dialogue due to take place in Kenya 4-13 Nov.

Also in east, ADF forces killed dozens, and west saw deadly intercommunal conflict. Despite ongoing DR Congo-Uganda operations against Uganda-born Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in east, group 1 Oct allegedly killed 14 people in Kyamata village, Irumu territory (Ituri province); 4 Oct reportedly killed 11 civilians, with 20 others missing in Vido village, Beni territory (North Kivu); 20 Oct killed at least seven people and set fire to health facilities in Maboya town (also North Kivu). Meanwhile, govt mid-Oct said conflict over land between Teke and Yaka communities in Kwamouth territory (western Mai-Ndombe province) had left at least 180 people dead and over 30,000 displaced since July.

President Tshisekedi conducted first major army reshuffle since coming to power. Tshisekedi 3 Oct appointed close relative Lt. Gen. Christian Tshiwewe, formerly commander of Republican Guard (elite unit in charge of presidential security), as new army chief of staff. Presidency said reshuffle, which saw other Republican Guard officers promoted to strategic positions, part of broader military reforms aimed at boosting efficiency. Tshisekedi 17 Oct also appointed new heads of defence zones, notably replacing Gen. Philemon Yav as commander of eastern provinces, who was arrested in Sept for treason in fight against M23 rebellion.

➡ **Uganda Tensions ran high as President Museveni's son threatened to invade neighbouring Kenya and reaffirmed presidential ambitions.**

President removed Kainerugaba from army role after threat to invade Kenya. In series of tweets 3 Oct, Museveni's son, land forces commander Lt. Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba, threatened to capture Kenya's capital Nairobi. Govt next day distanced itself from Kainerugaba, committing to "good neighbourliness, peaceful co-existence" with Kenya, and Museveni 5 Oct apologised to Kenyans. Museveni 4 Oct removed Kainerugaba as armed forces commander, albeit promoting him to full general and keeping him as presidential adviser for special operations. After Museveni around 17 Oct said his son will "leave Twitter", Kainerugaba 19 Oct said that "no one will ban [him] from anything".

Kainerugaba's presidential ambitions revived tensions over Museveni's succession. Kainerugaba in same series of tweets 3 Oct said it was time for new generation to replace old guard; and 10 Oct pledged to devote time to the youth, Uganda's largest voting bloc. Museveni 16 Oct declined to say whether he would support his son for presidency; also denied opposition Democratic Party leader and Justice Minister Norbert Mao's claim that he joined govt in July after agreeing with Museveni to work

together toward transition of power. Against backdrop of tensions, ruling party youth sections in Oct called on Museveni to stand for re-election in 2026.

Concern persisted over lack of free speech guarantees of new Computer Act. Museveni 13 Oct ratified controversial Computer Misuse Act, which criminalises using computer to send any information that might ridicule or degrade someone. Group of 13 activists, lawyers and journalists 17 Oct filed petition at Constitutional Court challenging law, citing free speech concerns; local NGO Legal Brains Trust hours later filed similar challenge at regional East African Court of Justice.

Horn of Africa

↓ Djibouti Armed opposition group conducted deadly attack on army base for first time in almost two years.

In their first attack since Jan 2021, splinter group of Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) known as FRUD-armé, which seeks greater representation for Afari Djiboutians in country's politics, 7 Oct launched raid on army post in Garabtissan area, Tadjourah region (north), leaving seven soldiers dead, four injured and six missing. National Assembly 13 Oct passed law classifying FRUD-armé as terrorist group, allowing harsher consequences for those associated with group and enabling govt to issue international arrest warrants against exiled FRUD-armé leaders.

➔ Eritrea Eritrean and Ethiopian federal forces gained ground in Tigray, raising fears of mass atrocities against local population.

Ethiopian-Eritrean offensive gained ground in Tigray, fuelling fears of large-scale attacks on civilians. Eritrean forces continued supporting Ethiopia's military and regional allies in Tigray after returning to frontline fighting early Sept. Eritrean troops fought Tigray's forces in Tigray's Eastern, North Western and Central zones throughout month, making significant advances. Notably, joint Ethiopian-Eritrean offensive 17 Oct drove Tigray's forces from strategic Shire city (North Western Zone), after which they began pushing east from Shire toward Aksum and Adwa cities, and could threaten Tigray's capital Mekelle (see Ethiopia). Battlefield advances of Ethiopian and Eritrean forces, alongside potential for continued strong Tigray resistance, raised risk of Ethiopian and Eritrean forces escalating atrocities on civilians in Tigray, who largely back Tigray's resistance led by Asmara's long-standing rival, Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Eritrea 24 Oct accused humanitarian and media groups, as well as western govts, of "insinuating perpetration of 'unspeakable atrocities'" to "rehabilitate the TPLF" for geopolitical interests.

Asmara rejected calls to withdraw its forces from Tigray. International actors condemned Eritrea's military activities in Ethiopia and urged troop withdrawal. Notably, European Parliament 6 Oct accused Eritrea of "playing a destructive role in the Tigray conflict"; Asmara next day condemned "spurious accusations". Australia, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, UK and U.S. 12 Oct published joint statement condemning "escalating involvement of Eritrean military forces in northern Ethiopia" and urging them to "cease their military operation and withdraw". Asmara

15 Oct released second statement, accusing western countries of “wilfully harassing the victims of the TPLF” despite TPLF’s “acts of continued destabilisation of Eritrea”. As talks between Ethiopia’s federal and Tigray negotiators 25 Oct got underway in South Africa, concerns that Asmara will spoil any future peace process remained.

➡ 🌍🗺️ **Ethiopia Absent an immediate cessation of hostilities, military offensives in Tigray could result in mass atrocities against civilians in coming weeks.**

Federal coalition gained ground in Tigray, raising risk of serious abuses toward local population. After weeks of federal and allied military offensives on multiple fronts in northern Ethiopia, Tigray’s defences began giving way to superior firepower. Notably, Tigray’s forces 2 Oct withdrew from Kobo district in Amhara region’s North Wello Zone; 17 Oct withdrew from strategic Shire city (North Western Zone), which hosts tens of thousands of displaced persons. Federal and Eritrean forces began pushing eastward from Shire toward Aksum and then Adwa cities (Central Zone), where fierce fighting in surrounding areas is ongoing. Federal and Amhara forces 18 Oct captured Alamata and Korem towns (Southern Zone). Meanwhile, Addis 17 Oct said military would seize all federal facilities in Tigray, which will likely fuel continued Tigray resistance to prevent federal govt from forcefully taking control of region. As civilians are caught in crossfire, federal and Eritrean forces could further harm local populations, as they have already done by air. Notably, federal air force 4 Oct killed over 50 displaced people in Adi Daero town (North Western Zone), 14 Oct struck Shire, killing humanitarian worker and two civilians; Ethiopian Red Cross Society 28 Oct reported death of ambulance driver.

African Union (AU) held peace talks in South Africa. Amid mounting international pressure, Tigray and federal negotiators 25 Oct met in South Africa for AU-led peace talks. Whether progress is made remains to be seen. Tigray authorities 16 Oct expressed readiness for immediate cessation of hostilities but demanded Eritrea’s withdrawal from region; federal govt reiterated its willingness to negotiate but is unlikely to halt military operations given recent gains.

Drone strikes in Oromia left scores dead. Amid ongoing clashes between security forces and Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), federal air force conducted multiple air strikes. One of deadliest drone strikes occurred 23 Oct in Cobi district in West Shewa Zone at OLA graduation ceremony, killing at least 50, including civilians. Meanwhile, Amhara militias known as Fano reportedly killed at least 43 civilians in five attacks in East Wollega and Horo Guduru Wollega zone during month.

➡ **Kenya President Ruto’s cabinet sworn in despite concerns over nominees’ integrity, while Al-Shabaab violence persisted near border with Somalia.**

Controversy arose over cabinet nominees. After Ruto late Sept unveiled cabinet, Director of Public Prosecutions Noordin Haji 12 Oct dropped charges – including murder, fraud and graft – faced by several nominees; Law Society of Kenya next day condemned Haji’s decision, alleging judiciary was compromised to allow nomination. Parliament 26 Oct unanimously approved cabinet, which was sworn in 27 Oct. Presidential runner-up Raila Odinga’s Azimio La Umoja coalition 22 Oct announced it would soon unveil shadow cabinet. Meanwhile, Ruto 14 Oct appointed Mohamed Amin as head of Directorate of Criminal Investigations following

resignation of George Kinoti, who led investigations perceived as targeting Ruto and his allies. Ruto 16 Oct said he had disbanded elite police unit, Special Service Unit, accused of extrajudicial killings; rights group Amnesty International Kenya 16 Oct welcomed move. Director of public prosecutions 28 Oct announced 12 police officers would be charged for crimes against humanity over 2017 crackdown on post-election protest.

Ruto undertook efforts toward regional economic integration. Ruto 6 Oct met Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa to discuss bilateral cooperation, including electricity import deal from the Ethiopian Electricity Corporation. Ruto 9 Oct visited Uganda as part of regional tour, called for free trade within East African Community.

Al-Shabaab attacks persisted in east near Somalia's border. In Lamu county, suspected Al-Shabaab militants 8 Oct attacked pub in Mswakini village, making no casualties; leaflets warning of imminent Al-Shabaab attacks early Oct circulated in Mokowe, Mpeketoni and Hindi towns; in response, police increased security around town centres, roads and key infrastructure. In Mandera county, suspected Al-Shabaab militants 12 Oct reportedly attacked school and communication mast in Libehiya town, with local authorities refuting claims that three teachers went missing; 22 Oct raided two mosques in Elram village, making no casualties.

➡ **Somalia Military offensive against Al-Shabaab continued mainly in central regions; in response, group launched deadliest attack in five years, leaving 120 dead.**

Govt forces and allies continued to take back rural areas from Al-Shabaab in centre. Intense fighting continued in Hirshabelle state's Hiraan and Middle Shabelle regions. In Hiraan, military and local Ma'awisley militiamen engaged Al-Shabaab in Bulobarde and Beledweyne districts, reportedly killing over 200 Al-Shabaab militants around 9 Oct near Jicibow town in Bulobarde district. In Middle Shabelle, govt forces and local militia 15-18 Oct wrestled control of multiple villages notably in Bal'ad district; 20 Oct cleared several villages in Adale district; 22-30 Oct cleared Al-Shabaab stronghold of Cali Gadud (also Adale), with over 100 militants reportedly killed. In Galmudug state, govt forces and allies 25 Oct captured Qayib town, Galgaduud region, reportedly killing dozens of Al-Shabaab militants. Lower-scale operations also continued in South West state to clear Al-Shabaab-controlled areas around Buur Hakaba and Qansadheere towns in Bay region as local population continued to face major food insecurity.

Al-Shabaab conducted large-scale, exceptionally deadly attacks. In deadliest attack in country since 2017, Al-Shabaab 29 Oct launched twin bombing at busy Kilometer 4/Zoobe junction in capital Mogadishu, leaving at least 120 dead. In Hiraan, Al-Shabaab launched bomb attacks against govt and security targets in Beledweyne city 3 Oct, and in Bulobarde and Jalalaqsi towns 19 Oct, killing over 40. In Jubaland state's Lower Juba region, Al-Shabaab 23 Oct laid siege to hotel in Kismayo city, killing nine civilians. Meanwhile in South West state's Bakool region near Ethiopian border, fighting between Al-Shabaab militants and Ethiopian Liyu police forces in Rab Dhuure district 1-7 Oct allegedly resulted in over 100 fatalities on both sides.

Discontent rose in Puntland state over presidential term. Puntland President Said Deni in Sept replaced mayors of Puntland's major cities and key officials in his

cabinet, and late Oct appointed new judicial and security officials. Former Puntland Presidents Abdirahman Mohamad Farole and Abdiweli Gaas 7 Oct accused Deni of planning to extend his term beyond elections scheduled for Jan 2024; dispute follows recent term extensions in other federal member states.

➔ 🌟* **Somaliland Electoral dispute risks turning into wider crisis as opposition vows to no longer recognise govt after 13 Nov.**

Postponement of presidential poll increased tensions between political elites. After electoral commission late Sept announced it could not organise presidential election on scheduled date of 13 Nov and requested nine-month delay, parliament's Upper House 1 Oct extended President Bihi's term by two years and its own term by five. Leaders of opposition parties UCID and Waddani – who want presidential vote before selection of new parties – next day said they would no longer recognise Bihi as president when his mandate ends on 13 Nov; also said circumstances under which Upper House has authority to extend both terms were not met, and requested explanation as to why extensions go beyond technical delay outlined by electoral commission. UCID leader Feysal Ali Warabe also 2 Oct said Bihi would be responsible for “any violence or instability” that may occur. Garhajis clan – one of Somaliland's largest – 27 Oct called for “inclusive and consensus-based agreement” between political parties before 13 Nov; warned that “no election will take place in territories inhabited by Garhajis clan” if no deal is reached.

➔ **South Sudan Rebel groups pursued anti-govt alliance as Rome peace talks appeared set to resume, ruling party expelled VP Machar from leadership structure, and violence remained rampant in several areas.**

Amid possible resumption of peace talks, major rebel groups sought alliance. Holdout opposition leaders, including head of National Salvation Front (NAS) Thomas Cirillo, former army chief Paul Malong and former Sec Gen of ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) Pagan Amum mid-Oct held consultations with African and Western officials in Italy's capital Rome ahead of expected renewed talks with govt; peace talks began in 2019 but broke down in Aug 2021. Meanwhile, in move likely aimed at strengthening groups' hand at negotiations, head of splinter group Sudan People's Liberation/Army-In Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) Kitgwang faction Gen Simon Gatwech Dual 9 Oct called for alliance of holdout opposition groups, 15 Oct met with NAS high-ranking representatives to discuss proposal.

President Kiir ousted Machar from vice chairmanship of SPLM. In move aimed at undermining VP Riek Machar, ruling SPLM led by Kiir 20 Oct expelled Machar along with former Sec Gen Pagan Amum from party leadership, accusing them of trying to build up their own political parties. Machar 24 Oct rejected move, saying “no faction can dismiss any member of the other factions from SPLM”.

Split in breakaway faction of Machar's SPLM/A-IO continued to fuel violence in Upper Nile state. Fighting pitting ethnic Shilluk “Agwelek” forces under Gen. Johnson Olony against Nuer forces, predominantly backed by Gen. Simon Gatwech, persisted. Notably, Nuer forces 8-9 Oct attacked Shilluk territory around Kodok area, Fashoda county, displacing thousands and killing unknown number of civilians. Nuer forces 12 Oct retreated after counter-attack by Shilluk Agwelek forces, with clashes then occurring in Atar area of Jonglei state.

In other notable developments. Fighting over disputed border that erupted late Sept between neighbouring Dinka groups from Abyei Administrative Area and Twic County, Warrap state, left scores dead, according to UNMISS statement published 14 Oct; govt 13 Oct deployed troops to ease tensions. UN Humanitarian Agency 11 Oct reported that fourth consecutive year of major floods have affected at least 909,000 people across country.

↓ **Sudan Intercommunal clashes killed hundreds in Blue Nile state and forced thousands to flee; transition remained fragile as news of “imminent” civilian-military deal prompted mixed reactions and violent street protests continued.**

Intercommunal violence killed hundreds in Blue Nile state. UN humanitarian office 17 Oct reported that killing of two Hamaji people over land dispute 13 Oct “led to clashes between the Hausa community and other tribes” 13-16 Oct, killing at least 13 in Wad al-Mahi and Al-Rusyaris areas of Blue Nile State. Fighting 19-20 Oct escalated once more, reportedly killing over 250 in Wad al-Mahi, injuring over 500 and forcing around 7,000 to flee. State governor 21 Oct declared state of emergency for 30 days while military 24 Oct named new commander for Blue Nile state. Hundreds 23 Oct protested violence and lack of strong security response in state capital Damazin. In West Kordofan state, clashes between Misseriya and Nuba groups over land dispute 13-15 Oct killed at least 19 in Lagawa town.

Military-civilian forces made progress toward transition deal, but some groups decried process. Military and main civilian opposition bloc Forces for Freedom and Change-Central Council (FFC-CC) engaged in talks mediated by “Quad” (U.S., UK, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates) over Sudanese Bar Association’s proposal for draft constitution to restore democratic transition, 12 Oct confirming reaching agreement on several issues. Other opposition groups criticised process. Notably, talks did not include Resistance Committees, driving force behind ongoing street protests, who have rejected negotiations with military; deal could thus weaken what remains of revolution that toppled Omar al-Bashir in 2019. Meanwhile, at least 54 resistance committees 5 Oct approved unified political charter calling for resignation of military leaders from power and implementation of new transitional constitution and legislative council.

Resistance Committees escalated anti-military protests. Coordination of Resistance Committees in Khartoum state escalated protests to mark one-year anniversary of military coup, with demonstrations 21-23, 25, 30 Oct held across major cities. Some protests turned violent as security forces cracked down on protestors, leaving two dead in Omdurman and Khartoum cities on 23 and 25 Oct respectively.

➔ **Tanzania Military launched exercises along border with Mozambique amid mounting fears that jihadist activity could spill over.**

Military late Oct conducted two military exercises in southern Lindi, Mtwara and Ruvuma regions near border with Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado region; exact nature of exercises – whether training or actual field manoeuvres – remained unknown, but authorities in Ruvuma said objective was to prepare troops “particularly for the threat presented by terrorism” and stressed importance of securing borders. Meanwhile, suspected jihadists in Oct reportedly killed two people on Tanzanian side of Unity bridge across Ruvuma River, which forms border with Mozambique.

Southern Africa

➔ Mozambique Jihadists in Cabo Delgado province continued to terrorise local population and again headed south toward neighbouring Nampula province as insurgency entered its sixth year.

Jihadist attacks continued in northern and central Cabo Delgado province. In Macomia district, suspected Islamic State Mozambique Province (ISMP) 8-9 Oct raided Litandacua, Nguida and Namituco villages, killing at least one; local militia in Namituco reportedly ran out of ammunition, allowing insurgents to run over area. ISMP 13 Oct again engaged local militia at Litandacua village, killing at least three militiamen. In first incursion into Macomia town since 2020, suspected ISMP 23 Oct stormed Napulubo neighbourhood, killing between three and five civilians. In Muidumbe district, alleged ISMP 9 Oct attacked Mandava village, reportedly killing at least five people. In Nangade district, suspected ISMP 10-11 Oct killed one civilian in attack on health centre in Ntoli village, suggesting they face shortages of medical supplies; 14-16 Oct launched raids on Namuembe, Ngalonga and Liche villages, killing at least two civilians and looting goods; further attacks centred around Liche village 26-28 Oct left unknown number of casualties as local militia clashed with militants. Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique and govt forces 4-7 Oct dismantled several insurgents' camps in Nangade.

Insurgents headed south toward Nampula province. In Ancuabe district in southern Cabo Delgado, alleged ISMP 17 Oct launched coordinated attack on four villages in Meza locality, killing unconfirmed number of civilians; 20 Oct attacked ruby mine belonging to Indian-owned Gemrock Company, reportedly forcing hundreds of residents to flee and evacuation of nearby mine in Montepuez district. In Chiure district along border with Nampula province, alleged ISMP 28-29 Oct attacked three villages and beheaded one civilian. ISMP 29 Oct also launched first attack in Namuno district, killing at least two people in Murrameia village.

RENAMO guerrilla demobilisation program nears completion. President Nyusi and RENAMO leaders 7 Oct reaffirmed resolution to complete disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration program for former RENAMO combatants by year's end. In Zambezia province (centre), 800 guerrilla soldiers 12 Oct started demobilisation process.

➔ Zimbabwe Attacks on opposition supporters continued as political temperature heated up ahead of 2023 general elections.

Campaign for 22 Oct local govt by-elections marred by violence. Alleged ruling party Zanu-PF supporters 16 Oct stoned convoy carrying main opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) lawmaker in Matobo district, Matabeleland South province, leaving several women injured; group was campaigning for 22 Oct by-elections in Matobo. Assailants next day reportedly attacked CCC lawmaker Jasmine Toffa and other party members campaigning for 22 Oct by-elections in Insiza district, also Matabeleland South, injuring at least seven; CCC accused Zanu-PF supporters, and CCC candidate in Insiza by-election Augustine Gumede went into hiding in following days. Cases of violence and intimidation reported in at least two other by-election sites. NGO Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and others 18 Oct urged police to investigate all cases of political violence. Electoral commission 20 Oct

set general elections for July-Aug 2023. Lawmakers around 27 Oct passed law to establish new institution intended to monitor and investigate allegations of security forces brutality; legislation inspired by recommendations made by commission that investigated post-election violence in 2018.

Clampdown on journalists intensified. Security personnel 8 Oct reportedly assaulted and detained Voice of America journalist Godwin Mangudya as he was covering Zanu-PF party meeting in capital Harare's Kuwadzana suburb; party officials reportedly seized his cell phones and deleted content. NGO Committee to Protect Journalists 13 Oct reported five journalists "assaulted, harassed, and blocked from covering events" in country 6-10 Oct.

In other important developments. Zanu-PF elective congress late Oct re-elected President Mnangagwa as party's first secretary, endorsed him as sole party candidate for 2023 presidential election.

Sahel

➔ **Burkina Faso Amid countrywide insecurity, new transitional leadership consolidated control following late September coup.**

New coup leaders secured national and regional support. Supporters of new coup leader Capt. Ibrahim Traoré 2 Oct marched in capital Ouagadougou waving Russian flag and threw rocks at French embassy on allegations that deposed President Lt. Col. Damiba was hiding out at French base to plot "counteroffensive"; Paris immediately denied any involvement. Damiba same day agreed to step down and left for neighbouring Togo. Traoré 2-3 Oct reportedly secured support from military chain of command, 4 Oct met with West African regional bloc ECOWAS mediator for Burkina Faso, former Nigerien President Issoufou. New transition charter, released mid-Oct, maintained Damiba's commitment to hold elections by July 2024, prohibited transitional leadership from running in polls and confirmed Traoré's appointment as head of state. Traoré 21 Oct took office as transitional president, next day named jurist Apollinaire Joachim Kyelem de Tembela as interim PM, and 25 Oct named govt of 23 ministers, including three members of military and five former Damiba ministers. Authorities 24-25 Oct announced initiative to recruit 50,000 civilians as army auxiliaries to help battle jihadists. Hundreds 28 Oct demonstrated in Ouagadougou demanding end of French military presence.

Insecurity remained rampant across country. In Sahel region's Soum province, al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 24 Oct attacked army base in Djibo town, which has been under jihadist blockade for several months, leaving ten soldiers dead and over 50 wounded; 18 militants also killed. In Sahel region's Oudalan province, presumed Islamic State-Sahel (IS Sahel) 11 Oct killed four people and kidnapped at least seven others in mosque in Gorom-Gorom commune; deadly clashes between IS Sahel and JNIM reported 8 and 10 Oct in Gorom-Gorom and Gountoure localities. JNIM continued sporadic attacks in Centre-North region's Namentenga province. Notably, suspected JNIM 3 Oct seized Bouroum town, killing at least seven including three civilians; 15 Oct ambushed armed forces in Silmangué locality, leaving 12 security forces dead. In East region,

suspected jihadists 29 Oct ambushed military convoy near Kikideni locality (Gourma province), killing at least 15 security forces.

➡ **Mali** **Jihadists pressed ahead with offensive in north, while govt forces and allies sustained counter-insurgency operations in centre; transitional authorities pushed ahead with plan to change constitution.**

Islamic State Sahel Province clashed with rival as it consolidates control in north. In Ménaka region, local populations in Oct continued to flee from areas around regional capital Ménaka amid rumours that IS Sahel militants may seek to assault city. Also in Ménaka, IS Sahel and al-Qaeda Affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) late Oct reportedly engaged in intense fighting in Adéraboukane, Inchnane and Tamalate localities; local sources said JNIM had gained upper hand. IS Sahel continued to make progress in Ansongo district of Gao region, where ambush on military convoy near Fafa locality 1 Oct wounded six. In Kidal region, UN mission MINUSMA peacekeepers 17 Oct hit explosive device near Tessalit village, leaving four dead.

Fighting continued apace in centre as military tries to reconquer lost territories. Military 3-5 Oct killed 31 presumed JNIM militants and destroyed two of their bases in Niono district (Ségou region); 4-6 Oct arrested 50 presumed jihadists in Sofara town and Mopti city (both Mopti region). Also in Mopti, public bus 13 Oct hit explosive device between Bandiagara and Goundaga towns, killing 10; local officials 31 Oct claimed govt forces and private security company Wagner operatives previous day killed at least 13 civilians in Guelledjé locality, Ténenkou district.

Transitional authorities poised to change constitution and militarise police. Constitutional drafting commission 11 Oct submitted preliminary draft of new constitution to interim President Goïta, who wants to put new constitution to referendum in March 2023. Coalition gathering dozens of opposition parties in following days insisted drafting process should be handled by democratically elected civilian govt. Meanwhile, transitional legislative body late Oct passed law allowing police and civil protection services to play more active role in fight against jihadist groups while also depriving officers of their right to strike.

Govt continued to confront traditional security partners. At UN Security Council, FM Abdoulaye Diop 18 Oct again accused France of supporting jihadists and undermining Mali's sovereignty; Paris immediately denounced "slander". Negotiations for release of 46 Ivorian soldiers dragged on (see Côte d'Ivoire).

➡ **Niger** **Jihadist violence persisted in south west and south east, while inflation and French troop presence remained sources of public discontent.**

Islamic State Sahel Province attacks continued in Tillabery region in south west. Suspected IS Sahel militants 8 Oct ambushed G5 Sahel force patrol in Téra department, injuring five soldiers before being repulsed; 22 Oct attacked transport trucks on Tizegorou-Banibangou axis (Banibangou department), killing 12 civilians. Suspected jihadists – likely IS Sahel or al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) – 22 and 24 Oct killed two police officers in Tamou locality (Say department); after defence ministry said seven jihadists killed 24 Oct in subsequent security operations in Tamou gold mine, civil society coalition M62 29

Oct alleged much higher death toll and civilian victims; local authorities 27 Oct shut down Tamou mining site until further notice.

Boko Haram offshoots maintained their presence in Diffa region in south east. Govt forces 1-2 Oct reported dismantling Boko Haram (likely Islamic State in West Africa Province, ISWAP) supply system in Toumour village (Diffa department). Suspected ISWAP-planted explosive device 16 Oct killed woman and girl and injured two children in Bosso commune (Bosso department).

In other important developments. Niamey authorities 7 Oct banned M62 protest scheduled for 9 Oct, citing “security reasons”; M62 had called for demonstration against high costs of living and relocation of French Barkhane force to Niger. Meanwhile, civil protection services 4 Oct said floods have killed at least 192 people and affected 263,000 others since June, with Maradi, Zinder and Dosso most affected regions.

West Africa

➔ Benin Sporadic violence continued in north, and govt discussed military cooperation with commander of French Operation Barkhane.

Jihadist and other violence persisted in northern departments. In Atakora department, unidentified armed men 4 and 7 Oct reportedly kidnapped two Fulani pastoralists near Matéri and Kérou towns; al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) elements 11 Oct tried to engage govt forces and accidentally detonated explosive device near Matéri, leaving eight militants dead. In Alibori department, unidentified armed men 7 Oct killed farmer in Segbana commune, and overnight 11-12 Oct kidnapped Fulani village chief in Karimama commune.

Visit of Barkhane commander sparked controversy. New commander of French Operation Barkhane, Gen Bruno Baratz, 4-6 Oct visited Benin and met with Defence Minister Fortunet Alain Nouatin; Baratz reportedly expressed France’s willingness to support Beninese forces while ruling out French military operations on Beninese territory. Following visit, rumours of French troop presence and of alleged plans to establish French military base in country spread on social media; govt around 10 Oct denied claims.

➔ Côte d’Ivoire Despite reported progress, negotiations for release of Ivorian soldiers detained in Mali dragged on; former President Gbagbo loyalist announced return from exile.

President Ouattara expressed optimism over release of soldiers detained in Mali. Ouattara 6-7 Oct met in economic capital Abidjan with Togolese President Faure Gnassingbé and West African regional bloc ECOWAS President Umaro Sissoco Embaló to discuss latest ECOWAS efforts to negotiate release of 46 Ivorian soldiers detained in Mali since July; following meetings, Ouattara said “happy ending” will be reached “very soon”, but negotiations continued to drag on. Stumbling blocks reportedly include location for soldiers’ release, with Mali insisting on Bamako while Côte d’Ivoire prefers Togo’s capital Lomé. Ouattara and Embaló 7 Oct also discussed

regional security issues as Abidjan sustains efforts to contain jihadist threat in country's north.

Former President Gbagbo's right-hand man vowed to return home. Former Youth Minister under Gbagbo, Charles Blé Goudé, 24 Oct announced he had received Ouattara's approval to return home from Netherlands on 26 Nov, vowed to take part in Ouattara-sponsored reconciliation process. Blé Goudé, who was acquitted by International Criminal Court in March 2021 on charges of crimes against humanity, still faces 20-year sentence in Côte d'Ivoire for role in 2010-2011 post-election crisis. Ouattara's move could form part of attempt to divide left-wing opposition ahead of 2023 regional and 2025 presidential elections, as Blé Goudé's relations with Gbagbo have been tense in recent years.

Opposition heavyweights continued manoeuvring with eye on 2025 presidential election. After faction of Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) 29 Sept proposed long-time party leader Henri Konan Bédié as sole candidate for party leadership, PDCI's young wing in following days expressed opposition, denouncing lack of internal democracy. Meanwhile, African People's Party-Côte d'Ivoire's general secretary, Damana Adia Médard aka Pickass, 17 Oct said Laurent Gbagbo was party's "natural candidate" for presidential election.

➔ **Guinea Ruling junta and West African regional bloc agreed on two-year transition to civilian rule as crackdown on opposition protest once again turned deadly.**

Military junta agreed to restore civilian rule in two years. Under pressure from West African regional bloc ECOWAS to agree to shorter transition timeline by 22 Oct or risk more sanctions, Col. Doumbouya-led junta 17-21 Oct held series of talks with ECOWAS officials in capital Conakry. Doumbouya and ECOWAS mediator, Benin's former President Boni Yayi, 21 Oct announced agreement on 24-month transition starting in Jan 2023, down from 36-month period proposed by junta in May.

National dialogue remained stalled amid ongoing repression of opposition. Opposition Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG), former President Condé's Rally of the Guinean People, and outlawed coalition National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC) 3 Oct rejected govt-led dialogue framework, denouncing "unilateral" process. Police 17 Oct arrested prominent UFDG official Cellou Baldé in Conakry on undisclosed charges; released him 24 hours later. FNDC 20 Oct held demonstration in Conakry despite nationwide ban on protests, demanding quick return to civilian-led govt and release of all prisoners detained for political reasons; clashes between security forces and protesters left at least three protesters killed, while 20 people suffered gunshot wounds, and many others were detained. Protesters 28 Oct disrupted traffic in Conakry, denouncing death of protesters during 20 Oct demonstration. Meanwhile, Paris-based news website Africa Intelligence 7 Oct reported that France would provide military support to junta to help securitise Mali-Guinea border and prevent expansion of jihadism, sparking rumours of French troop deployment in country; FM Morissanda Kouyaté 11 Oct denied claims.

Trial over 2009 massacre of over 150 people continued. During trial of several former military and govt officials accused of responsibility in 2009 massacre of over 150 people in Conakry stadium, court 10 Oct denied then-junta leader Capt. Moussa

Dadis Camara's request to be released to house arrest. Camara's former aide-de-camp, Lt. Aboubacar Sidiki "Toumba" Diakit , 24 Oct accused Camara of having planned and ordered massacre.

➔ **Nigeria U.S. warned of terror risk in federal capital Abuja amid rampant violence in North West and Centre North; electoral violence flared four months away from general elections.**

Insecurity remained high across country, especially in North West and North Central zones. U.S. 23 Oct warned of "elevated risk of terror attacks" in Abuja, and 25 Oct authorised departure of non-emergency govt staff. Elsewhere in North West and North Central zones, criminal and jihadist violence ran high despite security operations. In Zamfara state, armed group raid 5 Oct left at least 30 civilians dead in Birnin Waje village in Bukkuyum area. Govt forces 29 Oct repelled suspected Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) attack on Wawa military base in Niger state, where nearly 1,700 jihadists are being held, killing eight assailants. Meanwhile, in Benue state, suspected herdsmen 19 Oct killed at least 36 people in Gbeji village. In North East, security forces largely contained jihadists. Notably, in Borno state, govt forces 11 Oct repulsed ambushes by Boko Haram JAS faction or ISWAP near Gala Kura village in Bama area and along Gamboru-Dikwa road in Ngala area, killing over 40 insurgents. Explosive device attacks on Maiduguri-Damboia-Chibok road 3 Oct however left several dead.

Court ordered release of Biafra separatist leader as unrest persisted in South East. Appeal Court in Abuja 13 Oct dropped all remaining charges against separatist group Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) leader Nnamdi Kanu, citing procedural flaws including illegal arrest abroad and extradition; govt 18 Oct appealed judgment and Kanu remained in custody. Meanwhile, IPOB or criminal groups continued to target security operatives and facilities. Notably, raid on police divisional headquarters in Inyi town, Enugu state, 8 Oct left two people dead.

Electoral violence turned deadly. During electoral campaign for 2023 general elections, supporters of ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and main opposition Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) 15 Oct clashed in Zamfara state, leaving one dead and 18 injured. Unidentified gunmen same day killed APC local youth leader in Ebonyi state.

In other important developments. Govt 16 Oct said floods had killed over 600 people and displaced over 1.3mn countrywide since early summer, while also devastating farmlands, raising risk of heightened tensions over access to resources.