

# Africa

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## Central Africa

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➔ **Cameroon** **Army killed several suspected separatists in anglophone region amid major cholera outbreak in area's south east; meanwhile, security forces launched operation in east to free hostages.** Separatist attacks continued against civilians in Northwest (NW) and Southwest (SW) anglophone regions. Notably, separatists 7 April kidnapped dozen protesters in Mbalangi, near Kumba (SW) town and Oku (NW) subdivision; 12 April ambushed and killed five penitentiary officers in Nkum town, Bui division (NW). Authorities 8 April also stated armed men torched dozen homes and killed six people in Mbonhong village, Ndu district (NW) targeting Mbororo ethnic group, who they blamed for earlier attacks in community; in response, soldiers 26 April killed six attackers. Military raid against separatists in Bali town (NW) 21 April left three civilians dead. In Mbalangi, near Kumba (SW) and Jakiri (NW) towns, angry mobs 5 April killed three separatists accused of rape and other violence. Soldiers 25 April killed eight men in Guzang, Batibo town, who they accused of being separatists. Cholera outbreak, which started in Oct 2021, continued to take heavy toll on anglophone region's south west, with about 50 per cent of all 4,627 cholera cases across country recorded there as of 5 April; Meme and Ndian divisions (SW) and Littoral were most affected areas due to worsening pre-existing water crisis and enduring armed conflict. After years of campaigning by Anglophones and dozens of civil society groups, U.S. administration 15 April granted Temporary Protected Status to Cameroonian migrants, allowing 18-month stay until individual status is determined. Meanwhile, in east, military 18 April sent hundreds of troops to border Mbere division near Central African Republic, where rebels had abducted at least 35 people; operation left two dead and five hostages freed. In Northeast, Boko Haram jihadists 2 April killed two civilians in Doulong Touro village, Mayo Tsanaga division; 29 April reportedly abducted at least 14 people in Bargaram locality, Logone-et-Chari department. Regional Multinational Joint Task Force 1 May reported killing at least 20 suspected jihadists during operation in Nigeria and Cameroon 27-29 April. Cameroon 12 April signed military deal with Russia, renewing cooperation.

➔ **Central African Republic** **Rebels continued deadly attacks outside capital Bangui, govt forces and Russian paramilitary faced more accusations of serious crimes, and intercommunal violence rose in west and centre.** Rebel groups launched attacks across country. Notably, Popular Front for the Rebirth of Central African Republic (FPRC) rebel group 1-2 April attacked villages in Bakouma sub-prefecture (Mbomou prefecture, south east), leaving at least five civilians dead; Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) rebel coalition allegedly attacked NGO personnel in Basse-Koto prefecture (east), injuring four 7 April and another two 9 April; and 3R rebel group 16 April and 19 April clashed with govt forces and Wagner paramilitaries in Amada-Gaza sub-prefecture (Mambéré-Kadéï prefecture, east), causing ten deaths among rebels according to local authorities. Meanwhile, Bangui 4 April rejected accusations made by UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet late March of human rights violations, including torture and

sexual violence, by security forces and Russian paramilitary Wagner Group, claimed report was meant to tarnish military's image. Security forces and Wagner personnel 11-12 April reportedly killed over ten civilians in Gordil and Ndah villages (Vakaga prefecture, east); UN mission (MINUSCA) 16 April launched investigation into incident. Video allegedly showing soldiers torturing and executing man mid-month surfaced on social media, prompting outcry among opposition and human rights groups, while govt denounced smearing campaign. Communal violence spiked during month. Notably, herders 2 April attacked Samoh village (Ouham prefecture, centre), reportedly in retaliation for cattle theft, leaving five dead; clashes between Fulani herders (supported by 3R group) and local tradesmen early April left six dead in Gadzi sub-prefecture (Mambéré-Kadéï, south west); and anti-balaka militia attack on Fulani herders 8-10 April reportedly left around ten dead in Zawa village (Nana-Mambéré, west). Political tensions stayed high after March dialogue, as govt supporters continued to call for constitutional revision to allow third presidential term; notably online petition by Héritier Doneng, sports minister's chief of staff and head of Republican Front movement, 20 April reportedly reached 400,034 signatures. First audience of hybrid Special Criminal Court mandated with adjudicating serious crimes committed in country since 2003, postponed 19 April to 25 April after defence lawyers failed to show up; later delayed to 16 May.

➔ **Chad Pre-dialogue with armed groups in Qatar continued, civil society coalition withdrew from national dialogue initiative, and land dispute killed one in south.** Pre-dialogue between Transitional Military Council (CMT) and 52 Chadian politico-military movements continued in Qatari capital Doha despite mistrust toward transitional authorities. CMT and other groups 14 April exchanged draft protocols on final agreement, including proposals on ceasefire, release of prisoners of war, and disarmament, demobilisation, reinsertion program. Armed groups 14 April subsequently expressed discontent at CMT's proposition. Major rebel group Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic (CCMSR) 5 April withdrew from talks, denouncing transitional authorities' hidden agenda. Preparations for national dialogue planned on 10 May faced further hurdles as civil society coalition Wakit Tama 6 April suspended talks with CMT about conditions for dialogue participation, citing transitional authorities' "duplicity" and announcing "major actions" in response. Following CMT mid-month confirmation dialogue would go forward despite pre-dialogue with armed groups' slow pace, groups and opposition expressed doubts about CMT's good-will and dialogue's inclusivity. Amid growing scepticism about transitional authorities' sincerity and rising fears they will cling to power, transitional President Mahamat Déby named his half-brother Abdelkérime Déby as presidential chief of staff after former Minister Abdoulaye Sabre Fadoul 5 April resigned from position citing "institutional and interpersonal" reasons. Former President Idriss Déby's Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS) political party 18-20 April held event for anniversary of Déby's death, criticised transitional authorities for not organising official commemoration. Judges 11 April suspended March's strike order until 6 May to give govt chance to accede to their demands for more security for members of judiciary. Meanwhile, land dispute 7 April sparked clashes between Migami and Dadjo communities in Dokatchi village (Guéra prefecture, Guéra region), leaving one dead and 14 injured.

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## Great Lakes

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➔ **Burundi Imbonerakure harassed civilians, intelligence services reportedly abducted opposition supporter, and security operations against RED-Tabara rebel movement continued.** Ruling party youth wing Imbonerakure continued to target civilians. During CNDD-FDD sec gen's visit to Rumonge commune, Imbonerakure 2 April harassed and beat up local fruit vendors. Clashes between opposition party Congrès National pour la Liberté (CNL) and Imbonerakure 13 April left CNL member severely injured in Mpanda commune, Bubanza province, prompting arrest of 14 CNL members in Mpanda 16-17 April. Authorities 16 April launched national campaign to provide paramilitary training to at least 6,000 Imbonerakure, with view to potentially create Force de réserve et d'appui au développement du pays (FRAD), new reserve military force composed of civilians; first batch of 300 Imbonerakure 16 April completed training in Makamba province. Meanwhile, families accused intelligence service of arresting four people whom they suspected of collaborating with armed groups in Ndava commune, Cankuzo province, 31 March; intelligence services 7 April also allegedly kidnapped CNL member in Cibitoke province. Police collaborating with locals 3 April found two unidentified, tied-up bodies in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province; 8 April found another corpse in Buruhukiro zone, Rumonge commune. Concerns over economic situation rose, primarily in Bubanza and Cibitoke provinces (north west), where rise in commodity prices and fuel shortages paralysed fishing. Armed forces continued to fight RED-Tabara rebel movement, Tutsi-led group that opposes country's Hutu-dominated govt, in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Notably, soldiers and their allies, mai mai rebels, 13 April killed Congolese soldier and stole around 400 cows from local farmers in Mutarule, Uvira territory, South Kivu, DRC; around 90 additional Burundian soldiers 15 April crossed into South Kivu.

➔ **DR Congo Amid ongoing violence from armed groups, regional leaders pledged to launch joint force to tackle M23 threat in country's east.** Violence continued to run high in east. Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) launched attacks in Irumu territory. Notably, alleged ADF 8 April killed eight in Pakulu village; ADF rebels 10-11 April killed at least 20 in Basili Chiefdom villages; alleged ADF 10 April killed nine in Shauri Moya locality, while four others found dead next day. Locals 11 April found 11 bodies in Mangusu village, 5km from Komanda locality where ADF reportedly killed at least 18 others same day. Four civilians died in alleged ADF attack in Otomabere village 16 April. In North Kivu province, ADF 4 April reportedly killed 29 people, including army captain, in Masambo village, Beni territory. Congolese operations continued as security forces alongside UN mission to DR Congo 19 April overtook key ADF base in Irumu's Mont Oyo zone. Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO) rebels 15 April decapitated five civilians in Ndjala village, Djugu territory. Following M23 rebels late-March offensive against army at border with Rwanda and Uganda, rebels 1 April, and again 10 April declared unilateral ceasefire; M23 rebels and army however accused each other of ongoing violence during month and heavy clashes 27 April resumed with army accusing rebels of provoking them. East African Community (EAC) representatives 21 April agreed to deploy joint military force to address threats from local armed groups in Eastern DRC; move follows DRC's formal adhesion to EAC 8 April. State of siege 19 April renewed despite opposition from deputies from

east. Deputies from parliamentary group Common Front for Congo (FCC), which is closely aligned with former President Kabila, 14 April boycotted National Assembly plenary session on reforms to new 2023 electoral law, prompting Assembly President Christophe Mboso to postpone plenary discussion to 20 April; debate on law 22 April resumed, albeit without FCC deputies. After Court of Cassation 11 April overturned Court of Appeal's decision that sentenced Vital Kamerhe, Tshisekedi's former chief of staff, to 13 years of hard labour for corruption and embezzlement, Kamerhe, 18 April returned to Kinshasa.

➔ **Uganda Allegations that late parliament speaker was poisoned caused tensions, commodity prices rose markedly, and security operation against cattle-rustling in Karamoja continued.**

Following death of Parliament Speaker and Omoro county MP Jacob Oulanyah in March, Electoral Commission 9 April set timetable for by-election to fill vacant seat, with planned vote on 26 May. Oulanyah's family 8 April announced son Andrew Ojok would run; during meeting convened by President Museveni, National Resistance Movement (NRM) party chairman, four NRM hopefuls 19 April agreed to step down in favour of Ojok. Following allegations from Oulanyah's father Nathan Okori and NRM Vice Chairman for Buganda region Godfrey Kiwanda that Oulanyah was poisoned, police late March opened investigation and 11 April announced it was preparing summons including for Okori, Kiwanda and opposition National Unity Platform (NUP) leader Robert Kyagulanyi, known as Bobi Wine; govt maintained Oulanyah died from cancer. Museveni 15 April announced meeting of NRM caucus to discuss rising commodity prices; 26 April convened meeting, during which they agreed not to intervene with incentives or other measures, said that it could otherwise destabilise country. Meanwhile, in restive Karamoja region, army 14 April reportedly killed local council leader who was suspected of leading cattle raids in Napak district; army late March said it had killed 309 people in operation against cattle rustlers since July, prompting opposition Forum for Democratic Change 4 April to request that govt investigate alleged civilian deaths during military operation. Rwandan President Kagame 24 April arrived in Uganda on "private visit" in first trip to country in four years to attend Museveni's son Muhoozi Kainerugaba's birthday party, and met president to discuss regional security.

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## **Horn of Africa**

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➔ **Eritrea Govt downgraded diplomatic mission to Ethiopia in sign that bilateral relations may be souring.**

After Ethiopian PM Abiy 24 March declared humanitarian ceasefire for Tigray region, local media early April reported Asmara 30 March downgraded diplomatic mission to Ethiopia, replacing outgoing Ambassador Semere Russom with Chargé d'Affaires Biniam Berhe. Asmara yet to accept letter of credence from newly appointed Ethiopian ambassador to Eritrea, Fekadu Beyene. Meanwhile, violence against Eritrean refugees in northern Ethiopia continued: six unidentified gunmen 2 April raided Dabat refugee camp in Amhara region, injuring eight Eritrean refugees. High-level govt delegation 11 April visited Sudan, met with Sovereign Council head Gen Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan and expressed solidarity with latter's "efforts to overcome the ongoing crisis"; 16 April presented peace initiative to end Sudanese crisis, which Sovereign Council next day welcomed. FM Osman Saleh 27-28 April travelled to Russia, met with counterpart Sergey

Lavrov, reportedly called on Russia and Ukraine “to find bilateral solution to their conflict”.

➔ **Ethiopia While fragile truce between federal govt and Tigray forces held, humanitarian aid to embattled region remained grossly insufficient; elsewhere, religious tensions flared and other violence continued.** No clashes reported in April in northern Tigray region after federal and Tigray authorities late March agreed to humanitarian truce. For first time since Dec 2021, aid convoys 1, 2 April entered Tigray by land; another convoy of 50 trucks 15 April arrived in regional capital Mekelle after Tigray forces 12 April withdrew from Erebti district in Afar region. World Health Organization 18 April said only 4% of required aid had reached Tigray since truce. More truck convoys later mid- to late-April reached Mekelle, but deliveries by month’s end remained far from sufficient to meet needs. Tigray forces 25 April said they were completely withdrawing from Afar in hope aid could finally pour into Tigray; federal govt 28 April rebutted claims as “big lies”. In joint report, NGOs Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch 6 April alleged Amhara regional authorities and security forces, with possible participation of federal soldiers, carried out “ethnic cleansing” campaign in Western Tigray from Nov 2020, systematically expelling several hundred thousand Tigrayans. Meanwhile, religious tensions spiked. Armed assailants 26 April attacked Muslim worshippers in Gondar city, Amhara; attack and subsequent unrest left 21 dead. Retaliatory attacks against Orthodox and Protestant Christians reported 28 April in Werabe town, Southern Nations region; casualties unknown. Also in Amhara, clashes in border area between Jille Dhumuga district in Oromia Zone and Efrata Gidim district in North Shewa Zone around 18-19 April reportedly left 20 dead, over 5,000 displaced; Amhara region officials accused Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) rebel group of initiating violence, while ethnic Oromo residents blamed Amhara militias known as Fano, and regional special forces. In Oromia region, federal govt forces along with Oromia regional forces early April launched renewed offensive against OLA: intense fighting reported 2-3 April along highway connecting Hawassa city to Ethiopia-Kenya border town of Moyale; violence throughout month persisted in Oromia’s North, West and South West Shewa zones, also Horo Guduru Wollega, West and East Guji zones, with all conflict actors reportedly targeting civilians.

➔ **Kenya Political parties held chaotic primaries ahead of August general elections as supporters disrupted voting to denounce methods used for selecting candidates and voting irregularities.** Raila Odinga’s Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) primaries sparked infighting: party supporters 1 April protested in Mombasa county over alleged issuance of direct tickets to certain candidates, prompting party to postpone primaries in Kilifi and Mombasa counties. Deputy President William Ruto’s United Democratic Alliance (UDA) primaries also marred by tensions: unidentified individuals in Kangaru town, Embu county, 13 April burnt ballot boxes and ransacked lorry carrying ballot material, while candidates in Bomet county next day urged vote suspension, claiming some ballots were pre-marked. All primaries however finalised by 22 April deadline. In other incidents of political violence, crowd 1 April stoned helicopter carrying ODM presidential candidate Odinga in Uasin Gishu county; unidentified assailants 3 April killed businessman and aspiring member of County Assembly Thomas Okari in Kisii county; gunmen 6 April reportedly attacked rally of Marakwet East MP Kangogo

Bowen in Kapetwa area, injuring two. Meanwhile, violence related to cattle raiding, land and pasture access continued in Isiolo, Marsabit, Baringo, West Pokot, Turkana and Garissa counties. Notably, in Isiolo, armed individuals 8 and 18 April killed 14 people in Burat area and Tigania village. Unidentified gunmen 28 April killed at least five people including local govt officials who were pursuing stolen cattle in Awaye area, Marsabit. World Food Programme 19 April said severe drought has left over 3mn Kenyans acutely food insecure. Following arrears in govt subsidies for oil companies amid global fuel price increases, fuel shortages throughout month led to petrol rationing and hours-long queues at petroleum retail stations across country.

↑ **Somalia Election process made significant progress as both houses of parliament selected speakers, paving way for presidential vote; Al-Shabaab attacks continued; and UN agencies warned of risk of famine.**

In major step forward for electoral cycle, approximately 290 out of 329 members of parliament sworn in 14 April, meeting PM Mohamed Hussein Roble's deadline. Swearing in took place after Roble 5 April removed two federal electoral body officials who opposed his actions, and 13 April found last-minute agreement on some disputed seats with South West state President Abdiaziz Laftagareen. Dispute over selection of Lower House seats representing Jubaland's Gedo region led to parallel elections around 22-23 April: 16 lawmakers selected in Ceel Waaq city with support from Roble; another set of 16 MPs selected in Garbaharey city with support from President Farmajo. Selection of parliament leadership went ahead despite concerns over security and location of vote: Senator Abdi Hashi Abdullahi re-elected 26 April as Upper House Speaker, while Sheikh Adan Mohamed Nur (Madobe) 28 April became Lower House Speaker. AU Transition Mission (ATMIS) got off to bumpy start: after mission 1 April officially began operations, taking over from AMISOM, Roble 6 April declared mission's head Francisco Madeira persona non grata, accusing him of "engaging in acts that are incompatible with his status"; Farmajo immediately challenged move. Al-Shabaab conducted several attacks in capital Mogadishu, notably firing mortar shells at complex hosting parliament during 14 April swearing-in ceremony; group 18 April again targeted complex during parliamentary meeting; suicide attack at popular restaurant 22 April killed at least six. In Hirshabelle state in centre, Al-Shabaab continued to demonstrate its presence in Hiraan region, temporarily seizing town of Mataban on 18 and 23 April; at least ten soldiers killed 30 April in roadside explosion in Middle Shabelle region. In Bay region (South West state in south), Al-Shabaab around 12 April clashed with Ethiopian contingent of ATMIS and govt forces in Tugaar-Hoosle area; at least ten al-Shabaab reportedly killed. Amid worsening drought, several UN agencies 12 April said nearly 6mn people, roughly 40% of country's population, face extreme levels of food insecurity with "pockets of famine conditions" likely in six areas.

➡ **Somaliland Uncertainty over upcoming political cycle persisted, and authorities detained journalists.** Opposition parties UCID and Waddani mid-April renewed accusation that President Bihi plans to prolong his stay in power, urged him to schedule presidential election. National Election Commission 27 April replaced NEC Chair Abdirashid Mohamud Ali with commissioner Kaltun Hassan Abdi; former immediately claimed move null and void, said he remained legitimate chair. Gunfire 13 April erupted in capital Hargeisa's central prison as inmates allegedly clashed with prison guards; security forces detained 15 journalists covering events. Marodi-Jeh Regional Court 19 April released 12 journalists; local NGOs

Somali Journalists Syndicate and Somali Media Association immediately welcomed move, demanded journalists still in detention be freed.

➔ **South Sudan While main signatories of 2018 peace deal reached new agreement on unified armed forces command, deadly fighting displaced thousands in north.** Following late-March spike in tensions between President Kiir and his long-time rival, VP Riek Machar, leaders 3 April agreed to implement key provision of 2018 peace agreement and form unified armed forces command; under Sudanese-brokered security deal, Kiir's forces got 60% of key leadership posts in national security institutions, while Machar's Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-In Opposition (SPLM/A-IO) and South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA) took remaining 40%. Following deal, Machar immediately announced he would lift weeks-long suspension of participation in security and ceasefire mechanisms that underpinned 2018 peace deal. Kiir 12 April ordered military officers loyal to Machar be officially integrated into unified army command. Violent clashes 8 April erupted between Machar's SPLM/A-IO and forces allied to govt in Leer county of Unity state; local authorities 11 April reported around 14,000 people displaced and at least 35 killed, including SPLM/A-IO senior leader James Gatjung Dok, in several days of fighting. In Upper Nile state, govt forces and SPLM/A-IO troops mid-April accused each other of attacks in Maban county. Ethnic Misseriya militiamen from Sudan 13 April attacked three villages in disputed Abyei Administrative Area, reportedly killing over 40 people. Violence also continued in Jonglei and Lakes states. Notably, cattle-related violence 16 April reportedly killed four people in Jonglei's Nyirol county. Lakes state authorities said four people killed and five wounded 1 April in Rumbek East county when youth from Unity state carried out cattle raids. Intercommunal clashes 8-12 April reportedly killed at least eight people in Eastern Equatoria state and neighbouring Greater Pibor Administrative Area (south east). UN Food and Agriculture Organization Representative in South Sudan Meshack Malo around 12 April said "two-thirds" of country's population "will likely face hunger between May and July".

➔ **Sudan Violence in West Darfur reportedly left over 200 dead, anti-coup protesters marked third anniversary of former President Bashir's fall, and military leaders' relations with UN deteriorated.** Deadly violence continued to ravage Darfur. Fighting between Arab pastoralists and non-Arab Massalit tribesmen 21 April erupted in Kreinik area of West Darfur state, 25 April reportedly spread to state capital El Geneina. NGO General Coordination for Refugees and Displaced in Darfur 24 April said at least 168 people killed in violence, accused paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF)-backed Janjaweed militia of orchestrating attacks, while West Darfur Governor Khamis Abdalla Abkar 26 April said death toll was over 200. RSF Head Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo "Hemedti" 1 April ordered use of military force and implementation of emergency law in South Darfur state after deadly tribal violence in late March. Meanwhile, on anniversary of 2019 sit-in in front of military headquarters in capital Khartoum, thousands 6 April marched in Khartoum and across country, demanding civilian rule; security forces shot one protester dead. Thousands of anti-coup protesters 11 April rallied across country on third anniversary of Bashir's removal. Coup leader and Sovereign Council Chairman Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan 1 April threatened to expel head of UN mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), Volker Perthes, who late March warned political paralysis could lead country to "economic and security collapse". Alliance of rebel

groups signatory to 2020 peace agreement, Sudan Revolutionary Front, 9 April presented national dialogue initiative to resolve political crisis. Political coalition Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) 14 April conditioned participation on release of political detainees and abolition of state of emergency; authorities 22-27 April released at least 27 political prisoners, including former Minister Khalid Omer Yousif and former Sovereign Council member Mohammed al-Faki Suliman, but dozens of opponents remained in prison. Military leaders took several steps toward rehabilitating Bashir-era ruling National Congress Party (NCP) and allies. Authorities around 7 April dropped charges of crimes against state pressed against NCP head Ibrahim Ghandour and released him from prison; court 26 April reversed order dissolving Islamic Call Organization, which served as financing arm for Bashir's regime.

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## **Southern Africa**

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↑ **Mozambique** **Lull in violence recorded in far north Cabo Delgado province as Mozambican, Rwandan and SADC troops increased coordination effort against jihadists; latter however retained capacity to mount attacks on security clusters in Nangade district.** Govt forces early March engaged jihadist insurgents south of Nangade town, killing at least one near Chicuaia Velha village 3 April, and ambushing others in Chianga village next day. Islamist militants 4 April killed one further south in Nambedo area, Ntamba Administrative Post, and next day attacked military outpost in Mandimba village east of Nangade town; three soldiers reportedly killed. In response, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) troops reportedly moved out from Nangade district capital to reinforce Mandimba. Voice of America news outlet 18 April reported militants around 14 April abducted at least ten people, including women and children, near Chibau village, south of Nangade town. Militants 30 April returned to Chibau, killing one villager, and same day killed another civilian in Litingina village. In neighbouring Mueda district, combined force of Mozambican and Rwandan troops 22 April intercepted insurgents in Chipingo locality on their way to Muiha village in Nangade district; toll unknown. In Macomia district, some SAMIM troops based in Macomia town relocated north to site between Quinto Congresso and Nova Zambezia villages following spate of insurgent attacks in area since late 2021; Rwandan forces in recent weeks have also deployed around Macomia coastal towns of Quiterajo and Mucojo, outside their usual area of operation, reflecting more coordinated squeeze on insurgents. Elsewhere in Macomia, Matemo island remained under curfew following major incursion in March, with marine traffic blocked. Heads of state and govt from SADC's Organ Troika, representatives of countries supporting SAMIM, and President Nyusi 12 April met virtually, extended SAMIM's mandate for three months and approved mission's transition from "rapid deployment" to "multidimensional" force taking on greater peacekeeping responsibilities. South Africa 14 April extended its own troop mandate for SADC intervention for 12 months; mandate of SAMIM troops had thus far been agreed multilaterally for periods of three months.

➔ **Zimbabwe** **Authorities continued to harass political opposition, and Central Bank raised interest rate amid hyperinflation.** Following March legislative by-elections, new MPs sworn in 5 April. Opposition party Citizens



Coalition for Change (CCC) leader Nelson Chamisa same day urged party's incoming legislators to prioritise electoral reforms to level electoral playing field ahead of 2023 general elections. Tensions ran high ahead of several local council by-elections scheduled for 7 May: authorities 16 April reportedly detained 14 CCC activists during rally in Mutare city, Manicaland province; residents of Chitungwiza town's Zengeza West Ward 7 in Harare province mid-month accused ruling party ZANU-PF candidate for by-elections of intimidating electorate during door-to-door campaigns. CCC VP Tendai Biti claimed ZANU-PF representatives 18 April attempted to "kidnap" party activist Makomborero Haruzivishe, denounced President Mnangagwa's "incurable regime with no respect of human rights". State media stepped up campaign against prominent anti-corruption activist and journalist Hopewell Chin'ono. Notably, state broadcaster ZBC late-April claimed Chin'ono acquired goats from govt as part of controversial Command Agriculture scheme, prompting threats from well-known ZANU-PF activist that they would invade Chin'ono's property in Mukarakate village (Murewa district) to seize his goats; villagers and CCC supporters 30 April reportedly gathered to protect Chin'ono's estate. Meanwhile, ZANU-PF provincial youth league elections suspended 24 April in Mashonaland West province as party youths traded blows and threatened to kill each other. Amid currency slide and food and fuel price pressures exacerbated by Russia's war in Ukraine, Central Bank 4 April raised main interest rate from 60% to record-high 80%, citing escalation in annual inflation to 72.7% in March.

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## Sahel

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➔ **Burkina Faso Deadly jihadist attacks and counter-insurgency operations continued in north; military junta announced local-level talks with jihadist groups and requested more time from West Africa regional bloc to finalise transition timetable.** Jihadist violence increased in Centre-North region from late March. Presumed al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) militants overnight 31 March-1 April killed 20 civilians in Namentenga province and 8 April attacked military detachment, killing 12 soldiers and four volunteers fighting alongside security forces in Sanmatenga province. Residents of Bourzanga town (Bam province, also Centre-North), where jihadists established presence in March, early April said town running out of supplies. In Sahel region (north), military in cooperation with Nigerien forces 2-25 April conducted airstrikes and ground offensives against both JNIM and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, claimed about 100 combatants killed and 40 detained; local sources said most killed were civilians, which defence ministry 24 April denied. Coordinated jihadist attacks on two military detachments 24 April killed nine soldiers and six civilians in Pobé-Mengao department (Soum province, also Sahel). Suspected jihadists 26 April reportedly opened fire on civilians near Markoye town (Oudalan province, Sahel), killing 13. Amid mounting public pressure to address insecurity, President Lt Col Damiba 1 April announced dialogue with jihadists, with aim of "integrating Burkinabe youth from these groups back into society"; Council of Ministers 13 April created commission coordinating local dialogue committees. Interim govt 15 April announced recruitment, training and deployment of 3,000 additional soldiers by May. Deposed President Kaboré released from house arrest 6 April. Military junta 22 April requested more time to finalise

“acceptable transition timetable” ahead of West African regional body ECOWAS 25 April deadline; ECOWAS 27 April announced it would send mission to country to determine next steps. Ouagadougou military court 6 April sentenced former President Compaoré to life imprisonment for 1987 murder of then-President Sankara. Sankara’s relatives and several civil society groups immediately welcomed trial’s outcome, with Thomas Sankara Memorial Committee hailing it as “great victory”; former National Reconciliation Minister Zephirin Diabré 10 April however said Compaoré’s conviction could be obstacle to future national reconciliation.

➔ **Mali Jihadist violence persisted in Mopti region amid national and international outcry over alleged “massacre” of hundreds of civilians at hands of govt and Russian forces; EU suspended in-country training missions.** Army 1 April said military 23-31 March “neutralised” over 200 jihadists in major operation in Moura town (Djenné district) in central Mopti region. Several media and rights groups however accused govt forces and allies of “massacre”. Notably, NGO Human Rights Watch 5 April said army and foreign fighters, identified as Russians, late March “allegedly summarily executed” 300 civilian men in Moura town, urged “independent, credible inquiry”. UN envoy in Mali El-Ghassim Wane 7 April told Security Council military govt had denied request to grant UN mission investigators access to site; Bamako same day announced military tribunal would handle investigation. Meanwhile, violence continued in Mopti. Notably, explosive device attack by suspected al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 19 April killed Russian paramilitary near Hombori village (Douentza district); in apparent retaliation, govt forces and Russian private military company Wagner Group elements same day reportedly stormed Hombori. Armed forces reported air strikes 14 April killed 12 militants, including Franco-Tunisian JNIM leader Samir Al-Bourhan, in Ganguel forest, and overnight 27-28 April killed 12 other combatants near Yirma village, both Djenné district. Simultaneous jihadist attacks 24 April also targeted military camps in Sévaré (Mopti region), Bapho and Niono towns (Ségou region), leaving six soldiers dead. JNIM 24 April claimed it had captured Wagner operatives during first week of April in central Ségou region. Junta continued to take increasingly harsh line on political opposition: authorities 4 April allegedly sought to arrest opposition leader Oumar Mariko after he publicly accused army of killing civilians in Moura. Amid rumours of govt reshuffle and internal conflicts within PM Choguel Maïga’s support base, Maïga 21 April presented transitional govt’s activities to legislative body National Transitional Council, emphasised 24-month transition timeline and praised army’s recent advances. Thousands 1 April demonstrated in capital Bamako against French presence and West African bloc ECOWAS’ sanctions. Following year-long tensions between Bamako and Brussels, EU 11 April announced full suspension of EUCAP and EUTM missions in Mali.

➔ **Niger Rival jihadist factions engaged in major clashes in Diffa region, parliament authorised relocation of foreign troops from Mali to Niger, and authorities arrested sitting minister and other govt officials as part of anti-corruption campaign.** In Diffa region (south east), infighting between two subgroups of Boko Haram faction known as JAS 4 April left over 60 dead around Bosso commune, on islands shared between countries of Lake Chad basin; JAS 9-10 April clashed with rival group Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Bosso commune, with at least 14 dead. ISWAP reportedly claimed

executing 11 Christians after capturing them in Diffa region 22-26 April. Amid lower jihadist activity in Tillabery region (south west), suspected jihadists 12 April killed seven police officers and wounded over a dozen in attack on police station near Burkina Faso border in Bankilaré department. As part of 2-25 April joint operation with Burkinabè forces along shared border, govt forces reportedly killed numerous suspected al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) militants in Torodi department. In Agadez region (north), attacks by unidentified assailants 8 and 12 April left six soldiers dead. As part of ongoing military operations across country, 54 suspected jihadists reportedly killed 26 March-2 April in Dosso, Tahoua, Tillabery, and Diffa regions; and 37 militants killed 5 April in joint operation with neighbouring Benin and Burkina Faso in tri-border area. National Assembly 22 April voted to allow redeployment from Mali to Niger of French Barkhane and European Takuba troops. Authorities 8 April arrested former Interior Minister Ousmane Cissé on accusations of involvement in alleged coup attempts in 2021 and during President Bazoum's visit to Turkey in March. Bazoum next day announced arrests of 30 senior govt officials as part of anti-corruption drive; authorities around 19 April also arrested Communication Minister Mahamadou Zada on embezzlement charges in first-ever arrest of minister in office.

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## West Africa

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➔ **Benin Suspected jihadist attacks killed six members of security forces in country's north.** Armed group allegedly linked to Islamic State or al-Qaeda 11 April launched explosive device attack on armed forces convoy in Pendjari National Park in north west near Burkina Faso border; five soldiers killed and at least eight others injured. Suspected jihadist group 26 April raided police station in north-eastern municipality of Karimama (Alibori department), less than 50km from Niger border; attack killed one police officer and wounded several others. Amid series of jihadist attacks since late 2021, President Talon 6 April appointed Gen Fructueux Gbaguidi as new Armed Forces Chief.

➔ **Côte d'Ivoire President Ouattara named new VP and appointed slimmed-down govt; authorities continued to engage with neighbours to step up regional security cooperation.** Ouattara 19 April announced selection as new VP of Tiémoko Meyliet Koné, governor of Central Bank of West African States; VP position had remained vacant since 2020. PM Achi 13 April resigned, giving way to long-expected govt reshuffle. Ouattara 19 April reappointed Achi, tasked him with forming slimmed-down govt to reduce spending; govt of 32 ministers, down from 41, unveiled next day. Presidential Chief of Staff Claude Sahi Soumahoro 5 April travelled to Netherlands to meet former Youth Minister Charles Blé Goudé in exile; Blé Goudé later same day said discussion focused on "modalities surrounding his return to Abidjan". Former President Gbagbo 7-10 April toured stronghold regions of Guémon and Cavally, called for "consolidated political alliance" with former President Bédié's Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire. Meanwhile, Ouattara 14 April received Togolese President Faure Gnassingbé at Abidjan presidential palace to discuss joint fight against jihadist groups; leaders pledged to take "bold regional measures" to defeat Islamist insurgencies. Defence and security ministers from ad hoc security coalition of West African states, Accra Initiative, 13 April met in Benin, agreed to create multinational joint task force to

combat jihadists. University students in second-largest city of Bouake 25 April went on strike to demand better study conditions; next day clashed with police, reportedly leaving several students injured and 22 detained.

➔ **Guinea Special court charged former Condé-era officials with financial crimes, while interim military authorities proposed 39-month transition to civilian rule.** Court for economic and financial crimes (set up by ruling junta in late 2021) placed former govt officials and members of former ruling party Rally of the Guinean People (RPG) in detention on several charges, including corruption, embezzlement of public funds and money laundering: PM Ibrahima Kassory Fofana and former Defence Minister Mohamed Diané jailed 6 April; two other former ministers, Albert Damantang Camara and Ibrahima Kourouma, held in custody 21 April; former National Assembly Speaker Amadou Damaro Camara and former Electoral Commission President Loucény Camara also sent to prison around 28 April. In response, RPG 14 April suspended participation in national dialogue. On interim President Doumbouya's orders, former President Condé 8 April returned to Guinea after receiving medical treatment in United Arab Emirates since Jan; ruling military junta 22 April announced Condé freed from house arrest. Meanwhile, Territorial and Decentralisation Minister Mory Condé 15 April unveiled ten-step electoral roadmap without set deadlines. Country 25 April missed regional bloc Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) deadline to present "acceptable timetable" for return to civilian rule. ECOWAS 27 April announced it would send mission to country to determine next steps. Doumbouya 30 April proposed 39-month transition to civilian rule; RPG and other opposition groups immediately denounced move.

➔ **Nigeria Kaduna state remained epicentre of violence in North West and large-scale attacks left over 150 killed and thousands displaced in neighbouring Plateau state; Islamic State claimed expansion into central states, and separatists stepped up attacks in South East.** Federal govt 13 April blamed "bandits" together with "Boko Haram insurgents" for late-March attack on Abuja-Kaduna train line in North West; operations continued to rescue dozens of abductees. Also in Kaduna, gunmen 4 April abducted 22 civilians on Abuja-Kaduna highway; same day attacked Polwire military base in Birnin Gwari area, killing at least a dozen soldiers. In Zamfara state, bandits 1 April reportedly attacked Daki Takwas village in Gummi area, killing at least 20 civilians. Troops 1 April engaged suspected bandits near Suleja town, Niger state; three bandits and 14 soldiers reportedly killed. Military next day said 83 suspected bandits killed in airstrikes in Zamfara and Kaduna states. Meanwhile, unidentified gunmen around 10 April reportedly killed around 154 people in Kanam area of Plateau state; about 4,800 people reportedly displaced by violence. In Borno state in North East, Boko Haram faction known as JAS around 31 March-1 April ambushed and killed about 50 fighters from rival group Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Abadam area; renewed clashes in Sambisa forest 22 April left 32 killed on both sides. ISWAP allegedly expanded operations to new areas: group claimed 19 April bomb attack which killed at least three in Iware town, Taraba state, and overnight 22-23 April reportedly killed five policemen in first ISWAP attack in Kogi state. Herder-farmer violence continued. Suspected herders 4 April killed 12 people in Plateau's Bassa area and 12 April killed at least 23 villagers in Guma and Tarka areas of Benue state. In south, suspected members of separatist Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)'s armed

wing Eastern Security Network launched almost daily attacks on local authorities and security forces, particularly in Anambra state: at least six people killed 3-7 April in Aguata area; four police officers killed 13 April in Ogbaru area. Federal High Court in Abuja 8 April dropped eight of 15 charges against IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu.