

Middle East and North Africa

Eastern Mediterranean

➔ **Israel-Palestine** **Israeli security forces continued lethal raids across West Bank, while Israel's governing coalition collapsed, paving way for fifth election in less than four years.** Following tensions around Jerusalem's Holy Esplanade in May, situation in area was calmer during month; however, risk remains of escalation around religious Eid al-Adha festivities 9-13 July. In West Bank, as of 15 June, Israeli forces conducted over 220 incursions into West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem, with some turning violent, and arrested 57 Palestinians. Notably, Israeli soldiers 1 June shot dead Palestinian woman at entrance of al-Aroub refugee camp in Hebron city, prompting Palestinian protests. Israeli forces 2 June killed five Palestinians, including child, during incursions in Bethlehem, Hebron and Ramallah cities. Israeli forces 9 June detained 24 Palestinians in 37 raids in multiple locales, marking most arrests in 24-hour period this year. Clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces 10 June wounded seven Palestinians, including four children, in Qalqilya city. Israeli forces' pre-dawn raid in Jenin refugee camp 17 June killed three Palestinians. Palestinian Ministry of Health 17 June reported over 70 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces since start of 2022. Clashes 29-30 June erupted in Nablus city where Israeli forces claimed Palestinian gunmen fired on Jewish worshippers, leaving three Israelis and dozens of Palestinians injured. EU 15 June agreed to release funding to Palestinian territories for 2021 that it had withheld over concerns of content inside Palestinian school textbooks. Regional parliament of Catalonia 16 June became first parliament inside EU to pass resolution declaring Israel is committing crime of apartheid. Meanwhile, PM Naftali Bennett and FM Yair Lapid 20 June agreed to hold vote on dissolving Knesset, collapsing eight-party coalition govt and making Lapid caretaker PM, after acknowledging that there was no chance to pass emergency regulations that extend Israeli civil law to settlers in West Bank; Knesset dissolved 30 June, awaiting fifth election since April 2019 to be held 1 Nov. Egypt, Israel and EU 15 June signed deal to increase liquefied natural gas sales to EU countries to help reduce dependence on Russian supplies. Shadow hostilities with Iran became more visible (see Iran).

➔ **Lebanon** **President Aoun invited PM Mikati to form next govt, while tensions rose with Israel over disputed maritime border.** President Aoun 23 June tasked incumbent PM Najib Mikati to form new govt after Mikati secured support of 54 out of 128 members of parliament – lowest level of support for any PM-designate since end of civil war in 1990; Mikati will likely face challenges to form govt that can rely on sufficiently strong parliamentary support to move forward with substantial reform, while most observers expect that no new govt can be formed before compromise is found over successor of Aoun, whose term expires on 31 Oct. Meanwhile, floating production storage and offloading facility operated by energy company Energean 5 June arrived at position near maritime border between Israel and Lebanon to prepare commercial extraction scheduled for Sept 2022 of gas from Karish gas field, which company acquired in 2016 with authorisation of Israeli govt; field is located some 90km off both countries' coastline and has been area of dispute

between govts. In response, Hizbollah Sec Gen Hassan Nasrallah 9 June called upon all Lebanese political forces to unite in defence of country's maritime resources, warned Energean against extraction activities and threatened group may take matter into its own hands. At invitation of govt, U.S. mediator Amos Hochstein 13 June arrived in capital Beirut seeking compromise to dispute following previous failed attempts this year; uncertainty persists around whether govt will adhere to official 2010 position of maritime border known as "line 23" or adopt expanded claim presented in 2020 known as "line 29" that claims part of Karish field. 13 MPs elected last month on platforms of opposition to established parties 16 June voiced support for "line 29"; despite heated public debate and many casting support of "line 29" as patriotic duty, Aoun resisted signing decree to officially modify govt's 2010 position. Govt, UN and over 100 humanitarian partners 20 June announced \$3.2bn appeal for 2022 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan aimed at providing support for 1.5mn Lebanese, 1.5mn displaced Syrians and more than 209,000 Palestinian refugees.

➔ **Syria Israeli airstrike targeted Damascus airport, northern Syria braced for possible Turkish offensive, and country awaited outcome of crunch vote on cross-border aid at UN Security Council in July.** Israeli airstrike 10 June hit Damascus International Airport, injuring one civilian and causing damage to runways; airport next day suspended all flights and 23 June reopened; Israeli media claimed attack sought to disrupt weapons smuggling from Iran to Hizbollah. In north west, Idlib province's March 2020 ceasefire held despite violations. Turkish President Erdoğan 1 June said new military operation targeting Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) announced in May would target Tal Rifaat and Manbij areas in Aleppo province; Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) 7 June said it was ready to cooperate with Syrian govt to resist Turkish incursion. Russia and govt reportedly reinforced positions close to Turkish border, amid reported near-daily rocket and artillery fire early month. While U.S. and Russian opposition appear for now to have forestalled offensive, operation, if it goes ahead, could create new instability in north and strain Türkiye's ties with West. Fighting among factions of Türkiye-backed militia coalition Syrian National Army 18 June reportedly killed at least eight and injured scores in al-Bab city, Aleppo province; Türkiye next day reportedly facilitated deal to end clashes. Meanwhile, protests against high electricity prices and power outages erupted early month in Turkish-controlled areas of Aleppo province; security forces 3 June killed one protestor in Afrin city. Low-scale Islamic State (ISIS) attacks and Russian anti-ISIS airstrikes continued. U.S.-led coalition 16 June captured senior ISIS leader in northern Syria and 27 June killed "senior leader" of al-Qaeda-aligned militant group Hurras al-Din in Idlib province. In Raqqa province, ISIS 20 June killed eleven govt soldiers and two civilians in Jabal al-Bishri. Russia 15 June carried out airstrikes at al-Tanf military base used by U.S. and UK forces in Homs province; Russia reportedly notified U.S. beforehand. Ahead of expiry of UN mandate to deliver aid from Türkiye into opposition-controlled north west Syria on 10 July, UN Sec Gen 20 June appealed to UN Security Council to extend mandate; UN late month warned "people will die" without renewal.

Gulf and Arabian Peninsula

➔ **Iran Govt ramped up nuclear activity and scaled down external monitoring, while resumption of indirect U.S.-Iran talks offered faint**

glimmer of hope in salvaging 2015 deal and tensions with Israel rose.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi 6 June told agency's board that Iran had failed to provide adequate explanations regarding traces of uranium found at undeclared sites. Board by vote of 30 to two (Russia and China) 8 June passed resolution expressing "profound concern" over lack of progress and called on govt to address queries. Govt next day condemned censure, adopting measures to ramp up nuclear activity and restrict transparency: ahead of vote, govt began installing cascade of advanced IR-6 centrifuges at Natanz plant with plans for further two cascades, and took pair of IAEA cameras offline; govt 8 June began dismantling 27 IAEA cameras, which IAEA following day characterised as potential "fatal blow" to restore 2015 nuclear deal. Govt 14 June pointed to possible "external elements" that may be responsible for uranium traces at undeclared sites. In positive step, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell 25 June announced EU would mediate resumed indirect U.S.-Iran negotiations in Qatar; talks late June ended according to U.S. with "no progress". Meanwhile, shadow hostilities with Israel grew more visible. News 3 June surfaced of death of Ali Esmailzadeh, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) colonel who, Iranian media asserted, "died after falling from a terrace in his house"; two other individuals – engineer at military aerospace facility and geologist – died on 31 May and 2 June in suspected poisoning. In sign of rising tensions that underscore growing risks of escalation, Israeli PM Naftali Bennett 8 June said "we've created a new equation by going for the head [of the octopus]", referring to shift away from only targeting Iran's tentacles, meaning regional proxies. Israel 13 June issued travel alert for Israelis to avoid visiting Türkiye, citing alleged Iranian threats. U.S. 16 June sanctioned Iranian companies and individuals allegedly supporting sale of oil to China and East Asia. U.S. reported IRGC vessels 20 June approached U.S. navy ships in "unsafe and unprofessional" manner, second such incident since March.

➔ Iraq Largest parliamentary bloc resigned amid deadlocked govt formation, while Türkiye struck Shiite militias for first time and continued to target Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and its affiliates.

Stalled govt formation efforts entered ninth month; in protest of deadlock, 73 lawmakers from Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's bloc 12 June resigned and Sadr 15 June announced he would withdraw from political process, raising prospect of Sadr encouraging street protests; parliament Speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi 12 June accepted resignations. Parliament 23 June held emergency session for replacement MPs to take their oath. Earlier in month, parliament 8 June approved emergency food security bill backed by Sadr, allocating \$17bn for food, gas, electricity and public service salaries. Drones allegedly launched by Shiite paramilitary coalition Popular Mobilisation Forces' (PMF) 30th battalion 2, 9 June targeted Türkiye's Zilkan base in Bashiqa, Ninewa governorate; group has launched eight attacks on base this year. In response, reports suggested Türkiye 9 June launched indirect fire against 30th battalion, resulting in two casualties in Ninewa plains, in first Turkish assault to date on PMF group not aligned with PKK; tit-for-tat attacks between Türkiye and PMF could increase in disputed areas of Ninewa. Meanwhile, Türkiye continued operations targeting PKK in northern Iraq; notably, in Sinjar district of Ninewa, Türkiye 15 June allegedly conducted airstrikes against PKK-affiliated Sinjar Resistance Units (YBS) positions in Sinuni town, killing two and injuring seven. Turkish drone 17 June targeted vehicle in Kalar town in Sulaymaniyah governorate, killing four PKK militants. In Kurdistan, judicial council 4 June rejected federal

supreme court's Feb ruling that declared regional govt's development of oil and gas fields outside federal supervision "unconstitutional". IED-laden drone 8 June hit Pirmam road near U.S. consulate facility in regional capital Erbil, injuring three; security forces claimed Shiite militia Kataib Hezbollah was responsible for attack, while Iranian media said strike targeted Israeli secret service. Low-level Islamic State (ISIS) attacks and counter-ISIS operations continued throughout month; notably, security forces 3 June announced killing four ISIS members in Wadi al-Qathf region in Anbar governorate.

➡ **Saudi Arabia** **Warring parties extended truce in Yemen and U.S. President Biden announced visit to Jeddah port city in July.** Saudi-led coalition and Huthis refrained from cross-border attacks after warring parties in Yemen 2 June renewed April truce for two more months (see Yemen). News 13 June surfaced that Oman facilitated talks in May on border security between govt and Huthis. U.S. White House 14 June confirmed U.S. President Biden will visit Saudi Arabia in July as part of first Middle East trip of his presidency; Biden is expected to meet King Salman and, informally, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. In sign of warming ties with Türkiye, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman 22 June visited Turkish capital Ankara to meet President Erdoğan, in first visit to country since killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018. Iranian foreign ministry 27 June said Riyadh wanted to resume talks with Iran; fifth round of talks were held in April. After months of resisting U.S. and European pressure to increase oil production, OPEC+ 2 June announced it would raise output by 648,000 barrels per day in July and August 2022.

↑ **Yemen** **Conflict parties extended April truce for two months, while negotiations over access to Taiz city remained central sticking point and divisions surfaced within govt.** Warring parties 2 June renewed UN-mediated April truce for two months; truce – which is longest in effect since start of war in 2015 – has halted entirely cross-border attacks between Saudi-led coalition and Huthis and significantly slowed ground fighting. Low-scale fighting, however, continued during month across front lines, while conflict parties reportedly continued redeployment of military reinforcements and use of drones was reported in Marib, Hajjah, Saada, Hodeida, Taiz and al-Dhale governorates. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 3 June said 19 civilians had been killed in first two months of truce. In effort to fulfil truce's third confidence-building measure, govt and Huthis 5 June began second round of negotiations in Jordanian capital Amman over reopening road access to Taiz city; UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg's office 6 June presented proposal for phased reopening of roads. Huthis 24 June rejected UN proposal. After Huthis lifted ban on Grundberg's entry to capital Sanaa, envoy 8 June visited city to meet Huthi Supreme Political Council President Mahdi al-Mashat and other Huthi officials, urging them to accept UN proposal. Separately, govt, Huthi and Saudi-led coalition representatives 6 June agreed to set up joint operation room to facilitate ceasefire. News 13 June surfaced that Oman facilitated talks in May on border security between Saudi Arabia and Huthis. Domestically, tensions within recently-formed Presidential Leadership Council surfaced, raising uncertainty over whether anti-Huthi bloc will remain united; notably, head of Southern Transitional Council (STC) Ayderous al-Zubaidi pushed for STC military wing, Security Belt Forces, to remain independent following govt's decision in May to unify all anti-Huthi factions; STC reportedly has embarked on rampant

recruitment across south. Meanwhile, security incidents in south rose, notably targeting STC-aligned individuals; IED 15 June killed journalist in Aden city. On economic front, food prices rose causing aid organisations to reduce food rations. With Yemeni riyal reaching 1,050 to U.S. dollar early month, state oil company in Aden 4 June increased fuel prices. Amid increasing power-cuts, as summer months approach, protests 5 June erupted in Mukalla city, Hadramawt governorate.

North Africa

➔ **Algeria Relations with Spain continued to deteriorate over Western Sahara, and army conducted exercise near Moroccan border; harassment of journalists persisted.** After Spanish PM Pedro Sánchez 8 June confirmed his country's support for Morocco's autonomy plan for Western Sahara before parliament, Algiers same day announced suspension of 2002 friendship and cooperation treaty with Madrid, and 9 June cut off bilateral trade. Spanish govt immediately expressed "regret" at Algiers' decisions, while EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell 10 June warned suspension of bilateral trade might violate EU-Algeria partnership agreement and lead to "retaliatory measures". Army early June conducted live-ammunition night-time exercises in southern Tindouf area near border with Morocco, likely in show of force ahead of U.S.-Morocco annual joint military exercise launched 20 June. Authorities continued to curtail free speech. Algiers courts 7 June sentenced prominent journalist Ihsane El Kadi to six months in prison on charges of "spreading false information"; 13 June sentenced head of Ennahar media group, Mohamed Mokadem, to ten years' imprisonment on fraud charges. Meanwhile, Algerian, Nigerian and Nigerien energy ministers around 20 June met in Nigeria's capital Abuja in effort to revive trans-Saharan pipeline project to link Nigeria to Europe through Niger and Algeria.

➔ **Egypt Preparations for national dialogue moved forward, and fighting between security forces and Islamic State militants continued in Sinai Peninsula.** Authorities 8 June appointed journalist and head of State Information Service Diaa Rashwan as general coordinator of President Sisi-sponsored national dialogue. Move sparked controversy among opposition forces, with coalition of seven political parties Civil Democratic Movement 10 June denouncing "unilateral" appointment, saying it does not augur well for fair and effective dialogue process. Rashwan later in month held consultations with political, economic and social actors with a view to launching formal dialogue in July. As part of appeasement efforts ahead of dialogue, authorities 13 June released group of 15 political prisoners, adding to 59 political detainees set free since late April. Imprisonment of opponents however continued: courts 5 June sentenced 17 people to jail, including some to life imprisonment for allegedly belonging to outlawed organisation Muslim Brotherhood (MB); 28 June sentenced ten people to death and over 50 others to life imprisonment for supporting or carrying out MB-led attacks against security forces between 2013 and 2015; NGO Amnesty International same day decried "grossly unfair mass trial" and urged authorities to quash death sentences. In response to recent spike in jihadist attacks in Sinai Peninsula, security forces 5 June launched operation against Islamic State-affiliated Sinai Province (SP) west of Rafah town and in Sheikh Zuweid region. Encounters between militants and security forces in Rafah area reportedly killed large number of SP operatives 9-10

June; three soldiers 13 June; one army colonel and two tribal militia fighters around 18 June; and seven SP operatives 19-20 June. Airstrikes in same area 12 June killed six SP operatives. Russian trade minister 16 June announced Moscow and Cairo agreed to switch to local currencies for future business transactions, thus bypassing obstacles created by recent sanctions on Russia.

➔ **Libya Crisis of two govts dragged on as UN-led talks failed to forge consensus on constitutional basis for elections.** House of Representatives (HoR) 15 June passed Sirte-based PM Fathi Bashagha's proposed govt budget. Bashagha unlikely to be able to tap into state funds, however, as Tripoli-based Govt of National Unity (GNU) immediately rejected budget, and Central Bank of Libya Governor Siddiq Elkebir, who is in charge of making disbursements into govt accounts, did not signal he would recognise budget. Bashagha's efforts to win international support remained unsuccessful. UN Sec-Gen office 23 June said UN would continue to recognise Tripoli-based PM Abdelhamid Dabaiba as legitimate PM until elections are held. Delegates of HoR and Tripoli-based High State Council 12-20 June met in Egypt's capital Cairo for third round of UN-sponsored political talks, failed to find agreement on constitutional basis for elections; new UN-convened talks between rival assemblies' chairmen 28-29 June took place in Switzerland, failed to make breakthrough. Simultaneously, some politicians in recent weeks tried to forge consensus for "third" govt to replace both Bashagha and Dabaiba-led executives, while eastern strongman Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and Dabaiba aides in June allegedly met outside Libya to negotiate deal aimed at persuading Haftar to drop support for Bashagha in favour of Dabaiba. Politically driven closures of oil sector throughout June persisted, with production fluctuating between 600,000-900,000 barrels/day, equivalent to 50-75% of country's total oil production before closures; National Oil Corporation 30 June declared force majeure on oil terminals of Sidra and Ras Lanuf in Gulf of Sirte region due to shutdown of oilfields. Meanwhile, security situation in capital Tripoli remained tense. Notably, rival western militias 10 June clashed in Souk el-Tlath neighbourhood, leaving at least one dead; UN Support Mission in Libya next day expressed concerned and urged restraint, also reported mobilisation of armed groups from areas surrounding Tripoli. Heavy fighting between rival GNU-affiliated militias 22 June left three combatants and one civilian dead in Zawiyet Al-Dahmani neighbourhood. Pan-Arab media 23 June reported clashes at military base in Tripoli as 22 June transitional phase deadline set by 2020 roadmap passed.

➔ **Tunisia Political tensions continued to run high as President Saïed conducted mass dismissal of judges, moved forward with constitutional reform project and pursued economic reform despite protests.** President Saïed 1 June revoked 57 judges on various charges, including "disrupting investigations" into terrorism cases and "corruption". Powerful Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) 3 June denounced justice ministry's "terrorism campaign" against judiciary, and Tunisian Judges Association 6 June launched week-long strike, later extended it three times into July. Saïed 4 June started national dialogue on new constitution; UGTT and main political parties, including Islamist-inspired An-Nahda party, boycotted initiative. Different political forces 18-19 June organised protests against Saïed's "coup" and constitutional referendum due 25 July, drawing thousands into streets of capital Tunis. Head of constitution drafting committee Sadok Belaïd 20 June submitted draft constitution to Saïed for approval; Saïed 30

June published draft constitution enshrining strong presidential system. Meanwhile, UGTT 16 June staged public sector nationwide strike, bringing country to a standstill, to protest Saïed's economic policies as govt seeks to secure major loan from International Monetary Fund; 27 June called for new nationwide strike without giving date. Repression of dissent continued. Military court of Tunis 13 June issued arrest warrant against journalist Saleh Attia on charges of "harming the army" and "inciting Tunisians to violence" after he criticised govt in interview with Qatar-based news channel Al Jazeera. Police 23 June arrested former PM Hamadi Jebali on money-laundering charges; judge 27 June ordered his release. Authorities around 27 June reportedly charged 33 people including head of An-Nahda and speaker of dissolved parliament, Rached Ghannouchi, with belonging to terrorist organisation in relation to 2013 killings of two prominent politicians.

➔ **Western Sahara** **Relations between Algeria and Spain continued to deteriorate over Western Sahara, while civil society groups mobilised against Moroccan repression of Sahrawi activists.** Algeria 8 June announced suspension of 2002 friendship and cooperation treaty with Madrid, and next day froze bilateral trade operations, citing Spain's endorsement of Morocco's autonomy plan for Western Sahara. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell 10 June warned suspension of trade operations might violate EU-Algeria partnership agreement and lead to "retaliatory measures" (see Algeria). Meanwhile, group of NGOs and lawyers 9 June filed several complaints against Morocco with UN Committee Against Torture, denouncing mistreatment and alleged torture of four Sahrawi activists currently in prison in Morocco.