



---

## CrisisWatch 2023 – November Trends and December Alerts

---

# Africa

---

## Central Africa

---

↓ **Cameroon** Anglophone conflict took heavy toll on civilians, with over 30 killed in two major attacks; jihadist groups continued targeting civilians and govt forces' positions in Far North.

*Massacres highlighted civilians' vulnerability amid Anglophone conflict.* In South West region, unidentified gunmen overnight 6 Nov rampaged through Egbekaw neighbourhood of Mamfe town (Manyu division), setting houses ablaze and killing at least 25 civilians; day marked anniversary of President Biya's rise to power (see below). In Francophone West region, near border with Anglophone North West, suspected armed separatists 21 Nov raided market in Bamenyam village (Bamboutos division), killing nine people, abducting at least ten and wounding two soldiers. UN condemned both attacks, urged govt to conduct investigations and hold perpetrators accountable. Meanwhile, fighting continued between Anglophone separatists and govt forces. In North West region, separatist combatants 8, 11 Nov clashed with army in regional capital Bamenda, leaving two soldiers dead; army 11 Nov raided separatist hideout in Nguri locality (Donga-Mantung division), killing six fighters including one commander; separatists 10 Nov attacked soldiers with rocket-propelled grenade in Belo town (Boyo division), killing three.

*Jihadist groups kept up attacks on military, civilian targets in Far North region.* Suspected Boko Haram (BH) combatants early to mid-Nov attacked several localities in Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone-et-Chari divisions, with four civilians killed 12 Nov in Kolofata and Hile Alifa towns. Fighting between militants and govt forces continued. Suspected Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) elements 5 Nov attacked military post in Fotokol town (Logone-et-Chari), killing one soldier. BH-army clashes 9-13 Nov also left four dead in several areas of Mayo-Sava.

*Ruling party celebrated President Biya's 41st anniversary in office.* Ruling party 6 Nov held rallies in several cities to celebrate Biya's 41st anniversary in power, called on 90-year-old president to vie for eighth term in 2025 presidential election.

➔ **Central African Republic** Govt forces and allies continued to hunt down rebels in several regions, and authorities dismissed UN mission's call for national dialogue.

*Increased rebel activity prompted military to step up presence in hinterland.* Between 100 and 150 govt troops 1 Nov deployed to Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture's capital Ndélé, after around 120 unidentified armed men late Oct took control of nearby Miamani village, killing one soldier and forcing other soldiers and civilians

to flee. In Ouham-Fafa prefecture, Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) rebels 2 Nov claimed control of Sido town near Chadian border, with two soldiers and several civilians reportedly killed; military and Russian paramilitary Wagner Group 5 Nov recaptured town, and Wagner plane on search mission in Ouham-Fafa 11 Nov briefly crossed into Chad, prompting N'Djamena to threaten defensive action; CPC 24 Nov once again attacked Sido before leaving next day. After govt and Wagner forces late Oct attacked Central African Patriotic Movement (MPC) armed group and killed about 20 fighters, MPC leader Mahamat Al-Khatim 3 Nov announced leaving CPC and reintegrating 2019 peace agreement with govt.

*UN renewed mission's mandate amid tensions over national dialogue proposal.* After UN mission (MINUSCA) late Oct called for new dialogue between govt and both civilian and armed opposition, President Touadéra's special adviser Fidèle Gouandjika 2 Nov dismissed proposal, claimed it was part of "genocidal plot" hatched by MINUSCA and France to destabilise country. Opposition and armed groups reacted cautiously to MINUSCA's proposal, with some voicing concern that any such dialogue would legitimise Touadéra-sponsored constitutional referendum held in July. UN Security Council 15 Nov renewed MINUSCA's mandate for one year until Nov 2024, demonstrating international community's almost unanimous support for Touadéra despite authoritarian drift.

*Intercommunal tensions flared in north west.* Muslim trader 8 Nov attacked and killed non-Muslim man following land dispute in Paoua town, Lim-Pendé prefecture; in response, crowd next day set fire to over 20 Muslim houses.

➔ **Chad Opposition heavyweight Succès Masra returned from exile ahead of constitutional referendum due in December; N'Djamena faced growing risk of becoming embroiled in Sudan conflict.**

*Authorities allowed Succès Masra to return, prepared constitutional referendum.* Succès Masra, leader of *Les Transformateurs* party, 3 Nov returned to Chad after year-long exile; agreement for his return, facilitated by Economic Community of Central African States, includes amnesty for all military and civilian actors involved in deadly violence of 20 Oct 2022, and Masra's commitment to support transition process. Authorities 5 Nov released 72 members of *Les Transformateurs* who had been detained since 2022. Masra 19 Nov addressed hundreds of supporters in capital N'Djamena, urged "reconciliation" with military rulers. Civil society movement *Wakit Tama* refused to recognise amnesty, and *Les Démocrates* party leader rejected "fool's agreement", urged justice for victims of 2022 police crackdown. Meanwhile, govt 7 Nov published decree convening electorate for constitutional referendum scheduled for 16-17 Dec. Several opposition and civil society figures continued to denounce draft constitution's focus on unitary state to the detriment of federal one, lack of participation of main political actors and hasty nature of census, which did not cover entire electorate, especially in southern provinces.

*Chad denied taking sides in Sudan's war amid mounting risk of destabilisation.* Govt 6 Nov denied rumours that Chad and United Arab Emirates use Amdjarass airport to send military supply to Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo "Hemedti"'s paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Recent clashes in Sudan between RSF and Juba Peace Agreement signatories, whose members largely hail from Zaghawa

community, could increase tensions between Arabs and Zaghawa in govt and military (see Sudan).

*In another important development.* Coordinated offensive launched in August by Libyan National Army and Chadian military continued to weaken rebel movement Front for Alternance and Concord in Chad (FACT). Prominent FACT leader Mahamat Barh Béchir Kendji late Oct or early Nov reportedly surrendered to Chadian authorities alongside between 130 and 1,000 combatants; FACT 9 Nov accused Kendji of treason.

➔ **Gabon** **Junta disclosed timetable for transition back to civilian rule, setting August 2025 as tentative election date.**

Military govt 13 Nov announced that presidential and legislative elections will be held in Aug 2025, according to “indicative” timetable to be validated by national dialogue scheduled for April 2024.

---

## Great Lakes

---

➔ **Burundi** **Public prosecutors called for life imprisonment for former PM Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni, while govt troops engaged in DR Congo faced challenges.**

*Trial of former PM Bunyoni over alleged coup attempt ended.* Supreme Court trial of Bunyoni 9 Nov concluded, with public prosecutors seeking life imprisonment on multiple charges including undermining national security for allegedly plotting coup against President Ndayishimiye in 2022; prosecutors also requested 30 years in prison for Bunyoni’s six co-defendants. Since Bunyoni’s arrest in April, human rights groups have called in vain for full judicial investigation into abuses committed by security forces during his time as security minister from 2015 to 2020.

*Soldiers abandoned positions in DR Congo under pressure from M23.* Amid renewed offensive by M23 armed group in North Kivu province (see DR Congo), Congolese civil society said Burundian troops deployed as part of East African Community regional force 22 Nov left Kitshanga town (which straddles Masisi and Rutshuru territories) and Mweso city (Masisi territory); military denied leaving Kitshanga. Meanwhile, M23 rebels 7 Nov accused Burundian troops of collaborating with Congolese armed forces and allied armed groups, including anti-Kigali Hutu-led Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, in eastern DR Congo; Gitega denied claim, which could strain relations with Rwanda after period of improvement. Radio France Internationale 17 Nov reported Gitega deployed at least four battalions of soldiers to North Kivu as part of bilateral agreement with Kinshasa.

➔ ⚡ **DR Congo** **Distrust in electoral process continued to mar prospects for peaceful vote on 20 December; M23 rebels stepped up offensive, threatening key cities in North Kivu province.**

*Electoral preparations progressed haltingly as opposition discussed coalition.* Constitutional Court 18 Nov validated all 26 presidential candidacies for 20 Dec election, and electoral campaign started next day. Six opposition candidates, including heavyweights Martin Fayulu and Denis Mukwege, 24 Nov filed complaint

against head of electoral commission, Denis Kadima, and Interior Minister Peter Kazadi, accusing them of manipulating electoral process. EU 29 Nov cancelled election observation mission, citing security and technical reasons. Meanwhile, opposition representatives 13-17 Nov met in South Africa, and three candidates 19-20 Nov withdrew from presidential race to back Moïse Katumbi; neither Fayulu nor Mukwege followed suit.

*M23 captured positions in east around North Kivu's provincial capital Goma.* Amid ongoing tensions between Kinshasa and Kigali (see Rwanda), Rwanda-backed M23 rebels continued offensive in North Kivu, with intense fighting in Masisi, Nyiragongo and Rutshuru territories. M23 from late Oct reoccupied most positions they had ceded to East African regional force and repelled army and loyal militias, formerly known as Wazalendo, on Sake-Kitshanga axis and Goma-Rutshuru axis. Notably, M23 14 Nov took control of Kishishe village, Rutshuru territory, 22 Nov captured Mweso city, Masisi territory. Clashes between M23 and army 26 Nov intensified around Kilolirwe village; several thousand households took refuge in Sake town, last stop before Goma. Responding to resurgent M23 threat, UN peacekeeping force (MONUSCO) 3 Nov launched operation with army to reinforce security around Goma; plans for mission's withdrawal continued unhindered, as MONUSCO and govt 21 Nov agreed on timeline for complete disengagement. East African regional force, whose mandate is set to expire on 8 Dec, largely stayed out of fight. President Tshisekedi 17 Nov signed agreement on Southern African regional force, confirmed deployment "in the coming days".

*ADF continued to wreak havoc in eastern provinces.* Islamic State-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels 7 Nov killed at least 12 civilians in three localities of Irumu territory, Ituri province; 12 Nov reportedly slaughtered up to 42 people in Watalinga chiefdom, Beni territory, North Kivu.

➡ **Rwanda U.S. secured commitments from Kigali and Kinshasa to de-escalate tensions as Rwanda-backed M23 armed group made territorial gains in DR Congo.**

*U.S. said Kigali, Kinshasa agreed on de-escalation steps.* U.S. govt 21 Nov said Intelligence Chief Avril Haines 19-20 Nov travelled to Rwanda and DR Congo, secured commitments from Kigali and Kinshasa to de-escalate tensions, although specific measures were not articulated publicly. Congolese army same day prohibited all soldiers, regardless of their ranks, from establishing or maintaining "any contact" with anti-Kigali Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda. Fighting in following days continued in North Kivu between M23 rebels and Congolese forces.

*Kinshasa continued to accuse Kigali of incursions, support for M23 rebels.* Earlier in month, DR Congo's permanent representative at UN, Zénon Mukongo Ngay, 1 Nov said images captured by UN mission (MONUSCO) surveillance drones show columns of Rwandan soldiers crossing border to reinforce M23 rebel positions in Runyoni, Kibumba and Tshanzu localities in North Kivu province. Following request filed by Kinshasa in May, International Criminal Court 4 Nov confirmed it will conduct preliminary examination to "determine the advisability of opening a new investigation" into crimes committed by M23 and others in North Kivu since 2022.

➡ **Uganda Opposition MPs continued to boycott parliament over rights violations, and military captured suspected ADF commander.**

*Opposition boycott continued to paralyse parliament.* Opposition leader in parliament, Mathias Mpuuga, 15 Nov said boycott of parliamentary plenary sessions launched in Oct would continue until govt addresses series of issues, including shrinking civic space and trial of civilians in military courts, also requested information on whereabouts of 18 supporters of opposition party National Unity Platform (NUP) who went missing two years ago. Parliament Speaker Anita Among 22 Nov barred boycotting MPs from other parliamentary activities including attending committee meetings; Mpuuga urged boycotting MPs to defy order, which came into force 28 Nov. State minister for internal affairs, Gen David Muhoozi, 29 Nov presented statement on human rights violations before parliament, said many of alleged missing persons have never been reported to police and some are fictitious.

*Authorities continued to claim gains against Islamic State-affiliated militants.* Military 2 Nov announced capture of Abdul Rashid Kyoto, also known as Njovu, said he was commander of Islamic State-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) unit responsible for 17 Oct attack that left three dead, including two foreigners, in country's west; Nakawa court 13 Nov charged Njovu with terrorism and murder. Congolese civilians continued to seek refuge in Uganda amid ADF attacks, with over 1,000 arriving mid-Nov in Bundibugyo district.

*President Museveni lashed out at U.S., UK and UN.* After U.S. 30 Oct excluded Uganda from African trade initiative over human rights violations, Museveni 5 Nov accused Washington of "underestimating the freedom fighters of Africa". Museveni 15 Nov also condemned "interference in our internal affairs" after U.S. and UK early Nov issued security warning over situation in Uganda; same day accused UN of "conserving" terrorism in DR Congo.

---

## **East and Southern Africa**

---

➡ **Kenya** **Bipartisan talks produced report calling for reform to electoral commission and audit of last presidential elections; court extended suspension of police deployment to Haiti.**

*National Dialogue Committee (NDC) published final report.* NDC, platform for bipartisan talks between governing Kenya Kwanza alliance and opposition Azimio la Umoja coalition on conduct of last year's elections and other issues, 25 Nov published report calling for "restructuring and reconstitution" of electoral commission, audit of last presidential election and urged govt to review tax policy, rationalise public expenditure and expand social protection to reduce cost of living. President Ruto next day welcomed budget cut recommendations as "practical". Meanwhile, High Court 28 Nov ruled that salary levy introduced by Ruto in June was illegal, dealing a blow to govt's efforts to increase tax revenue; Azimio leader Kalonzo Musyoka same day welcomed "win for Azimio".

*Violent incidents continued, notably Al-Shabaab attacks near Somalia border.* Suspected al-Shabaab combatants 25 Nov raided Marafa and Poromoko villages, Lamu county, killing one; 28 Nov attacked police post in Garissa county, injuring one officer. Meanwhile, suspected cattle rustlers from Turkana county same day raided Lochacha village, West Pokot county; resulting clashes killed six.

*Parliament approved police deployment to Haiti, court extended suspension.* Parliament 16 Nov approved police deployment as part of UN-backed mission to Haiti. High Court same day extended order to suspend deployment until 26 Jan 2024 pending ruling on petition questioning constitutionality of deployment.

*In another important development.* Authorities 28 Nov said flooding linked to weather phenomenon El Niño killed 120 people and displaced tens of thousands since Oct.

↓ **Madagascar Political tensions escalated as opposition boycotted presidential election and rejected incumbent President Rajoelina's win amid crackdown on protests; authorities accused army officers of inciting rebellion.**

*Opposition parties rejected results of presidential election held on 16 Nov.* Electoral commission 25 Nov announced provisional results of presidential poll, with Rajoelina winning 59% of votes and turnout just over 46%. Collective of ten opposition candidates rejected results, claimed election saw lowest voter turnout on record at roughly 20%; at least one opposition candidate in following days lodged appeal with High Constitutional Court to have election annulled.

*Security forces clashed with opposition protesters amid calls for election boycott.* Ahead of election, police wielding tear gas and stun grenades 4 Nov dispersed opposition-led protest in Antananarivo, arresting 11 people and leaving around 20 injured. Security forces 8 Nov arrested opposition lawmaker Fetra Ralambozafimbololona at demonstration in Antananarivo, sparking violent clashes with protesters which left 16 people injured. President of National Assembly Christine Razanamahaso 9 Nov endorsed opposition collective's demand to postpone election and hold consultations on electoral rules, citing procedural irregularities and ongoing unrest. Interim govt next day condemned "attempted institutional coup" by Razanamahaso. Collective of ten opposition candidates 13 Nov called on voters to boycott presidential election, denouncing "unbearable" actions of electoral commission, top court and incumbent President Rajoelina. Authorities imposed nightly curfew in capital Antananarivo on eve of presidential vote.

*Army warned against destabilisation attempt after plot allegations.* Country's top prosecutor 28 Nov said two senior army officers had been detained and charged with "threatening state security" for allegedly inciting soldiers to mutiny ahead of election. Army next day warned against any attempt to destabilise country, said army committed to respecting election's outcome.

➡ **Mozambique Islamic State militants pushed toward southern districts of Cabo Delgado province, and opposition continued to reject October municipal elections' results.**

*Islamic State militants moved south in Cabo Delgado province.* Islamic State Mozambique Province (ISMP) combatants late Oct-early Nov moved into Cabo Delgado's southern districts of Meluco and Quissanga, the latter for the first time in a year, leading army to fortify positions against potential attack on provincial capital Pemba. Move may have been forced by military operations in Catupa forest area straddling Mocímboa da Praia, Muidumbe and Macomia districts, or be part of ISMP

efforts to recruit and rebuild strength, with reports of peaceful interactions with residents in Quissanga; concerns also grew that group may try to free militants imprisoned in Pemba or neighbouring Metuge district. Meanwhile, militants launched several attacks in northern districts, forcing thousands to flee. In Macomia, combatants 10 Nov attacked Novo Cabo Delgado village, killing three and wounding four including community militia members. In Muidumbe, militants 12 Nov killed four people in Lagoa Nguri area, and 16 Nov killed another two and took several hostages in Mapate village.

*Opposition protests over contested municipal elections continued, with one killed.* Strains between ruling FRELIMO and main opposition RENAMO parties remained high following electoral violence in wake of October municipal elections. Interior Minister Pascoal Ronda 1 Nov announced 149 people arrested during unrest. RENAMO in Nov continued demonstrations and boycott of parliament to denounce widespread irregularities during vote; police 16 Nov used live bullets to repress opposition protest in Angoche town, Nampula province, killing one and wounding several others. Constitutional Council 24 Nov proclaimed final results with FRELIMO winning 56 municipalities, RENAMO four, smaller opposition party one, and ordered re-vote in four others, set for 10 Dec; preliminary results announced late Oct by electoral commission gave FRELIMO 64 of 65 municipalities. RENAMO 27 Nov announced it would file extraordinary appeal to annul Constitutional Council's judgment validating ballot, arguing it jeopardises fundamental rights.

➔ **Zimbabwe Violent attacks on political leaders persisted, while recalls of some opposition MPs continued to fuel tensions.**

*Political violence targeted opposition, causing outrage.* Gunmen 1 Nov abducted Takudzwa Ngadziore, MP from main opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) in capital Harare, with legislator tortured and released later that day. Body of CCC activist Tapfumaneyi Masaya found 13 Nov, days after armed men abducted him in Harare; Masaya was campaigning for CCC candidate in parliamentary by-election scheduled for 9 Dec. U.S. embassy 14 Nov called for full investigation and end to political violence, while UN human rights office 17 Nov urged authorities to keep their pledge to investigate Masaya's killing, hold perpetrators accountable in fair trials. High Court 28 Nov overturned lower court's conviction of Job Sikhala, CCC deputy chairman, for obstructing justice; Sikhala, however, remained behind bars facing other charges.

*Confusion over recalls of opposition MPs continued to fuel tensions.* Political tensions ran high ahead of 9 Dec by-elections for several parliamentary seats won by CCC candidates in Aug elections; re-runs come after self-proclaimed secretary-general of CCC, Sengezo Tshabangu, in Oct recalled 15 members of National Assembly, claiming they were no longer party members, and High Court 4 Nov dismissed affected lawmakers' request to be reinstated. Confusion persisted as Tshabangu 14 Nov recalled another 13 National Assembly members, with CCC lawyers saying new recalls contradict High Court order issued earlier same day temporarily blocking him from doing so. CCC throughout month continued to accuse ruling ZANU-PF party of orchestrating recalls.

---

## Horn of Africa

---

### ➔ Eritrea Asmara defended its role in Ethiopia's Tigray war, and President Isaias attended Saudi Arabia-Africa summit.

*Asmara defended involvement in Tigray war.* On first anniversary of peace deal between Ethiopian govt and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Asmara 2 Nov defended its involvement, saying it was compelled to enter war amid alleged TPLF plans to invade Eritrea, overthrow govt and expand its territory. Minister of Information Yemane Gebremeskel same day accused U.S. and "certain European countries" of making "unsubstantiated allegations" about continued presence of Eritrean troops in Tigray region.

*Isaias attended Saudi Arabia-Africa summit.* President Isaias 9 Nov travelled to Saudi capital Riyadh for three-day Saudi Arabia-Africa summit beginning 10 Nov; 13 Nov met with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. While in Riyadh, Isaias held separate meetings with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Somali President Hassan Sheik Mohamud to discuss Red Sea security. Isaias and Sisi also discussed Sudan crisis, during which Isaias reportedly called for African Union (AU)-led peace initiative. In interview with media outlet Asharq al-Awsat next day, however, Isaias launched scathing critique of AU, alongside Intergovernmental Authority on Development and Economic Community of West African States, dismissing them as ineffective.

### ➔ Ethiopia Hostilities continued to intensify in Amhara region, talks between govt and Oromo Liberation Army ended without agreement, and frictions within Tigray's leadership simmered.

*Fano-federal violence continued in Amhara, with heavy clashes in Lalibela town.* Hostilities between federal forces and Amhara militias known as Fano intensified in Amhara region. Notably, fierce clashes 8 Nov erupted around Lalibela (North Wollo Zone), with Fano militants briefly taking control of town before withdrawing 9 Nov amid heavy artillery and drones. Fano fighters 25 Nov reportedly entered strategic Addis Zemen town (South Gondar Zone). Meanwhile, news agency Reuters 7 Nov reported that skirmishes between armed Amhara and Oromo militia in Oromia Special Zone killed 30 civilians.

*Talks to end Oromia insurgency broke down.* Govt and Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) early Nov resumed high-level talks in Tanzania, facilitated by Intergovernmental Authority on Development, U.S. and Norway; talks 21 Nov ended without agreement, sides traded blame for breakdown; previous talks failed due to disputes on key political issues, such as OLA demands for greater political role in Oromia. Meanwhile, govt-insurgent fighting continued. Notably, radio network VOA Amharic 1 Nov reported that shootouts in North Shewa Zone left at least twelve civilians dead and displaced unknown number.

*Tigray's interim administration dismissed four top officials.* Tigray region's Interim Regional Administration (IRA) 8 Nov announced it had 28 Oct removed four high-ranking officials for failing to adequately perform their duties; IRA had dismissed six others late Oct. Move comes amid simmering power struggle between IRA and disgruntled senior faction of region's ruling party, Tigray People's Liberation Front



(TPLF). Another high-level meeting between IRA, TPLF leadership and Tigray military leaders began 12 Nov to address disagreement.

*In other important developments.* After PM Abiy's Oct remarks on securing access to seaport raised concerns in region, Abiy 14 Nov reiterated he has no intention of using military force; still, he underscored importance of seaport access for Ethiopia's development and warned failure to resolve issue now could trigger future conflict. U.S. development agency 14 Nov announced resumption of food assistance to Ethiopia, suspended in May due to aid diversion and theft.

➡ **Somalia Election-related tensions persisted in Puntland even as state president appointed dialogue committee, offensive against Al-Shabaab remained largely on pause, and UN delayed drawdown of AU mission.**

*Amid election stalemate in Puntland state, opportunity for de-escalation emerged.* Opposition in Puntland continued to accuse President Said Deni of attempting to manipulate upcoming parliamentary and presidential election process to his advantage, by determining rules of game with little consultation as Puntland moves from clan-based selection to universal suffrage. Group of Puntland clan elders 1 Nov argued for return to clan-based selection to ensure timely vote on 8 Jan 2024; but govt said it would not change path. Opposition 14 Nov announced parallel clan-based vote for 8 Jan. In local incident partially related to dispute, govt and opposition forces 7 Nov clashed in state capital Garowe, killing one civilian; UN 21 Nov called for restraint, expressed concern over recent mobilisation of forces in city. Parliament 26 Nov called for more time to resolve issues between govt and opposition, did not endorse electoral commission's proposal to postpone elections to 25 Feb 2024. Deni 27 Nov appointed election negotiation committee, providing some hope for dialogue to break deadlock.

*Govt offensive against Al-Shabaab remained on hold.* Large-scale military operations against Al-Shabaab militants remained on pause due to heavy rain and troop rotation, as govt forces used time to regroup. Several small clashes reported, however, including in South West state. Notably, army 1-5 Nov engaged Al-Shabaab during clearing operations around Xuddur town, Bakool region, and late Nov conducted further operations in Bakool and Bay regions. In Galmudug state, main focus of recent efforts, govt forces 7 Nov captured small village of Barag Mohamud Daaud. Govt-allied clan militias continued attempt to clear militants from both banks of Shabelle river in Hirshabelle state. Al-Shabaab attacks also occurred at low frequency. Notably, two suicide attacks 3 and 13 Nov caused minimal damage in capital Mogadishu.

*AU mission (ATMIS) drawdown official delayed.* UN Security Council 15 Nov approved extension of ATMIS mandate until 30 June 2024, including postponing second phase of mission's drawdown until 31 Dec 2023.

➡ **Somaliland Inter-clan clashes pitted Dhulbahante militias against Isaaq sub-clan fighters in Sool region and parliament prepared for Nov 2024 elections.**

*Security situation remained precarious in Sool region.* Dhulbahante clan militias 6-9 Nov clashed with fighters from Haber Jecllo sub-clan of Isaaq (Somaliland's largest

clan) at Buq-dharkayn town, 20km south of frontline of conflict between Somaliland govt and SSC-Khatumo state (new self-declared administration for Dhulbahante community) around Oog town, leading to unconfirmed number of deaths and capture of prisoners. Govt and SSC-Khatumo state accused each other of stoking violence and reinforced nearby positions. Deadly clashes 22 Nov resumed in Buq-dharkayn and Maygaale areas. Though fighting has mostly been on clan militia level, Somaliland pointed to involvement of Somalia's Puntland state, while SSC-Khatumo called on Somali and international actors to pressure Somaliland President Bihi to cease hostilities. Ruling party's deputy chairman, Hussein Aden Adde, 27 Nov reportedly defected to SSC-Khatumo. Meanwhile, self-declared administration continued lobbying to become member state of Somalia.

*Electoral tensions remained low amid preparations for Nov 2024 vote.* August agreement between Bihi and opposition to simultaneously hold political party and presidential elections on 13 November 2024 continued to hold. House of Elders 18 Nov agreed to form committee to review amendments to election law made by parliament.

➡ **South Sudan Hostilities between Twic Dinka from Warrap state and Ngok Dinka from disputed Abyei area escalated, leaving scores dead amid retaliatory violence and reported army involvement.**

*Violence spiked in Abyei area and Warrap state, killing dozens.* Border skirmishes 13 Nov erupted between Twic Dinka from Warrap state and Ngok Dinka from disputed Abyei Administrative Area; Abyei officials accused national army, which is prohibited from entering Abyei (a demilitarised zone), of fighting alongside Twic youth, though army denied allegations. Hostilities reportedly left dozens dead. Violence 19 Nov intensified again when armed Twic youths entered several villages in Abyei in attacks, killing at least 27. Head of UN mission in South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, 23 Nov said recent violence killed at least 75 and urged govt to investigate. Meanwhile, Sudan conflict neared Abyei (see Sudan) and could aggravate tensions between Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities given latter's proximity to paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and recruitment campaigns of Sudan's warring parties.

*President Kiir reconstituted key electoral institutions.* As 2024 elections inched closer, President Kiir 3 Nov reconstituted National Election Commission (NEC), Political Parties Council and National Constitution Review Commission. Failure to appoint single opposition candidate to NEC leadership, which will play crucial role in conduct of polls, prompted Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO) to reject its composition.

*South Sudan deployed first Necessary Unified Forces (NUF).* After four-year delay, South Sudan 15 Nov deployed first 750 NUF members as stipulated in peace agreement. Deployment sparked controversy as most troops selected are former members of South Sudan People's Defence Forces, army of governing party; troops were also deployed to Tonga town (Upper Nile state), where hostilities between SPLM-IO and govt-allied Agwalek militia reignited late Oct, raising fears NUF could intervene against SPLA-IO.

*In another important development.* Security forces 10 Nov increased presence in capital Juba during President Kiir's trip to Saudi Arabia, triggering rumours of coup

attempt; army leadership dismissed Inspector General of National Police Services. President Kiir 27 Nov reshuffled cabinet, replacing Warrap state governor and three national ministers.

📌 ⚡ **Sudan Rapid Support Forces (RSF) scored major victories in Darfur, reportedly targeting ethnic Massalit communities; RSF advances to North Darfur triggered Juba Peace Agreement (JPA) signatories to renounce neutrality, raising risk of all-out ethnic conflict in Darfur.**

*RSF captured West Darfur and East Darfur state capital, left trail of alleged mass atrocities.* Having captured South and Central Darfur states late Oct, RSF 4 Nov seized West Darfur, 21 Nov captured East Darfur state capital El Daein. Refugees in Chad claimed RSF committed “many atrocities” during early Nov attacks on Ardamata in West Darfur, including ethnically-motivated killings and sexual violence. Thousands of people fled Ardamata and evidence of mass graves emerged.

*JPA signatories threatened to fight RSF if it advances towards El Fashir, North Darfur.* Paramilitary early Nov began march on North Darfur state capital El Fasher, prompting two JPA signatories, Sudan Liberation Movement under Minni Minawi and Justice and Equality Movement, 16 Nov to renounce neutrality and fight alongside Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF); third signatory, Gathering of Sudan Liberation Forces, 20 Nov followed suit. Groups deployed forces across North Darfur, raising fears of all-out ethnic conflict. Involvement of JPA signatories, whose members largely hail from Zaghawa community, could reverberate in Chad, where Zaghawa community lives and dominates govt and military (see Chad).

*Fighting in Kordofan and capital Khartoum persisted.* RSF continued advance in Kordofan region, targeting oil infrastructure. Notably, paramilitary launched more attacks on North Kordofan state capital El Obeid, through which major pipeline runs. Offensive brought fighting near border with South Sudan and disputed Abyei region, raising risk of spillover (see South Sudan). Meanwhile, battle for Khartoum continued. Notably, RSF 20 Nov claimed it had seized Jebel Awlia army base south of Khartoum, which could facilitate advance into White Nile state.

*In other important developments.* U.S.-Saudi facilitated talks in Jeddah city 7 Nov failed to yield ceasefire. Reports late Nov surfaced of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) plans to hold emergency summit on Sudan in early Dec. Army General 28 Nov publicly accused United Arab Emirates of supplying RSF.

---

## Sahel

---

➡ **Burkina Faso Amid widespread fighting between jihadists and govt forces, deadly attacks targeted civilians, leaving over 100 killed; Russian soldiers reportedly took charge of presidential protection.**

*Civilians remained at forefront of hostilities between govt and jihadist groups.* In Centre-Nord region, unidentified gunmen around 5 Nov killed at least 70 and up to 100 people, mostly civilians, in Zaongo village (Namentenga province). EU 12 Nov and UN 15 Nov condemned massacre and urged Ouagadougou to open investigation and bring perpetrators to justice, and authorities 13 Nov announced investigation.

Meanwhile, fierce fighting continued between jihadists and govt forces and allies. In Sahel region, al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 26 Nov launched complex, simultaneous attacks on army base, army auxiliary positions and camps for internally displaced persons in and around Djibo town (Soum province); UN Human Rights Office 28 Nov said fighting left at least 40 civilians dead, while military claimed killing up to 400 assailants before repelling them. In East region, govt forces and VDPs 2, 6 Nov killed around 30 presumed JNIM militants in Yamba town (Gourma province) and Tipoli village (Gnagna province).

*Forced conscription of civil society activists sparked outrage.* Military govt 2 Nov issued order to conscript into army a dozen people, including journalists, civil society activists and opposition party members. Several local civil society organisations denounced move and rights group Human Rights Watch 8 Nov accused junta of using emergency law to punish critics and silence dissent. Administrative court 20 Nov rejected petition filed by three conscripts and confirmed conscription order.

*Media reported Russia deployed small military contingent.* French-language magazine *Jeune Afrique* and newspaper *Le Monde* reported Russian plane with about 20 Russian soldiers on board 10 Nov landed in capital Ouagadougou; soldiers were reportedly deployed to support army's efforts against jihadist groups, but also to protect transitional President Capt. Traoré, pointing to fragility of his rule as military remains divided.

*In another important development.* As Malian forces early to mid-Nov launched offensive and eventually captured Kidal town (see Mali), Ouagadougou reportedly provided material support as part of close security cooperation between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

➡ **Mali In latest blow to 2015 peace agreement, army seized strategic town of Kidal from former separatist armed groups; fighting for control of vast northern region will likely continue in coming weeks.**

*Army captured formerly separatist armed groups' stronghold of Kidal.* After UN mission (MINUSMA) left Kidal base earlier than planned on 31 Oct, govt forces and Russian paramilitary Wagner Group 11-13 Nov clashed with members of Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP), coalition of armed groups signatory to 2015 Algiers Accord, around latter's stronghold of Kidal; death toll unknown. Transitional President Col. Goïta 14 Nov announced army had seized Kidal town, celebrating major victory; Goïta's speech was less triumphalist than expected, however, giving credence to idea that maintaining control of Kidal and upcoming campaign for rural areas in Kidal region, where CSP and jihadist groups remain implanted, may be more difficult. Govt forces 16 Nov claimed discovering mass grave in Kidal, accused CSP members of committing atrocities; CSP rejected allegation. Govt and Wagner forces continued to face criticism for impact of northern campaign on local populations. Notably, reports emerged that govt airstrikes 7 Nov killed civilians including children in Kidal town, and that govt forces and Wagner elements 12 Nov executed dozens of detainees in Tonka town, Timbuktu region. Lacking armoured protection or air cover during withdrawal, MINUSMA continued to suffer attacks: UN peacekeepers traveling from Kidal to Gao town 1-3 Nov encountered six explosive devices, leaving

at least 37 injured. MINUSMA 18 Nov handed over Ansongo camp, Gao region, to Malian authorities.

*Jihadist violence continued in centre and north.* In northern Timbuktu region, Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 24 Nov launched simultaneous attacks on army positions in Niafunké and Goundam towns; JNIM claimed taking control of Niafunké camp and killing around 50 soldiers, while military said they repelled attacks. Meanwhile, conflict gave rise to intercommunal violence and abuses, notably in centre. Suspected Dan Na Ambassagou militiamen 2 Nov killed four Fulani pastoralists in Sévaré town, Mopti region. Malian and Wagner troops 7 Nov allegedly killed 12 people near Molodo and Diabaly towns, Ségou region.

➔ **Niger Junta asked Togo for help to extract concessions from erstwhile partners as sanctions continued to cripple economy and state finances; jihadist threat remained elevated.**

*Ruling military turned to Togo to mediate with regional bloc.* Military govt continued to grapple with economic crisis sparked in large part by West African regional bloc's (ECOWAS) sanctions, and budget reduction of around 40% following withdrawal of much of country's foreign aid. Authorities 31 Oct-4 Nov detained Central Bank of West African States local director in likely bid to pressure institution to lift economic and financial sanctions. Defence minister Gen. Salifou Mody 6 Nov asked Togolese President Gnassingbé to facilitate dialogue between Niger and ECOWAS and serve as guarantor of French withdrawal from Niger, which in Nov continued apace; Togo's FM Robert Dussey said Lomé ready to "help as a facilitator".

*Govt denied rumours of large-scale jihadist attack amid persistent insecurity.* Junta mid-Nov denied rumours of complex ambush on army convoy by Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) in Tissilatane area, along border with Mali; unconfirmed reports claimed as many as 200 soldiers killed. Smaller-scale incidents involving al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) and IS Sahel continued in Tillabery region (south west), where presumed JNIM fighters 10 Nov killed six civilians and abducted 11 more in Kakou village, Torodi department. Meanwhile in Diffa region (south east), JAS faction of Boko Haram 8 Nov killed three soldiers along Nigerian border near Abadam village, Diffa department. As part of close security cooperation between Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, Nigerien Air Force early Nov reportedly contributed to capture of Kidal town by Malian forces (see Mali); Niamey 15 Nov congratulated Bamako on "liberation of Kidal".

*In other important developments.* In southern region of Maradi, herder-farmer violence 4 Nov killed three people in Danja village, Madarounfa department. Junta 25 Nov revoked 2015 law aimed at curbing migration to Europe, adding new twist to growing political tensions between Niger and EU countries.

---

## **West Africa**

---

➔ **Benin Govt forces continued to battle jihadist insurgency in country's north.**

Military early Nov conducted operations targeting suspected Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) and Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) militants around Boiffo village, Malanville commune, and Kompa town, Karimama commune (both Alibori department), with unknown casualties. Troops 9 Nov killed suspected JNIM guard near Porga town, Matéri commune, Atacora department, during counter-insurgency operation.

➡ **Côte d’Ivoire Former PM Guillaume Soro announced intention to end self-imposed exile; govt highlighted criminal convictions facing him.**

Opposition party Generations and Peoples in Solidarity (GPS) claimed Ivorian authorities 3 Nov attempted to arrest party leader, former PM Guillaume Soro, at Istanbul airport in Türkiye; govt 6 Nov denied allegation. Soro 12 Nov announced intention to end self-imposed exile and return home, said he was back in Africa for first time in five years. In defiance of President Ouattara, who has taken firm stance against military takeovers in West Africa, Niger and Burkina Faso junta leaders 13, 21 Nov met with Soro in Niamey and Ouagadougou, respectively. Govt 23 Nov said Soro can return to Côte d’Ivoire “whenever he wants”, adding it was up to justice system to implement sentences handed down against him in 2020-2021, which include life imprisonment for “undermining state security” over accusations of plotting coup against Ouattara.

➡ **Guinea Armed individuals broke former military ruler out of prison, sparking military purges and suggesting that President Doumbouya faces opposition from within armed forces.**

*High-level prison escape sparked manhunt.* Armed men 4 Nov stormed prison in capital Conakry, freeing former strongman Moussa Dadis Camara and three close associates on trial since last year for 2009 Conakry stadium massacre; authorities said nine people, including two civilians, were killed during breakout. Security forces later same day recaptured Dadis and two other officials, who claimed incident was kidnapping rather than breakout. Govt 5 Nov said last escapee, former minister of presidential security Col. Claude Pivi, was still at large and accused his son of leading breakout. Security forces 6 Nov conducted intensive search for Pivi in Conakry neighbourhoods known to be sympathetic to deposed President Condé. Conakry stadium massacre trial resumed 13 Nov in Pivi’s absence.

*Breakout led to purges in military, pointing to divisions within regime.* Govt 5 Nov announced removal of over 60 soldiers, gendarmes, and prison officials suspected of involvement in prison breakout; also announced legal proceedings against some for abandonment of post and violation of orders. Breakout reportedly featured fighting between Special Forces, formerly led by interim President Col. Doumbouya, and Autonomous Battalion of Airborne Troops (BATA), of which Col. Pivi was once a member; both units reportedly also clashed in September 2021 during Doumbouya’s coup against Condé. Doumbouya 14 Nov sacked four senior military officers, next day appointed new head of BATA.

*In other important developments.* Justice Minister Charles Wright 20 Nov announced investigation into Condé for treason; Condé 22 Nov said Wright had “lost his bearings” due to Pivi’s escape.

➡ **Nigeria Violence by diverse armed groups continued in many states, while ruling party consolidated power at state level.**

*Fighting between rival jihadist groups continued in North East.* Clashes between Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) combatants 18 Nov left about 70 dead on Tumbum Ali Island in Marte area, Borno state; security sources said fighting escalated following influx of arms and fighters from Islamic State Sahel Province joining ISWAP. Two trucks loaded with ISWAP militants 26 Nov hit landmine in Marte area, leaving about 50 dead. Meanwhile, also in Borno, Boko Haram combatants 6 Nov killed at least 15 farmers in Mafa area, and ISWAP 18 Nov ambushed Yobe state governor's convoy on Maiduguri-Damaturu highway, wounding six security personnel.

*Armed groups killed and abducted scores in North West.* In Sokoto state, gunmen 2-12 Nov attacked villages in Wurno, Rabah and Tangaza areas, killed at least 24 people and abducted unconfirmed number. In Katsina state, armed group 5 Nov attacked Muslim Maulud celebration in Musawa area, killing at least 20 people and abducting others. In Zamfara state, armed group 24 Nov abducted at least 100 people in four villages of Maru area, after residents failed to pay "tax" demanded by group.

*Criminal violence and Biafra separatist unrest continued in South East.* Abia state govt late Oct discovered over 70 bodies in Umunneochi area, said bodies must be those of kidnapping-for-ransom victims. Gunmen 17 Nov killed two police officers in Ebonyi state capital Abakaliki, 27 Nov killed another two in Ahiazu Mbaise area, Imo state; police blamed armed wing of Indigenous People of Biafra separatist group.

*Ruling party consolidated power at state level.* President Tinubu's All Progressives Congress (APC) won two of three governorship elections held 11 Nov. APC also made major gains through election petitions: Appeal Court in capital Abuja 16-19 Nov annulled opposition's victory in March 2023 governorship elections in Zamfara state, Kano and Plateau states; 23 Nov reversed election petition tribunal's verdict sacking Nasarawa state APC governor, upholding his re-election. APC now controls 22 of country's 36 states.

➡ **Senegal Ahead of February 2024 election, Supreme Court foiled opposition leader Ousmane Sonko's presidential bid.**

Supreme Court 17 Nov overturned lower court's ruling ordering opposition leader Ousmane Sonko's reinstatement on voter roll, asked for case to be decided afresh by high court in capital Dakar. Sonko's lawyer immediately deplored decision, said time is running short for Sonko to get sponsorship and submit candidacy for Feb 2024 presidential election. Separately, West African regional court same day rejected Sonko's claim that state violated his human rights. Sonko's PASTEF party 19 Nov designated its secretary-general and Sonko's right-hand man, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, as its presidential candidate, likely to act as placeholder while Sonko is ineligible. Meanwhile, Sonko 14 Nov returned to prison after having spent weeks in hospital since launching hunger strike in mid-Oct. Local media 23 Nov reported Sonko had ended hunger strike.

↓ **Sierra Leone Armed men attacked main military barracks and prison in capital Freetown; govt denounced coup attempt.**

Unidentified gunmen 26 Nov launched assault on main military barracks in capital Freetown, seemingly attempting to access key armoury. During ensuing battle with security forces, assailants attacked detention centres, including Freetown Central Prison, from which 1,890 inmates were freed or abducted. Govt same day imposed nationwide curfew, said security forces repelled attack by “renegade soldiers”, while President Bio that evening announced most leaders of attack had been detained. As fragile calm returned to Freetown, govt 27 Nov said attack had left 20 people dead, including a dozen soldiers, and most inmates remained missing. Delegation of West African regional bloc ECOWAS same day arrived in country, expressed solidarity with govt and readiness to “deploy elements” upon request. Information Minister Chernoh Bah 28 Nov described incident as “attempted coup” and announced 13 military officers had been arrested. As night-time curfew remained in place, police same day published list of 34 people wanted in connection with incident, including current and former security forces members.

➡ **Togo President Gnassingbé carried out security reshuffle while court sentenced former top military official to prison, signalling potential divisions within military; jihadist threat persisted in north.**

*Former top military officer convicted amid security reshuffle.* Gnassingbé 3 Nov appointed new head of his personal security team and made several changes to leadership of anti-jihadist operation deployed in country’s north, notably appointing new operation commander. Meanwhile, military court 7 Nov sentenced Maj. Gen. Abalo Kadangha, former armed forces chief of staff, to 20 years in prison for complicity in murder of Col. Bitala Madjoulba in May 2020. Trial and conviction came as a shock to many Togolese due to Kadangha’s high military rank and family ties with Gnassingbé; affair could be linked to inter-military rivalries, with murdered Col. Madjoulba being brother of newly appointed Security Minister Calixte Madjoulba.

*Jihadist threat persisted along northern border with Burkina Faso.* In northern Savanes region, Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims 11 Nov claimed killing three soldiers and seizing their vehicle and weapons near Dapaong city, Tône prefecture.