



CrisisWatch 2024 – May Trends and June Alerts

Africa

Central Africa

↓ **Cameroon Anglophone region violence surged around National Day; election tensions continued to mount.**

Separatist tensions and violence escalated in North West (NW) and South West (SW). Ambazonia rebels and security forces heavily clashed in lead-up to 20 May National Day celebration, killing at least sixteen. Notably, govt forces 5 May targeted separatist strongholds in Ndop town (NW), eliminating prominent commander and two fighters. Separatists 10 May ambushed and killed six gendarmes near Mamfe town (SW) and 14 May clashed with soldiers in Bambui town (NW), killing at least four including two civilians. Govt forces 16 May killed four rebels in Kumbo town (NW), while separatist fighters same day killed two soldiers in Akwaya town (SW). On day of celebrations, suspected separatists 20 May assassinated mayor of Belo town (NW); separatist-imposed “ghost town” strikes 17-20 May paralysed business and movement in NW and SW. Meanwhile, former spokesperson of Ambazonia Defence Forces (ADF) armed group, alias “Capo Daniel”, 4 May urged ceasefire and direct negotiations with Yaoundé; govt dismissed move while ADF denounced him as “traitor”.

Far North unrest continued. Boko Haram attacks persisted as Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) continued “Operation Lake Sanity II”, launched in April to reclaim territory. Fishermen 11-12 May clashed with JAS Bakura faction in three villages around Lake Chad, seizing guns and three motorbikes, casualties unknown. Jihadist militants 12 May carried out multiple attacks, including cattle rustling and abduction of at least two women in Djibrili village, Mayo-Tsanaga division. Meanwhile, govt forces 14 May announced rescue of 300 Boko Haram captives after week-long operation along northern border with Nigeria.

Tensions continued to mount in run-up to 2025 elections. Concerns over govt manipulation of election process grew as senior govt official 2 May cautioned electoral commission against inciting public voting drive amid calls from opposition politicians for mass registration to challenge President Biya; ruling party mayor 4 May halted registration process in a district of Yaoundé reportedly attended overwhelmingly by opposition supporters. Meanwhile, protests early May erupted in West region over alleged registration irregularities by ruling party, while pro-Biya demonstrators in South region 5 May blocked roads to hinder opposition activity.

➡ **Central African Republic Transitional justice efforts faced challenges as court issued arrest warrant for former president but govt dissolved reconciliation commission; insecurity persisted.**

Authorities' transitional justice record remained mixed. President Touadéra 8 May ordered dissolution of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR), created as part of 2019 peace agreement between govt and fourteen armed groups; presidential decree remained unpublished so uncertainty persisted over whether move only removes current office holders or dismantles institution entirely. Communication Minister 14 May attributed dissolution to governance, operational and financial issues within CVJRR. Earlier, UN-backed Special Criminal Court 30 April issued warrant for former President Bozizé's arrest for allegedly ordering crimes against humanity committed Feb 2009-March 2013 by army and presidential guard; NGO Human Rights Watch 3 May said move provided chance for Bozizé to "face justice" but presidential adviser Fidèle Gouandjika same day suggested warrant aims to incite ethnic tensions. President Umaro Embaló Sissoco of Guinea-Bissau, where Bozizé is in exile, 1 May said he would not extradite former president, citing lack of legal framework.

Climate of insecurity persisted against backdrop of intercommunal tensions. Intercommunal and rebel violence continued in hinterland, notably in south west. Suspected armed herders 5 May destroyed two churches in Boganangone town, Lobaye prefecture, resulting in unconfirmed number of casualties. Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) fighters 12 May attacked mining site in Gaga town, Ombella-M'Poko prefecture, killing four Chinese miners and injuring seven. Meanwhile, 100 ethnic Azandé fighters officially integrated into army 1 May after intensive training by Russian paramilitary Africa Corps, formerly Wagner Group, in Obo town, Haut-Mbomou prefecture; despite govt portraying step as improving army integration, militants reaffirmed tribal allegiance by calling themselves "Azandé Wagner", while fears grew over group's escalating tensions with Fulani-led armed group Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) in south east. U.S. 30 May imposed sanctions on two companies based in country for supporting "malign activities" of Russian paramilitaries. Meanwhile, risk of unrest grew in capital Bangui as security forces continued search operations in Muslim neighbourhood, which have resulted in arbitrary arrests since April.

➔ **Chad President Déby secured election win amid reports of voting irregularities and repression of opposition, tightening grip on power.**

Déby clinched victory, cemented his control despite opposition challenges. Following 5-6 May presidential polls, electoral authority 9 May declared Déby winner with 61% of vote, marking end of transition period; rivals including former PM Padacké and incumbent PM Masra initially contested results, filing unsuccessful appeals with Constitutional Court which 16 May certified results. Déby 17 May rejected calls for national unity govt, further isolating opposition, as Masra same day acknowledged defeat and 22 May resigned as PM; Déby inaugurated next day and appointed Allamaye Halina as PM; Halina 27 May announced new govt formed of pro-Déby ministers and no opposition members.

International actors welcomed vote amid reports of irregularities and repression. As military deployed significant presence around polling stations and in major cities, security forces 6 May detained 79 Masra supporters over alleged fraud. Reports of electoral irregularities emerged with some polling stations inadequately equipped or opening late while opposition observers reported under-age voting and regime supporters confiscating ballot boxes. Meanwhile, independent election observers

faced restrictions, with civil society 5 May and EU 7 May condemning denial of access for 2,900 trained observers. Following vote, canton chief and aide 10 May assaulted opposition activist in Koumra town, while opposition journalist same day reported intimidation from armed men in capital N'Djamena and later went into hiding. NGO Human Rights Watch 13 May expressed concerns over political repression and govt's consolidation of power. International actors largely welcomed Déby's election, however. Regional body Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) 12 May congratulated Déby, as did French President Emmanuel Macron 17 May. U.S. 16 May acknowledged transition milestone but highlighted "troubling shortcomings". Amid growing ties with Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin 14 May sent congratulatory message.

Banditry and herder-farmer-related insecurity persisted. Farmer and herder groups 9 May clashed in Lac-Iro area of Moyen-Chari region, killing at least five civilians and injuring others, after alleged cattle raid by herders. Governor of Ennedi-East region 17 May announced arrest of eight bandits on murder charges in Amdjarass city on Libyan border.

Great Lakes

↓ **Burundi Security situation deteriorated amid series of deadly grenade attacks in Bujumbura that marked worst violence in city in recent years, as govt blamed rebel group.**

Series of grenade attacks struck country's largest city Bujumbura. Grenade 5 May detonated in Kamenge area in north of city, resulting in three deaths and eight injuries, although conflicting casualty reports emerged. Another attack struck city's bus park 10 May, reportedly claiming six lives and leaving dozens wounded, but Interior Minister Pierre Nkurikiye refuted reports of any fatalities. Same day, attacker carried out grenade assault in Ngagara district, resulting in his injury and arrest. Nkurikiye 11 May accused RED-Tabara rebels, group reportedly backed by Rwanda, of orchestrating attacks with Rwandan and diaspora support; Rwanda 12 May issued statement dismissing involvement, while RED-Tabara also denied accusations of being responsible same day.

Security situation continued to deteriorate across country. Ruling party youth wing Imbonerakure member suspected of being responsible for 2 May killing of civilian in Mukoro hill, Gitega province. Arbitrary arrests continued as police, in collaboration with Imbonerakure, 16 May detained 44 individuals in Nyanza-lac commune, Makamba province, on charges of "rebellion". Human rights group Ligue Iteka 2 May released monthly report detailing dozens of murders as well as case of torture of opposition National Congress for Freedom (CNL) member, with police, intelligence agents, soldiers and Imbonerakure suspected as main perpetrators.

In other important developments. Economy continued to plummet due to inflation, fuel and electricity shortages, exacerbated by delayed infrastructure projects and govt mismanagement, while food and transport costs rose. Meanwhile, concerns remained high over continued rise of waters of Lake Tanganyika, which has displaced hundreds of thousands in past seven months, flooded homes and destroyed crops, prompting April govt and UN appeals for support.

↓ DR Congo Security and humanitarian situation worsened in east after deadly bombing of displacement camp as rebels took more territory; security forces thwarted apparent coup attempt.

M23 crisis escalated following attack on IDP sites near North Kivu capital Goma. Rockets allegedly fired from rebel positions west of Goma 3 May struck Mugunga and Lac Vert displacement camps, resulting in 35 deaths, deadliest M23-related attack since Nov 2022. Govt and U.S. accused Rwanda, prompting Kigali to vehemently deny involvement. Meanwhile, M23 continued advance following late April capture of strategic mining town Rubaya. Violence also threatened South Kivu province, with 7 May M23-attributed rocket attack in Kisongati village, resulting in seven fatalities and six injuries; rebels may in June pose threat to pivotal town of Minova, possibly opening route to advance further into South Kivu. Southern African regional bloc (SADC) mission SAMIDRC 5 May announced plans to offensively counter M23 rebellion but faced persistent financial challenges.

Diaspora member orchestrated unsuccessful apparent coup in capital Kinshasa. Army 19 May claimed to have foiled coup attempt led by Christian Malanga – American resident and promoter of New Zaire movement – in Kinshasa’s Gombe district, resulting in death of Malanga, one other assailant and two police officers. Gunmen targeted largely symbolic locations – including residences of top officials and empty state house – prompting widespread questions about security protocols and motives of attack.

Armed group violence plagued Ituri and North Kivu. In North Kivu, seven suspected victims of Islamic State-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels found 3 May along Mangina-Mantumbi road in Beni-Mbau sector. In Ituri, ADF 6 May killed three in Kianangazi village, Irumu territory, abducting one child. Subsequent attacks 9, 12 and 13 May in both provinces resulted in further casualties and abductions, raising doubts about efficacy of joint Congolese-Ugandan anti-ADF operations.

Ruling party faced discord over formation of new administration. President Tshisekedi 29 May announced new govt – rewarding loyalists and campaign organisers with top jobs while axing foreign and defence ministers – following months of intense haggling amongst his political coalition. Meanwhile, opposition warned against potential power grabs amid concerns over Tshisekedi’s 3 May proposal to overhaul constitution.

➡ Rwanda Regional and international actors continued to accuse Rwanda of complicity in security challenges faced by its neighbours.

Govt firmly denied involvement with neighbouring rebel groups. Rwanda 4 May rejected U.S. and Congolese claims that it had, alongside M23 rebel group, attacked displacement camp in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), branding accusations “ridiculous” and “absurd”. Authorities also 12 May issued statement denying any connection or reason to be involved in series of grenade attacks in Burundian city of Bujumbura, urging Burundi to “address its internal issues”. Meanwhile, DRC Mine Minister 8 May called for international embargo on metal exports from Rwanda, alleging its support for rebel groups stealing natural resources.

In another important development. Army spokesperson Ronald Rwivanga 27 May announced govt had deployed additional 2,000 soldiers to assist Mozambique in combating resurgent attacks by Islamic State-linked insurgents in Cabo Delgado province, amid southern African military mission withdrawal (see Mozambique).

➡ **Uganda Political tensions grew amid threats of further strikes, while govt engaged with DR Congo (DRC) on anti-militant cooperation.**

Threats of strikes continued amid persistent fiscal policy discontent. Fear of further industrial action persisted, as business groups 8 May threatened two-month long strike from 20 June after failed talks with President Museveni, spurred by discontent over fiscal and tax policies and govt's promotion of electronic tax payments. Parliament 16 May approved new taxes on fuel and construction materials despite protests, potentially leading to price increases. Meanwhile, Museveni same day signed deal with Kenya to import refined petroleum directly, aiming to offset impact of fuel tax hikes.

Army chief scrutinised operations against Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). Newly appointed head of army and Museveni's son Lt-Gen. Muhoozi Kainerugaba 6 May engaged in talks with Congolese military leadership to assess progress in joint operations against Islamic State-affiliated ADF rebels in DRC; joint force 18 May captured prominent ADF commander skilled in explosives in Ituri province in eastern DRC. Security forces 4 May said they had discovered four suspected ADF bombs in capital Kampala.

Disputes within opposition political parties escalated. Former opposition leader Mathias Mpuuga faced continued censure from National Unity Platform (NUP) party for accepting financial parliamentary awards, sparking tensions with party leader Robert Kyagulanyi, alias 'Bobi Wine'. Similarly, Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) appeared set for split, with former presidential candidate Kizza Besigye poised to lead breakaway faction over alleged ties between current leadership and Museveni.

In other important developments. Opposition parties 2 May welcomed UK late April announcement of corruption-related sanctions on three politicians, including Parliament Speaker Anita Among, as potential deterrent against mismanagement of public resources, while govt expressed surprise and promised both investigation and examination of legality of sanctions. Meanwhile, U.S. 30 May also announced corruption-related sanctions on trio and one other politician, alongside sanctioning former deputy army chief for alleged "gross violations of human rights" including extrajudicial killings by military.

East and Southern Africa

➡ **Kenya Al-Shabaab-related insecurity continued in north east while govt burnished international standing including through security mission to Haiti and President Ruto's visit to U.S.**

Militant activity persisted in several areas. Notably, Al-Shabaab 10 May killed border police officer in attack in Garissa county's Yumbis village near border with Somalia. Meanwhile, military 1 May said forces had killed six Al-Shabaab fighters

during operation in Kumba area of Lamu; operation follows stepped-up troop deployment in late April to address insecurity amid reported increases in attacks in Garrissa, Lamu and Mandera counties in recent months.

Police mission to Haiti delayed again as Ruto visited U.S. As part of UN-mandated Nairobi-led multinational security force to combat gang violence in Haiti, high-level Kenyan delegation including mission commander 20 May arrived in Haitian capital Port-au-Prince to assess preparations for force arrival; Ruto 24 May said first batch of police would arrive in three weeks, in further delay to deployment amid reports of logistics issues (see Haiti). Meanwhile, Ruto 22-24 May took high-profile trip to Washington, marking first African state visit to U.S. in sixteen years, with Kenya being given Major Non-NATO Ally status, allowing govt increased access to defence cooperation with U.S.

In another important development. Following severe floods that began in April that killed hundreds and exposed gaps in govt preparedness for natural disasters, residents decried forceful eviction of people living in settlements next to rivers in capital Nairobi as part of authorities' evacuation orders.

↓ Mozambique Security deteriorated in northern Cabo Delgado province as Islamic State militants launched assault on strategic town; attacks may continue in June amid upcoming withdrawal of regional troops.

Jihadists carried out large-scale attack, displacing thousands. Over 100 Islamic State Mozambique Province (ISMP) militants 10 May launched attack on strategic Macomia town that lies on main road connecting northern and southern districts of Cabo Delgado province; insurgents engaged govt and South African troops in clashes lasting almost two days before returning to their base near Mucojo town. Attack came days after Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) had left town, as militants ambushed South African troops who provided reinforcements to Macomia during attack. Number of casualties unknown but local sources reported between ten and 23 killed, while civilians fled into bush. Militants also stole equipment and goods including vehicles and medicines. Several NGOs suspended operations in town following attack, including Médecins Sans Frontières 13 May, adding to existing shortages. Rights group Human Rights Watch 15 May said ISMP had used children to raid town, while UN 22 May reported 4,500 displaced 10-21 May in Macomia and nearby Quissanga district. Attacks also continued in other areas of Cabo Delgado including Ancuabe and Chiúre districts. Timing of Macomia attack after SAMIM troop movements raised further concerns; scale of ISMP attacks may increase in June as SADC pulls out mission by 15 July, with Islamic State propaganda explicitly referring to SAMIM withdrawal. EU 14 May, however, announced extension of training mission until June 2026 and Rwanda 27 May said it had deployed extra 2,000 troops to Cabo Delgado, boosting security presence in province; Rwandan and govt soldiers 29 May reportedly repelled attack on Limala village, Mocímboa da Praia district.

Main parties announced candidates for Oct general elections. After months of uncertainty, ruling-FRELIMO 5 May announced governor of southern Inhambane province Daniel Chapo as presidential candidate. Meanwhile, main opposition party RENAMO 17 May re-elected Ossufo Momade as leader following April moves that

prevented his main opponent Venâncio Mondlane from running; party officials 20 May said Momade would be presidential candidate.

➡ **South Africa Tight general elections held as ruling African National Congress (ANC) projected to lose majority; dispute over Zuma's eligibility increased risk of unrest.**

Polls held as ANC projected to lose majority for first time. General elections took place 29 May as voting day went peacefully, with high voter turnout expected to be reported; full results announced in June. Amid heightened tensions in lead-up to vote, Constitutional Court 20 May barred former President Zuma, leader of newcomer uMkhonto weSizwe party (MKP), from contesting polls due to his 2021 conviction for contempt of court; decision overturned Electoral Court's April ruling permitting Zuma to run. MKP alleged that Independent Electoral Commission and Constitutional Court colluded with ANC to rig elections. MKP members 25 May broke into ballot storage sites in Chesterville and Hammarsdale towns in KwaZulu-Natal province, alleging voting material had been altered, and also threatened election officer in Chesterville; electoral commission condemned incidents. President Ramaphosa 26 May listed govt achievements in speech on South African Broadcasting Corporation, prompting MKP and opposition Democratic Alliance to each file urgent affidavit in Electoral Court accusing Ramaphosa of violating electoral code of conduct by using presidential office to influence elections outcome; Ramaphosa 29 May said he merely provided update on country's state of readiness for elections.

Ruling party members clashed with opposition supporters. ANC members and supporters 19 May clashed with members of populist opposition Economic Freedom Fighters during ANC campaign event in Seshego township, Limpopo province, as rival party members reportedly threw stones escalating into exchange of gunfire that wounded two bystanders. Electoral Commission 23 May convened both parties to diffuse tensions in area ahead of polls. Suspected political dispute between ANC and MKP members 26 May in Kathlehong township, Gauteng province, resulted in two MKP members shot and killed.

➡ **Zimbabwe Ruling party supporters disrupted public hearings on controversial NGO bill while police cracked down on informal money traders amid implementation of new currency.**

Govt-linked groups disturbed public consultations on contentious law. Govt 13-17 May held public hearings on controversial proposed Private Voluntary Organisations Amendment Bill that critics argue will be used to control civil society organisations. Suspected ruling party ZANU-PF supporters disrupted hearings in cities of Chinhoyi, Gweru, capital Harare and Masvingo; participants 16 May fled consultation in Masvingo due to fight between ZANU-PF supporters and residents that reportedly left several people injured.

Govt targeted dissenters of new currency. Govt cracked down on informal money traders in effort to enforce acceptance of new Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) currency – inaugurated in April and facing struggles to win consumer confidence – as police 15 May announced they had arrested 224 alleged illegal currency traders and frozen 90 bank accounts since ZiG introduced; govt 9 May announced it will levy \$14,800 fines on businesses who refuse to use official exchange rate while Finance Minister Mthuli

Ncube 14 May urged war veterans in Bulawayo city to “protect” ZiG by “fighting” informal money traders. Meanwhile, police 13 May arrested Neville Mutsvanga, son of ZANU-PF spokesperson Chris Mutsvangwa, on charges of illegally dealing in foreign currency, in case reportedly linked to suspected ZANU-PF factional battle between President Mnangagwa and VP Chiwenga.

In another important development. Harare court 21 May ordered army chief Lt. Gen. Sanyatwe and Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri to pay \$29,000 compensation to protester who was attacked and shot during 2019 demonstrations, when authorities deployed military to crush countrywide anti-govt protests sparked by increase in fuel prices.

Horn of Africa

➡ Eritrea Ethiopia’s efforts to settle Tigray-Amhara territorial dispute continued to fuel security concerns in Asmara.

Ethiopia-Eritrea relations remained riddled with tensions. Amid concern in Asmara that Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) may return to administer Western Tigray Zone in Ethiopia, Tigray region’s interim VP Tadesse Worede 2 May said federal efforts to dissolve local Amhara administrations and resettle displaced persons in disputed areas – part of Addis Ababa’s plan to settle Tigray-Amhara territorial dispute – would be completed by late June. Ethiopia’s ruling Prosperity Party and TPLF 15 May convened third round of party-to-party political dialogue in Tigray’s capital Mekelle as part of efforts to address political issues underlying conflict in Tigray, deepening Asmara’s fears that Ethiopia’s PM Abiy may be consolidating alliance with TPLF.

U.S. bodies criticised Eritrea’s human rights record. Embassy of Eritrea to U.S. 2 May dismissed as “fallacious” U.S. State Department’s 2023 Human Rights Report published late April, which documented “significant human rights issues” in Eritrea. U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom 13 May said religious freedom conditions remain “extremely poor” in Eritrea, urged U.S. President Biden to pressure Asmara to end persecution of unregistered religious communities and release religious prisoners.

In another important development. Eritrea 24 May celebrated 33 years of independence with official gathering in capital Asmara. Anniversary gave rise to scuffles between pro-regime and anti-regime Eritreans living abroad, leaving one killed and several wounded 27 May in Israel’s Tel Aviv city.

➡ Ethiopia Govt’s plan to address Tigray-Amhara territorial dispute continued to fuel tensions in Western Tigray; federal forces pursued efforts to stem insurgencies in Amhara and Oromia regions.

Tensions lingered over Tigray-Amhara territorial dispute in Western Tigray. Implementation of Addis Ababa’s plan to address Tigray-Amhara territorial dispute continued, with Tigray’s interim VP Tadesse Worede 2 May saying dissolution of local Amhara administrations and resettlement of displaced Tigrayans in Southern and Western zones would be completed by late June. Plan fuelled more violence, however; notably, skirmishes 3 May broke out between Ethiopian military and

Amhara nationalist militias known as Fano on outskirts of Maksego Gebeya town in Western Tigray Zone after Fano militants previous day briefly entered town. Tigray's interim President Getachew Reda 24 May announced withdrawal of Tigray's forces from two villages near Alamata town (Southern Tigray Zone), in move designed to ease tensions with Amhara administrations and facilitate return of Tigrayans.

Fighting continued between federal forces and Fano militias in Amhara. After easing of hostilities early May between federal forces and Fano militias, fighting picked up toward end of month, with clashes reported in North Shewa, East Gojjam, West Gojjam, North Gojjam, North Gondar, South Wollo and North Wollo zones. PM Abiy 12 May visited Amhara capital Bahir Dar, called on insurgents to lay down arms and reintegrate into civilian life. Adding to region's instability, thousands of Sudanese refugees late April-early May fled Kumer and Awlala camps in West Gondar Zone after kidnappings for ransom and armed robberies late April left at least one person injured.

Army intensified counter-insurgency operations in Oromia. Federal forces conducted operations against Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) in East Wollega, West Wollega, Horo Guduru Wollega, West Shewa, Arsi, West Arsi and East Borena zones. Notably, regional broadcaster 2 May reported joint operation by federal and regional security forces in East Borena; Addis Ababa claimed to have inflicted heavy OLA casualties. In rare visit to rebel stronghold of western Oromia, PM Abiy 8 May attended pro-govt rally in Nekemte town, East Wollega, in attempt to shore up Oromo support amid deepening unpopularity and OLA insurgency.

➡ **South Sudan Kenya hosted talks between holdout opposition groups and govt, intercommunal violence remained rampant, and disruption of oil exports deepened economic crisis.**

Govt and holdout opposition groups held peace talks in Kenya. High-level mediation 9 May started in Kenyan capital Nairobi, bringing together govt and some opposition groups that did not sign 2018 peace accord, including South Sudan United Front, Real-Sudan People's Liberation Movement and South Sudan People's Movement/Army (SSPM/A); National Salvation Front led by Thomas Cirillo and Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition Kitwang led by Simon Gatwech did not participate, dimming hopes for wider deal. SSPM/A leader Stephen Buay 20 May accused govt of sending agents to Nairobi to target him and threatened to withdraw from talks. Kenyan authorities same day launched investigation into claims; in the meantime, Buay agreed to continue participating.

Communal violence persisted in several regions. Notably, in Jonglei region alleged Murle ambush 9 May killed three in Duk county; suspected armed Lou Nuer youth from Jonglei 12 May reportedly raided villages in Likuangole county, Greater Pibor Administrative Area, abducting nine people and raiding cattle. Authorities from Abyei area and Warrap State early May traded blame for deadly violence and cattle raids. Fighting between Balanda and Azande in Tombura county, Western Equatoria, reportedly displaced over 10,000 by 2 May.

Disruption of oil exports fuelled fiscal crisis. Breakdown of main oil pipeline continued to threaten currency collapse and fuel spike in food costs, raising risk of renewed instability and violence. Central Bank governor 3 May said oil reserves are

“at historically low levels”, affecting foreign currency reserves. Official 28 May claimed operations would resume imminently, though acknowledged oil had gelled along pipeline; industry experts maintained that repairs necessary to restart exports would take at least months to complete.

Concerns over election preparedness persisted. U.S. 9 May warned it would not support electoral process without urgent govt action to implement 2018 peace agreement. Body tasked with tracking implementation of agreement 23 May said there was “no evidence of sufficient preparation” for elections. Meanwhile, UN Security Council 30 May renewed sanctions on South Sudan for one year, including arms embargo, travel bans and asset freezes.

📌 ⚡ **Sudan Full-scale conflict pitting Sudanese army (SAF) and allied Darfuri armed groups against Rapid Support Forces (RSF) erupted in North Darfur’s capital El-Fasher, threatening to inflame intercommunal conflict further in coming weeks.**

Fighting broke out in El-Fasher. Clashes 10 May erupted between SAF in alliance with Darfuri armed groups and RSF in El-Fasher, killing and displacing thousands. SAF and armed groups held western and central neighbourhoods, and RSF controlled north and east sectors while besieging city. Outside El-Fasher, RSF-affiliated militias attacked non-Arab villages, while SAF airstrikes targeted RSF positions but also communities allegedly supporting paramilitary, including mostly Arab El-Zurug and Kutum villages; attacks threaten to aggravate intercommunal conflict in coming weeks. UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide 21 May warned “the risk of genocide exists” and is “growing”. Fighting obstructed aid deliveries as World Food Programme 3 May warned of “widespread starvation and death”.

Hostilities escalated across several other states without decisive gains. SAF-RSF clashes expanded from flashpoints including Babanussa town, West Kordofan state, North Kordofan’s capital El-Obeid, and Gezira state capital Wad Madani, to multiple towns and rural villages, increasing displacement and civilian casualties; RSF 19 May announced seizure of Um Rawaba area, North Kordofan. SAF continued offensives in capital Khartoum and sister cities Omdurman and Bahri, particularly in Bahri’s Jiali oil refinery area, but failed to secure clear-cut victory. Parties continued mobilising local communities, exacerbating violence and complicating future peacemaking efforts. In and beyond Darfur, restrictions on free movement, arbitrary killings, arrests and lootings by both sides and their supporters underscored growing lawlessness and impunity across country.

Several political coalitions called for transfer of power to civilians. SAF-aligned political coalition “National Forces Coordination”, which includes over 40 political parties, armed groups, community leaders and civil society organisations, 8 May endorsed political charter proposing three-year transitional govt with joint military-civilian Sovereign Council and transitional legislative council. Anti-war coalition Tagadam, which claims neutrality between warring parties, 26 May launched founding conference of expanded coalition in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, attended by over 600 key stakeholders; conference led to adoption of Tagadam’s political position, new leadership structure and basic principles for political process.

➔ **Somalia** Federal govt met member states amid continued political tensions, while clan violence surged in several areas; conflict with Al-Shabaab remained largely quiet.

Govt held consultations with most member states to discuss key issues. Federal govt and member state leaders 14-17 May gathered in capital Mogadishu for National Consultative Conference (NCC) to discuss contentious issues, including constitutional review process, operations against Al-Shabaab and status of Nov 2024 member state elections amid speculation they may be delayed; officials from Puntland did not attend following March suspension of recognition of Mogadishu-based central govt and pulling out of NCC process in Jan 2023. At NCC conclusion, govt reported participants had endorsed federal parliament's approval of first four chapters of constitution. Independent constitutional review commission 18 May began discussion of five further chapters. Political figures who oppose govt's constitutional changes remained vocal, including Puntland President Said Deni 18 May and former federal Presidents Sheikh Sharif and Farmajo next day criticising govt and NCC.

Clan conflicts erupted in Southwest, Hirshabelle and Galmudug states. In Bay region in Southwest, state security forces and clan militia early May clashed several times in Berdale town, killing elder and militia member, after state govt sent troops to dismantle militia group; tensions remained high throughout month. Significant violence 13 May also erupted in Hirshabelle between Abgal sub-clans in Bur Shiiq and Biyo Adde villages in Middle Shabelle region, killing over 30. Clashes also reported in Galmudug in late April between Marehaan and Dir clans in Abudwaq district of Galgaduud region.

Govt offensive against Al-Shabaab remained at stalemate. Military conducted episodic airstrikes targeting militants in Galmudug and Hirshabelle states with support from international partners, but launched no major ground operations. Meanwhile, Al-Shabaab conducted several small-scale bombings and assassinations, particularly in Mogadishu including 3 May shooting of senior police officer, but also did not carry out large-scale attack.

In other important developments. Amid rising concerns over resurgence of piracy off Somali coast, EU naval force 10 May arrested six suspected pirates attempting to hijack oil tanker in Gulf of Aden and 23 May rescued cargo ship being hijacked.

➔ **Somaliland** Govt continued to prepare for November elections while tensions with Dhulbahante fighters remained high along Sool frontline.

Authorities progressed with vote arrangements. Ahead of 13 Nov concurrent party and presidential elections, House of Representatives 12 May approved presidential appointees to committee overseeing registration of political associations that will run in polls to decide which can become political parties; step further eases fears elections could be delayed.

Tensions remained high but stable along Sool region frontline. Despite late April clashes in Sanaag region between Haber Jecllo sub-clan of Isaaq (Somaliland's largest clan) and Dhulbahante clan members, frontlines between govt troops and those from SSC-Khatumo (self-declared administration for Dhulbahante community) in Sool region stayed largely quiet. Meanwhile, SSC-Khatumo leader Abdulkadir Firdhiye 14

May visited Somali capital Mogadishu for consultations between Somali federal govt and member states (see Somalia), but did not participate as full federal member state.

Authorities pursued preparations for implementation of Jan port deal with Ethiopia. Technical committee from Hargeisa early May announced it had finished its work and was awaiting counterparts from Addis Ababa, while President Bihi 18 May said he was certain agreement would be implemented “shortly”.

Sahel

↓ **Burkina Faso** **Extreme levels of violence caused hundreds of civilian casualties as insecurity raged; military authorities extended rule by five years.**

Extreme levels of violence against civilians continued, leaving hundreds dead. Armed forces 3-9 May allegedly killed over 250 civilians across country; in Sahel region, troops reportedly killed 150 civilians in four villages between Dori and Mansila towns in Yagha province, while in East region, military allegedly killed at least 100 others between towns of Fada N’Gourma and Tankoualou, Komandjari province. Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) militants reportedly attacked civilians across Centre-North, North, East, and Centre-East regions; notably, JNIM militants 2 May killed twenty civilians in Tagalla village, Sanmatenga province (Centre-North). JNIM also clashed against govt forces and civilian auxiliaries (VDPs); militants 5 May attacked security forces and VDPs in Tapoa-Barrage village, Tapoa province (North), leading to deaths of three JNIM militants, two soldiers and eighteen civilians. In Centre-North’s Namentenga province JNIM 9 May reportedly killed seven VDPs in Bonam village and same day killed six soldiers and 33 VDPs in Boko village.

Govt delayed transition by five years. Ahead of 1 July supposed end of military rule and after 25 May national conference on state of transition, military authorities announced extension of their rule until 2029, dealing heavy blow to hopes of democratic transition; many civil society and political groups boycotted conference. Earlier, thousands of supporters of military govt 11 May gathered in capital Ouagadougou to endorse an extension of transition and acknowledge “positive results” of regime.

Amid tensions with Côte d’Ivoire, govt strengthened ties with Sahel neighbours. Foreign Ministers of Alliance of Sahel States (AES) 17 May convened in Nigerien capital Niamey to finalise alliance documents; AES 20 May began joint military exercises alongside Chadian and Togolese troops in western Niger. Tensions with Côte d’Ivoire remained high amid series of border incidents; after reported VDP incursions into Ivorian territory throughout May, Ivorian forces 16 May allegedly deployed for one day to Helintira town, Djigoué department, South-West region.

➔ **Mali** **Amid political tensions, inter-Malian dialogue ended and recommended extension of transition; conflict persisted in centre and north.**

Inter-Malian dialogue concluded, recommending transition extension. Final stage of national dialogue took place in capital Bamako 6-10 May as key armed groups remained outside of the process and several opposition parties and civil society groups boycotted initiative. Concerns grew that military would use process to prolong hold on power as consultations concluded with report recommending three-year extension of transition and allowing transitional President Col. Goïta to be presidential candidate when elections held; opposition grouping 12 May called dialogue “grotesque political trap” while leader of opposition African Socialist Democratic Party said dialogue only “about securing benefits for ruling junta”. Meanwhile, in continued suppression of civil and political freedoms, court 21 May sentenced university professor to two years imprisonment for harming state’s reputation and defamation over criticism of govt.

Violence remained widespread in centre and north. Clashes between armed forces, Russian paramilitary Africa Corps (formerly Wagner Group) and militants continued. In centre, al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) militants 3 May attacked base in Diafarabe town, Segou region, killing at least ten soldiers. In north, jihadists attacked civilians in Gao region including Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) 22 May killing at least three civilians in Balga village, Ansongo commune. Reports of killings of civilians during anti-jihadist operations persisted; notably army and Russian paramilitary patrol 16 May allegedly killed nine civilians in Tahaganet village and same day two in Jenchichi village in Kidal region (north). Meanwhile, following April clash between JNIM and armed groups of Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP), reports emerged 17 May that CSP leadership was seeking non-aggression pact with JNIM.

Govt strengthened ties with Sahel neighbours, tensions persisted with Mauritania. Foreign Ministers of Alliance of Sahel States (AES) 17 May convened in Niger to finalise alliance documents; AES 20 May began joint military exercises alongside Chadian and Togolese troops in western Niger. Tensions, however, persisted with Mauritania over cross-border incidents (see Mauritania) as govt remained agitated by alleged presence of rebel groups and jihadists on Mauritanian side of border.

➡ **Niger U.S. troops announced Sept withdrawal date, govt strengthened ties with Sahelian neighbours amid tensions with Benin, and jihadist violence persisted.**

Govt and Washington agreed for U.S. troop withdrawal by mid-Sept. U.S. delegation 15-19 May met with Nigerien officials in capital Niamey to plan formal withdrawal of around 1,000 U.S. military personnel, agreeing to complete manoeuvres by 15 Sept; PM Zeine 14 May stated lack of U.S. military support in combating jihadists had led to severed security ties but also welcomed engagement with U.S. on economic investments. Meanwhile, EU 27 May announced military mission would end 30 June but Germany 29 May announced temporary deal allowing its troops to remain at air transport base outside Niamey while new agreement on presence negotiated.

Row with Benin prompted Chinese mediation and threatened oil exports. Amid continued dispute as govt maintained closure of border with Benin, Beninese authorities 6 May announced they would prevent Niger using its port to export crude oil through March inaugurated 2,000km-long Niger-Benin pipeline. PM Zeine 11

May announced border would remain closed for supposed security reasons. However, following mediation efforts by China – whose state oil company owns shares in Niger’s oil – Beninese President Patrice Talon 15 May reversed decision to block exports and agreed to hold dialogue with govt, although 27-28 May dialogue attempt in Niamey faltered. Meanwhile, Foreign Ministers of Alliance of Sahel States (AES) 17 May convened in Nigerien capital Niamey to finalise alliance documents; AES 20 May began joint military exercises alongside Chadian and Togolese troops in west.

Jihadists conducted attacks in Diffa and Tillabery regions. In Diffa (south east), military 1 May clashed with militants likely from Boko Haram JAS faction near N’Guigmi town, killing three jihadists. In Tillabery (south west), hundreds of al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) militants 20 May attacked Boni military post, as govt reported seven soldiers killed, while Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) same day allegedly killed around twenty civilians in Diambala village.

In another important development. State court decision on immunity of former President Bazoum originally scheduled for 10 May delayed to 7 June.

West Africa

➔ Benin Row with Niger prompted Chinese mediation; security front remained quiet as U.S. military official visited.

Chinese diplomatic efforts attempted to cool bilateral tensions with Niger. Amid continued dispute as Niger kept its land border closed – which has disrupted trade and led to increased food prices in Benin – govt 6 May prevented Nigerien authorities using Seme terminal port to export crude oil through March inaugurated 2,000km-long Niger-Benin pipeline and 8 May banned maize exports to neighbours, including Niger. Nigerien PM Ali Lamine Zeine 11 May announced border would remain closed for supposed security reasons, further inflaming tensions. China – whose state oil company owns shares in Niger’s oil – 15 May sent delegation to mediate with President Talon, who reversed decision to block crude oil exports and agreed to hold dialogue with Nigerien authorities on potential border reopening and repair of bilateral ties. Media, however, 23 May reported govt had blocked river crossing with Niger used for informal trade, while 27-28 May dialogue attempt in Nigerien capital Niamey faltered.

Jihadist threat remained latent in Northern departments. Head of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), Gen. Michael Langley, 1-3 May met Talon and military officials to discuss defence collaboration amid latent jihadist threat in north. Military 14 May reportedly killed eight militants during operation in Bogo-Bogo district, Alibori department, while no significant jihadist attack reported during month.

In another important development. Amid cost-of-living crisis, trade unions 1 May organised protest in country’s largest city Cotonou but police repressed demonstrations and arrested 72 people; opposition party Les Démocrates demanded their release.

➔ **Côte d'Ivoire Political jostling continued ahead of 2025 presidential election; govt further deepened military ties with U.S.**

Political focus remained on next year's vote. At party convention in Abidjan city, opposition African People's Party-Côte d'Ivoire (PPA-CI) 10 May officially declared former President Gbagbo as candidate for 2025 presidency polls; Gbagbo's candidacy, however, faces major obstacles including his ineligibility due to 2018 criminal conviction for looting Central Bank of West African States during 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis and competition from several parties run by previous allies, including his former wife, that will be chasing similar parts of electorate. Meanwhile, former PM Soro – in exile since 2019 and sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia in 2021 for undermining national security – 8 May said he would continue dialogue with Ouattara on national reconciliation, amid his attempts to return from exile.

Discussion with Washington over expanded security ties continued. After U.S. delegation led by head of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), Gen. Michael Langley, late April visited Ouattara to discuss establishment of American military base, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana 13-24 May jointly hosted annual AFRICOM-led special operations exercise featuring dozens of countries.

In other important international developments. Relations with Senegal boosted by 7 May visit of new Senegalese President Faye. Tensions with Burkina Faso, however, remained high following series of incidents along border with reports of reciprocal security forces' provocations during May.

➔ **Guinea Govt defended stalled transition, while crackdown on protests continued.**

As opposition continued calling for elections, PM Bah justified transition delays. Bah 10 May responded to demands from opposition urging regime to respect timetable for restoration of civilian govt, claiming transition's objective was not just to organise vote but to lay foundations for "institutionalisation to stabilise country and consolidate unity"; PM declared "things are progressing". Opposition calls to progress transition, however, grew louder; coalition National Alliance for Alternation and Democracy (ANAD) 18 May urged govt to restore constitutional order before 31 Dec 2024, and said it "vigorously denounces junta's renunciation" of its "commitments"; ANAD threatened to organise protests if timetable not respected. Meanwhile, opposition grouping National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC) 21 May announced it will oppose any extension of transition timetable, and also threatened to resume demonstrations.

Popular protests continued amid crackdown and media repression. Police 3 May arrested 126 people after demonstrations took place over ten days in late April in Lero town (Kankan region) protesting against employment practices of local gold mining company and lack of public services including water and electricity. Also, authorities 14 May arrested spokesperson for victims of Dec gas depot explosion in Conakry that killed at least 23 and 17 May gave him three months suspended sentence for defaming govt; hundreds on same day demonstrated in capital in support of spokesperson. In continued repression of media, authorities 22 May withdrew six radio and television stations licences, with govt 24 May blaming outlets' "regular abuses"; Union of Guinean Press Professionals 27 May said they were preparing calls for a general strike.

In another important development. Small fires reported throughout month in capital Conakry including at headquarters of Culture Ministry and public energy company; official state media 7 May attributed cause of fires to “acts of sabotage”, but much remained unclear about incidents.

➡ **Nigeria Military operations continued against jihadists, bandits and other armed groups, but killings and abductions persisted while herder-farmer and separatist violence also flared.**

Army reported gains in anti-jihadist campaign in North East. Govt continued “clearance campaign” against Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Boko Haram militants around Lake Chad and Sambisa Forest in Borno state. Notably, troops 9 May raided ISWAP enclave and killed six fighters near Goniri village, Damboa area, while army 19 May said it rescued 386 people from Boko Haram strongholds in Sambisa Forest. ISWAP 28 May killed 31 fishermen with 40 others missing in Kukawa area, and 30 May ordered all residents of area to leave by 1 June or be killed.

Criminal group violence remained high in North West and North Central zones. Despite govt operations, armed groups continued killings and abductions in several states including Kaduna, Katsina, Kogi, Niger, Plateau and Zamfara. Notably in Zamfara, gunmen 7-11 May killed almost 50 and abducted over 100 civilians in eight villages in Anka and Birnin-Magaji areas. In Plateau, armed group 20 May killed around 50 in attack in Wase area. In Niger, armed groups 24-27 May reportedly killed at least six people, raped at least ten women and girls, and abducted 160 others in Munya area.

Herder-farmer violence persisted in North Central zone. In Benue state, armed group 3 and 14 May attacked Ogbaulu village in Agatu area, killing at least thirteen villagers; local official blamed attacks on herders. Meanwhile in Plateau, gunmen 8 May killed two herders and hundreds of cattle in Bassa area; chair of local Fulani organisation condemned attempts to “annihilate” community.

Biafra separatists and military continued to clash in South East zone. In Imo state’s Orsu area, army 7 May said troops had killed key commander of separatist group Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) armed wing Eastern Security Network and two of his lieutenants near IHITEUKWA town. In Abia state, gunmen 17 May killed two soldiers and civilian in Aba city and 30 May killed five soldiers and six civilians in Obingwa area; military blamed attacks on IPOB, vowed fierce response.

➡ **Togo Ruling party won overwhelming majority in April elections and new constitution expected to extend President Gnassingbé’s decades-long rule came into effect.**

Following 29 April legislative and regional votes, provisional results released 4 May showed ruling Union for the Republic party won 108 out of 113 parliamentary seats and 137 of 179 council seats, which Constitutional Court 13 May confirmed. Opposition parties expressed doubts about results but international actors including African Union and West African regional bloc ECOWAS commended electoral process. Meanwhile, President Gnassingbé 6 May signed new constitution into effect, marking beginning of Fifth Republic and transition from presidential to

parliamentary system, amid persistent concerns president would use new structure to extend stay in power.