

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Burundi Authorities continued to repress political opponents, and ruling party elected new head.** Security forces and ruling party CNDD-FDD youth wing Imbonerakure 3-22 Jan arrested over a dozen members of opposition parties National Congress for Freedom (CNL) and FRODEBU in several provinces. In Rumonge province, security forces 14-16 Jan killed two former soldiers suspected of supporting rebel groups. Residents in several provinces 20 Dec-23 Jan discovered at least 13 bodies, including some with signs of torture. Truth and Reconciliation Commission – provided for in 2000 Arusha peace accords and tasked with investigating ethnic violence in country’s recent past – 7 Jan presented to parliament intermediary report focused on 1972 mass killings. Civil society platform FORSC 15 Jan criticised it as biased, saying truth commission relied on selected testimonies, did not investigate archives of local administrations, and solely focused on violence against Hutu population, failing to address violence against Tutsis. Ruling party CNDD-FDD 24 Jan elected former Senate President Révérien Ndikuriyo as new party sec gen, replacing President Ndayishimiye; NGO Burundi Human Rights Initiative immediately expressed concerns that Ndikuriyo’s election “seems to consolidate the dominance of hardliners since the 2020 elections” and “does not bode well for human rights”. Meanwhile, govt continued to rebuild relations with foreign partners. EU delegation to Burundi, along with Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands 4 Jan expressed wish for “complete and gradual” normalisation of relations; statement also welcomed “the gestures made especially on the occasion of the end-of-year celebrations”, referring to Ndayishimiye’s late Dec pardoning of four independent media outlet Iwacu journalists, sentenced to two and a half years in prison in Jan 2020 on charges of “threatening state security”.

↓ **Cameroon Violence between govt forces and Anglophone separatists intensified in west leaving high civilian toll; jihadists kept up deadly attacks in Far North.** In North West region, armed forces 1 Jan killed two suspected separatists in Wum town, in apparent revenge killing for previous day attack which wounded soldier in same area. Separatists 6 and 8 Jan killed eight security forces and three civilians near North West’s Njikwa town and on Matazem checkpoint between North West and francophone West region; in response, armed forces 9-11 Jan launched raid on Bachua village in West region, reportedly detaining dozens of civilians suspected of supporting separatists. Armed forces 8 Jan killed separatist militia leader Captain Small Pikin in Ndop town. In regional capital Bamenda, unidentified gunmen 13 and 17 Jan killed two civilians, and soldiers 23 Jan killed four teenagers. In South West region, armed forces 10 Jan raided Mautu village and killed nine civilians in what residents described as “execution-style killings”; UN and France in following days condemned killings and called for investigation. Suspected separatists 14-15 Jan reportedly killed at least five soldiers in Muyuka town and Likomba locality. In attempt to disrupt Africa Cup of Nations football championship taking place 16 Jan-7 Feb in several Cameroonian cities including South West’s Limbe, separatists 14 Jan also set

construction equipment ablaze outside training stadium in Limbe and imposed regional lockdown. Prior to tournament, soldiers 12-16 Jan conducted mass arrest of civilians in Limbe, regional capital Buea, and Muyuka and Tiko towns. U.S. 1 Jan passed bipartisan resolution calling for ceasefire in Anglophone regions, sanctions on those responsible for atrocities, and for Washington to raise Anglophone conflict at UN. In Far North, Boko Haram (BH) launched almost daily attacks on civilians, notably in Mayo-Tsanaga division. Suspected BH assailants 1-2 Jan killed civilian in Ouzal village; 4 Jan killed three members of self-defence militia in Nguetchewe locality; overnight 7-8 Jan killed at least 14 civilians in Mozogo town; 25 Jan killed two civilians in Waza town, Logone-et-Chari division.

↓ **Central African Republic Coalition of armed groups allied to former President Bozizé launched attacks in push to encircle capital Bangui, while incumbent President Touadéra won 27 Dec presidential election.** Newly-formed Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), alliance of country's six most powerful rebel groups, escalated attacks against govt and UN peacekeeping force (MINUSCA); by month's end, over 200,000 civilians had been forced to flee their homes since conflict started in early Dec. Notably, CPC 3 Jan seized Bangassou city in Mbomou prefecture (south east); MINUSCA 15-16 Jan regained control of town. Army and MINUSCA troops, with support from Rwandan and Russian troops, repelled CPC attacks on Damara city (Ombella-M'Poko prefecture in west) 2 Jan, Bouar city (Nana-Mambéré prefecture in west) 9 and 17 Jan, Grimari city (Ouaka prefecture in centre) 9 Jan and on outskirts of Bangui 13 Jan; death toll unknown. Suspected CPC combatants 15 and 18 Jan ambushed MINUSCA convoys near Grimari and Bangassou, killing three peacekeepers. Military and allied forces mid- to late-Jan launched counter-offensives in bid to break rebel stranglehold on Bangui. Army 24-25 reportedly regained control of Boda city, Lobaye prefecture (west) and govt 25 Jan said military and allied forces had killed 44 rebels in Boyali village, Ombella-M'Poko prefecture. Security forces 11 Jan killed one civilian in Bangui for allegedly breaking night curfew, which was imposed 7 Jan; hours later killed another three who had gathered in protest. Authorities early Jan opened investigation into Bozizé's alleged role in ongoing "rebellion", 16-19 Jan arrested two generals and several soldiers and civilians in crackdown on perceived Bozizé sympathisers, and late Jan issued arrest warrant against CPC spokesman Abakar Sabone. Meanwhile, electoral commission 4 Jan declared Touadéra re-elected in first round of presidential election with 53% of votes despite reports of widespread irregularities and low turnout at 35%. Ten of 17 presidential candidates 5 Jan called for annulment of results and new election. Constitutional court 18 Jan confirmed Touadéra's re-election, which main opposition coalition COD-2020 rejected next day.

➔ **Chad Intercommunal violence continued in several regions, while govt faced accusations of interference in armed conflicts in neighbouring Sudan and Central African Republic (CAR).** Farmers and herders 1 Jan clashed in Djokhana and Abourakha villages, Salamat region (south east), leaving 16 dead. Farmer-herder clashes 5 Jan killed at least three in Kim locality, Mayo-Kebbi Est region (south west). Brawl between ethnic Arabs and Kanembus over access to well 13 Jan left two dead in Dourbali department, Chari-Baguirmi region (centre). Insecurity in Lake region (west) fuelled population displacement. Following suspected jihadist attack in Bikerom village in Dec, over

1,300 people 4-10 Jan fled Lake Chad islands to seek refuge on mainland. In run-up to April presidential election, opposition and civil society criticised new round of COVID-19 restrictions announced late Dec. Notably, opposition party National Union for Democracy and Renewal led by Saleh Kebzabo 5 Jan said ruling party is preparing “electoral hold-up” under pretext of COVID-19. Amid outcry, Déby 13 Jan lifted most restrictions. Meanwhile, Chad faced accusations of supporting armed groups involved in fighting in neighbouring countries. In Sudan, West Darfur state’s governor 17 Jan said some groups involved in previous day’s attacks in El-Geneina city, which left at least 48 dead, came from Chad; Chadian govt next day denied accusations. Amid fighting in El-Geneina area, over 2,500 people 16-19 Jan sought refuge in eastern Chad’s Adré area. CAR govt 13 Jan presented on television Chadian national arrested during early Jan rebel offensive on outskirts of capital Bangui and implied Chad was complicit in attack. Chadian govt next day denied accusations, condemned recruitment of Chadian nationals by all parties to CAR conflict. After president of CAR National Assembly 25 Jan travelled to Chad, CAR authorities next day refuted alleged accusations toward N’Djamena.

➔ **DR Congo Armed group violence left over 100 civilians killed in east; meanwhile President Tshisekedi secured new majority in parliament amid ongoing political tensions.** In Ituri province, clashes between military and armed group Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo early Jan reportedly left over two dozen dead on outskirts of provincial capital Bunia; suspected armed group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) 14 Jan killed 46 ethnic pygmies in Abembi Masini village, Irumu territory. In North Kivu province’s Beni territory, ADF 31 Dec-4 Jan killed 48 civilians in Tingwe and Mwenda villages; armed forces 1 Jan clashed with ADF in Loselose village, killing 14 and losing two soldiers; angry mob 16-17 Jan lynched three security force personnel across Beni territory, accusing them of complicity with armed groups. In Rutshuru territory (also North Kivu), local Maï-Maï militia 10 Jan killed six wildlife guards in Virunga National Park; armed forces and Maï-Maï militia 30 Jan reportedly clashed in Bwito chiefdom, leaving at least six dead. In South Kivu province, suspected Maï-Maï militia 6-8 Jan reportedly killed four civilians in Uvira and Mwenga territories. Meanwhile, President Tshisekedi won new round of power struggle with predecessor and former coalition partner Joseph Kabila. Constitutional Court 15 Jan ruled deputies could shift political allegiances without risking to lose their seats, opening way for Kabila’s Common Front for Congo (FCC) deputies to defect and join Tshisekedi. Over 300 MPs (out of 500) 22 Jan filed motion of no-confidence against PM Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba (loyal to Kabila); National Assembly 27 Jan approved motion; Ilunga 29 Jan stepped down. Senator Modeste Bahati, appointed 1 Jan by Tshisekedi to identify new majority, 28 Jan submitted list of 391 MPs in support of new parliamentary majority. Protests 18 Jan erupted in Lubumbashi city, Haut-Katanga province, following same-day arrest of Kabila-ally Pastor Ngoy Mulunda for alleged incitement to hate and secessionism; Lubumbashi court 27 Jan sentenced Ngoy to three years in prison. French prosecutors 2 Jan opened investigations against former warlord Roger Lumbala, arrested in Paris in Dec for “complicity in crimes against humanity” during second Congo war (1998-2003), among other charges.

Horn of Africa

↓ **Djibouti** **Armed opposition group clashed with state forces for first time in recent years, and ruling party appointed President Guelleh as its candidate for April presidential election.** In Tadjourah region, armed opposition group Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD-armé) 14 Jan launched simultaneous attacks on police and military targets in regional capital Tadjourah, leaving at least one gendarme dead and one civilian injured; attacks follow increase in govt repression of group since late Sept. FRUD-armé 17 Jan reportedly clashed with security forces in Giba Gible. Ahead of presidential election in April, ruling party People's Rally for Progress 9 Jan appointed party leader and four-term incumbent President Guelleh as its presidential candidate. Supporters of opposition RADDE party held several demonstrations against Guelleh's fifth term bid in capital Djibouti city.

➔ **Eritrea** **Reports of country's involvement in Tigray conflict in neighbouring Ethiopia continued to emerge.** As fighting persisted between troops of Ethiopia's federal govt and regional state of Tigray (see Ethiopia), UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi 14 Jan said UN refugee agency (UNHCR) continues to receive "many reliable reports and first-hand accounts" of human rights violations in Tigray, including "forced return of refugees to Eritrea"; govt next day accused UNHCR of "smear campaigns against Eritrea". EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell 15 Jan stated as fact that Eritrean forces are involved in Addis Ababa's military operations in Tigray. Ethiopia 20 Jan denied Eritrean involvement. U.S. State Department 26 Jan said there is "evidence of Eritrean soldiers forcibly returning Eritrean refugees from Tigray to Eritrea". Amid Sudan-Ethiopia border tensions, FM Osman Saleh and presidential adviser Yemane Gebreab 5-6 Jan visited Sudan and met with Sudanese PM Hamdok, Sovereign Council head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and deputy head Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" to discuss regional security and bilateral ties. President Afwerki 8 Jan also received high-level Sudanese delegation led by Hemedti, discussed conflict in Tigray and bilateral relations. Amid tensions with Yemen over disputed Hanish islands, authorities 9 Jan released two dozen Yemeni fishermen who had been in custody for three months; 21 Jan released additional 80 Yemeni fishermen who had reportedly been arrested inside Yemen's territorial waters few days earlier.

➔ **Ethiopia** **Further skirmishes with Sudan broke out in disputed border areas, fighting continued in Tigray regional state and intercommunal violence persisted in Benishangul-Gumuz region.** After Sudan's military in Dec reclaimed large swathes of territory in disputed Al-Fashqa area, Ethiopian and Sudanese forces 4 and 10 Jan clashed in Al-Fashqa and nearby Al-Qureisha border regions. Addis Ababa 12 Jan accused Sudan of pushing further into its territory and warned it was running out of patience. Ethiopian militia mid-Jan reportedly killed around a dozen Sudanese farmers in Al-Qureisha and Al-Fashqa. Khartoum 13 Jan said Ethiopian military aircraft had entered its airspace, calling it "a dangerous escalation"; next day closed airspace over Al-Qadarif state until April. Ethiopia 17 Jan released eight Sudanese soldiers captured during Dec border clashes. Sudan's Sovereign Council head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan 20 Jan said "Sudan does not want to go to war with Ethiopia", but warned that it "will not

abandon an inch of its territory”. In Tigray region in north, fighting continued between Tigray’s and federal govt’s forces. Security forces throughout month killed or captured dozens of senior Tigrayan leaders; notably, unidentified security forces 13 Jan killed former Ethiopian FM Seyoum Mesfin. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell 15 Jan stated as fact that Eritrean forces are involved in military operations in Tigray alongside Ethiopian federal forces (see Eritrea). Amid restricted humanitarian access to Tigray, Tigray official 21 Jan said 4.5mn in need of emergency food assistance; UN 26 Jan said it was receiving reports of “rising hunger and malnutrition”. Meanwhile, in Benishangul-Gumuz region in north west, ethnic Gumuz militia 12 Jan reportedly killed at least 80 ethnic Amhara, Agew and Shinasha civilians in Metekel zone. In Southern Nations region in south, unidentified assailants 9-11 Jan killed at least nine civilians in Konso zone. In Afar region in north east, clashes between security forces and Issa militia 23 Jan reportedly left at least 30 police officers killed and 40 more injured in Adaytu village. Talks between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan on Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam early Jan resumed but failed to make progress.

↓ **Kenya Intercommunal violence flared across country leaving at least two dozen dead; tensions with Somalia remained high.** In border area between Turkana and Baringo counties in west, intercommunal clashes and security operations aimed at quelling violence 11-31 Jan left at least ten dead, including at least four police officers in Kapedo town. In border areas between Isiolo, Garissa and Wajir counties in east, intercommunal clashes early to mid-Jan left at least eight dead. Intercommunal violence mid to late-Jan left four dead in Marsabit county in north, and 18-19 Jan reportedly left at least two dead in Tana River county in south east. In Mandera county in north east, police 11 Jan repelled Al-Shabaab attack on bus in Burashum area; Al-Shabaab militants same day abducted three public servants on Banisa-Takaba road, released them several days later; clashes between Al-Shabaab militants and security forces 15 Jan left civilian dead in Banisa sub-county; security forces 23 Jan killed at least one Al-Shabaab militant near Ashabito town; suspected Al-Shabaab roadside bombing 27 Jan killed at least one security officer along Omarjillo-Arabia road. In neighbouring Wajir county, Al-Shabaab militants 12 Jan robbed bus driver and passengers in Tarbaj sub-county. Electoral commission 26 Jan submitted for approval draft constitutional reform bill to county assemblies after confirming President Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga’s signature campaign to trigger referendum on constitutional reform had secured required 1mn signatures. Kenya 1 Jan began two-year term as non-permanent member of UN Security Council. After Somalia in Dec accused Kenya of hosting and arming Somali militia to launch cross-border attacks, and cut diplomatic relations with Nairobi, deadly fighting night of 24-25 Jan broke out between Somali federal forces and Somalia’s Jubaland state forces in Bula Hawa town, Gedo region, near Kenya’s Mandera county; Mogadishu 25 Jan accused “illegal militias armed by the government of Kenya” of launching attack on Bula Hawa; Nairobi same day denied involvement.

↓ 🗡️ **Somalia Deadly clashes erupted between federal and Jubaland state forces in Gedo region; amid deadlocked electoral preparations, violence could erupt when President Farmajo’s mandate expires on 8 Feb.** In Jubaland state’s Gedo region, fighting overnight 24-25 Jan erupted between federal govt forces and Jubaland state forces in Bula Hawa town near

Kenyan border, reportedly killing 21 and displacing at least 30,000; Mogadishu 25 Jan accused “illegal militias armed by the government of Kenya” of launching attack in Bula Hawa; Nairobi same day denied involvement. Meanwhile, PM Roble 9 Jan announced legislative elections would proceed despite federal member states Jubaland and Puntland continuing to boycott electoral process. Opposition bloc of 14 presidential candidates 11 Jan denounced move, warning that partial elections would endanger “the unity and stability of Somalia”. Jubaland and Puntland states 27 Jan appointed regional electoral commissions and called for emergency meeting between federal govt and member states to resolve disputes over electoral process; President Farmajo 30 Jan announced he would meet with heads of federal member states 1-3 Feb. Failure to organise parliamentary and presidential elections as planned by 8 Feb – the day Farmajo’s mandate ends – could trigger violent outbreaks. In south and centre, Al-Shabaab attacks 2-27 Jan left at least 44 security personnel, civilians and officials dead in Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Lower Juba, Gedo and Hiraaan regions. In capital Mogadishu, string of Al-Shabaab roadside bombings 5-23 Jan killed at least 15 security personnel, civilians and officials; Al-Shabaab attack 31 Jan reportedly left at least 11 dead. Meanwhile, counter-insurgency operations continued. Security forces 7-29 Jan killed several dozen Al-Shabaab militants in Bay, Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Gedo, Lower Juba and Mudug regions. U.S. airstrikes 1-19 Jan killed a dozen Al-Shabaab militants in Lower Juba, Middle Juba, Bay and Bakool regions. U.S. mid-Jan said it had completed “repositioning” of most U.S. troops based in Somalia to neighbouring countries.

➔ **Somaliland Electoral commission scheduled long-delayed elections for 31 May, and inter-clan violence broke out in Togdheer region in centre.** Amid registration of voters for parliamentary and local elections planned this year, grenade attack by unidentified assailants 12 Jan left at least two injured in voter registration centre in Sool regional capital Lasanod (east). After completing voter registration, electoral commission 16 Jan scheduled polls for 31 May. In Togdheer region, inter-clan fighting 11-20 Jan reportedly left three dead in Buhoodle town, Yayle and Dadan villages.

➔ **South Sudan After months-long deadlock, President Kiir appointed Upper Nile state governor; intercommunal violence persisted.** Govt and former rebel opposition groups 18 Jan agreed to power-sharing arrangement for Abyei, Greater Pibor and Ruweng Administrative Areas. After appointing six out of ten deputy state governors in Dec, President Salva Kiir appointed another three 22 Jan; Kiir 29 Jan appointed Upper Nile state governor and deputy governor, ending months-long deadlock with rebel leader turned VP Riek Machar over latter’s initial choice for state governor. Cabinet same day approved establishment of hybrid war crimes court. In Upper Nile state in east, clashes involving several militias continued to spark tensions between Kiir-aligned Dinka Padang and Machar-aligned Nuer communities in Maban county; Machar’s Sudan People’s Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO) and Kiir’s forces reportedly clashed throughout month and accused each other of attacking civilians in Maban. In Upper Nile state’s Melut county, cattle raiders 13 Jan killed four, and unidentified assailants 16 Jan killed at least seven civilians. In el-Mogeynes border area between Upper Nile state and Sudan’s White Nile state, clashes between South Sudanese gunmen and Sudanese communities early Jan reportedly left at least 17

dead. In Warrap state in centre, unidentified gunmen mid-Jan ambushed vehicle, killing five in Tonj North county; intercommunal clashes 24-30 Jan left at least 14 dead in Tonj North and Tonj South counties. In Lakes state in centre, intercommunal violence early to mid-Jan left at least six dead in Cueibet county; cattle raiders 11-12 Jan killed at least five police officers in Yirol West county. UN Sec-Gen Guterres 15 Jan appointed Nicholas Haysom as new head of UN Mission in South Sudan. Kiir mid-Jan offered to mediate in border dispute between Sudan and Ethiopia (see Sudan and Ethiopia).

↓ **Sudan Intercommunal violence left hundreds dead in West and South Darfur states; skirmishes in disputed border region with Ethiopia persisted.** In West and South Darfur states (west), intercommunal fighting between Arab and non-Arab tribes 15-18 Jan left 250 dead and reportedly displaced more than 100,000. Unidentified gunmen 19 Jan attempted to assassinate West Darfur state governor in state capital el-Geneina. Unidentified gunmen 24-25 Jan attacked villages in border area between South and North Darfur states, reportedly killing 11. Holdout rebel group Sudan Liberation Movement/Army led by Abdel Wahid al-Nur late Jan said it had repulsed attack by govt forces in North Darfur state, claimed killing 17. In el-Mogeines border area between Sudan's White Nile state and South Sudan's Upper Nile state, clashes between Sudanese communities and South Sudanese gunmen early Jan reportedly left at least 17 dead. After Sudan's military in Dec reclaimed large swathes of territory in disputed Al-Fashqa area, Sudanese and Ethiopian forces 4 and 10 Jan clashed in Al-Fashqa and Al-Qureisha border regions. Ethiopian militia mid-Jan reportedly killed around a dozen Sudanese farmers in Al-Qureisha and Al-Fashqa. Khartoum 13 Jan said Ethiopian military aircraft had entered its airspace, calling it "a dangerous escalation"; next day closed airspace over Al-Qadarif state until April. Ethiopia 17 Jan released eight Sudanese soldiers it captured during Dec border clashes. Sudan's Sovereign Council head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan 20 Jan said "Sudan does not want to go to war with Ethiopia", but warned that it "will not abandon an inch of its territory". Sudan and U.S. 6 Jan signed memorandum of understanding to provide Khartoum with loan to clear its arrears to World Bank, which would allow it to access more than \$1bn in annual funding; authorities same day signed U.S.-brokered agreement normalising relations with Israel. Talks between Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt on Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam early Jan resumed but failed to make progress.

➔ **Tanzania Opposition continued to question legitimacy of 28 Oct 2020 general elections.** Opposition party Chadema's vice-chair and 2020 presidential candidate Tundu Lissu 9 Jan said Chadema had submitted evidence to International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor of election-related incidents committed against opposition members, said incidents could qualify as crimes against humanity. Lissu 13 Jan accused African Union of failing to condemn violence and crackdown on opposition during election period, also regretted that East African Community and Southern Africa regional bloc called elections free and fair despite widespread irregularities. Outgoing U.S. Sec State Pompeo 19 Jan announced visa restrictions on Tanzanian officials for "undermining the democratic process and human rights" in election period; Lissu same day welcomed decision. Meanwhile, Attorney General Adelardus Kilangi early Jan said country would not fully rejoin African Court of Human and People's Rights

(AFCHPR) until African court respected country's constitution; remark comes after Tanzania's Nov 2020 withdrawal from Article 34(6) of AFCHPR's protocol, which allows individuals and NGOs to file cases against govt at African court. Amid ongoing cross-border attacks by Mozambique-based Islamist insurgents in Tanzania, President Magufuli and Mozambican counterpart Nyusi 11 Jan met in Chato town in Geita region, agreed to resume joint commission on defence and security (see Mozambique). Magufuli 25 Jan met with Ethiopian counterpart Sahle-Work in Chato, same day ordered release of over 1,700 Ethiopian migrants imprisoned for entering Tanzania illegally.

➔ **Uganda General elections 14 Jan held amid violent crackdown and internet shutdown; electoral commission declared victory of President Museveni, which opposition rejected.** Police 6 Jan reportedly fired live bullets at convoy of Forum for Democratic Change presidential candidate Patrick Amuriat Oboi in Kitagwenda district; 2 and 10 Jan briefly detained Amuriat for allegedly defying police directives and violating traffic rules in Nakasongola and Mpigi districts, respectively. Police 7 Jan dragged opposition National Unity Platform leader and presidential hopeful Bobi Wine out of his car in Namayingo district, reportedly firing tear gas and live bullets; Wine was giving online press conference to announce he had filed complaint with International Criminal Court against President Museveni and nine security officials over alleged incitement to murder, arrests and beatings. Facebook 11 Jan took down alleged fake pro-govt accounts. Uganda Communications Commission next day directed telecommunications providers to block access to social media, and 13 Jan shut down Internet. Elections 14 Jan proceeded without major security incident; security forces next day put Wine under de facto house arrest in capital Kampala. Electoral commission 16 Jan announced Museveni's re-election with 59% of vote against Wine's 35%; said ruling party National Resistance Movement (NRM) won 310 of 529 seats in parliament. Wine immediately rejected results and accused govt of electoral fraud. Protests against election results erupted same day in Luwero and Masaka districts; security forces reportedly killed two and arrested 23. Govt 18 Jan partially restored Internet access. High Court in Kampala 25 Jan ruled Wine's house arrest illegal, reportedly prompting security forces to withdraw next day. Meanwhile in Wakiso district, supporters of ruling NRM and opposition Democratic Party 26 Jan took to streets in Entebbe town to contest election of independent candidate Fabrice Rulinda as Entebbe mayor previous day; security forces reportedly fired teargas and live bullets, leaving NRM local official Eric Kyeyune dead and several others injured.

Southern Africa

➔ **Mozambique Islamist insurgents targeted liquefied natural gas (LNG) project site in far north and President Nyusi replaced armed forces chief of staff.** In far north Cabo Delgado province, Islamist insurgents 1 Jan clashed with security forces in Palma district's Quitunda village, adjacent to French oil and gas company Total's fenced-off LNG project site. Oil company Total 4 Jan confirmed suspension of field operations due to security situation and evacuation of most personnel. Insurgents 24 Jan attacked Olumbe village, located few kilometres from LNG site, for second time in just over a week; incident led to

intense fighting which reportedly involved company and govt's Joint Task Force protecting LNG project. In Ibo district, insurgents 5 Jan attacked Quirimba Island, reportedly killing four civilians. In Macomia district, insurgents 7 Jan kidnapped 13 civilians, and later killed at least seven of them in Olumboa village; 22 Jan reportedly attacked Ingoane and Pangane villages, leaving several civilians dead. In Nangade district, insurgents 16-19 Jan killed at least nine and abducted unknown number of civilians in Pundanhar area; 21-22 Jan killed two police officers and four civilians in Mandimba and Namiune villages. In Mocimboa da Praia district, clashes between Islamist insurgents and self-defence militia late Jan reportedly left at least 27 insurgents and three militiamen dead in Panjele village. Nyusi 14 Jan promoted General Eugenio Mussa to armed forces chief of staff, replacing Lázaro Menete; Mussa late 2020 had been appointed commander of Northern Operational Command Post in garrison town of Mueda, headquarters of govt's campaign against insurgents in Cabo Delgado and previously under police control. Following cross-border attacks into Tanzania in recent months, Nyusi and Tanzanian President Magufuli 11 Jan agreed to resume joint commission on defence and security; Southern African Development Community summit on security situation in Cabo Delgado, scheduled for mid-Jan, indefinitely postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile in centre, suspected members of Renamo Military Junta (JMR), dissident faction of opposition party Renamo, 9 Jan attacked truck convoy in Zove area, Sofala province, killing civilian; attack took place despite unilateral ceasefire announced in Dec by JMR leader Mariano Nhongo.

➔ **Zimbabwe Authorities continued crackdown on opposition and civil society through legal system.** Authorities 8-11 Jan arrested investigative journalist Hopewell Chin'ono and two senior officials of Nelson Chamisa-led faction of main opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-A), Job Sikhala and Fadzayi Mahere, on charges of "publishing or communicating false statements prejudicial to the state" which carry maximum of 20 years' imprisonment; in messages posted online, all three had accused police officer of killing baby in capital Harare 5 Jan. NGO Amnesty International 13 Jan called for "immediate release" of all three, condemned "growing crackdown on [...] critical voices". EU delegation in Zimbabwe same day expressed concern over pre-trial detentions "without serious charges" and warned about high risk of COVID-19 infection in jails. After Harare Magistrate's Court 14 Jan denied Chin'ono bail, High Court 27 Jan granted him bail; Harare Magistrate's Court 15 Jan denied Sikhala bail, 18 Jan granted Mahere bail. Mahere 20 Jan announced testing positive for COVID-19, denounced "deplorable" prison conditions. High Court 15 Jan granted bail to Harare mayor and prominent MDC-A official Jacob Mafume; Mafume was arrested in Dec on charges of witness tampering. Three ministers, including FM Sibusiso Busi Moyo (retired senior military official and public face of Oct 2017 coup against then-President Mugabe), died of COVID-19 in Jan amid soaring cases in country.

Sahel

➔ **Burkina Faso Jihadist violence continued unabated in north and PM Christophe Dabiré formed new cabinet following late-2020 elections.** In northern Sahel region's Oudalan province, army airstrikes 4 Jan

killed ten Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) militants near Gountawola village; suspected ISGS militants next day assaulted civilians near Goungam town. In neighbouring Seno province, suspected al-Qaeda-linked Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) or ISGS combatants 5 Jan abducted one in Bani commune; suspected ISGS militants 8 Jan killed three in Gorgadji commune. In Soum province (Sahel region), ISGS militants and militants from JNIM-affiliated Katiba Macina and Ansarul Islam 2 Jan clashed in Tongomayel commune; at least ten fighters reportedly killed. Violence also persisted in North region. In Koumbri locality in Yatenga province, series of incidents took place early Jan: suspected Katiba Macina militants 4 Jan killed two volunteers (VDPs) fighting alongside security forces and four civilians; suspected VDP 7 Jan abducted two civilians at camp for internally displaced; suspected JNIM combatants 9 Jan clashed with security forces reportedly leaving one soldier and 11 militants killed. UN refugee agency 22 Jan said violence in and around Koumbri had displaced over 11,000 people, mostly women and children, since early Jan. French military 21 Jan said French troops 16-17 Jan killed over 20 jihadists in north near border with Mali. In Plateau-Central region, unidentified assailants 4 Jan stormed Loumbila village; six people killed, including two VDPs. In Cascades region in south west, body of Catholic priest Abbé Rodrigue Sanon, who went missing 19 Jan, was found 21 Jan in Toumousseni forest, 20km from regional capital Banfora. In East region, suspected JNIM militants 2 Jan abducted civilian in Kantchari commune, Tapoa province; suspected JNIM or ISGS militants next day abducted and killed councilman in Coalla commune, Gnagna province; suspected ISGS combatants 7 Jan abducted and next day executed two individuals in Foutouri commune, Komondjari province. President Kaboré, who was re-elected in late 2020, 5 Jan reappointed Christophe Dabiré as PM; Dabiré 10 Jan unveiled new 33-member cabinet featuring opposition figure Zephirin Diabré as state minister for “national reconciliation and social cohesion”.

➔ **Mali Amid jihadist attacks against military and international forces, French counter-insurgency operation sparked public outcry.** Jihadists launched series of deadly attacks on international forces. In Ménaka region (east), roadside bomb planted by suspected al-Qaeda-linked Group to Support Islam and Muslims (JNIM) 2 Jan killed two French soldiers and wounded another in Tabangout area. In Mopti region’s Douentza circle (centre), suicide bomber from JNIM-linked jihadist group Katiba Serma 8 Jan wounded six French troops in Isey village; IED 21 Jan killed three soldiers in Mondoro area; military overnight 23-24 Jan repelled “complex and simultaneous” jihadist attacks on Boulkessi and Mondoro military bases, six soldiers and around 30 assailants killed. In Timbuktu region (north), suspected JNIM or Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) militants 13 Jan ambushed UN mission (MINUSMA) patrol near Bambara-Maoudé town; four peacekeepers killed and five more wounded. Meanwhile, counter-insurgency operations continued. In Mopti’s Douentza circle, French Operation Barkhane-led airstrikes 2 Jan reportedly killed 15 JNIM fighters in Gassa-Douni locality, and French airstrike next day reportedly killed at least 19 people in Bounti village. French military 5 Jan said 3 Jan airstrike targeted jihadists, while local Fulani advocacy group Tabital Pulaaku next day claimed strike killed civilians during wedding ceremony; NGO Human Rights Watch 21 Jan urged Malian and French govts to launch investigation into incident. Protestors 20 Jan took to streets in capital Bamako against France’s military presence in country;

security forces fired tear gas to disperse gathering, which authorities had banned citing COVID-19. In Kidal region in north east, delegations of ex-rebel Coalition of Azawad Movements and leaders of pro-govt Platform coalition's two branches 8 Jan signed agreement establishing joint management of Aguelhok town following tensions between Tuaregs and Arabs in area. After West Africa regional bloc ECOWAS 12 Jan praised establishment of transition's main organs, called for "credible and transparent elections" in 2022 and dissolution of National Committee for the Salvation of the People (CNSP), governing body of military junta which toppled former President Keita in 2020. Govt 18 Jan disbanded CNSP.

↓ **Niger Jihadists launched large-scale attack, leaving over 100 civilians dead.** In Tillabery region (south west), suspected Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) militants 2 Jan stormed ethnic Zarma villages Tchoma Bangou and Zerma Dare in Ouallam department, killing over 100 villagers and wounding at least 26 more; attack reportedly in retaliation for recent killing of several ethnic Fulani civilians or ISGS members in same villages; UN office for humanitarian affairs 6 Jan said attack displaced over 10,000. In response to incident, Interior Minister Alkache Alhada 4 Jan announced deployment of additional soldiers to area bordering Mali. Also in Tillabery region, ISGS militants 5 Jan reportedly extorted taxes and seized livestock in Ndjeleye village, Tera department. Security situation in Diffa region (south east) remained precarious. Notably, roadside bomb planted by suspected Boko Haram (BH) militants 18 Jan reportedly killed four Nigerien soldiers near Chetima Wangou village; also, combatants of BH faction led by Abubakar Shekau (JAS) and BH splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) 13 Jan allegedly clashed near Maniram village. Further west, bandits continued attacks against villages bordering Nigeria in Maradi region, involving cattle rustling and kidnappings. Following Dec presidential election, electoral commission 2 Jan released provisional results: ruling-party candidate Mohamed Bazoum obtained 39% of vote, falling short of majority, while former President Mahamane Ousmane came in second with 17%. Constitutional Court 30 Jan confirmed results. Second round of elections scheduled for 21 Feb. Bazoum's Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism secured 80 of the 171 seats in Dec legislative elections. Cap 20/21 opposition coalition 3 Jan denounced results of legislative elections and first round of presidential election, citing electoral fraud in some areas; later announced it would lodge appeal before Constitutional Court, and called on followers to vote for Ousmane in presidential election run-off.

West Africa

➔ **Côte d'Ivoire Several opposition figures returned to political arena, and opposition parties formed competing coalitions ahead of legislative elections scheduled for March.** Following late 2020 political dialogue between govt and opposition to alleviate electoral tensions, leader of Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire, Albert Mabri Toikeuse, 11 Jan resurfaced after two months in hiding; National Alliance for Change leader Alphonse Soro next day returned to Côte d'Ivoire after one-year exile in France and

16 Jan rallied ruling party Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP), officially ending collaboration with prominent opponent in exile and former PM Guillaume Soro. Electoral commission 3-22 Jan held registration of legislative elections' candidates. Opposition platform Together for Democracy and Sovereignty (EDS), which is close to former President Laurent Gbagbo, 7 Jan said opposition coalition – made up of EDS, Henri Konan Bédié's Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, and Pascal Affi N'Guessan's Ivorian Popular Front, along with other parties – would participate in legislative elections set for 6 March and aim to field common candidates against RHDP in country's 205 constituencies. N'Guessan mid-Jan left coalition due to disagreements over selection of nominees, forming new electoral alliance. Guillaume Soro 16 Jan announced his party would boycott polls; his close ally Alain Lobognon, in pre-trial detention since 2019, next day said he would run as independent candidate, in apparent disavowal of Soro.

➔ **Guinea Authorities continued to use legal means to suppress dissent, while international pressure to halt repression mounted.** Court in Dixinn, Conakry region, 13 Jan sentenced Souleymane Condé and Youssouf Dioubaté, members of opposition and civil society coalition National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC), to one year in prison on charges of “production and dissemination of data likely to disrupt public order and safety”; FNDC next day said sentence aimed at silencing dissenting voices, denounced “dictatorial regime”. Mafanko court 28 Jan sentenced prominent FNDC leader Oumar Sylla, alias Foniké Mengué, to 11 months in prison on charges of “participation in an illegal gathering”. Meanwhile, crackdown on dissent drew international condemnation. U.S. 20 Jan expressed concern over govt's “targeting of political opposition” and recent “death in detention of two opposition members”; move follows death in detention of opposition party Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea members Roger Bamba 17 Dec and Mamadou Oury Barry 16 Jan. EU 21 Jan called for independent investigation into Barry's death. France 27 Jan called on govt to “shed light” on recent spate of arrests of opposition figures. Following Condé's investiture in Dec, PM Kassory Fofana 15 Jan resigned along with govt; Condé immediately reinstated him.

➔ **Nigeria Jihadist attacks and criminal violence continued unabated in north east and north west.** Attacks by Boko Haram (BH) factions against military continued in Borno state (north east) despite military operations. Notably, suicide bombing by BH splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) 11 Jan killed six soldiers in Talala village and ISWAP insurgents 15 Jan reportedly temporarily took over army base in Marte town; number of casualties unknown. Army 3 Jan launched new counter-insurgency operation to dislodge BH factions from Borno state (notably islands of Lake Chad), parts of Adamawa and Yobe states, reportedly killing over 60 combatants in Yobe state 9-10 Jan and “several” others in airstrikes in Konduga, Kaga and Bama areas of Borno state 12-14 Jan. Armed criminal groups continued to launch attacks and abductions across several regions, reportedly killing at least 71 security personnel and civilians and kidnapping at least 191 people throughout month in Katsina, Zamfara and Kaduna states (north west), Niger, Nasarawa and Kogi states (Middle Belt), and Taraba state (east). Meanwhile, security forces continued operations to stem violence in north west. Notably, military 9 Jan reportedly killed at least 50 gunmen in Kaura Namoda area and 17 Jan killed another 35 in two separate clashes in Bungudu and

Maradun areas, all Zamfara state. Amid mounting pressure from Senate, President Buhari 26 Jan dismissed four military chiefs. Farmer-herder tensions continued. Governor of Ondo state in south west 18 Jan issued seven-day ultimatum to ethnic Fulani herders to vacate state's forest reserves which have turned into hideouts for criminals; order yet to be enforced; in Ibarapo area of neighbouring Oyo state, ethnic Yoruba mobs 22 Jan attacked Fulani communities, killing at least three. In Imo state in south east, secessionist group Indigenous People of Biafra 25 Jan clashed with security forces in Orlu area, reportedly leaving several killed.