

# CrisisWatch

A monthly bulletin on current and potential conflicts  
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## June 2015 – Trends



### Deteriorated situations

[Afghanistan](#), [Chad](#), [Kuwait](#), [Myanmar](#), [Tunisia](#)



### Improved situations

[Nepal](#)

## July 2015 – Watchlist



### Conflict risk alerts

[Burundi](#)



### Conflict resolution opportunities

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**CrisisWatch** summarises developments during the previous month in some 70 situations of current or potential conflict, listed alphabetically by region, providing references and links to more detailed sources. It assesses whether the overall situation in each case has, during the previous month, significantly deteriorated, significantly improved, or on balance remained more or less unchanged. It identifies situations where, in the coming month, there is a risk of new or significantly escalated conflict, or a conflict resolution opportunity (noting that in some instances there may be both). It also summarises Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers published the previous month.

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**Arrows and alerts:** Up, down and side arrows signify, respectively, improved, deteriorated or unchanged situations. Conflict Risk Alerts (identified with bombs) or Conflict Resolution Opportunities (with doves) are used in addition to arrows: a bomb signifies a risk of escalated violence; a dove an opportunity to advance peace. Both bombs and doves tend to be used where events are moving fast.

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# Africa

## Central Africa

➡ 🇧🇮 **Burundi** Parliamentary elections opened 29 June amid climate of fear and violence, despite international efforts to delay polls and ensure they are free and fair. Opening of several voting stations delayed by 29 June grenade attacks. Seventeen opposition parties 11 June announced boycott of 29 June parliamentary vote and presidential polls scheduled for 15 July; AU chief 28 June said AU will not observe elections after govt rejected international proposal to move legislative and presidential elections to 30 July and mid-August respectively. Violence in Bujumbura continued despite end of mass protests, including four killed, some 30 injured in grenade attacks 22 June. UN human rights chief Zeid 9 June warned increasing violence by Imbonerakure youth militia destabilising country. VP Gervais Ruyikiri 25 June and head of parliament Pie Ntavyohanyuma 28 June defected, fled country; latter said he received death threats after criticising President Nkurunziza's third term bid.

- ["Violent start to 'sham elections' in Burundi"](#), *Guardian*, 29 June 2015.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°111, [Burundi: Peace Sacrificed?](#), 29 May 2015.

➡ 🇨🇲 **Cameroon** Low-intensity attacks by Boko Haram (BH) in Far North continued including 10 June attack that left two soldiers dead, some 23 injured. Assailants from CAR 16 June attacked Bakari village, attack repulsed by local self-defence forces.

- Thierry Vircoulon, ["Cameroon: Africa's Pivot"](#), *World Policy Journal*, 1 June 2015.
- ["Two soldiers killed, 23 injured in northern Cameroon rocket attack"](#), Anadolu Agency, 11 June 2015.

➡ 🇨🇦 **Central African Republic** Electoral authority (ANE) 16 June announced electoral timetable: parliamentary and first round of presidential elections scheduled for 18 Oct, second round of presidential polls for late Nov; UN representatives at meeting organised by UN Peacebuilding Commission 8 June called for urgent financing for elections. DDR process also remains significantly underfunded, with several donors denouncing absence of concrete DDR strategy. France 4 June announced it would reduce troops in country from 1,700 to 900 by end June. UNSG Ban 3 June ordered independent investigation into UN handling of allegations of child abuse by peacekeepers; UN spokesperson 23 June said new abuse allegations revealed, relevant member state asked to investigate. Clashes between anti-balaka and MINUSCA forces in Bangui 3 June left 70 students hospitalised. Kimberley Process 26 June allowed CAR to partially resume exporting diamonds.

- ["Des dizaines d'élèves blessés dans des échanges de tirs à Bangui"](#), RFI, 6 June 2015.

➡ 🇳🇮 **Chad** First suspected Boko Haram (BH) suicide attack in N'Djamena 15 June targeted police academy; at least 30 killed, some 100 injured. Govt increased security in N'Djamena, 15 June closed border with Cameroon and expelled some 300 Cameroonians 26-27 June; 17 June launched offensive, reportedly bombing six BH camps in Nigeria. Prosecutor 28 June said 60 suspects arrested, terrorist cell dismantled. At

least eleven, including five police, killed in 29 June raid on suspected BH militants in N'Djamena when suspects detonated explosives. PM Deubet 17 June banned burqas.

- [“Chad retaliates after Boko Haram attack”](#), Deutsche Welle, 18 June 2015.

➡ **DR Congo** Several killed in 2 June attack on Goma airport, govt linked attack to insecurity around Beni. Several FARDC officers in “Sukola 1” operation against Ugandan ADF rebels arrested 14 June, accused of spreading insecurity; head of operation General Mondozi replaced 5 June. Electoral Commission proceeded with preparations for provincial elections, despite unclear funding and parliament’s failure to adopt key law on number of seats allocated to decentralised entities. President Kabila continued consultations; major opposition parties refused to participate. MONUSCO chief Martin Kobler 24 June said Patriotic Force of Resistance in Ituri (FRPI) rebel group weakened in joint MONUSCO-FARDC operation.

- [“Beni: des présumés instigateurs de l’insécurité aux arrêts”](#), Radio Okapi, 15 June 2015.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°225, [Congo: Is Democratic Change Possible?](#), 5 May 2015.

➡ **Rwanda** Ruling RPF 15 June endorsed constitutional amendment that would allow President Kagame to run for third term; opposition Democratic Green Party 3 June petitioned Supreme Court to prevent amendment. Intelligence chief Karensi Karake arrested in UK 23 June, wanted in Spain for war crimes; AU Peace and Security Council demanded immediate release.

- [“Rwanda opposition party seeks to block president term extension”](#), Reuters, 5 June 2015.

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## Horn of Africa

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➡ **Ethiopia** Results of 24 May parliamentary elections announced 22 June: ruling EPRDF took all seats; AU observers said elections “calm, peaceful and credible” but opposition alleged intimidation, said four activists killed since poll. UK 25 June warned Ethiopia over treatment of imprisoned opposition figure and UK citizen Andargachew Tsige.

- [“Ethiopia’s ruling party wins by landslide in general election”](#), AFP, 22 June 2015.

➡ **Kenya** Al-Shabaab late May and early June briefly seized several villages and mosques in remote locations in Mandara, Garissa and Lamu counties. Al-Shabaab attacks continued throughout month: 14 June attacked army post in Baure, Lamu county; at least two soldiers and eleven militants killed including senior Al-Shabaab commander and a British fighter. Suspected Al-Shabaab operatives 20 June killed Eyrib chief in Wajir town. Military convoys hit by IEDs in Ijara Garissa county and Baure Lamu county 13, 21 June, one officer injured. Five charged 8 June for involvement in April Al-Shabaab attack on Garissa university that left 148 dead. Two Tanzanians arrested 27 June in Migori on charges of recruiting for Al-Shabaab. Govt 27 June lifted curfew, imposed April, in NE and parts of coast; 24 June permitted thirteen Somali remittance companies to resume operations after licences suspended in April. Clan fighting re-erupted in Mandera county, some twenty killed.

- [“11 Shabaab fighters died in Baure attack: KDF”](#), Daily Nation, 16 June 2015.

➡ **Somalia** Somali federal parliament 6 June passed no confidence vote against Interim Juba Administration regional assembly, calling it illegal and unconstitutional. Vote welcomed in Digil/Mirifle (Rahanweyn) strongholds in Bay and Bakool regions who claimed Juba assembly selection favoured Ogaden and Marehan (Darood) clans; Somali Federal Govt (SFG) appointed ten-member ministerial committee to resolve impasse. Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama (ASWJ) militias 7 June seized Dhusamareb, capital of Galgaduud region, after govt-allied forces vacated positions. SFG attempts to persuade ASWJ to surrender town unsuccessful; ASWJ announced own process to establish administration for Mudug and Galgaduud regions. Al-Shabaab attacks and clashes with AMISOM/Somali forces continued including late June Al-Shabaab attack on Leego AMISOM base, Lower Shabelle, that reportedly killed some 40 peacekeepers, and 21 June attack on Somali intelligence training centre in Mogadishu. Suspected Al-Shabaab militants assassinated four clan elders accused of collaborating with govt. Somali militias clashed with Ethiopian police in Galgaduud on border with Ethiopia early June, over 45 killed; Ethiopian and Somali govts 7 June intervened to halt hostilities, signed agreement 7 June.

- [“Dozens killed as Al-Shabab overrun African Union base”](#), AFP, 27 June 2015

➡ **Somaliland** Security forces 9 June arrested eight in Awdal region, seized illegal arms and explosive devices. Local clan conflicts continued in Caynabo, Buhoodle and Erigabo. Tensions with Puntland over disputed Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer regions increased further with clashes mid-June in Tukaraq.

- [“Top General inspects army units based in Sool region”](#), Somalilandpress, 13 June 2015.

➡ **South Sudan** Kenyan President Kenyatta 29 May announced “merger” of IGAD peace process and SPLM reunification process. Delegation of five out of ten SPLM-Former Detainees (FDs) early June visited S Sudan after considerable pressure from S Africa and Kenya: accompanied by S African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa and Kenyan and Ethiopian FMs. Former detainee Pagan Amum reinstated as Sec Gen of SPLM 23 June. Merged process stalled 28 June as talks with President Kiir and former VP Machar in Nairobi failed. IGAD special envoys 8-10 June held consultations with S Sudanese parties to conflict, gave parties a “synopsis” of a draft agreement. AU Summit 7-15 June inaugurated ad-hoc high-level committee and former Malian President Alpha Oumar Konaré as AU high rep for S Sudan. Meanwhile, low-level conflict continued in W Equatoria and W Bahr el Ghazal, and on 28 June fighting resumed in Malakal. UN 30 June released human rights report documenting widespread rape and burning women alive; said “level of cruelty ... suggests a depth of antipathy that exceeds political differences”.

- Crisis Group Statement, [“South Sudan: No Sanctions without a Strategy”](#), 29 June 2015.
- [“Mediator proposes new ‘compromise’ peace plan for S Sudan”](#), Reuters, 25 June 2015.

➡ **Sudan** President Bashir inaugurated for 3rd term 3 June, formed new govt comprised primarily of trusted military and security figures and demoting or excluding several key figures from Islamic Movement including former FM Ali Karti. Karti replaced by pragmatist Ibrahim Ghandour, viewed by several diplomats as reformer. Former Janjaweed militia commander and leader of Darfurian Arab Mahameed clan Musa Hilal attended inauguration suggesting rapprochement with Khartoum. Govt’s “Decisive Summer” campaign against rebel groups in Darfur, Blue Nile and S Kordofan continued with growing contributions by paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Focus increasingly switching to S Kordofan and Blue Nile after April’s decisive

RSF victory over Justice and Equality Movement in S Darfur. SPLM-N rebels 14 June claimed govt assault on Kalgom Blue Nile repulsed. UN 29 June extended UNAMID peacekeeping mandate for further year.

- [“Sudan swears in President Al-Bashir as he shifts alliances”](#), AP, 2 June 2015.

➡ **Uganda** Former PM Amama Mbabazi 15 June declared presidential candidacy, challenging President Museveni within ruling NRM party. Opposition party leaders 10 June established Democratic Alliance coalition; coalition will field joint candidate, including for president, promised to form five-year Transitional Govt of National Unity and enact political and institutional reforms. Police 19 June arrested former army General David Sejusa, who previously criticised Museveni, for holding illegal assembly. EU 5 June criticised Constitutional Amendment Bill tabled by govt late-May, for potential impact on credibility of upcoming elections.

- [“Museveni friend turns rival in Uganda campaign”](#), VoA, 17 June 2015.

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## Southern Africa

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➡ **Madagascar** Constitutional Court 13 June struck down parliament’s 26 May impeachment of President Rajaonarimampianina. Impeachment vote followed by crack-down on dissidents: interior ministry 4 June prohibited political gatherings. Police 8 June seized \$65,000 from car of Lanto Rakotomanga, MP and ally of former coup leader Rajoelina, claimed money would be used to foster unrest; Rakotomanga’s lawyers insisted money was for political campaign.

- [“Madagascar constitutional court throws out impeachment”](#), BBC, 13 June 2015.

➡ **Mozambique** Tensions between President Nguysu and opposition Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama escalated after talks failed to resolve outstanding disagreements around devolution and security sector reform. Renamo forces and police clashed 14 June in Tete province: Dhlakama 23 June said he ordered his forces to confront govt troops, claimed 45 soldiers killed; police said one killed. Renamo MP Jose Manteigas 15 June announced Renamo will establish own police and armed forces, Dhlakama at risk of assassination. Despite increased tensions, govt and Renamo 23 June signed agreement on separation of party and state, following 108th round of dialogue.

- [“In likely bloodiest clash since 1992, ex-rebel group Renamo says it killed 45 Mozambique troops”](#), Mail and Guardian, 23 June 2015.

➡ **Zimbabwe** Opposition MDC boycott facilitated ZANU-PF’s clean sweep of sixteen by-elections held 10 June; voter turnout low. Expelled ZANU-PF MP Themba Mliswa scored well as independent candidate in Hunzviwe West despite campaign of intimidation and violence waged against him and supporters. MDC continued calls for key electoral reforms. Election observers noted widespread voter intimidation. ZANU-PF purges continued with 39 senior officials suspended early-June, bringing total to 141 senior officials expelled and suspended.

- [“Zimbabwe ruling party sweeps by-elections, strengthens grip on power after opposition boycott”](#), AFP, 11 June 2015.

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## West Africa

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➡ **Burkina Faso** Preparations for Oct elections continued: former FM Ablassé Ouédraogo named as presidential candidate for Le Faso Autrement party 7 June; former leading opposition figure Zéphirin Diabré sworn in as presidential candidate for Union for Progress and Change (UPC) party 28 June. Inflammatory remarks by candidates, including Ablassé Ouédraogo's 7 June assertion that ethnic and religious affiliations increased his chances of electoral success, sparked outcry. Tensions revived between PM Zida and presidential guard (RSP): protest held 29 June after National Guard accused senior RSP members of planning coup attempt; President Kafando 30 June began mediation between parties. Govt 5 June adopted law requiring officers with political aspirations to resign from military. President Kafando early-June and PM Zida 12 June affirmed RSP will not be dissolved.

- ["Présidentielle burkinabè: le Faso Autrement investit Ablassé Ouédraogo"](#), RFI, 8 June 2015.

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**New** Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°112, [Burkina Faso: Meeting the October Target](#), 24 June 2015. Burkina Faso's faltering transition faces elections in less than four months amid political tensions and social agitation. A controversial electoral code could inject the poison of exclusion into a country that is attached to multiparty politics.

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➡ **Côte d'Ivoire** Protests against President Ouattara 9 June escalated in Abidjan, Gagnoa, Daloa and Guiglo; organisers reported four killed, govt said one. Opposition National Coalition for Change (CNC) 10 June denied organising demonstration, denounced govt's "crackdown" on protesters. Govt 11 June opened investigation into allegedly illegal march, said organisers will face prosecution. CNC meeting 27 June featured speeches reviving dangerous ethnic and identity rhetoric; coalition member Mamadou Koulibaly, absent from meeting, 28 June denounced rhetoric as dangerous. Faction of opposition Ivoirian Patriotic Front (FPI) loyal to former President Gbagbo 15 June called for boycott of all Independent Electoral Commission activities. Trial of nine pro-Gbagbo officers accused of violence during 2010-2011 post-election crisis began 9 June. UNSC 24 June extended UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) mandate by one year.

- ["Le gouvernement enquête sur la marche des jeunes de l'opposition"](#), Afrik, 11 June 2015.

➡ **Guinea** Voter roll update ended 8 June: opposition 1 June denounced alleged massive enrolment of minors in pro-govt strongholds, disruptions in opposition-held regions and abroad; electoral commission 12 June denied claims. Official dialogue over electoral preparations began 18 June after consultations led by justice minister during which govt agreed to international participation in dialogue. Govt and opposition 20 June agreed to drop schedule for local elections, originally planned for 1st quarter 2016; presidential election date of 11 Oct unchanged. Opposition 26 June pulled out of dialogue, both sides traded blame for failure of discussions. Opposition Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea leader Cellou Dalein Diallo and exiled ex-junta leader and presidential candidate Moussa Dadis Camara met 19 June, announced they would push parties in direction of political alliance.

- ["Début du dialogue politique en Guinée"](#), BBC, 18 June 2015.

➡ **Guinea-Bissau** Sec of State for Communities Idelfrudes Fernandes, member of ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and al-



legedly close associate of PM Pereira, detained 4 June over suspected role in trafficking diplomatic passports; released on bail. Commission for constitutional revision inaugurated 12 June. PAIGC 20-21 June internal meeting allowed Pereira to solidify his prominent position within party. Pereira critic Bacirot Dja resigned from cabinet 23 June; Pereira 25 June received unanimous vote of confidence from National Assembly.

- ["PGR guineense quebra silêncio sobre o caso Idelfrides Fernandes"](#), VoA, 9 June 2015.

➡ **Mali** Armed Tuareg coalition Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA) 20 June signed peace agreement with govt and pro-govt armed groups after series of consultations; CMA and govt 5 June signed ceasefire stipulating all armed groups retreat 20km outside of Menaka in Gao region, with MINUSMA securing city. Pro-govt armed groups did not sign but withdrew from Menaka 19 June. Violence continued despite end of clashes between CMA and pro-govt armed groups. Local sources reported 30-40 assailants attacked army camps and police station in Misseni, Sikasso region, 10 June. Security forces 16 June launched operation against suspected jihadi group near Koba village, Mopti region, one soldier wounded, five suspects killed, one taken prisoner. Suspected jihadis attacked army camp in Nara 27 June; nine assailants, three soldiers killed.

- ["La paix signée par tous les belligérants au Mali"](#), *Le Monde*, 20 June 2015.

➡ **Niger** Boko Haram (BH) attack 17 June left some 38 dead in Diffa region, near border with Nigeria. Army 26 June reported fifteen BH insurgents killed, twenty captured; following BH attack 22 June on Yebbi village, Diffa, killing five villagers. Thousands protested 6 June to denounce humanitarian situation in Diffa, warned govt against further authoritarian abuse, following 18 May arrest of prominent NGO leader who criticised govt handling of refugees in Diffa. President Issoufou 2 June met with French President Hollande, both called on all states in Lake Chad region to strengthen cooperation in fight against Islamist groups.

- ["A Diffa, Boko Haram commet l'un de ses plus lourds massacres au Niger"](#), *Jeune Afrique*, 18 June 2015.

**New** Crisis Group Africa Report N°227, [The Central Sahel: A Perfect Sandstorm](#), 25 June 2015.

The Sahel's trajectory is worrying; poverty and population growth, combined with growing jihadi extremism, contraband and human trafficking constitute the perfect storm of actual and potential instability. Without holistic, sustained efforts against entrenched criminal networks, misrule and underdevelopment, radicalisation and migration are likely to spread and exacerbate.

➡ **Nigeria** Progress made toward deploying Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) following President Buhari's 29 May relocation of command centre for military operations against Boko Haram (BH) from Abuja to Maiduguri, Borno state capital. Nigerian Major General Tukue Buratai appointed pioneer force commander 3 June; Buhari, Chad and Niger presidents and Cameroonian defence minister 11 June adopted proposals for increased military action and launch of \$66mn Emergency Development Program for areas affected by insurgency. Buhari 14 June ordered release of \$21mn from \$100mn pledged as Nigeria's contribution to MNJTF. U.S. Asst Sec State for African Affairs 15 June announced Washington will contribute \$5mn to bolster Nigeria's fight against BH. Bombs abandoned by BH killed some 70 civilians in Monguno 16 June. BH attacks and suicide bombings continued in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, killing over 140.

- ["President Buhari's to-do list: Boko Haram, democracy and the 'petrococalypse'"](#), *Guardian*, 1 June 2015.



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# Asia

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## North East Asia

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➡ **China (internal)** Uighur group 22 June reportedly attacked police checkpoint in Kashgar, Xinjiang; at least eighteen dead including three police and fifteen people suspected of involvement in attack. Police 17 June shot dead Uighur man who “charged” into ticket queue holding brick at railway station in Xi’an. Govt 16 June banned Uighur Muslims from fasting for Ramadan; authorities in Shayar, Xinjiang 15 June issued order calling for close watch on Uighurs during fasting period.

- [“Is China facing a Xinjiang insurgency?”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 25 June 2015.

➡ **China/Japan** Japan saw protests against govt’s proposed legislation for collective self-defence 21 June despite assurances from PM Abe 15 June that legislation and proposed reinterpretation of pacifist constitution would not lead to conflict with China; Abe’s approval ratings at new low. Beijing 13 June said Tokyo’s activities in South China Sea could harm improving relations (see SCS). China and Japan 16 June agreed on liaison mechanism to prevent accidental clashes, will exclude territorial waters and airspace. Beijing 30 June demanded explanation from Tokyo after Abe was quoted saying Japan’s security legislation is directed at China. Japan and South Korea 21 June agreed to aim for three-way summit with China by end of year.

- [“Japan, China agree to hasten setup of maritime communication system”](#), *Japan Times*, 19 June 2015.

➡ **Korean Peninsula** U.S. and ROK 31 May-3 June conducted combined anti-submarine warfare (ASW) drill near Cheju Island, and another combined ASW exercise 8-12 June in the Philippine Sea; 29 June launched joint military logistics exercise. DPRK late month threatened U.S. with “tougher countermeasures”, following U.S. criticism of DPRK in annual global human rights report; 29 June said it is ready for conventional, nuclear or cyber wars with U.S. after U.S. sent guided missile submarine to Pusan and guided missile cruiser to Yokosuka Naval Base. ROK 3 June test-fired new 500km-range ballistic missile, capable of striking all DPRK territory. DPRK state media mid-June reported test-fire of short-range anti-ship missiles in Wönsan. ROK 26 June imposed financial sanctions on Taiwanese and Syrian arms corporations trading with DPRK. Pyongyang 9 June announced provincial, county and municipal people assembly elections will take place 19 July. DPRK 24 June sent high-ranking envoys to Russia, Cuba and Equatorial Guinea. ROK navy 30 June fired warning shots as DPRK patrol vessel crossed ROK waters.

- Daniel Pinkston, [“Shadow Boxing on the Korean Peninsula”](#), Interpreter, 29 May 2015.
- [“US and South Korea conduct anti-submarine warfare drill”](#), *Diplomat*, 12 June 2015.

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**New** Crisis Group Asia Report N°269, [North Korea: Beyond the Six-Party Talks](#), 16 June 2015. Prospects are bleak that the Six-Party Talks can lead to a denuclearised Korean peninsula, notably since DPRK has made nuclear weapons an integral part of its identity. The international community must open new channels of communication and interaction, give greater roles to international organisations, the private sector and civil society.

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## South Asia

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↓ **Afghanistan** Taliban captured and maintained control of district administration centres (DACs) in north for first time since beginning of insurgency, including Yamgan, Chardara and Dashte Archi districts, increasing military pressure on govt positions near Kunduz and underscoring intensity of 2015 fighting season. Afghan security forces fighting to regain lost territory late June, re-captured Yamgan. Interior minister 14 June said foreign militants, having fled Pakistan, infiltrated northern provinces including Baghlan, Takhar, Faryab, Kunduz and Badakhshan. Uruzgan province official 7 June said Taliban had captured twelve security outposts, warned insurgents could take control of entire district; Sar-e Pul province officials 9 June said Taliban captured thirteen villages in Sozma Qala district. At least seventeen police reported killed in Taliban attack on police post in Musa Qala, Helmand 12 June. Eleven soldiers reported killed in clash with militants in Herat 28 June. Suicide car bomb attack in Kabul 30 June, two reported killed. Fighting also reported in east between Taliban and rival insurgent groups swearing allegiance to Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL). NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg 25 June said alliance would decide how quickly to scale back Afghan forces training mission in function of their performance during 2015 fighting season. Confirmation hearing of acting Defence Minister Masoom Stanekzai interrupted 22 June by Taliban attack on parliament, killing two and injuring 40. President Ghani 19 June issued decree extending term of parliament, originally set to expire 22 June; new election date yet to be announced. Chairing 1 June Council of Ministers meeting, Abdullah denounced MoU on information sharing/cooperation between National Directorate of Security and Pakistan military's intelligence agency, implying it would undermine national security. Urging Taliban to agree to ceasefire 17 June, Abdullah said fighting and peace talks could not happen simultaneously. Leaked UN report on police corruption heightened debate over control of donor funds for police salaries, to be transferred to Kabul under 29 June agreement.

- Graeme Smith, [“U.S.-funded Afghan Police Prey on those they're Paid to Protect”](#), Reuters, 10 June 2015.
- [“Notes from Afghanistan's most dangerous province”](#), Vice, 19 June 2015.

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**New** Crisis Group Asia Report N°268, *The Future of the Afghan Local Police*, 4 June 2015. Too often, the Afghan Local Police (ALP) has preyed on those it is meant to guard. Some members are outright bandits, exacerbating conflict. Rogue units should be disbanded, and better ones integrated into the armed forces. This must be done carefully and slowly, or else insurgents will win a new military edge.

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➡ **Bangladesh** Fallout of Jan-April violent confrontation between AL and opposition Bangladesh National Party (BNP) continued. Dhaka court 8 June issued arrest warrants for 28 leaders and activists of BNP-led opposition alliance; 22 June issued arrest warrants for senior BNP leader and 32 other party officials for violence during BNP-led strike and transport blockade late Jan. High Court 18 June directed BNP leader Khaleda Zia to surrender in two months to trial court, rejecting her petition challenging legality of graft case. International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) 9 June awarded death penalty in absentia to former militia leader Hasan Ali for war crimes committed during 1971 liberation war. High court 16 June upheld Jamaat secretary general Ali

Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed's death sentence for similar crimes; Jamaat responded with call for 24-hour countrywide *hartal* (strike), largely ignored. Several media reports of increased activism by religious extremists and recruitment on college campuses, continued attacks on religious minority symbols, including desecration of Hindu idols in Bogra 1 June. Indian PM Modi visited Dhaka 6-7 June for joint ratification ceremony of historic land swap agreement ending decades-old border dispute between countries, representing significant political victory for PM Sheikh Hasina; also extended new \$2bn line of credit. Modi met Zia, who reportedly raised AL's failure to uphold democratic principles and rule of law, assured Modi that a BNP govt would seek good relations with India. Govt under continuing pressure to take steps to stop human trafficking, including by protecting victims, taking action against traffickers.

- ["Human traffickers must get harsh punishment"](#), Daily Star, 5 June 2015.

➡ **India (non-Kashmir)** Twenty soldiers killed in rebel ambush in Chandel district of Manipur state close to Myanmar border 4 June; leader of National Socialist Council of Nagaland group arrested late month in connection with attack. Police reportedly killed at least a dozen suspected Maoist rebels in Jharkhand clash 9 June. In other clashes with police, three alleged Maoists shot dead on Telangana-Chhattisgarh border 12 June, including nineteen-year-old former student activist, and police killed suspected Maoist near Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border 20 June. Twenty Maoists surrendered to police in Visakhapatnam 20 June. Maoists 23 June blew up stretch of railway track in Jharkhand.

- ["Maoist killed near Andhra border, weapons found"](#), *Times of India*, 21 June 2015.

➡ **Kashmir** Month saw increasingly aggressive rhetoric by Pakistani and Indian officials, including implied threats of a military confrontation. Pakistan Army Chief Raheel Sharif speaking at National Defence University in Islamabad 3 June said Pakistan and Kashmir inseparable. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif next day reiterated claim that India's main intelligence agency supporting terrorism in Balochistan and other parts of Pakistan. On 7 June visit to Dhaka, Modi said Pakistan "promotes terrorism". In apparent bit to ease tensions, Modi 16 June called PM Sharif, offered to release detained Pakistani fishermen. U.S. Sec State Kerry same day called Sharif to voice concerns about rising India-Pakistan tensions; UNSG Ban also encouraged sides to engage. Pakistan 18 June released 113 Indian fishermen, New Delhi three days later released 88 Pakistani fishermen. Indian authorities 25 May reported three soldiers and a militant killed in clashes along Line of Control (LoC). Indian soldiers 6 June reportedly shot dead three Pakistani militants attempting to cross LoC. Former militant Aijaz Ahmad Reshi killed 15 June, fourth such incident in week involving alleged separatists in Sopore; separatist leaders of Hurriyat Conference and Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front 17 June called for complete strike in J&K, accusing militias backed by Indian security forces of murders. Two suspected militants and one civilian killed in gun battle, Indian-administered Kashmir 21 June.

- ["Old chasm between India and Pakistan again echoes with warnings and fears"](#), *Washington Post*, 11 June 2015.

⬆ **Nepal** Major political parties 8 June signed historic sixteen-point agreement on long-awaited constitution, which envisions eight federal provinces; hailed as "major milestone" by UNSG Ban, who called on leaders to implement agreement. Supreme

Court (SC) 19 June ordered temporary halt to implementation of agreement, saying it violates provisions of interim constitution; parties criticised SC move as judicial intervention. Drafting Committee 29 June endorsed first draft of new constitution to be submitted to Constituent Assembly for deliberation; describes country as “secular, inclusive and multi-ethnic”.

- [“1st draft of Nepal constitution to be presented in parliament”](#), *Economic Times*, 29 June 2015.

➡ **Pakistan** Govt and military officials 13 June marked one-year anniversary of Zarb-e-Azb, military operation in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)’s North Waziristan agency, declaring ongoing success against militant groups, including killing over 2,700 insurgents. Militant attacks in FATA continued, including 1 June roadside bomb in S Waziristan that killed three, 8 June clash near Dattakhel in N Waziristan in which seven soldiers and nineteen militants reported killed, and 17 June bombing of primary school in Bajaur. Attacks on Quetta’s Shia Hazara community continued. Eight police shot dead in Quetta 6, 11 June; several police also killed in attacks in Peshawar and Karachi. Paramilitary Frontier Corps 1 June claimed to have killed thirteen Baloch militants involved in 29 May attack on bus killing 22 Pashtuns. In review headed by PM and Army Chief, senior civilian and military officials 27 May noted poor implementation of National Action Plan against terrorism, particularly regarding action against banned jihadi groups, foreign terrorism funding, hate speech and madrasa reform. Anti-terrorism court 5 June freed eight of ten people implicated in Oct 2012 attack on Malala Yousafzai; police cited insufficient evidence. Former President Asif Ali Zardari 16 June criticised military for overstepping its authority in Karachi, amid concerns about moves to oust Pakistan Peoples Party’s Sindh govt. Interior ministry 11 June reportedly ordered nine international NGOs to leave country within fifteen days; following pressure from U.S. and UK suspended order. Govt criticised as over 1,000 died in heatwave in Karachi.

- [“Pakistan warns international aid groups: No working against ‘national interests’”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 12 June 2015.

➡ **Sri Lanka** President Sirisena 26 June dissolved parliament and called elections for 17 Aug; followed deepening political deadlock and uncertainty, after months of negotiation for a 20th constitutional amendment establishing new mixed electoral system failed to reach consensus and threatened to shatter fragile coalition of parties and civil society organisations that backed Sirisena’s election. Public campaign in support of Mahinda Rajapaksa’s return as PM and rift within Sirisena’s Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) strengthened, with pro-Mahinda rally 12 June attended by 75 parliamentarians; Sirisena 19 June reiterated that Rajapaksa will not be nominated as PM or MP. However, negotiations continue within SLFP and United Freedom People’s Alliance (UPFA) that it leads, with neither Sirisena nor Rajapaksa factions wanting to be blamed for splitting party and coalition as it faces strong challenge from United National Party, which has led minority govt since Sirisena’s January election. UN Resident Coordinator in Colombo 5 June announced plans to support range of govt reconciliation-related initiatives, including support to recently established Office of National Unity and Reconciliation and Northern Provincial Council and “quick impact resettlement initiatives” for north and east. FM 24 June said govt war crimes investigation, originally set to begin June, to be delayed until Sept in view of impending parliamentary elections. Global Tamil Forum 7-8 June hosted meeting in London with Sri

Lankan FM and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to discuss confidence-building measures to strengthen reconciliation.

- [“The reasons why Sirisena decided to dissolve the Sri Lankan parliament”](#), *Citizen*, 29 June 2015.

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## South East Asia

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➡ **Indonesia** President Widodo 4 June asked Papua governor to end controversial transmigration program which has relocated hundreds of thousands of Javanese to Papua since annexation in 1969; however minister for transmigration 7 June said transmigration will continue. Foreign ministry 22 June said govt never banned foreign media or tourists from covering/visiting Papua, 23 June said eight permits approved in past six months to foreign journalists. Govt 11 June announced plans to free dozens of political prisoners, launch infrastructure investment projects and confront serious unemployment problem in Papua. President Widodo 10 June selected army chief as next military chief, in apparent break with convention of rotating post between navy, air force and army.

- [“Can Jokowi bring peace to West Papua?”](#), *Diplomat*, 12 June 2015.

⬇ **Myanmar** Negotiations on draft Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) deadlocked; leaders of armed groups meeting at 2-9 June summit declined to endorse NCA text that had been agreed by their negotiators and proposed twelve amendments (which would need to be negotiated with govt); decided that none of the sixteen armed groups would sign NCA unless all permitted to sign, and other groups (three of which currently fighting govt) should also be able to sign; and proposed current observers (UN, China and Japan) should be expanded to include ASEAN, U.S., UK, Norway, Thailand and India. Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) 11 June declared unilateral ceasefire following pressure from China, however fighting continued; govt has insisted that group must lay down its arms. Ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) 10 June proposed two constitutional amendment bills in parliament; one proposing changes to eligibility requirements for presidency and constitutional amendment procedure; other proposing changes to 30 sections. Parliament 25 June rejected most amendments in first bill, including one that would remove military’s veto power over other amendments. Govt started distributing new ID cards in Rakhine early June to replace Rakhine Muslims’ cancelled “white cards”; with green cards: first ID that does not force Rohingya to identify as “Bengalis,” no mention of ethnicity or religion; holders of these cards not on voter lists posted 22 June. Opposition leader Suu Kyi met Chinese President Xi and PM Li during visit to China from 10 June. Parliament 18 June passed amendment to education law omitting many demands of student protesters.

- [“Myanmar parliament begins debate on bill to amend constitution”](#), *Radio Free Asia*, 23 June 2015.

➡ **Philippines** House of Representatives postponed deadline for passing proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) from 11 June, when Congress entered recess, to Sept. Senate 9 June agreed to remove BBL’s contentious opt-in clause, expected to decrease resistance to BBL among lawmakers. Moro Islamic Liberation Front 16 June surren-

dered 75 assault weapons, retired 145 fighters during decommissioning ceremony; official decommissioning process to begin after BBL is passed. Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) 8 June clashed with military, blew up water pipeline in Basilan; 27,000 residents displaced. Suspected ASG 16 June detonated pipe bomb, followed by brief clash with security forces in Basilan; one soldier killed, eight wounded. Security forces 21 June arrested suspected ASG member in Zamboanga, seized explosives. Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) attacks continued in Maguindanao; four civilians reported killed in ambush 18 June, two soldiers killed 22 June.

- [“Decommissioning is first step to real peace, not surrender – MILF”](#), CNN, 16 June 2015.

➡ **South China Sea** Tensions continued. China 30 June said some island-building projects in SCS already complete, military facilities to be built on islands. China 26 June moved Haiyang Shiyu oil rig – focus of tensions with Hanoi in May 2014 – to area of overlapping exclusive economic zones. Philippines, U.S. and Japan 22-26 June conducted naval exercises in SCS. Japanese and Philippines flew patrol planes over SCS 23-24 June; China issued warning not to increase tension. Japanese military 25 June said it is considering joining U.S. forces in regular patrols in SCS. Japanese PM Abe and Philippine President Aquino signed joint declaration on defence equipment sharing agreement; allows Japan access to Philippine military bases. U.S. and China 12 June signed army-to-army dialogue mechanism, agreed to coordinate on major military activities; expected to lower risk of clashes in SCS.

- Yanmei Xie, [“South China Sea: Washington Says one Thing but Beijing Hears Another”](#), Interpreter, 5 June 2015.
- [“Let’s be real: the South China Sea is a US-China issue”](#), *Diplomat*, 24 June 2015.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°267, [Stirring up the South China Sea \(III\): A Fleeting Opportunity for Calm](#), 7 May 2015.

➡ **Thailand** PM Prayuth Chan-ocha 4 June told National Legislative Assembly (NLA) he “would not rule out” National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) extending tenure for another two years, to ensure reform process is complete. Cabinet and NCPO 9 June approved seven amendments to 2014 interim charter, including allowing referendum on draft constitution; NLA 18 June approved amendments, paving way for referendum. Current Reform Council members will be eligible for the Reform Movement Council, a new body that will oversee reforms after constitution is promulgated. Police 23 June announced wrap-up of crackdown on human trafficking networks. Lt. Gen. Manas Kongpan, accused of trafficking Rohingya migrants, turned himself in to police 2 June. Police 26 June arrested fourteen students after they staged two days of anti-coup protests; military court issued warrants on charges of “violating national security”; students face seven years’ jail. Violence on rise in south: militants 3 June ambushed rangers in Yala, killing four; improvised explosive device (IED) 6 June wounded eight soldiers and civilian in Pattani; gunmen 9 June shot dead two Muslims in Narathiwat; gunmen 15 June killed police officer in Narathiwat.

- [“PM Prayut won’t rush Thailand’s transition to democracy”](#), Channel News Asia, 18 June 2015.



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## Europe and Central Asia

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### Balkans

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➡ **Bosnia** Ruling coalition of Federation entity broke up 4 June as Democratic Front quit over change in rules on appointments of new managers for public companies. Federation 9 June adopted reform plan, part of reform agenda required for progress on EU integration and external financing, however Republika Srpska leaders refused to sign plan.

- [“Bosnian Serb leaders reject EU reform plan”](#), Balkan Insight, 11 June 2015.

➡ **Kosovo** Parliamentary vote on proposal to establish court to try alleged Kosovo Liberation Army war crimes failed to pass 26 June; U.S., EU expressed disappointment. Latest round of Pristina-Belgrade dialogue late month failed to produce agreement.

- [“Kosovo vote on new war crimes court fails”](#), Eurasia Review, 26 June 2015.

➡ **Macedonia** Amid ongoing political crisis centred on apparent mass illegal surveillance by govt, EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn helped broker 2 June agreement between govt and opposition to advance elections by two years, to April 2016, preceded by transitional period to prepare for polls. Negotiations subsequently deadlocked over details, including whether/when PM Gruevski would resign. Opposition insists he must go and transitional government have six-nine months to level electoral playing field and threatened to “radicalise” protests if no agreement reached by end of month. EU 19 June issued expert report on crisis, urging rule-of-law reforms, backed by EU Council 23 June. Opposition continued to release selective recordings, including some suggesting involvement in corruption of govt’s ethnic-Albanian partner party, as pressure grows on that party to leave coalition if no agreement by end of June. Greek FM visited Skopje 24 June, part of attempt to rekindle relations despite name dispute which has blocked Macedonia’s EU accession progress.

- Jon Greenwald, [“The Macedonian Revolution to Come”](#), Politico, 10 June 2015.
- [“Macedonian government is blamed for wiretapping scandal”](#), *New York Times*, 21 June 2015.

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### Caucasus

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➡ **Armenia** Thousands protested in Yerevan from 22 June against increase in electricity prices. Police dispersed hundreds of protesters 23 June; 25 reported injured, some 240 arrested. President Sargsyan 27 June announced that electricity price increase will be suspended; thousands of protesters remained on main road.

- [“Armenia protest over power price hikes turns violent”](#), Al Jazeera, 23 June 2015.

➡ **Azerbaijan** Ahead of European Games’ opening 12 June, govt refused entry to foreign rights groups and journalists: Amnesty International, *Guardian* among those barred from country until games end. OSCE 5 June reported govt gave it one month to close office in country. Amid ongoing govt repression, Emin Huseynov, rights activist wanted on tax evasion charges, flew to Switzerland 13 June after months of negotiations between govt and Swiss embassy, where Huseynov had been evading prosecution



since Aug 2014. UN special rapporteur 2 June criticised govt's ongoing repression of activists, called for immediate release of jailed rights defenders.

- [“Azerbaijan ‘stifles free speech’ as European Games begin”](#), *Telegraph*, 11 June 2015.

➡ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** European Court of Human Rights 16 June issued two decisions recognising that Armenia and Azerbaijan violated property and other rights of persons displaced during NK conflict in early 1990s.

- [“Rulings give Nagorno-Karabakh displaced something to celebrate”](#), RFE/RL, 22 June 2015.

➡ **Georgia** Opposition United National Movement (UNM) 10 June boycotted parliament session in protest over electoral reform plan proposed by ruling Georgian Dream coalition. Russian defence ministry 10 June said 1,500 Russian troops began exercises involving drones in Georgian breakaway republic South Ossetia; Georgian foreign ministry condemned drills, said they violated country's territorial integrity.

- [“The woman seeking a MAP of Georgia”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 2 June 2015.

➡ **North Caucasus (Russia)** Islamist insurgents of Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia and Kabardino-Balkaria (KBR) 21 June reportedly pledged allegiance to Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL); notorious Chechen insurgency leader Aslan Byutukayev did same 12 June; IS 23 June welcomed news, announced new “governorate” in NC and appointment of new “amir” Abu Mohammad al-Qadar (Rustam Aselderov) from Dagestan. Russian anti-terrorist unit (NAC) continued operations in Dagestan: wanted militant leader, who reportedly swore allegiance to IS in Dec 2014 shot dead 6 June; leader of Gimry insurgency group, his deputy and police officer killed in Gimry 23 June. Insurgents 17 June killed school teacher in Derbent district, Dagestan. Two militants killed in special operation in Baksan district, KBR 5 June. Violent clashes between Sufis and Salafis over mosque in Nasyr-Kort, Ingushetia 4 June; two alleged recruiters to Syria killed in special operation in Nasyr-Kort 25 June. Two alleged insurgents killed, two police injured in special operation in Grozny 26 June. Masked men 3 June attacked and destroyed office of Committee Against Torture (CAT) in Grozny; CAT claimed police did not respond to calls for help. Chechen leader Kadyrov said Chechen police investigating incident, CAT called for investigation at higher level.

- [“In Chechnya, human rights group's offices are vandalized”](#), *New York Times*, 3 June 2015.

**New** Crisis Group Europe Report N°236, [Chechnya: The Inner Abroad](#), 30 June 2015. A powerful propaganda machine promotes the “success story” of today's Chechnya. But its peace is fragile; government repression is used to keep the people at bay while economic inequality, poor social infrastructure, lack of genuine reconciliation and almost full impunity for past abuses reflect the republic's daily reality.

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## Eastern Europe

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➡ **Ukraine** Month saw heaviest fighting since Feb, including clashes between army and separatists near Maryinka and Krasnohorivka towns west of Donetsk 3 June, leaving at least 26 dead and reportedly involving heavy artillery; separatist commanders described fighting as counter-attack in response to constant Ukrainian “provocations”. President Poroshenko 6 June said separatists forced out of Maryinka, however low-

grade fighting continued throughout month. FMs of France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia met 23 June to discuss crisis in east, urged sides to implement ceasefire, withdraw heavy weapons. Speaking to parliament 4 June Poroshenko said more than 9,000 Russian troops currently in Ukraine, warned of “full-scale invasion”. International pressure on Russia continued: EU 22 June extended economic sanctions until Jan 2016; G7 leaders 8 June said further sanctions possible; U.S. 23 June said it will send tanks and arms to Eastern Europe, Baltic countries in response to Russian actions in Ukraine. NATO 24 June said it will increase number of Response Force troops from 13,000 to 40,000; NATO chief 25 June warned of risk of heavy fighting in Ukraine, urged Moscow to cease support to separatists. Some 500 people protested in Donetsk 15 June calling on separatist leaders to remove rocket launchers from residential neighbourhoods. Kyiv’s chief debt talks envoy 28 June said Ukraine will suspend international debt repayments if agreement on debt restructuring not reached; IMF 19 June welcomed reforms to strengthen country’s central bank, said second tranche of bailout could be disbursed despite stalemate in restructuring talks.

- [“Heavy fighting rages near Donetsk, despite truce”](#), BBC, 3 June 2015.

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## Western Europe/Mediterranean

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➔ **Cyprus** Reunification talks continued between Republic of Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades and President of Turkish Cypriot north Mustafa Akinci, with meetings 4, 17 and 29 June. Mediator of talks UN SRSG Espen Barth Eide 16 June noted strong international and domestic momentum behind talks. Anastasiades 22 June said no reunification possible until Turkey withdraws troops from north.

- [“Cyprus peace talks: Rocky road to reunification”](#), BBC, 16 June 2015.

➔ **Turkey** Parliamentary elections 7 June saw ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) lose parliamentary majority for first time in over twelve years, gaining 41% of vote and 258 of 550 seats in parliament. Negotiations to form coalition govt ongoing. Pro-Kurdish People’s Democratic Party (HDP) exceeded 10% minimum electoral threshold with 13% of vote (80 seats); result strengthens its legitimacy and political space for peace deal. Surge in violence in days prior to and following elections amid increased tensions in run-up to polls: bus driver working for HDP shot dead 3 June in Bingöl; bomb attack at HDP rally in Diyarbakır 5 June killed four and injured over 100. HDP blamed Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) affiliates, accused govt of poor intelligence. Govt mid-June accused Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) of ethnic cleansing of Arabs and Turkmens in north of Syria during attempt to unite Kurdish cantons/territories there, including with PYD’s 16 June capture of Syrian town Tal Abyad along border. National Security Council (NSC) convened 29 June to discuss security threat from Syria as military deployed tanks to border near Kobani. Senior PKK figure threatened retaliation if military enters Syria; NSC said tanks are a security measure. Head of Islamic aid organisation close to pro-Islamist Huda Par (Kurdish Islamic party affiliated with Hizbollah) gunned down 9 June in Diyarbakır; subsequent riots left four dead, at least six injured. Clashes between govt and PKK occurred throughout month at military base in Dağlica on Iraqi border, one villager killed.

- Nigar Göksel and Hugh Pope, [“Five Takeaways from the Turkish Election”](#), Politico, 8 June 2015.
- [“Turkey’s diverse parliament seeks to end political uncertainty”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 23 June 2015.

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## Central Asia

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➡ **Kazakhstan** WTO members 22 June approved Kazakhstan’s membership following nineteen years of negotiations, to take effect in Dec. Parliament late May ratified border cooperation agreements with Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, and agreement with Turkmenistan on demarcation of Caspian Sea. President Nazarbayev 10 June called for joint efforts to fight religious extremism. Russian Central Bank reported 39% drop in remittances to Kazakhstan in first quarter of 2015

- [“Kazakhstan joining WTO”](#), Trend, 22 June 2015.

➡ **Kyrgyzstan** MPs demanded revote on bill to increase electoral threshold from 7% to 9% after it floundered at second reading 19 June. Controversial draft Foreign Agents law passed first parliament reading 4 June; critics say law could criminalise NGOs, human rights defenders. During regional visit, UNSG Ban 10 June attended events marking fifth anniversary of Osh inter-ethnic conflict. Russian Central Bank reported 41% drop in remittances to Kyrgyzstan in first quarter of 2015.

- Deirdre Tynan, [“Central Asia is a Sitting Duck for Islamic State”](#), *Moscow Times*, 14 June 2015.
- [“U.N.’s Ban urges probe into Kyrgyzstan’s 2010 ethnic clashes”](#), Reuters, 11 June 2015.

➡ **Tajikistan** New video released 19 June featuring former special forces (OMON) commander Gulmurod Khalimov, whose defection to Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) was reported late May, reiterating threats to bring jihad to Tajikistan; govt blocked several websites in response. Joint military exercises continued: OMON held joint anti-terrorist exercises with Chinese special police units 5 June. Dozens of Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) members resigned during month; IRP blamed increase in harassment, including from pro-govt newspaper linking IRP to terrorism; IRP’s political council 10 June warned leader Mukhiddin Kabiri to remain in Europe for fear of arrest in Tajikistan. Russian Central Bank reported 44% drop in remittances to Tajikistan in first quarter of 2015.

- [“Islamic party members resign en masse in Tajikistan”](#), RFE/RL, 24 June 2015.

➡ **Turkmenistan** Opposition media reported govt is mobilising local population in Lebap province to build defensive infrastructure against Taliban near Amu-Darya river by Afghan border, and conducting secret military exercises with foreign trainers in area. Conscription of school leaders also reported to be gathering pace. President Berdymukhammedov 27 May met special representative of Afghan president to discuss Turkmen role in inter-Afghan peace dialogue, agreement to continue Turkmen electricity exports to Afghanistan until 2027, security. Russian Central Bank reported 57% drop in remittances to Turkmenistan in first quarter of 2015.

- [“Talibs threaten Turkmenistan”](#), Vestnik Kavkaza, 4 June 2015.

➡ **Uzbekistan** Govt 20 May closed country's oldest privately-owned weekly newspaper *Noviy Vek* for "undermining the nation's moral values and shaping incorrect notion of the socio-political situation in the country"; newspaper had reported on corruption in state institutions. Russian Central Bank reported 49% drop in remittances to Uzbekistan in first quarter of 2015 – causing shortages of cash, foreign currency, suspension of salaries for state personnel including security services, as well as payment of pensions and allowances.

- ["How deep will economic crisis bite in Central Asia?"](#), RFE/RL, 21 June 2015.

## Latin America and the Caribbean

➡ **Colombia** Govt and FARC negotiators 4 June reached first partial agreement on transitional justice, defines “Commission for the clarification of truth, co-existence and non-repetition” as independent, impartial and extrajudicial mechanism; negotiations to continue 3 July amid growing expectations that a separate agreement on reparations could be announced soon. Increase in violence that followed 22 May collapse of FARC’s unilateral ceasefire continued, representing worst escalation in years; clashes and spike in guerrilla attacks on oil and energy infrastructure caused significant environmental damage and large humanitarian impact, including mass displacements, power cuts and mobility restrictions; South and SW regions most affected. Killing of two police in Nariño 12 June sparked outrage. Security forces reportedly “neutralised” 278 guerrilla members between 21 May and 17 June. Post-conflict Minister Óscar Naranjo reportedly stepped down 17 June over frustrations with job. New Defence Minister Luis Carlos Villegas took office 22 June, swapping positions with Juan Carlos Pinzón who will take over as ambassador to U.S. Army 14 June confirmed death of Marcos, highest ranking ELN leader killed in combat in recent years. Peace commissioner Sergio Jaramillo 11 June repeated govt remains open to talks with ELN if guerrillas accept disarming after agreement is reached. ELN 29 June took responsibility for 22 June attack on Black Hawk helicopter in Teorama (Norte de Santander) which killed at least four soldiers. Attorney general 23 June summoned four retired generals, including a former army commander, to respond to allegations of involvement in extrajudicial executions.

- Crisis Group Statement, [“Lo que no es y lo que puede ser una comisión de la verdad”](#), 2 June 2015.
- Crisis Group, [“A Truth Commission for Colombia”](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 9 June 2015.
- [“Colombia, FARC guerrillas to form truth commission”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 4 June 2015.

➡ **Guatemala** Amid widening corruption scandal, and continued protests calling for President Perez Molina to resign, Supreme Court 10 June ruled Congress could open investigation to determine whether president should be stripped of immunity and face impeachment; Constitutional Court 30 June denied president immunity from prosecution. President 18 June reiterated refusal to resign, called accusations political, spurious. Constitutional Court same day suspended congressional investigation into possible stripping president’s immunity following petition by lawyer close to Perez Molina questioning legitimacy of congressional investigation; said insufficient evidence to warrant congressional inquiry. Prosecutors 18 June requested Supreme Court lift immunity of two opposition presidential candidates for Sept elections, Sandra Torres and Manuel Baldizón, over vote-buying allegations. High Risk Court 11 June rescheduled retrial of former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt – whose May 2013 conviction on charges of genocide and war crimes was overturned – to 23 July. Ríos Montt’s lead Attorney Francisco Palomo killed 2 June by gunman in Guatemala City.

- [“Guatemala Supreme Court: president impeachment possible”](#), AP, 10 June 2015.

➡ **Haiti** Electoral Council (CEP) 12 June released final list of parliamentary and presidential candidates: 56 candidates running for president, over 1,700 candidates for legislative elections; high level politicians including former PM Laurent Lamothe and former FM Pierre Duly Brutus excluded from list. Organization of American States to

send electoral observation mission. Insecurity reportedly increased in anticipation of elections, with violent unrest reported in several neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince 4, 5 June. Continued fears of massive deportations from Dominican Republic as country's program to legalise Haitian immigrants ended 17 June; Dominican interior minister stated half of 500,000 Haitians living illegally in Dominican Republic had started residency application process, only some 10,000 met requirements. PM Evans Paul 26 June warned Dominican Republic is creating humanitarian crisis, noting some 14,000 Haitians crossed back into Haiti in less than a week.

- [“Dominican Republic to begin deporting Haitian immigrants”](#), Al Jazeera America, 17 June 2015.

➡ **Honduras** Thousands protested during month calling for President Juan Orlando Hernandez's resignation over alleged corruption and embezzlement of social security funds. Hernandez 3 June admitted graft-linked companies helped fund his campaign, said he was unaware at the time. VP Lena Gutierrez charged 18 June with fraud, falsification of documents, crimes against public health following investigation into fraudulent sales of medicines. UN and OAS 29 June announced they will assist govt in implementation of Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

- [“Thousands demand Honduras leader to resign in latest protest”](#), AFP, 20 June 2015.

➡ **Mexico** Mid-term elections 7 June saw President Peña Nieto's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) maintain control of lower house along with Green Party allies. Independent candidate won a campaign for governor for the first time with victory of Jaime Rodriguez, “El Bronco”, in Nuevo Leon. Over twenty killed, including at least four candidates, in campaign-related violence, particularly acute in Guerrero state, where demonstrators burned ballots in two municipalities prior to vote, and one student was shot dead in Tlapa town on election day. Human rights groups 16 June reported that armed men attacked over 100 migrants late-May in Sonora state near U.S. border; at least thirteen escaped, others remain missing, authorities 2 June reportedly discovered three bodies. Rights groups 18 June denounced another attack on Central American migrants in southern state Veracruz; over 40 escaped, including one who had been shot.

- [“Mexico votes, as ballots burn in Oaxaca and Guerrero”](#), Deutsche Welle, 7 June 2015.

➡ **Venezuela** National Electoral Council 22 June announced congressional elections to be held 6 Dec. Jailed opposition leader Leopoldo López ended month-long hunger strike next day; demands had included establishment of election date. Jailed opposition mayor Daniel Ceballos ended hunger strike 11 June for health reasons. Plight of political prisoners drew international condemnation and visits by foreign politicians including in June former Spanish PM and delegation of Brazilian senators urging their release and free elections; govt dismissed them as enemies of Venezuela, prevented them visiting political prisoners. Economic crisis continued to deepen: govt 11 June reportedly withdrew another \$1.5bn from fund with IMF. Relations with Guyana and Colombia worsened after President Maduro 27 May issued decrees setting up off-shore defence zones in disputed areas. U.S. Asst Sec State Thomas Shannon and President of National Assembly Diosdado Cabello met in Haiti 13 June for meeting apparently aimed at reducing bilateral tensions.

- [“Venezuela vote, in doubt, is now set”](#), Wall Street Journal, 22 June 2015.

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## Middle East & North Africa

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### Eastern Mediterranean

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➡ **Israel-Palestine** Palestinian Authority (PA) in West Bank 17 June announced it would resign; President Abbas ordered PM Rami Hamdallah to form new govt, replacing govt of national consensus formed in June 2014. Hamas refused to join unity govt under conditions set by PLO; Abbas spokesman 30 June said Abbas to reshuffle current govt. Tensions increased between Salafi-jihadis and Hamas in Gaza: Hamas security forces early June killed leading Salafi-jihadi militant Younis al-Hunnor in Sheikh Radwan, Gaza City. Salafi-jihadi groups 6 and 11 June fired rockets toward Israel. Amid ongoing rumours of possible Israel-Hamas truce in Gaza, Egypt opened Rafah crossing three times in June. With concern growing over Druze minority in Syria (see Syria), Israeli Druze called for govt to intervene in southern Golan to create safe zone for Druze. Druze protestors 22 June attacked military ambulance carrying two wounded Syrians in Golan Heights over suspicion they were militants, one Syrian beaten to death. Low-scale violence in Jerusalem and W Bank ongoing, including: Israeli forces 10 June shot dead Palestinian in Jenin refugee camp; Israeli forces 21 June shot dead Palestinian man who stabbed Israel border officer in Jerusalem; two Israeli civilians shot, one fatally, 19 June near Dolev, W Bank; Israeli soldier wounded in stabbing at checkpoint near Bethlehem and four wounded in W Bank settlement shooting, both 29 June. Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) 11 June announced military investigation cleared forces of any wrongdoing over controversial killing of four Palestinian boys in 2014 Gaza war. Several high profile boycott campaigns prompted concern in Israel over further “internationalisation” of conflict.

- [“Israel is between Syria, the Druze and a hard place”](#), *Haaretz*, 23 June 2015.

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**New** Crisis Group Middle East Report N°159, *The Status of the Status Quo at Jerusalem's Holy Esplanade*, 30 June 2015. Jerusalem's Holy Esplanade remains at the epicentre of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. With the holy month of Ramadan underway and the Jewish high holidays soon to follow, tensions are likely to increase. Calming the conflict's symbolic core requires more support for the site's status quo, including Palestinian participation and encouraging religious dialogue.

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➡ **Lebanon** Hizbollah and Syrian army continued offensive against rebels along Lebanon's NE border with Syria, with some success despite growing casualties. Hizbollah 8 June seized several strategic border crossings linking Lebanese town Aarsal to Syrian village Flita; 9 June repelled pre-emptive Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) attack near Ras Baalbek, in clash which saw eight Hizbollah fighters and fourteen IS militants killed; 12 June captured Qirnet Shaab al-Nasoub, Qirnet Abu Harb and Qirnet Semaan, near Jarajeer, held by Assad regime. Free Patriotic Movement leader Michael Aoun and Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea signed “declaration of intent” on filling position of president, now vacant for over a year, but rare meeting 2 June did not yield significant breakthrough. Hizbollah 8 June stated March 14 coalition must elect Aoun as president or face “indefinite” presidential vacuum.



- Sahar Atrache, [“Lebanon’s Resilience under the Weight of Syria’s War”](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 25 June 2015.
- [“Hezbollah gains new ground in Qalamoun”](#), *Daily Star*, 12 June 2015.

➡ **Syria** Backed by U.S.-led coalition airstrikes and rebel allies, Kurdish People’s Protection Unit (YPG) 15 June seized control of Tal Abyad on Turkish border, cutting vital Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) supply lines to its self-proclaimed capital Raqqa. YPG 22 June also captured IS base Liwa 93, north of Raqqa, entered Ein Eissa. Gains give YPG control of continuous territory across N Syria from Kobani to Iraqi border. Progress accompanied by accusations, including from leading rebel factions, of ethnic cleansing of Sunni Arabs; over 20,000 reportedly fled fighting in Tal Abyad. IS 25 June launched major offensives in Raqqa and al-Hasakah provinces, seized Al-Nashwa district of Hassakeh city reportedly displacing up to 60,000 people; launched renewed attack on Kurdish city Kobani, which it lost to Kurdish forces in Jan. Some 200 civilians reported killed in siege that ended 27 June with IS defeat by YPG and U.S.-led coalition airstrikes. IS attacked Tal Abyad 30 June. Rebel progress continued in south: Southern Front coalition seized Liwa 52 army base in Daraa province 9 June; 11 June stormed Thaaleh military airbase in majority Druze Sweida province; 16-17 June launched offensive against govt forces in Quneitra province near Golan Heights. Rebels halted Sweida offensive 19 June citing concerns over rising sectarian tension, amid opposition from Druze militiamen. Jabhat al-Nusra (JN) commander 10 June killed twenty Druze civilians in Qalb Lawzah, northern Idlib province. Southern Front coalition 25 June launched offensive to capture govt-held areas of Daraa, dozens killed. Govt 24 June confirmed IS blew up two historic Muslim shrines in ancient city Palmyra, followed local media reports that IS had planted mines in Palmyra 20 June. Govt launched heavy airstrikes against residential Palmyra 20-22 June, eleven reported killed. Govt airstrikes continued in Damascus and Idlib province, dozens reportedly killed including in Douma, near Damascus and Janudiah, western Idlib province. Clashes continued in Aleppo province amid near daily rocket fire.

- [“Syrian Kurdish forces capture key ISIL-held town”](#), Al Jazeera, 16 June 2015.

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## Gulf

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➡ **Bahrain** Leader of opposition al-Wefaq movement Sheikh Ali Salman, arrested Dec 2014, sentenced 16 June to four years’ prison for promoting disobedience, insulting public institutions, disturbing the peace and inciting hatred; acquitted of seeking to overthrow monarchy. 57 Shia citizens jailed, 56 of whom were stripped of their nationality for allegedly planning attacks on police, security institutions and embassy; rights groups condemned trial and sentences. Authorities 4 June said ten members of terrorist cell accused of bomb attacks on police and civilians arrested, 7 June said terrorist plot by Iraqi-trained militants foiled. U.S. 30 June announced resumption of military aid to Bahrain.

- [“Bahrain jails opposition chief despite outcry”](#), AFP, 16 June 2015.

➡ **Iran** Deadline for completion of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action nuclear accord extended from 30 June to 7 July: drafting continued throughout June but at slow

pace due to loopholes in Lausanne Framework agreed 2 April, domestic sensitivities and continued push for concessions by both sides.

- [“Iran, global powers extend nuclear talks deadline”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 30 June 2015.

➡ **Iraq** Iraqi soldiers, militias and Kurdish forces continued to clash with Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) throughout month; U.S. coalition strikes against IS continued. IS suicide bombers killed some 40 Iraqi soldiers in attack on police HQ near Ramadi 1 June; attacks in and near Baghdad continued including at least twelve killed in series of bombings in Baghdad commercial areas 27 June. Seventeen killed 15 June in clash between pro-govt forces and IS in Baiji town. U.S. President Obama 10 June approved deployment of additional 450 U.S. troops to advise and train Iraqi army. PM Abadi suggested U.S. lacked real commitment to troop training, 27 June said Iraqi troop withdrawal from Ramadi in May “unauthorised”, 30 June “retired” army chief-of-staff. U.S. Defense Sec Ashley Carter mid-June noted Iraqi soldiers unwilling to fight, Iraqi govt unable to provide over half of the 24,000 soldiers U.S. is proposing to train. U.S. Congress 17 June voted down amendment to National Defense Authorisation Act that would have allowed U.S. to send weapons to Iraqi Kurdish forces without approval of Baghdad central govt. UN late June said over three million displaced by conflict in Iraq since early 2014.

- Maria Fantappie, [“The Peshmerga Regression: How U.S. Aid is Undermining Years of Progress Professionalizing the Force”](#), *Foreign Affairs*, 14 June 2015.
- [“PM: Iraq forces made ‘unauthorized’ withdrawal from Ramadi”](#), AFP, 27 June 2015.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Middle East Report N°158, [Arming Iraq’s Kurds: Fighting IS, Inviting Conflict](#), 12 May 2015.

↓ **Kuwait** Bombing of Shiite mosque in Kuwait City 26 June left 27 dead and over 200 injured, Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) claimed responsibility. At least three suspects arrested; authorities said bomber was Saudi national; at least 60 more detained for suspected militant links. Interior minister 30 June said country in “state of war” with Islamist militants.

- [“Gulf states share shock of terror attack on mosque in Kuwait”](#), *Guardian*, 27 June 2015.

➡ **Yemen** UN-brokered consultations between warring parties in Geneva 15-19 June failed to reach agreement on ceasefire or humanitarian pause. Huthi/Saleh bloc continued to view exiled Yemeni govt as illegitimate and largely irrelevant; govt maintained unrealistic demands for Huthi disarmament and withdrawal from large blocs of territory. Huthi/Saleh coalition continued to advance: captured capital of Jawf province on border with Saudi Arabia 14 June; made gains in Marib province; 6 June fired scud missile into Saudi territory. Saudi military and Yemeni fighters reinforced border position, increased cross-border rocket attacks ahead of Geneva consultations. Hiraak fighters gained upper hand against Huthis in Dalia governorate. Humanitarian situation continued to worsen: UN mid-June said over 80% of population in need of aid, \$1.6bn needed to tackle “looming catastrophe”. Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) 17 June killed over 30 in series of bombings at Zayid mosques and Huthi HQ in Saana. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula leader killed 16 June in U.S. drone strike.

- [“Saudi-led jets bomb Yemen as Hadi government rejects new talks”](#), Reuters, 26 June 2015.

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## North Africa

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➡ **Algeria** French President Hollande visited mid-June to boost cooperation on regional security and trade. Uncertainty over President Bouteflika's health continued to mount amid speculation over his succession. Former PM Ahmed Ouyahia, considered close to military intelligence agency (DRS) often seen as opposing Bouteflika, appointed as Sec Gen of National Rally for Democracy (RND), Algeria's second most powerful political party. Letter published early June from Army Chief of Staff Gaid Salah congratulating Amar Saadani for his re-election in May as Sec Gen of National Liberation Front (FNL), also reiterating army's support for FNL; prompted accusations army chief lacked neutrality, was interfering in politics.

- ["Hollande meets Bouteflika in Algiers to discuss Mali, Libya, trade"](#), RFI, 14 June 2015.

➡ **Egypt** Death sentence against deposed president and former Muslim Brotherhood (MB) leader Mohamed Morsi confirmed by Cairo Criminal Court 16 June; judge used politically charged language, described MB as "diabolical". Apparent unwillingness of President Sisi's administration to consider leniency stoking radicalisation of younger MB members; MB leadership in exile 17 June voiced concern ongoing repression of group pushing some members toward violence. Uncertainty over long-postponed elections continued: citing "political crisis", former MB and current presidential candidate for Strong Egypt Party Abou al-Fatouh 18 June proposed holding early presidential elections, transfer of power from Sisi to consensual PM and release of political prisoners; proposal broadly dismissed but marks strongest critique yet of Sisi's performance by mainstream political figure. Top public prosecutor killed 29 June in car bomb attack in Cairo; President Sisi 30 June said will strengthen anti-terror laws. Ongoing violence in Sinai: military continued counter-terrorism campaign, imposition of severe constraints on NE Sinai including stopping food provisions from reaching area early June. 22 suspected militants killed in N Sinai army raid 22 June, at least eleven killed 27 June. Rafah crossing reopened 23-25 June to allow Palestinians and humanitarians into Gaza. Egypt 21 June appointed first ambassador to Israel since 2012. Suicide bombing against Karnak Temple in Luxor foiled 10 June.

- ["Egyptian court confirms Morsi death sentence over jailbreak during uprising"](#), *Guardian*, 16 June 2015.

➡ **Libya** Fourth UN-proposed draft agreement to end political standoff and internal conflict unveiled early June: Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC) delegation satisfied with proposal, which allows for former GNC members to remain under umbrella of proposed State Council; Tobruk-based House of Representatives (HoR) 24 June voted to continue participation in peace talks, said would accept proposed plan subject to several amendments, including reducing powers of State Council. Some hardliners affiliated with both GNC and HoR rejected agreement. In attempt to push for deal, UK, France, U.S. and Spain supported UNSC resolution imposing sanctions on Abderrahman Swehli and Othman Mlegta, affiliated with pro-GNC and pro-HoR blocs respectively, for obstructing UN talks on forming national unity govt; resolution blocked by Russia and China. Jihadi groups affiliated with Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) expanded grip in Sirte region, but suffered setbacks in Derna region. U.S. 14 June launched airstrike in Ajdabiya, allegedly to hit wanted al-Murabitoun leader

Mokhtar Belmokhtar; some twenty Ansar Sharia militants killed, Belmokhtar's death unconfirmed.

- ["Libya's elected parliament backs UN peace plan, with amendments"](#), Reuters, 24 June 2015.

➡ **Mauritania** Three convicted 17 June of belonging to Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL), sentenced to five-to-ten years' prison.

- ["Mauritania convicts 3 IS members, sentenced up to 10 years"](#), AP, 17 June 2015.

⬇ **Tunisia** 38 tourists killed in 26 June attack on hotel in Port al-Kantaoui tourist resort on the East coast; Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL) claimed responsibility. Authorities 30 June said gunman trained at same Libyan jihadi camp as gunmen responsible for March Bardo museum attack. Ruling Islamist-secularist coalition showing signs of fragility as anti-Islamist discourse increased, including by President Beji Caid Essebsi and leaders of his Nida Tounes party. Social discontent in south continued to rise amid growing terrorism fears: authorities increasingly intolerant of social movements, 5 June imposed curfew after protests in Douz. Seven wounded including four members of security forces when protesters and police clashed; curfew lifted 16 June by new Kebili region governor nominated by govt. Five members of security forces injured by shots fired by protesters during tribal clashes in southern towns of Jemna and Galaa 27-28 May. Four national guards killed 15 June in two separate attacks claimed by IS-affiliated jihadis. Ten Tunisian diplomats kidnapped in Libya freed mid-June after several days' captivity, consulate in Tripoli closed 19 June. Trial of 24 accused of involvement in 2013 assassination of opposition figure Chokri Belaid began 30 June.

- ["Tunisia launches security clampdown after Sousse attack"](#), BBC, 27 June 2015.