

CrisisWatch

A monthly bulletin on current and potential conflicts
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June 2016 – Trends

↓ Deteriorated situations

[Central African Republic](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#), [South Sudan](#), [Turkey](#)

↑ Improved situations

[Colombia](#)

July 2016 – Watchlist

💣* Conflict risk alerts

[South Sudan](#)

☪️ Conflict resolution opportunities

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.

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.

Table of Contents

AFRICA	3
Central Africa	3
Horn of Africa	4
Southern Africa	6
West Africa	7
ASIA.....	10
North East Asia	10
South Asia.....	11
South East Asia.....	13
Pacific.....	15
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA.....	16
Balkans.....	16
Caucasus.....	16
Eastern Europe	17
Western Europe/Mediterranean	18
Central Asia	19
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.....	20
MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA	22
Eastern Mediterranean	22
Gulf and Arabian Peninsula.....	23
North Africa.....	24

Africa

Central Africa

➔ **Burundi** Govt continued to repress opposition; talks to end political crisis postponed from 21 June to 5 July. Lead facilitator former Tanzanian President Mkapa 10 June in Brussels promised opposition figures he would invite main exiled opposition alliance National Council for the Respect of the Arusha Agreement, Restoration of the Rule of Law (CNARED) as single entity to second round of talks. Govt repeated it would not negotiate with CNARED. Security forces mid-June deployed in centre-west Mugamba and Burambi areas to disarm rebels, made multiple arrests. Police 3 June arrested eleven students in Muramvya, east of Bujumbura, for defacing Nkurunziza's image in textbooks, triggering protests. Police and intelligence services violently suppressed protests, killing one taxi driver and injuring two students. Provincial governors early June prevented Agathon Rwasa, opposition National Forces of Liberation (FNL) leader, from meeting his supporters in Gitega, Cibitoke and Karusi provinces. UN 3 June said it would not renew mandate of Burundian police in Central African Republic peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) when tour ends Sept 2016, citing allegations of human rights abuses. U.S. Treasury 2 June said it put sanctions on two govt officials and one Republican Forces of Burundi (FOREBU) rebel. Govt 20 June threatened to withdraw from ICC Rome Statute.

- Thierry Vircoulon, "[Burundi turns to WhatsApp as political turmoil brings media blackout](#)", *Guardian*, 14 June 2016.
- Thierry Vircoulon, "[Burundi : anatomie du troisième mandat de Nkurunziza](#)", *Jeune Afrique*, 10 June 2016.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°235, [Burundi: A Dangerous Third Term](#), 20 May 2016.

➔ **Cameroon** Boko Haram (BH) slightly increased rate of attacks in Far North killing 43 mostly civilians, including twenty fishermen in Tomboun Ali, Hile Alifa district, and launching other attacks in Limani town, Kolofata district and Mora district. Suicide bomber killed eleven in Djakana near Limani 29 June. BH abducted 40 people in Darak district 6-8 June. Cameroonian troops in counter-BH Multinational Joint Task Force 25 June launched operation on Lake Chad's Cameroonian and Nigerian islands.

↓ **Central African Republic** Violence spiked in Bangui and NW and central regions, continued in SE. In Bangui, killing of Muslim motorcycle taxi driver led to clashes in PK5 neighbourhood between Muslims and Christians 11 June, four killed; ex-Seleka rebels 19 June took six police captive for five days. Anti-balaka 24 June killed UN peacekeeper in Bangui. Anti-balaka fighters and ex-Seleka-backed herders clashed multiple times from 10 June in NW Ngaoundaye; ex-Seleka 15-16 June took control of town. Unidentified gunmen killed local Médecins Sans Frontières driver in ambush 17 June between Sibut and Grimari, NE of Bangui. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels kidnapped 29 people in separate raids 12 and 14 June in and near Kadjema in SE. Uganda 10 June said it would withdraw troops from AU Regional Task Force pursuing LRA in SE by end of 2016 citing group's reduced strength and insufficient international support. France 22

June said it had reduced troops in CAR from 650 to 350. Human Rights Watch 7 June said soldiers from Republic of Congo serving as peacekeepers in African Union mission (MISCA) and UN mission (MINUSCA) killed at least eighteen people Dec 2013-June 2015. National assembly 10 June adopted govt's General Policy Programme. International Criminal Court 21 June sentenced Congolese former rebel Jean-Pierre Bemba to eighteen years in prison for his militia's abuses in CAR 2002-2003.

➔ **Chad** President Déby 4 June went to Ngouboua on Lake Chad island to galvanise troops and call for people's support against Boko Haram (BH). Following BH attack on Bosso town, south Niger 3 June, Nigerien President Issoufou 7 June asked Déby for military support against BH. Chadian troops in Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) mid-late June reportedly took part in operations against BH in Lake Chad region.

➔ **DR Congo** Political manoeuvring over electoral crisis continued as ethnic tensions rose in east. Ruling party Sec Gen 4 June raised possibility of referendum on constitution to extend President Kabila's rule. Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of opposition Union of Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), brought together representatives of most opposition parties and civil society near Brussels 8-9 June: participants rejected dialogue as foreseen by Kabila but called for UN, EU, AU, International Organisation of La Francophonie and U.S. to support AU-appointed facilitator Edem Kodjo, established "Rassemblement" follow-up mechanism. Tshisekedi met Kodjo in Brussels 17 June, expressed support for dialogue in spirit of UNSC Resolution 2277. In east, army and UN operations against Rwandan Hutu rebel group Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) stoked tensions between Hutu and other ethnic groups at Buleusa, eastern Walikale; non-Hutu groups suspected Hutu of complicity with FDLR. UN Force Intervention Brigade 16 June reportedly killed seven Mai Mai militants who tried to block food distribution to displaced people in Buleusa camp. U.S. imposed sanctions on Kinshasa police chief Céléstin Kanyama 23 June for "violence against civilians".

➔ **Republic of Congo** Security forces 14 June arrested General Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko, opposition candidate in March 2016 presidential election; court 16 June charged him with violating state security and illegally possessing arms.

Horn of Africa

➔ **Eritrea** Security forces 12 June clashed with Ethiopian soldiers on disputed border near Tserona, both sides blamed other for instigating violence, claimed other sustained heavy casualties; govt 21 June accused Ethiopia of preparing larger military strike.

- Cedric Barnes, ["A Wake-up Call for Eritrea and Ethiopia"](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 15 June 2016.

➔ **Ethiopia** Security forces 12 June clashed with Eritrean soldiers on disputed border near Tserona (see Eritrea). At least 40 civilians reportedly killed 5 June in clashes between Ethiopia's Liyu Police and herders in Gashamo contested area on Ethiopia-Somalia border, prompting at least one protest against Ethiopian police in Somalia's Galgadud region (see Somalia).

➔ **Kenya** Police 6 June fired on opposition supporters protesting in western Nyanza region against Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) for alleged

pro-govt bias, killing at least two. Al-Shabaab fighters 20 June ambushed police escorting bus in NE Mandera county, killing five police. Al-Shabaab militants clashed with army in coastal Lamu county 29 June, four militants killed, one soldier injured. Police same day shot dead one suspected terrorist, arrested three at house in Malindi, coastal Kilifi county. Four-day clashes late June between two communities living along Kisumu-Nandi county border killed four, displaced more than 2,000.

➔ **Somalia** Al-Shabaab stepped up attacks against civilians and security forces: in Mogadishu militants 1-2 June stormed hotel, killed at least eighteen people including two MPs; suspected Al-Shabaab 5 June shot dead female journalist; militants 7 June shot dead two National Intelligence and Security Agency officers; militants 25 June detonated suicide car bomb then stormed hotel, at least fifteen people killed including minister and militants; suspected Al-Shabaab launched mortar attacks in several districts, no reported casualties. Al-Shabaab claimed 21 June killing of Middle Shabelle security chief in Jowhar. In Halgan, central Hiraan region, Al-Shabaab 9 June overran base of Ethiopian AMISOM contingent, forcing soldiers to retreat to bases in Wabha and Adan Yebal. Roadside bomb 30 June killed at least eighteen people in Lafoole, Lower Shabelle. Somali Special Forces 1 June killed senior Al-Shabaab commander Mohamed Dulyadeyn in Lower Juba and U.S. drone strike 3 June killed Al-Shabaab military instructor Ma'alim Adan Hassan in Lower Shabelle. National Leaders' Forum 25 June agreed electoral timetable: legislative elections in Aug, presidential in Sept. At least 40 civilians reportedly killed 5 June in clashes between Ethiopian Liyu Police and herders in Gashamo contested border district, prompted protest against Liyu Police in Galgadud region (see Ethiopia). Militia loyal to former Bari regional commissioner clashed with Puntland security forces 22 June, no reported casualties.

- Cedric Barnes and Zakaria Yusuf, "[Somalia's Al-Shabaab Down but Far from Out](#)", In Pursuit of Peace, 27 June 2016.

➔ **Somaliland** Tensions rose between Somaliland and Puntland over disputed Sool region: clashes between Dhulbahante clan militias left twenty people dead in Dharkeyn Genyo, Sool region 4 June.

⚠️ **South Sudan** No progress on peace deal implementation, fighting rose and govt and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO) prepared for return to war. Forces allied to SPLA-IO 11 June attacked Kajo Keji, former Central Equatoria State and 15 June attacked Raja, former Western Bahr el Ghazal State to demonstrate need for cantonment sites and unification into army or disarmament program in those areas. Independent armed group primarily comprising ethnic Fertit 25 June attacked and briefly captured Wau, second largest city; 10,000 civilians under UN protection and over 100,000 displaced. Govt delegation and Sudan govt 6 June in Khartoum committed to withdraw troops from Safe Demilitarised Border Zone along shared border and stop supporting rebel groups hostile to each other (see Sudan).

- Crisis Group Statement, "[Preventing Renewed War in South Sudan](#)", 1 July 2016.
- For latest report, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°236, [South Sudan's South: Conflict in the Equatorias](#), 25 May 2016.

➔ **Sudan** Govt and S Sudan delegation in Khartoum 6 June committed to withdraw troops from Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ) along shared border and stop supporting rebel groups hostile to each other (see South Sudan); govt 26 June said it

had withdrawn troops from SDBZ. Darfuri rebel groups Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudan Liberation Movement-Minni Minnawi (SLM-MM) met with Darfur mediation in Doha late May; govt 6 June rejected proposal of JEM and SLM-MM to renegotiate Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Govt 17 June announced four-month unilateral ceasefire in S Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Sudan Call, coalition of armed and political opposition groups, following talks with Western envoys in Addis Ababa, 19 June proposed supplementary document to Roadmap Agreement that includes additional confidence-building measures; govt 21 June rejected proposal.

- Casie Copeland and Magnus Taylor, "[From Conflict to Cooperation? Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda](#)", In Pursuit of Peace, 20 June 2016.

➔ **Uganda** Security forces 7-10 June arrested 30 soldiers, including Entebbe air base commander, and opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) MP for allegedly planning coup; army court charged 22 soldiers and MP with treason 28 June. Unidentified gunmen 12 June attacked police station in northern Gulu killing two; govt dismissed rumours that rebels were responsible for raid and 27 May attack on Local Defence Unit in Opit, Gulu district. Army 10 June said it would withdraw most troops from AU Regional Task Force deployed in Central African Republic to counter rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), citing group's reduced strength and insufficient international support.

Southern Africa

➔ **Angola** Secessionist group Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (FLEC) late May reportedly raided offshore Chevron gas platform, threatened foreign workers. FLEC Commander Sem Medo 22 June claimed group killed fourteen soldiers late May. Clashes 25-26 June left seven soldiers, two FLEC dead in Miconje area. Death of FLEC historic leader Nzita Tiago 3 June prompted uncertainty over future leadership: son Emmanuel Nzita and FLEC VP Alexandre Tati both claimed presidency; Emmanuel Nzita 21 June called on all FLEC factions to unite.

➔ **Madagascar** Grenade attack 26 June in stadium in Antananarivo during Independence Day celebrations killed two and injured 84; President Rajaonarimampianina blamed attack on "political divergences". Opposition senator René Lylison, under arrest warrant for threats to state security, early-June denied charges.

➔ **Mozambique** After longstanding rejection President Nyusi 18 June accepted foreign mediation of peace talks with armed opposition Renamo. Renamo attacks on civilians and infrastructure increased including 4 June attack on two lorries in Barue district, Manica province. Ruling Frelimo MPs 22 June called on attorney general to bring charges against Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama for group's actions.

➔ **South Africa** Inter- and intra-party violence and intimidation increased in run-up to 3 Aug local elections, affecting 80 locales in eight provinces. Ruling African National Congress (ANC)'s 20 June selection of Thoko Didiza, non-local former minister, as its mayoral candidate for Tshwane metro area outside Pretoria instead of current mayor Kgositso Ramokgopa sparked three days of violent protests, at least five people killed and many injured; residents said ANC leadership imposed mayoral candidate.

➔ **Zimbabwe** Factional tensions in ruling ZANU-PF party persisted: in speech to ZANU-PF central committee President Mugabe 9 June described war veterans as dissidents for allegedly threatening war if VP Emmerson Mnangagwa failed to succeed him.

West Africa

➔ **Burkina Faso** Govt 1 June created 92-member committee to draft new constitution comprising experts, politicians, civil society representatives, religious and customary chiefs and security forces. Military court 6 June said it would not re-issue arrest warrant against Côte d'Ivoire's national assembly speaker Guillaume Soro for involvement in Sep 2015 coup and that govt has asked Côte d'Ivoire to prosecute him. Signalling it would take firmer stance against Koglweogo vigilante groups, govt 13 June reiterated that carrying weapons without authorisation, collecting unofficial fines and taxes and corporal punishment are crimes that will be sanctioned. Thousands of Koglweogo 22 June held general assembly, rejected laws; clashes 25 June between Koglweogo and opposed youths in Ouagadougou outskirts injured five. Election of mayors stoked inter- and intra-party tensions, clashes 18-28 June killed at least three across country. Govt 30 June said ten people suspected of involvement in Jan Ouagadougou and March Grand-Bassam terrorist attacks arrested; six still wanted.

➔ **Côte d'Ivoire** Govt 1 June appointed ten-member committee to draft new constitution; possible changes could clarify presidential eligibility criteria and create VP position. President Ouattara 7 June said constitutional referendum to be held Sept-Oct followed by Nov-Dec legislative elections; 23 opposition parties 30 June rejected proposed process for amending constitution. Updating of voter rolls began 25 June. International Criminal Court trial of former President Gbagbo and youth leader Charles Blé Goudé resumed 6 June; former First Lady Simone Gbagbo on trial in Abidjan for crimes against humanity pleaded not guilty, denounced trial as political.

➔ **Gambia** President Jammeh 3 June reportedly accused Mandinka ethnic group, country's largest, of leading April-May political protests, called group "enemies and foreigners" and threatened to "kill them one by one". UN special adviser on genocide 10 June condemned remarks.

➔ **Guinea** Tensions persisted within ruling Rally of the Guinean People (RPG): President Condé 11 June banned from RPG former senior presidential advisor Ousmane Kaba and former Communications Minister Alhousseyni Mankanera Kaké after they criticised his late May comments accusing ethnic Malinké politicians of trying to take control of RPG by appealing to ethnic solidarity.

➔ **Guinea-Bissau** PM Djá, appointed 26 May by President Vaz, formed govt 2 June; gave twelve of 31 positions to opposition Party for Social Renewal (PRS) and remainder to dissidents of former ruling party, African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), small allied New Democracy Party and Vaz associates. National assembly convened 14 June after two months' inactivity, closed third session without resolving status of fifteen PAIGC dissident MPs. Former PAIGC ministers 9 June left main govt building which they had occupied since 26 May in protest against Djá's appointment. PAIGC and former head of state broadcasting service appealed to Supreme Court

against Djá's appointment 3 and 9 June respectively; court's decision awaited. ECOWAS 4 June prolonged mandate of its military mission (ECOMIB) until June 2017. IMF 3 June suspended budgetary assistance on grounds that previous govt's bailout of two commercial banks would benefit wealthy at expense of poverty reduction.

➔ **Liberia** Following NGO Global Witness's mid-May allegations of bribery against govt officials and British company Sable Mining, grand jury 8 June indicted Sable Mining CEO in connection with allegations; CEO denied charges. After thirteen years UN peacekeeping mission (UNMIL) 30 June handed over responsibility for security to govt.

➔ **Mali** Implementation of June 2015 peace agreement remained slow, as armed group and ethnic violence continued. Govt, main rebel alliance Coalition of Azawad Movements (CMA) and pro-unity armed groups (Platform) 14 June agreed new calendar to appoint interim authorities and restore public services in five northern regions. Prospect of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) program triggered violence between armed groups: two Platform groups, Groupe d'autodéfense touareg imrad et alliés (GATIA) and Ganda Izo, 11 June clashed after latter tried to create pre-DDR cantonment site near Douentza, Gourma region, which GATIA considered under its control; armed group leaders met in Bamako to ease tensions, GATIA released prisoners. Suspected jihadists continued attacks on national and international forces: unidentified gunmen 12 June clashed with govt forces in N Timbuktu region, wounding two soldiers; 19 June attacked National Guard outpost near Gao, wounding soldier. Communal violence continued in NE: alleged Imouchagh (Tuareg faction) fighters 12 June attacked CMA/Doosak position in Menaka region, three Imouchagh allegedly killed and two Doosak wounded. In centre two armed groups, Alliance nationale pour la sauvegarde de l'identité peule et la restauration de la justice (ANSIPRJ) and Mouvement pour la défense de la patrie (MDP), announced formation 18 and 25 June respectively, MDP joined pro-unity Platform coalition. UNSC 29 June extended MINUSMA mandate to 30 June 2017 and raised peacekeeper ceiling by some 2,500.

↓ **Niger** Boko Haram (BH) significantly increased attacks in SE Diffa region and regional counter-BH Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) reportedly launched major offensive. BH insurgents 3 June attacked Bosso town, killing 26 soldiers, looting weapons and ammunition and forcing army to leave temporarily; insurgents 9 June temporarily forced army out of Kabelewa, looted town; insurgents 16 June reportedly attacked military barracks at Ghafam, Diffa region, killed seven military personnel and same day attacked refugee camp near Diffa. President Issoufou 7 June asked Chadian President Déby for military support. Army general 21 June said MNJTF including Chadian and Nigerian troops had launched major offensive to eliminate BH along Niger-Nigeria border.

- Vincent Foucher and Jean-Hervé Jezequel, ["Le Niger et ses alliés face à Boko Haram"](#), *Le Monde*, 16 June 2016.

↓ **Nigeria** Insecurity in Niger Delta worsened. Armed group Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) vandalised Nigerian and foreign-run oil and gas facilities, including three in Bayelsa, two in Delta and one in Akwa Ibom states. Six other previously unknown groups also threatened attacks. State-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation 9 June said attacks had cut electricity production by over 1,500 megawatts, about half usual national output. Govt 6 June offered to negotiate with armed groups but military continued operations against them; NDA 8 June refused talks, other groups agreed but

set conditions. Suspected Niger Delta vandals attacked communities in Ikorodu area, Lagos state 23-24 June, killing at least 22 people, raising fears Delta violence may be spreading to SW zone. Unidentified gunmen 22 June kidnapped five foreigners and two Nigerians in Cross River state and killed their driver; freed captives 26 June. Nigerian military and multinational force continued operations against Boko Haram in NE; insurgents attacked police station and military post in Kanama, Yobe state 7 June, killing seven; attacked army positions in Pulka, Borno state 12 June, six killed as soldiers repelled them; insurgents killed four civilians and abducted four women in Kutuva, Borno state 14 June; killed 24 civilians in Kuda-Kaya, Adamawa state 16 June. Aid agencies reported critical humanitarian situation in parts of NE, called for urgent response. Suspected Fulani herdsmen killed about 59 people in Logo area of Benue state 18-19 June.

New Crisis Group Africa Report N°237, *Nigeria: The Challenge of Military Reform*, 6 June 2016. Nigeria's military is in distress. President Muhammadu Buhari's over-due reforms aren't yet enough to turn an under-resourced, over-stretched and corrupt army back into a professional force. A complete overhaul is needed, including accountability for human rights abuses, if Nigerians are not to be left at the mercy of Boko Haram and other armed groups.

Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China (internal)** Govt 2 June released white paper on “Freedom of Religious Belief in Xinjiang” defending crackdown against Islamic militants, and asserting no religious discrimination in province; however local officials reported they routinely blocked Uighurs’ right to fast during Ramadan.

➔ **China/Japan** Japanese FM 2 June lodged protest with Chinese embassy over China’s construction of new drilling towers in East China Sea (ECS) near median line between countries’ coastlines; said construction indicated China’s continued development of gas fields in violation of 2008 agreement on joint development in ECS. Chinese frigate 9 June sailed within contiguous zone around disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku islands; Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force (MSDF) issued warning and monitored vessel, Tokyo lodged diplomatic protest. MSDF 15 June reported it had spotted Chinese naval intelligence ship in Japanese territorial waters west of Kuchinoerabu Island in Kagoshima prefecture; Japanese foreign ministry same day expressed concern to Chinese embassy over China’s general naval activity. Chinese defence ministry said exercising right to innocent passage stipulated in UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. U.S. said Chinese fighter jet 7 June conducted “unsafe” intercept of U.S. aircraft conducting routine patrol in international airspace over ECS, also said Chinese jet was never within more than 100 feet of U.S. aircraft; China blamed frequent U.S. reconnaissance of Chinese coastal areas, asserted its right to take defensive moves and urged U.S. to cease reconnaissance activity.

New Crisis Group Asia Report N°280, [East China Sea: Preventing Clashes from Becoming Crises](#), 30 June 2016. Dangerous aerial and naval encounters are rising as China and Japan spar over disputed islands in the ECS. A promising reconciliation process has floundered. To prevent an accident tipping the dispute into open hostility, both sides urgently need a credible crisis management protocol to insulate any negotiations from their broader rivalry.

➔ **Korean Peninsula** International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) 6 June reported DPRK’s Yongbyon nuclear facility appeared to be reactivated, with satellite imagery indicating resumption of activities related to five-megawatt reactor, expansion of enrichment facilities, activities related to reprocessing. IAEA chief said Pyongyang’s unwillingness to comply with March UNSC resolution “deeply regrettable”, urged implementation of relevant IAEA and UNSC resolutions; qualified that IAEA only observing through satellite imagery. U.S. State Dept official 7 June suggested Pyongyang repeating process by which it obtained plutonium for previous nuclear tests. DPRK 22 June launched two mid-range ballistic missiles from eastern coast; first launch failed, ROK media reported second launch likely most effective to date. UNSC 23 June condemned launches. U.S. Treasury Dept 1 June designated DPRK “primary” money launderer, said it would seek secondary sanctions cutting off banks or companies conducting transactions with Pyongyang from U.S. financial system; sanctions expected to primarily affect Chinese banks. Beijing said it opposed unilateral sanctions, 14 June released list of goods banned for export to DPRK. EU Council 6 June decided to impose additional restrictive measures against DPRK. ROK 13 June said DPRK hacked over 140,000 computers at 160 firms and govt agencies,

planted code laying groundwork for major cyber-attack. Chinese President Xi 1 June received DPRK Worker's Party Vice Chairman Ri Su-yong in first meeting with senior DPRK official since 2013. Ri same day said DPRK would continue to build nuclear force. DPRK convened fourth session of thirteenth Supreme People's Assembly 29 June.

South Asia

► **Afghanistan** Parliament 13 June voted against President Ghani's 5 March decree on electoral reform, sent to parliament late April, which had enabled release of international aid for elections to be held Oct; vote makes it highly unlikely elections will be held in 2016. Main opponent to decree Farah province MP Abdul Sabur Khedmat argued Ghani had no intention of holding elections and sent decree to Wolesi Jirga intending to deceive nation and block reform. Sirajuddin Haqqani, deputy to new Taliban leader Haibatullah Akhunzada, 15 June said Taliban only open to peace talks if international community agreed negotiations would conform to Sharia. Defence ministry 7 June said Afghan air force strike in Nangarhar province killed five Islamic State (IS) loyalists; U.S. drone strike in Paktika province 9 June killed alleged Haqqani Network facilitator. Military 14 June reported operation targeting Taliban hideouts in Jawzjan province killed fifteen insurgents; defence ministry 18 June said army released nine Taliban hostages in Helmand province. Police commander 3 June claimed Taliban hideouts installed 500m from Baghlan-Kunduz Highway, requiring large-scale operation to secure it. Taliban 30 June staged twin bomb attack on police convoy outside Kabul 30 June; reports of death toll vary from 27 to at least 40. Ghazni province officials 8 June said Taliban executed eleven security personnel who they had kidnapped 4 June. Explosion in Nangahar province mosque 10 June killed four civilians, wounded 50. Special representative on reform and good governance 4 June reported thousands of acres grabbed across country and major embezzlement in fuel contracts, but govt lacked political authority to tackle corruption. Report by NGO Global Witness 6 June said lapis lazuli mines driving corruption and extremism, earning Taliban and other armed groups up to \$20m annually.

► **Bangladesh** Controversial counter-terrorism efforts exacerbated tensions between ruling Awami League and opposition Bangladesh National Party (BNP) as target killings continued. Hindu priest killed 7 June by attackers in Jhenidah Sadar sub-district; Hindu temple volunteer hacked to death 10 June in Babna Sadar sub-district. Islamic State (IS) reportedly claimed responsibility for both attacks. In first apparent instance of extremist retaliation against police, wife of senior police official hacked to death in Chittagong 5 June. Police 7 June killed three suspected Jamaat Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) militants in Dhaka, Rajshahi and Brahmanbaria. Govt 10 June launched weeklong crackdown on jihadist groups, reportedly arresting over 11,000 people; civil society activists claimed mass extortion by police during operation, while opposition accused govt of using counter-militancy efforts as pretext to target political opponents, reporting that majority of detainees were BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) activists. PM Sheikh Hasina insisted "BNP-Jamaat clique" had replaced previous mass street agitation with "secret killings" to destabilise country. Police 6 June pressed new charges against BNP leader Khaleda Zia and 38 other BNP figures in arson cases from Feb 2015 violent govt-opposition clashes. International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) 6 June upheld Nov 2014 conviction and sentencing of senior JeI member Mir Quasem Ali for

atrocities committed during 1971 war of independence. High Court 7 June granted bail to *Daily Star* editor, Mahfuz Anam in ten out of 82 sedition and defamation charges brought against him after he admitted to publishing uncorroborated reports on PM Sheikh Hasina's alleged corruption. Six-phase local council polls concluded 4 June, with a record of over 120 people killed in election-related violence before and during polls; most deaths reportedly linked to intra-Awami League clashes.

- Shehryar Fazli, "[A Rule of Law Meltdown Is Behind the Murder of Bloggers in Bangladesh](#)", *World Politics Review*, 20 June 2016.

➔ **India (non-Kashmir)** Several killed in encounters between Maoist insurgents and security forces throughout month: at least two police commandos killed in anti-Maoists operations 19 June in Bihar and 17 June in Jarkhand; at least four Naxalites reportedly killed in late June police operations in Maharashtra.

➔ **Kashmir** Indian National Investigation Agency Director General Sharad Kumar 2 June reported that inquiry into Jan 2016 Pathankot air base attacks had produced strong evidence implicating Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Masood Azhar and his brother Rauf; found no evidence to suggest direct involvement of Pakistani govt or intelligence agencies. Violent clashes between militants and Indian armed forces continued: suspected militants 25 June killed eight police, injured twenty in attack on convoy outside Srinagar; Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) claimed responsibility. At least fifteen soldiers and rebels reportedly killed in five other clashes during month. Heavy gunfire broke out 20 June between security forces and militants following reported arrest of top LeT commander Abu Ukasha in Kupwara district. At least 30 people reportedly injured in clashes with police during protests in Srinagar against Indian govt's new industrial policy.

➔ **Nepal** Govt 16 June approved roadmap to hold local elections by Dec 2016, provincial assembly elections by April-May 2017, and federal parliamentary elections by Dec 2017; opposition criticised plan for implementing new constitution without addressing concerns regarding new provincial boundaries; ruling UML party warned elections would be held even without dissenting Madhesi parties' buy-in. Coalition of Madhesi parties presented seven preconditions responding to 12 June govt invitation for dialogue including formation of judicial commission to investigate protest-related deaths in Tarai plains. Ruling coalition member Maoist Center held unsuccessful discussions with UML and opposition Nepali Congress on forming national unity govt. Naya Shakti Nepal – new party espousing good governance, economic progress, and inclusiveness led by Maoist ideologue and former PM Baburam Bhattarai – launched 12 June. Netra Bikram Chand's breakaway CPN (Maoist) undertook large extortion drives and torched telecommunications stations across nine western and eastern districts 11 June, mimicking insurgency-era tactic of attacking key infrastructure. Two transitional justice bodies on truth, reconciliation and disappearances extended conflict-era case registration deadlines until mid-July as some victims reportedly unaware of filing process; over 47,000 total cases registered thus far including fifteen against Col. Kumar Lama who is awaiting trial in the UK on charges of torture during the conflict.

➔ **Pakistan** Army chief Raheel Sharif 2 June said Zarb-e-Azb anti-militant operation in N Waziristan successfully entering final phases; another military official said operation's completion will be announced before end of Sharif's tenure in Nov. Attacks and clashes between alleged Baloch insurgents and security forces continued. Bomb blast

in Balochistan province's Quetta 24 June killed at least three, injured 32. Principal of University of Balochistan's law college killed 8 June in drive-by shooting in Quetta. Paramilitary Rangers 7 June blocked streets around senior Muttahid Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Farooq Sattar's home in Karachi; fellow MQM leader described incident as attempt to compel MQM leadership to switch loyalties from MQM to other movements. Karachi police 15 June registered case against MQM media head for spreading "propaganda" against Rangers. Son of Sindh High Court chief justice kidnapped 20 June in Karachi. Security officials reportedly expressed concern that al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) branch reestablishing itself in Karachi. President Manmohan Singh 8 June signed constitutional amendment allowing appointment of non-judicial officials to Election Commission (ECP), providing opportunity for more representative ECP leadership. U.S. State Dept 2 June confirmed sale of F-16s to Pakistan no longer viable after offer, which was approved in Feb, expired 24 May.

- For latest report, see Crisis Group Asia Report N°279, [Pakistan's Jihadist Heartland: Southern Punjab](#), 30 May 2016.

➔ **Sri Lanka** UN Human Rights Chief's 29 June report to UNHRC noted some important steps by govt to implement 2015 HRC resolution but called for faster progress on range of concerns, including releasing Tamil detainees, returning military-held land, asserting control over military and intelligence establishment and dismantling structures enabling abuses; reiterated importance of international involvement in accountability mechanism. Amid waning public confidence, govt took some positive steps on accountability, rule of law and transitional justice: Parliament 24 June unanimously approved long-awaited Right to Information Act; Inspector General of Police 18 June ordered disciplinary action against head of police Special Task Force (STF) for public threatening of journalists 17 June; president 17 June issued new directives to police and armed forces on arrest and detention of persons on terrorism related charges; task force for consultations on transitional justice mechanisms mid-June began public hearings, met military officials, religious and other civil society representatives. Opposition and activists criticised govt for lack of public consultation prior to 27 May publication of Office on Missing Persons draft law, presented to parliament 22 June. Tamil National Alliance (TNA) leaders 13 June criticised govt decision not to include foreign judges in promised special court. Defence Secretary 13 June announced much-criticised Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) will be replaced with national security act, prevention of organised crime act and intelligence act. Responding to pressure from civil society and cabinet members, PM agreed Central Bank governor Arjuna Mahendran not be reappointed until conclusion of parliamentary investigations into corruption charges; no interim governor named as expected 30 June following disagreement between PM and president.

- Alan Keenan, ["Impunity and Justice: Why the UN Human Rights Council Must Stay Engaged in Sri Lanka"](#), In Pursuit of Peace, 17 June 2016.

South East Asia

➔ **Indonesia** Activists accused police of detaining over 1000 protesters in W Papua 15-17 June following peaceful demonstrations calling for independence referendum and investigations into alleged human rights abuses. Police denied arrests, but admitted to "localising" protesters to restrict their movement. Police 9 June arrested three

suspected Islamic State (IS)-linked militants, believed to be planning attacks in Jakarta during Eid-al-Fitr.

➔ **Myanmar** State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) 31 May established “Preparatory Committee for Union Peace Conference (Panglong-21)”, slated to meet late-Aug, and two subcommittees for engaging with Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signatory armed groups and non-signatories. Also established committee for formation of “National Reconciliation and Peace Centre” (NRPC). Dr Tin Myo Win confirmed as govt’s lead peace negotiator. NCA-mandated Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) also re-formed 28 May, with ASSK as chair. Issues to be discussed at peace conference reduced from five thematic areas previously set out to two: political and security. Sub-committee for non-signatories met in Thailand 3 June with United Nationalities Federal Council umbrella group of non-signatory armed groups. Govt formally invited groups to attend preparatory meeting in Yangon in July, together with NCA-signatory armed groups and UPDJC, to prepare for Panglong-21. Armed conflict continued N Shan state between Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and govt forces; between TNLA and Shan State Army-South; and between govt forces and Shan State Army-North. Minor clashes also continued, including on 5 June, between Arakan Army and govt forces in Rakhine state. Distribution of “national verification cards” to Muslims without citizenship cards started 7 June in three townships in Rakhine state; cardholders will be able to apply for citizenship verification. Followed 31 May formation of Central Committee on Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development of Rakhine state, also chaired by ASSK.

➔ **Philippines** Govt peace negotiator Silvestre Bello met mid-June with exiled National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) communist leaders in Oslo, 15 June signed agreement to formally resume peace talks in July to end communist insurgency; previous round stalled 2013 when President Aquino halted negotiations and refused to release political prisoners. President-elect Duterte 17 June met with leaders of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF); reiterated his campaign promise to pass Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). MILF Vice Chair Ghadzali Jaafar said MILF and MNLF working to come up with unified stance on Bangsamoro govt. Army 4 June reported it captured Islamic State (IS)-allied Maute militant group training camp in Lanao del Sur province; four soldiers and dozens of militants reported killed. Army 4 June said it would suspend operations in south during Ramadan out of respect, but remain on standby in Lanao del Sur. Army 17 June said some 5,000 soldiers deployed in Sulu province to track Abu Sayyaf group; at least three Abu Sayyaf killed, ten Abu Sayyaf and sixteen soldiers injured in clash with military in Patikul town 21 June. Four Malaysian hostages held by Abu Sayyaf since April 2016 freed 8 June, Filipina woman held since Sept 2015 freed 24 June; group 13 June executed Canadian hostage held since Sept 2015. Amid growing regional security challenges, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines 20 June agreed to increase air and sea patrols in common maritime areas to combat hijackings, kidnappings and robbery. One police killed, five police and two civilians injured in grenade attack by unidentified assailants 20 June in Sarangani province; Sarangani among strongholds of communist New People’s Army (NPA). Police 18-19 June killed eleven suspected drug dealers, bringing number of drug suspects killed since Duterte was elected 9 May to over 40.

➔ **South China Sea** Indonesian navy 17 June fired on Chinese fishing vessels in Indonesian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around Natuna Islands, detained one boat and seven crew. Two Chinese Coast Guard vessels arrived to protect and rescue fishermen and vessels. China said incident took place in traditional Chinese fishing grounds, accused Indonesian navy of damaging one vessel and wounding fisherman, and of violating international law; lodged protest with Jakarta. Chinese media 1 June reported Beijing preparing to declare air defence identification zone (ADIZ) over SCS; U.S. Sec State Kerry 6 June warned such a step would be “provocative and destabilizing”; followed 27 May report of Chinese surveillance drone on disputed Woody Island. Addressing regional security forum U.S. Sec Defence 4 June outlined vision of “principled security network” in SCS. Following meeting between Chinese and ASEAN officials 14 June ASEAN FMs issued joint communiqué expressing “serious concerns” on development in SCS, but retracted hours later to make “urgent amendments”, possibly after China lobbied Cambodia and Laos to withdraw support for statement.

- Yanmei Xie, [“Avoiding a Military Showdown in the South China Sea”](#), *Wall Street Journal*, 2 June 2016.

➔ **Thailand** PM and head of National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) Prayuth Chan-ocha 2 June said if Constitutional Court rules against a provision of recently enacted Referendum Act, constitutional referendum scheduled for 7 Aug would be postponed. Provision in question prohibits aggressive or rude language that disrupts referendum with penalty up to ten years’ jail; human rights groups argue that restrictions on speech deemed “inconsistent with the truth” are unconstitutionally vague. Election Commission (EC) commissioner Somchai Srisutthiyakorn 17 June threatened prosecution of online critics who post “rude, false and provocative” statements critical of the draft constitution. Constitutional Court 29 June ruled Referendum Act accords with interim constitution. Red Shirt United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) early June announced it would establish “anti-fraud centres” across country to monitor referendum. NCPO mid-month decided centres violated prohibition on public gatherings for political activities; soldiers shut down some 30 anti-fraud centres around country. UDD leader Jatuporn Prompan called for the UN and other international bodies to monitor referendum. Insurgent attacks in Deep South included: in Narathiwat, two rangers killed in ambush in Rangae district 31 May, four insurgents and a ranger killed in clashes in Chanae district 1 June, Malay-Muslim village head and assistant killed in drive-by shooting in Cho Airong district 6 June; in Pattani, five people injured in shooting in Khok Pho district 5 June; bombs exploded Panare district and Mayo district same day, no casualties; two soldiers and five civilians injured by motorcycle bomb in Nong Chik district 9 June; two more soldiers wounded in bomb attack in same district 20 June; car bomb in Narathiwat 26 June injured two people.

Pacific

➔ **Papua New Guinea** Police opened fire on student demonstration in Port Moresby 8 June, leaving dozens wounded; protesters were calling for PM O’Neill to resign over corruption allegations. Court 9 June granted injunction barring students from protesting on campus; students 23 June clashed with security forces, burnt cars and trucks. Govt 28 June established inquiry into violence, imposed curfew on two university campuses.

Europe and Central Asia

Balkans

➔ **Bosnia** State Statistical Agency 30 June released sensitive results of 2013 census despite objections over methodology from Republika Srpska (RS), which disputes validity. Census shows 20% decline in population since 1991 to 3.5mn; 50.11% Bosniak (up from 43.5% in 1991, 88% of whom live in Federation entity), 30.78% Serb (down from 31.2% in 1991, 92% living in RS), 15.43% Croat (down from 17.4% in 1991, 91% living in Federation). European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) 9 June ruled that Bosnia discriminated against Bosniak living in RS entity who was not allowed to stand for presidency under constitution; third ECHR ruling to find that Bosnian constitution is discriminatory. Bosniak residents of Srebrenica in RS said police exercise in town late month was intended as demonstration of violence to intimidate Bosniak returnees.

➔ **Kosovo** Parliament 17 June approved extension of mandate of EU rule-of-law mission EULEX for two years, three days after it expired; also modified mandate to monitoring and advising role.

➔ **Macedonia** President Ivanov 6 June revoked his controversial pardons issued in April for 56 politicians (mostly from ruling party) and aides, protecting them from criminal prosecution in illegal wiretapping scandal; pardons had sparked widespread protests, exacerbating political crisis, and drawn condemnation from EU and U.S. EU and U.S.-brokered crisis talks saw rival political parties agree on new process to check electoral role; discussions on timing of early election and format of new interim govt, and on how to reform electoral role and media, continued. So-called “Colourful Revolution” anti-govt protests continued calling for constitutional court (CC) to rule to protect status of Special Prosecution set up in Sept 2015 to investigate wiretapping scandal and set up special court to try cases; tens of thousands protested in capital 20 June, after CC missed deadline imposed by protesters to make ruling.

Caucasus

➔ **Armenia** Germany’s lower house of parliament 2 June passed resolution recognising mass Ottoman killings of Armenians during WWI as genocide; Pope Francis 24 June denounced Armenian genocide during official visit to Yerevan, calling for Armenia-Turkey reconciliation and regional peace effort. During visit by Armenian military delegation to Iran mid-June, Tehran pledged to develop closer defence ties; Iranian and Armenian FMs 5 June signed MoU on visa regime liberalisation. Parliament approved decision to join Russian air-defence system.

➔ **Azerbaijan** Prison chief 15 June said 28 May amnesty act will cover release of 10,000 prisoners; 200 released same day. Armed Forces late June engaged in training involving 25,000 military personnel; Navy conducted exercises in Caspian Sea.

➔ **Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)** As Azerbaijan and Armenia both reported continued violations of ceasefire by other side along line of contact in N-K, Azerbaijani President Aliyev 7 June warned April ceasefire not stable, status quo not acceptable. Baku authorities 16 June stated they viewed visit of Nagorno-Karabakh de facto president to Brussels as provocation. Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders meeting in St Petersburg 20 June adopted trilateral statement.

➔ **Georgia** EU 1 June decided to postpone decision on granting visa-free travel to Georgian citizens, despite fact that country has fulfilled requirements for visa liberalisation, prompting expressions of disappointment within Georgia.

➔ **North Caucasus (Russia)** Commission for Human Rights and Civil Society 3 June met Ingushetia republic head Yunus-Bek Yevkurov who defended late May killings by National Antiterrorism Committee, which he said targeted Islamic State (IS) militants; followed questions from human rights activists over official account of killings. Officials reported police officer shot dead by unknown attackers in Ashaga-Sta village, Dagestan 3 June. Four security officers and six militants killed during two separate counter-terrorism operations in Dagestan 17 June; dead include militant commander wanted since 2009 and who pledged allegiance to IS. Members of Dagestan's Muslim Spiritual Board (DUMD) 21 June set up group within all-Russia extra-parliamentary party People Against Corruption (NPK) aiming to win representation in both Russian State Duma and Dagestan's Parliament in Sept elections for Duma and Dagestan parliament. Proposal to name bridge in St Petersburg after late Chechen President Akhmat Kadyrov succeeded despite several hundred protesting and online petition against it gathering 70,000 signatures. Turkish authorities reported one of three IS-affiliated suicide bombers responsible for 30 June Istanbul airport bombing was from North Caucasus.

Eastern Europe

➔ **Belarus** President Lukashenka 16 June announced successful test of new missile system as part of military rearmament program; follows announcement in May by Russia and Belarus of decision to develop military response to U.S. missile shield deployed in Eastern Europe. Leader of opposition United Civic Party (AHP) Anatol Lyabedzka and two associates taken into custody 2 June on charges of illegally distributing printed materials.

➔ **Moldova** Court 27 June sentenced former PM Filat, charged Oct 2015 with accepting bribes in \$1bn bank fraud case, to nine years' prison after finding him guilty of power abuse in office and corruption. Transdniester conflict talks resumed 2 June under official 5+2 format involving the two sides plus Russia, Ukraine, U.S., EU, OSCE, first talks since 2014 after three previous meetings under this format were cancelled. OSCE advanced "shared notion" for breakaway territory's status that respects Moldova's territorial integrity. Parliament of self-proclaimed Transdniester Moldovan republic 22 June adopted draft law on "legal, institutional and political framework" for negotiations with Chisinau.

➔ **Ukraine** Efforts to move Minsk peace process forward remained stalled despite new visit to Kyiv and Moscow by U.S. Asst Sec State Victoria Nuland; no progress reported. Fighting continued in east with more targeted artillery attacks and intensifying clashes over course of month, and increasing casualties; senior Ukrainian military official 16 June

reported 25 troops killed during month. OSCE 22 June urged both sides to investigate ceasefire violations. Russia 14 June extradited two Ukrainian political prisoners; Ukraine reciprocated freeing two separatists. In Kyiv, opposition appeared to be gaining momentum, particularly oligarch-supported Opposition Bloc which seeks to break deadlock in east (where high level supporters have major industrial assets) and reportedly stepped up contacts with Kremlin in recent weeks. Self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic 24 June adopted law on nationalisation of all Ukrainian property on its territory, including privately-owned major industrial plant, banks, railroad system. PM Groysman expressed regret over result of UK's 23 June EU referendum amid fears that "Brexit" could derail EU support for sanctions against Russia and EU visa liberalisation process for Ukraine.

Western Europe/Mediterranean

➔ **Cyprus** New round of peace talks between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders held 8 June following late-May row between Greek Cypriot leader Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Akıncı and cancellation of planned 27 May talks. Two sides 20 June reportedly reached agreement on issue of power sharing.

➔ **Northern Ireland (United Kingdom)** Result of 23 June UK referendum voting to leave the EU prompted concerns over potential for destabilisation of status quo in place since 1998 Good Friday Agreement ended decades-long Troubles. Overall vote in Northern Ireland favoured staying part of EU, however loyalist DUP supported Leave vote. Sinn Féin 24 June called for vote on Irish unity, prompting concerns in some quarters for potential to inflame Loyalist tensions. Referendum result also raised uncertainties over future status of open border with Republic of Ireland and fear of return to physical border with check-points. Developments come ahead of annual Orange Order parades 12 July.

⚡ **Turkey** Suicide bomb and gun attack at Istanbul airport 28 June saw 44 people killed and some 240 injured; authorities believe the three attackers, one Russian (North Caucasus), one Kyrgyz and one Uzbek, were Islamic State (IS) militants. Violence continued in SE provinces with fighting increasingly moving from urban to rural areas; some 36 security forces, thirteen civilians and 33 PKK militants killed in clashes throughout month. Attacks include suicide car bomber 7 June targeting police vehicle in Vezneciler in central Istanbul, six police officers and six civilians killed, PKK offshoot Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK) 12 June claimed responsibility. PM Binali Yıldırım 21 June declared end to military operations in urban areas in SE, said govt would begin reconstruction campaign for damaged districts; operations in rural areas continuing at high rate. Constitutional court 3 June rejected violation appeals by pro-Kurdish Democratic People's Party (HDP) and some opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) members over 20 May constitutional amendment stripping 152 MPs of their immunities from prosecution; President Erdoğan 7 June signed bill lifting MPs immunity, allowing for prosecution of 799 cases. Authorities 21 June arrested one human rights activist and two journalists on charges of "terror propaganda" amid intensified crackdown against opposition and pro-Kurdish journalists and activists. Clampdown against IS networks continued: Niğde Criminal Court 16 June gave three IS militants aggravated life sentences for March 2014 Ulukışla attack in Niğde province, first known IS attack on Turkish soil. Media 16 June reported govt will install new air defence system at Elbeyli border crossing, Kilis province, to prevent IS rocket attacks at

border, in continuing efforts to seal off 70km border with Syria. Turkey and EU 2 June began technical talks on overcoming last obstacles to visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens; PM Yildırım 14 June said amendments on anti-terrorism law – one of five outstanding criteria for visa-liberalisation deal – were out of question, citing terrorist threat. European Commission next day published second progress report on implementation of EU-Turkey deal emphasising five criteria still need to be fulfilled in order for visa liberalisation to take place. Erdoğan and Russian President Putin spoke for first time 29 June since Nov 2015 downing of Russian warplane by Turkish fighter jet.

Central Asia

➔ **Kazakhstan** Calm following nationwide protests in late April-May against sale of land to foreigners broken with armed attack by alleged Islamic State supporters in Aktobe in NW 5 June and subsequent manhunt; three soldiers, five civilians, eighteen attackers killed. Authorities reported security forces 26 June arrested group of suspects, one of whom blew himself up. Interior ministry claimed land protests funded by coup-plotting officials from south with links to Russia – not by West as alleged earlier. Kazakhstan elected to UNSC for two years 28 June.

➔ **Kyrgyzstan** Dispute between govt and country's largest gold mine Kumtor and Canadian-based operator Centerra Gold escalated. Govt early June launched probe against mine manager, seeking to fine operator for environmental damage. Interior minister 13 June suggested Kumtor was financing newly-created People's Parliament movement to destabilise govt; followed arrest same day of Dastan Sarygulov, former head of state-owned company which holds shares in Centerra and now associated with People's Parliament movement. President Atambayev 14 June described Kumtor as "biggest scam" in country. Turkish authorities reported one of three suspected Islamic State-affiliated suicide bombers responsible for 28 June Istanbul airport bombing was Kyrgyz.

➔ **Tajikistan** At 9 June closed session of annual Human Rights Dialogue with EU, EU delegation expressed concern over fate of Tajikistan's political prisoners, persecution of their relatives, torture and pressure on civil society/media. FM Aslov 13 June said Tajikistan is one of only a few countries to successfully combat extremism. Trials of Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) members continued: deputy heads Saidumar Husaini and Muhammad Hayit sentenced to life imprisonment 2 June, guilty of conspiring to seize power.

➔ **Turkmenistan** President Berdymukhammedov met with visiting Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu 8 June in Ashgabat to discuss regional security risks and increase military cooperation. Independent Turkmen media 8 June reported 27 conscripts died on Turkmen-Afghan border early May in unclear circumstances.

➔ **Uzbekistan** FM Abdulaziz Kamilov and senior Chinese official met in Tashkent 7 June, discussed relations both bilaterally and through Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). At SCO summit 23-24 June in Tashkent, leaders discussed regional security and situation in Afghanistan. Turkish authorities reported one of three suspected Islamic State-affiliated suicide bombers responsible for 28 June Istanbul airport bombing was Uzbek.

Latin America and the Caribbean

↑ **Colombia** Govt and FARC 23 June signed agreement on “end of conflict” and referendum mechanism for population’s approval of final deal, constituting final step of peace process. Agreement spells out functioning of ceasefire and cessation of hostilities; process for arms abandonment; security guarantees and preparation of “reincorporation” for FARC guerrillas; 23 cantonment sites and eight smaller sites where FARC will assemble forces; and adoption of Constitutional Court’s ruling on mechanism for referendum on final peace deal. Outstanding issues include agreement on FARC “reincorporation” to civilian life and transformation into a political movement, and monitoring and implementation mechanisms for all commitments. Kidnappings by National Liberation Army (ELN) persisted amid continued disagreement with gov’t over issue, stalling opening of formal talks. Úsuga Clan, or Gulf Cartel, country’s largest criminal group, suffered series of setbacks with two commanders killed 7 and 11 June in military operations.

- Crisis Group Statement, [“Agreements on the End of the Conflict and the Referendum Bring Peace in Colombia Closer”](#), 23 June 2016.

➔ **Guatemala** International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and Public Ministry (MP) 2 June revealed new “Co-optation of the State” case, disclosing details of corruption scheme involving former ruling Patriot Party and several high-profile public figures, based on creation of shell firms to receive illegal money transfers from free-to-air television monopoly, construction firms and other enterprises. Prosecutors concluded Patriot Party gov’t was “mafia-like criminal structure” that co-opted power through electoral means. Attorney general 11 June brought charges of money laundering and bribery against five former ministers of Pérez Molina-Baldetti administration. National dialogue requested by heads of three branches of gov’t on constitutional reform to strengthen justice system continued throughout month.

➔ **Haiti** Political crisis continued largely unchanged as parliament 28 June again failed to vote on whether to extend interim President Privert’s term, which was to end 14 June according to 5 Feb political accord for transitional gov’t; opposition previous day called to replace him with Court of Cassation judge or PM Enex Jean-Charles. Privert 15 June said he would stay in office until parliamentary vote on issue. Following 30 May recommendation by Special Verification Commission (CIEVE) to cancel Oct 2015 first round of presidential election due to fraud and irregularities, Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) 6 June announced new electoral timetable: first and second rounds of presidential elections scheduled for 9 Oct 2016 and 8 Jan 2017. Timetable prompted violent protests by supporters of Tèt Kale, party of former President Martelly that won most votes in annulled Oct 2015 first round vote. However, Martelly’s presidential candidate, Jovenel Moïse, along with runner-up Jude Célestin and 24 other presidential candidates, 22 June signed up for the new polls. Disputed elections for 39 parliamentary seats also remain unresolved. Politically motivated violence increased, including 30 May killing of Tèt Kale militant; bullets fired 27 June at presidential candidate’s car, no injuries reported; and guns drawn 22 June inside National Assembly.

➔ **Mexico** Clashes between police and supporters of dissident teachers’ union 19 June left at least nine civilians dead and dozens of protestors and police injured in

southern state Oaxaca. Police were reportedly trying to clear street blockades set up by protestors opposed to educational reforms; how gunfire started and its source still under investigation. Major opposition parties National Action Party (PAN) and Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) 5 June defeated ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in seven of twelve state elections. PRI lost governor's seat to PAN-PRD alliance candidate in two historic Gulf Coast strongholds, Tamaulipas and Veracruz states, where corruption and insecurity are major issues. Senate 16 June approved two anti-corruption laws, one enabling National Anti-Corruption System, creating an independent prosecutor, strengthening federal auditors and establishing special courts for fraud cases; the other requiring public officials to reveal assets, prove they pay taxes and expose potential conflicts of interest. Officials 25 May began exhuming remains of more than 100 people found in mass grave in central Morelos state. Constitutional reforms passed ten years ago came into force 18 June obliging states to adopt new accusatory justice system, aimed at improving transparency, impartiality and efficiency.

➔ **Venezuela** Standoff between govt and opposition Democratic Unity (MUD) alliance continued amid worsening humanitarian and economic situation. National Electoral Council (CNE) 7 June invalidated almost one third of signatures presented by MUD in May in support of presidential recall referendum; some 1.3mn signatures remained, almost seven times number required to trigger next step of process. In further attempt to reduce number of valid signatures, CNE 8 June passed resolution allowing signatories to exclude themselves from list, amid reports of public employees being pressured to sign exclusion form. Ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) 13 June filed petition with Supreme Court (TSJ) asking for investigation into alleged fraud in signature collection process, in apparent bid to halt process altogether. Small number (300) of fingerprinting machines, many in remote locations, available for petition signatories to personally "validate" signatures 20-24 June meant most unable to do so. Tensions on the streets continued to rise with daily protests over food shortages and incidents of looting, including protests 13-14 June in eastern coastal city of Cumaná in which scores of businesses looted, three reportedly killed and over 400 arrested before order was restored. Organization of American States (OAS) Permanent Council 23 June held meeting to debate applicability of Inter-American Democratic Charter following late-May publication by OAS head Luis Almagro of 132-page report on deteriorating situation in Venezuela, though no decision was taken. However, Venezuela's attempt to prevent debate was defeated. Earlier OAS Permanent Council 7 June, and General Assembly 15 June, reiterated support for UNASUR dialogue process launched late-May, but stressed it must be inclusive and effective; and emphasised need for Venezuela to observe "fair and timely implementation of constitutional mechanisms", with fifteen countries joining even more forceful call to respond to Venezuela's humanitarian and political crisis.

- Phil Gunson, "[Venezuela's Toxic Combination: Too Many Guns, Too Little Food](#)", In Pursuit of Peace, 6 June 2016.

New Crisis Group Latin America Briefing N°35, *Venezuela: Edge of the Precipice*, 23 June 2016. Venezuela is in full-fledged crisis: food and medicine are scarce, violent crime is surging, and the government is blocking democratic ways forward. The international community and the OAS should press for political dialogue, the opening of legal paths to a presidential recall referendum in 2016, and permission for humanitarian aid to enter the country.

Middle East & North Africa

Eastern Mediterranean

➔ **Israel-Palestine** Following armed attack in Tel Aviv by two residents of West Bank city Yatta killing four people 9 June, Israel suspended for several days thousands of entry permits for West Bankers and imposed closure on Yatta, eased late June. Final communiqué of international summit convened in Paris early June to revive diplomatic process said status quo not sustainable, both sides needed to show commitment to two-state solution. France said it will convene additional summit by year-end; Palestinians signaled they intend to continue cooperation, however Israel critical of plan. In Gaza, Hamas prepared for new visit to Egypt to discuss Egyptian security in Sinai, Salafi-jihadi militants, members of Hamas's military wing abducted in Sinai, and Palestinian reconciliation; Fatah delegation traveled to Qatar mid-June to start new Palestinian reconciliation talks which ended in mutual accusations of bad faith. Netanyahu mid-June endorsed harsher anti-terrorism law and allocated funds to construct new wall around Gaza and along some sections of Israeli-Lebanese border. Authorities also approved new settler homes in E Jerusalem during month. Israeli military 21 June reported troops accidentally shot dead Palestinian bystander in W Bank village Seit Sira; 24 June reported soldiers killed Palestinian woman who rammed vehicle into parked car. Violent clashes broke 26 June at Jerusalem's Holy Esplanade when Israel allowed entry of non-Muslims during the last ten days of Ramadan, reversing common practice over last few years and triggering violent reactions from Palestinians at site. After two days of violent clashes between Israeli police and Palestinian protestors Israel reinstated ban on non-Muslim entry until end of Ramadan fast. Israeli girl stabbed to death by Palestinian attacker 30 June at her home in Jewish settlement in West Bank. Israel and Turkey late June normalised relations following six-year rift over Israel's killing of Turkish flotilla; deal provided for Israeli compensation and Turkish aid to Gaza.

➔ **Jordan** Suicide car bombing claimed by Islamic State (IS) 21 June at al-Rukban on Jordan-Syria border killed seven soldiers and injured thirteen others, prompted govt to close border with Syria and suspend humanitarian access to some 60,000 Syrian refugees (see Syria). Gunman 6 June killed five intelligence personnel near Al-Baqaa Palestinian refugee camp north of Amman.

➔ **Lebanon** Six people killed and dozens wounded in series of suicide bomb attacks in mainly Christian village Qaa close to Syrian border in north east 27 June; with Islamic State suspected of being behind attacks, senior military commander called for stricter security along border. Bomb targeted HQ of Blom Bank in central Beirut 12 June causing damage but no fatalities; many politicians and analysts suspected Hizbollah, which has previously verbally attacked central bank over its compliance with U.S.'s Dec 2015 Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act (HIFPA). Hizbollah 24 June said it would send more fighters to support Syrian regime in Aleppo province (see Syria); also said 36 Hizbollah fighters killed in Aleppo fighting earlier in month.

➔ **Syria** U.S.-Russia engagement aimed at restoring cessation of hostilities continued without tangible progress, as increasing attacks by both Syrian sides and Russia's military re-escalation, particularly around Aleppo, appeared to push diplomatic track toward collapse. Russian planes 16 June struck U.S.-trained rebel force committed exclusively to combatting Islamic State (IS) in camp along Jordanian and Iraqi border; same day, intense regime airstrikes continued in Aleppo, ignoring 48-hour "calm" Russia had declared in city. Russia 19 June reported agreement with U.S. to improve coordination between their military operations; U.S. previously refused such coordination, but reports from Washington on 30 June suggest its position may have shifted. Elsewhere, Kurdish YPG troops and their allies in YPG-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) 1 June launched campaign to capture city of Menbij, south of the last stretch of Syrian-Turkish border controlled by IS. Backed by U.S. air power and special forces, campaign managed to encircle city within days. Offensive represents significant shift by U.S., which previously urged YPG to hold back due to Turkish opposition; reversal apparently driven by IS gains against Turkey-backed rebels along border; U.S. gave Turkey assurances that YPG personnel will withdraw from city once it is captured. Hizbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah 25 June vowed to increase the organisation's forces in Aleppo, amid renewed pro-regime offensive in city. UN warned of increasing deaths in Damascus suburb Daraya unless regime unblocks aid convoys; concerns also grew for refugees on Jordanian border after Jordan blocked convoys in response to IS suicide bomb attack on military base 21 June killing seven soldiers (see Syria).

Gulf and Arabian Peninsula

➔ **Bahrain** Govt crackdown on dissent intensified. Authorities 13 June detained prominent rights campaigner Nabeel Rajab for disseminating false news. Court suspended activities of main Shiite opposition al-Wefaq party 14 June on charges of "terrorism, extremism, and violence" until verdict passed on its dissolution. Govt 20 June stripped Shiite cleric Ayatollah Isa Qassim of citizenship for promoting sectarianism, provoked protests; Iranian Revolutionary Guards commander and Iranian foreign ministry condemned move.

➔ **Iran** In war of words with Saudi Arabia, govt 1 June said Iranians would not make pilgrimage to Mecca due to unresolved logistical dispute with Riyadh. Defence minister 9 June reviewed recent military setbacks in Syria with Syrian and Russian counterparts and explored options to improve coordination. Revolutionary Guards mid-late June clashed in NW near Iraq border with Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) fighters seeking greater autonomy, both sides claim to have killed other's personnel. U.S. company Boeing 21 June said it had tentatively agreed to sell passenger aircraft to Iran Air subject to U.S. govt approval; deal could ease Iran's reengagement in global economy.

➔ **Iraq** Govt forces, Shiite militias and local forces backed by U.S.-led coalition continued operation to retake Falluja (about 50km W of Baghdad) from Islamic State (IS): govt forces advanced from southern outskirts toward city centre, 12 June entered southern neighbourhoods Nuaymiya and Shuhada, late June dislodged IS from eastern neighbourhoods Shurta and Askari. PM Abadi 26 June said govt had full control of

Falluja, set sights on IS-held Mosul. U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi air force airstrikes around Falluja 28-29 June on suspected IS fighters reportedly killed at least 250. UN 22 June said govt-allied Shiite forces reportedly abused Sunni Falluja residents. IS-claimed suicide bomb and car bomb 9 June killed 24 people in Baghdad. Suicide bomb 28 June at mosque in Abu Ghraib W of Baghdad killed at least fourteen people; no claim of responsibility. Federal court 28 June ruled unconstitutional 26 April parliament session in which MPs approved PM Abadi's appointment of five new ministers.

➔ **Saudi Arabia** UN 3 June reported Saudi-led coalition supporting Yemen govt forces caused 60% of child deaths and injuries in Yemen in 2015. After govt and other Arab countries allegedly threatened to cut funding for UN humanitarian work, UNSG Ban removed coalition from list of countries accused of violating children's rights in war; govt denied making threat.

➔ **Yemen** Fighting between Saudi-led coalition forces and Huthi rebels continued as peace talks made slow progress, UN 29 June said talks adjourned until 15 July. Battle for Taiz continued throughout month; over 250 fighters and civilians reportedly killed and injured 3-4 June. Fighting continued in north and intensified in southern Shabwa and Lahj governorates. UAE-backed forces increased arrests of suspected al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) militants in southern Hadramout governorate, 9 June raided HQ of Sunni Islamist Islah Party in Mukalla and arrested director for suspected ties with AQAP. Multiple suicide bombings and other attacks targeting security forces 27 June in Mukalla claimed by Islamic State (IS) killed at least 42 people. PM bin Dagher and several ministers returned from exile to Aden 6 June; several officials left days later amid persistent insecurity. UN-sponsored talks in Kuwait bore some fruit: Saudi-led coalition released 52 child detainees 5 June and Huthi-Saleh forces released 187 prisoners. Separately local tribes 18 June mediated release in Taiz of 76 pro-govt fighters in exchange for 118 Huthis.

North Africa

➔ **Algeria** Govt 1 June reported army killed eight Islamist militants in Setif region east of Algiers previous day, 18 June said army killed eighteen and arrested four militants in Medea region south of Algiers mid-June.

➔ **Egypt** State Council court 21 June overruled President Sisi's decision to hand over two Gulf of Aqaba islands to Saudi Arabia on grounds that sovereignty over islands cannot be amended; govt appealed. Violence continued in N Sinai. Roadside bomb killed policeman 19 June; gunmen stormed police homes in al-Arish area, killing four police 16-21 June. Suspected Islamist militants 11 June killed three civilians, allegedly for cooperating with army. Army 2 June said it had killed 22 suspected militants, arrested five; 15 June killed 35 suspected militants. Islamic State 30 June claimed responsibility for killing Christian priest in N Sinai. Court 18 June confirmed 7 May death sentence for six people, including three journalists tried in absentia, for leaking state secrets to Qatar, and former President Morsi's life sentence for membership of Muslim Brotherhood.

➔ **Libya** Armed groups, half allied to UN-backed Govt of National Accord (GNA) and including Misratan forces that do not recognise it, early June pushed Islamic State (IS) affiliates from towns east and west of Sirte and reached city's periphery. GNA-allied forces 21 June said they had taken control of parts of strategically important neighbourhood 700, including broadcasting and electricity company HQ, but IS end-June still held ground in central Sirte. Misratan militia loyal to GNA late June clashed with locals in Garabulli, east of Tripoli. Double blast in arms depot there 21 June killed at least 30, mostly civilians; GNA's Presidency Council (PC) same day pledged to investigate. Newly formed Benghazi Defence Forces (BDF) 18 June attacked LNA troops of anti-GNA General Haftar near Ajdabiya in east, claimed control of several LNA positions; at least three killed in fighting. LNA 20 and 21 June retaliated with airstrikes. Car bomb outside hospital in eastern Benghazi 24 June killed five, no group claimed responsibility. Pro-GNA Petroleum Facilities Guard militia 20 June said LNA strikes hit its training camp, promised "harsh response". Two major armed groups in Benghazi 4 June announced support for GNA. Four cabinet ministers from east 30 June resigned from GNA without making reason public. UNSC 13 June extended mandate of political mission (UNSMIL) until 15 Dec.

➔ **Morocco** Security services 2 June arrested six suspected Islamic State (IS)-affiliated militants, allegedly dismantling cell operating in Tétouan and Martil in north and Casablanca in NW; 8 June arrested at Oujda airport in north Italian suspected of ties to IS and of planning to carry out attacks in Morocco.

➔ **Tunisia** President Essebsi 2 June called for national unity govt to help advance economic reforms and calm social tensions, consulted political parties and civil society groups throughout month. Main labour union UGTT 3 June supported initiative but rejected his call to participate in new govt. PM Essid 13 June said he would not leave post, 17 June said he would leave post only after political parties and civil society agree on unity govt. Islamist An-Nahda party said that, as largest party in parliament, it should have more ministries in new govt. Current govt seen as likely to continue as An-Nahda's opponents, including in Essebsi's Nida Tounes party, oppose it having greater role. Clashes between two tribes over control of collective land in south 3 June killed two, wounded 26, including six security forces. Essebsi 20 June extended for one month state of emergency imposed after Nov 2015 bomb attack on bus in Tunis.

New Crisis Group Middle East and North Africa Briefing N°50, *Jihadist Violence in Tunisia: The Urgent Need for a National Strategy*, 22 June 2016. To counter a growing jihadist threat, Tunisia must finalise, publish and implement a viable strategy that prioritises prevention, tackles the roots of radicalisation and appropriately enhances security forces' capacities. Success will require better institutional coordination, the appointment of a new counter-terrorism commissioner on a ministerial level and public consultations to win broader national consensus.

➔ **Western Sahara** UN sources 17 June said Morocco, in initial step toward complying with UNSC request, proposed to let 25 civilian staff return to UN peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara (MINURSO), following Morocco's expulsion of staff in March in protest at UN's perceived bias.