



RegionalPULSE: AFRICA

GEOPOLITICAL & SECURITY ANALYSIS

WEEKLY REPORT



 Africa Region

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1. Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current geopolitical and security landscape across Africa, with a focus on key developments in Northern Africa, East Africa, West Africa, and the Horn of Africa. Major issues include ongoing conflicts in Libya and Sudan, political tensions in Tanzania, judicial actions against coup plotters in Sierra Leone, and diplomatic disputes between Ethiopia and Somalia.

1.2 Report Hot Links

- [Regional Overview](#)
- [Key Regional Updates](#)
- [Security & Safety Updates](#)
- [Geopolitical and Domestic Policy](#)
- [Economic & Socio-economic Indicators](#)
- [Regional Stability Factors](#)
- [Future Outlook & Forecasting](#)
- [Key Recommendations](#)

2. Report Introduction

2.1 Report Objectives

This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the security and geopolitical situation in Africa, focusing on key regions and their interconnected dynamics.

2.2. Report Details

Report Date: Aug 27, 2024

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Contributors: Geopolitics & Security Analysis Team

2.3 Distribution

This report is distributed to authorized recipients and channels only. For ongoing access to our comprehensive analysis and risk advisory support: [Click Here for Access](#)

2.4 Methodology

This report employs a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to data collection and analysis:

On-the-Ground Intelligence: Our Geopolitical & Security Analysis Team provides real-time, firsthand information and insights.

Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT): We continuously monitor and analyze publicly available information from credible news sources, government statements, and international organizations.

Controlled Source Information: We leverage confidential and verified sources to obtain critical information not available through public channels.

Geospatial Analysis: We utilize mapping technologies and satellite imagery to track and visualize conflict, environmental and security-related developments.

Data Aggregation: We compile data on safety and security incident reporting from multiple official sources.

Expert Analysis: Our Geopolitical and Security Analysis Team synthesizes all gathered information, providing context and identifying key trends and implications.

Cross-Verification: We employ rigorous fact-checking and cross-referencing to ensure the accuracy and reliability of our reporting.

Continuous Monitoring: Our methodology includes ongoing surveillance of key developments, allowing for real-time updates and rapid response to emerging developments.

This multi-layered approach enables us to provide a comprehensive, nuanced, and timely analysis of the complex and dynamic situations in assigned countries and regions.

3. Current Regional Overview

Africa continues to face significant security and geopolitical challenges across its regions. Northern Africa, particularly Libya, struggles with ongoing instability and armed conflict. East Africa grapples with political tensions and the threat of extremism. West Africa is dealing with the aftermath of coup attempts and political instability. The Horn of Africa faces diplomatic tensions and the ongoing conflict in Sudan. Al-Qaeda has made some strategic gains in Burkina Faso as it launched one of the worst attacks in recent months. Like other parts of the Sahel the jihadi franchise is fast gaining territories in the landlocked country.

Despite UN recognition, Tripoli's government struggles with "organized" anarchy as rival armed groups control security. The country remains divided, with Eastern Libya under General Khalifa Haftar's control. While both rival governments nominally support unification, progress is minimal. The situation is further complicated by support from various regional and international actors in Africa, West Asia, and Europe, making Libya's path to stability and security increasingly complex and uncertain. The government of Tanzania banned a rally, accusing the opposition of using it as a pretext for violent demonstrations, amidst recent youth-led protests in Tanzania and neighboring Kenya, as well as earlier demonstrations against laws deemed harmful to multiparty democracy. A military court in Sierra Leone sentenced 24 soldiers to lengthy prison terms (50-120 years) for their involvement in a 2022 coup attempt. This follows the earlier sentencing of 11 civilians and police officers. Kenya-led stabilization force in Haiti making some early gains on the ground with deep seated differences still persisting among the various factions and actors.

The Ethiopia-Somalia dispute over a Somaliland port lease could escalate after "failed" talks in Ankara. Ethiopia seeks coastal access for economic and security reasons, while Somalia views it as a breach of sovereignty. Regional players are involved: Kenya offers mediation, Egypt pledges military support to Somalia, and Turkey has become a mediator. The conflict is complicated by Ethiopia-Egypt tensions over Nile waters and Sudan's instability. Despite earlier diplomatic progress, recent setbacks have raised concerns about potential regional instability in the Horn of Africa if the dispute isn't resolved peacefully. The Sudanese government has withdrawn from the planned Geneva peace summit, setting conditions for its participation that include focusing on the Jeddah Agreement implementation, rejecting new facilitators, and demanding broader government representation. This decision challenges the US-led effort to achieve a nationwide ceasefire.

4. Key Regional Developments

- **Libya:** Recent clashes in Tripoli resulted in at least 9 deaths, highlighting ongoing security challenges.
- **Tanzania:** Authorities arrested opposition figures and banned a planned rally, raising concerns about political freedoms.
- **Sierra Leone:** A military court sentenced 24 soldiers to long prison terms for their involvement in a 2022 coup attempt.
- **Ethiopia-Somalia:** Talks over a port lease in Somaliland ended without agreement, escalating tensions between the two countries.
- **Sudan:** The government has withdrawn from planned Geneva peace talks, complicating efforts to achieve a nationwide ceasefire.
- **Burkina Faso:** al-Qaeda affiliates are making gains after a series of deadly attacks against Burkinabe forces in Burkina Faso.
- **Kenya:** Kenya-led stabilization force in Haiti making strides, raising questions about the next steps to keep the situation under control.

5. Security & Safety Updates

- **Libya:** The country remains divided between rival governments, with armed groups controlling security in Tripoli despite UN recognition of the western government.
- **Tanzania:** There are concerns about potential violent demonstrations and travel alerts have been issued due to suspected planned attacks.
- **Horn of Africa:** The Ethiopia-Somalia dispute over the Somaliland port lease has raised concerns about potential regional instability.
- **Sudan:** The ongoing conflict between the Rapid Support Force (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) continues to worsen the humanitarian crisis.

6. Geopolitical & Domestic Policy Updates

- **Burkina Faso:** Violence extremism continues to be a threat in Burkina Faso as Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) intensifies attacks in the Sahel region. Last 24 August 2024, close to 200 people including women and children were killed and more than 140 people were injured in an attack in [Barsalogho](#) raising concerns about the ability of the military Junta to control the situation. Having been responsible for the numerous attacks in the Sahel, the recent capture of the strategic town of Barsalogho, (the last barrier between the terrorists and Ouagadougou) further emboldens extremists and weakens the security of the capital. Taking control of between 50 to 60 percent of territory from the government, JNIM has become stronger as it exploits marginalized

communities like the Fulbe by integrating itself into the local communities. It has also recruited many youths from these communities.

The group has in the past and recent years expanded its operations to neighboring Togo, Benin Cote d'Ivoire by attacking government infrastructure, kidnapping for ransom and taxing local populations to fund its activities.

- **Libya:** The country's instability continues to have regional implications, affecting migration routes to Europe and providing safe havens for extremist organizations. On Friday August 9, clashes between two armed factions in Libya resulted in at least 9 deaths. The clashes happened in Tajoura, Tripoli. The shooting that [lasted hours](#), according to residents in the coastal suburb of Libya's capital, was symptomatic of similar clashes that have bedeviled the country since the collapse of the Gaddafi regime over a decade ago. While Tripoli is under the authority of the United Nation recognized government in western Libya, rival armed groups have been in charge of its security. This has led to some level of "organized" anarchy in the city and surrounding settlements that makes maintaining law and order arduous. With Eastern Libya under the country of General Khalifa Haftar, who has threatened in the past to capture Tripoli, the stability and security of the country remains tenuous. While two rival governments of the country in principle hold that Libya must be united under a single government, little progress has been made towards the realization of this. More complex, the rival governments have gained the support of powerful regional and international actors in Africa, West Asia and Europe.
- **Tanzania:** The country is preparing for its first general elections since the death of former president John Magufuli, scheduled for late next year. Key opposition figures in Tanzania were arrested by security forces on the eve of a [planned rally](#). The operation which also involved the rounding up of hundreds of youths has been condemned by right groups in the country and beyond. The opposition maintains that the rally was intended to mark the International Youth Day. A day earlier, authorities had declared a ban on the rally. As part of the move, officials accused the opposition party for using the rally as a pretext for violent demonstrations. In recent weeks, the country has experienced protests organized by youth. This followed mass protests in neighboring Kenya. Before these protests, earlier protests in January were caused by laws the opposition found to be [inimical](#) to multiparty democracy. The country is scheduled to hold general elections late next year—the first after the death of former president John Magufuli.
- **Sierra Leone:** A military court sentenced 24 soldiers to long prison terms for their involvement in a 2022 coup attempt. A military court in Sierra Leone has handed down long sentences to 24 soldiers in connection with an attempted coup last year. Receiving sentences ranging from 50 to 120 years. Earlier in July, 11 civilians and police were also jailed for their roles in the coup that was [staged against](#) the government of Julius Maada Bio. The event happened after disputed elections that led to protests and the death of dozens. Opposition members including a former president were accused of supporting the coup. The reaction of the government to the incident led to heightened insecurity and a deepened political polarization in one of the poorest countries in the world. The long

sentences and the number of people sentenced could be part of the government goal of deterring future insurrections.

- **Ethiopia-Somalia:** The dispute has drawn in regional actors, with Kenya offering mediation and Egypt pledging military support to Somalia. On Tuesday 13 August, talks between Ethiopia and Somalia over a port lease in Somaliland ended without an agreement in Ankara. Considered by experts as a major issue that had the potential of plunging the region in chaos, [the deal](#) between landlocked Ethiopia and Somaliland attracted the displeasure of Mogadishu. This happened after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia insisted that Ethiopia's access to the coast is integral to its security and economic development. Even though the prime minister's position was initially thought to have been targeted at Eritrea—because of past events—the deal with Somaliland brought Somalia into the equation. Despite a long de facto autonomy exercised by the territory, it is formally recognized as part of Somalia. Mogadishu, therefore, argues that any deal between the territory and Ethiopia would constitute a [breach](#) of its sovereignty and international law. The country vowed to protect its territorial integrity if that would require the use of force.
- The dispute has drawn regional and international attention over the months with many actors urging restraint and dialogue. Kenya has urged dialogue and offered to mediate between the two sides. President William Ruto has engaged both sides on different occasions to find common ground on the matter. On the other hand, Egypt openly declared its support for Somalia and vowed to grant Mogadishu military support in protecting its sovereignty against Ethiopia. Already in a protracted dispute over the Nile waters, Egypt and Ethiopia were once again seen to have another disagreement on the Somaliland issue. With both countries possessing formidable armed forces, Egypt's position on the issue raised concerns among regional actors. With Sudan already in turmoil in the Horn of Africa, another regional clash involving more powerful states could prove disastrous.
- Also, at the initial stage of the dispute was Turkey. Ankara had signed an agreement with Somalia that granted it permission to militarily protect its coast—the longest in mainland Africa. With the Somali-Turkey pact, there was the potential of a clash between Ethiopia and Turkey. Months later, Ankara rather leveraged its diplomatic and security cooperation with both countries to mediate talks between the two Horn of Africa countries. It managed to secure some agreement between the two sides to start talks that could lead to some lasting peace. Over a month ago, they both signed a joint statement that was described as [“candid, cordial and forward-looking”](#). This signaled de-escalation of tensions and a consensus that diplomacy was a better option in the resolution of the dispute. Current news that the second round of talks made little or [no headway](#) is, therefore, a set back.
- **Sudan:** The government's rejection of peace talks in Geneva threatens to prolong the conflict and worsen the humanitarian situation. After [preliminary discussions](#) with US officials about the scheduled talks in Geneva, the Sudanese government has announced that it will not participate in the peace summit. The government led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan insisted that discussions in Geneva must focus on the implementation of the Jeddah Agreement which was signed in May. Another position of the government

was that it would not accept new facilitators and observers. It also argued that the military should not be the only representative of the Sudanese government during the talks. With the objective of the United States, the main sponsor of the talks being a [nationwide ceasefire](#), the demands of the Sudanese government complicate the situation. The minister who represented the government in the pre-talk consultations in Jeddah mentioned that even though it was not successful, the final decision will be made in Sudan. Nonetheless, the authorities in Port Sudan had not shown significant interest when the idea of the Geneva talks emerged. Later, it put forward the [conditions](#) that would bring it to the table. The Dagalo-led Rapid Support Force (RSF) has [agreed](#) to attend the talks.

- Kenya-led security forces in Haiti have been making headlines for their efforts to curb the long-standing gang violence that has gripped the country. The multinational security support mission, led by Kenya, has helped Haitian police regain control of major infrastructure, including the airport, and major roads which had previously been under the control of gangs. The mission involves around 400 out of the 1000 personnel from the Kenyan elite unit, as part of a larger international effort involving 2,500 personnel from countries including Bangladesh, Benin, Chad, the Bahamas, and Barbados. The United States is providing logistical and financial support to the mission. The request for international support came from Haiti's former Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, who resigned due to the chaos caused by an unprecedented uprising by gangs in 2022. This paved the way for Gary Conille to take over as Prime Minister in June 2024.

7. Economic and Socio-economic Indicators

- **Tanzania:** The country received around a billion dollars of foreign direct investment (FDI) last year, but youth unemployment remains a major concern. With the largest population in the East African Community (EAC), which is also predominantly youthful, Tanzania requires some internal stability to keep attracting investment and maintain economic growth. With a robust agriculture, tourism and mining sectors combined with a significant, positive outlook in the continent. This is, however, undercut by youth unemployment, extremism and potential political friction.
- **Sierra Leone:** The country remains one of the poorest in the world, with significant mineral resources that require stability to be effectively utilized. Despite its current status as one of the poorest states in the world, Sierra Leone has an important mining sector that holds potential for its development. Diamonds, gold, bauxite, [rutile](#) and iron deposits are found in significant quantities. The sine qua non for the utilization of the resources is stability. Youth unemployment remains a major security issue.
- **Sudan:** The ongoing conflict has created one of the largest humanitarian crises in Africa, with over 20 million people in need of aid. The rejection of the talks by the government threatens its prospects and effectively renders it inconsequential. The absence of the SAF (one of the two main factions) means that achieving a nationwide ceasefire is impossible. For aid agencies and other humanitarian organizations, the position of the government could mean that the humanitarian crisis will get worse. This is particularly

critical for many millions who face imminent famine as reported by the United Nations. The international organization has stated that the country is at a [“breaking point”](#).

8. Regional Stability Factors

Degrading Factors:

- Ongoing conflicts in Libya and Sudan
- Political tensions and potential for unrest in Tanzania
- Diplomatic disputes between Ethiopia and Somalia
- Threat of extremism in East Africa and the Sahel region

Stabilizing Factors:

- Regional and international mediation efforts in various conflicts
- Judicial actions against coup plotters in West Africa
- Economic potential in countries like Tanzania and Sierra Leone, if stability trends can be maintained effectively.

9. Future Outlook and Predictions

- The 2024 Global Terrorism Index ranked Burkina Faso as the world's most terrorism-affected country, with close to 2000 people killed in terrorist attacks in 2023 and over 2 million people displaced. Despite inviting Russia's African corps, recruiting thousands of paramilitary fighters and severing ties with France forces who have been assisting in combat terrorism for decades, the Junta administration is still struggling to stabilize the country. The security situation has, however, deteriorated; and reports of unsuccessful counter-coups in the country are emerging. The failure of the military Junta to stabilize and or counter terror groups in Burkina Faso is worsening the humanitarian situation of the country, thus there is a need for a new strategy and approach to restore security and protect lives and properties. It appears recent deadly attacks by extremists are unlikely to stop in the short and medium terms. Also, as violence escalates and more territories fall under the control of armed groups the threats against littoral states get heightened. There is a need for regional security collaboration to build robust defenses and consistent counterterrorism strategy that effectively tackle the menace. With an unprecedented schism between junta-led states and other member states of the bloc, the possibility of an effective military cooperation is significantly undermined.
- The situation in Libya is likely to remain unstable in the short to medium term, continuing to affect regional security. This has far reaching implications for the North African region and the Sahel. The effect of the current crisis is therefore consequential for states like

Mlai, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Chad and others. This requires multi-regional efforts to mitigate. Most importantly, however, peace in Libya needs to be prioritized.

- Tanzania's upcoming elections could be a flashpoint for political tensions and potential unrest. With the median age in the country at 17.4 years, the situation in Tanzania is a real concern. Linked to this is the not-so-open political system that makes government-opposition relations significantly adversarial and dangerous. With the impending elections, how this is managed by the different stakeholders could prove crucial for the long-term stability and security of the country. There is likely to be more frictions between
- The Ethiopia-Somalia dispute over Somaliland could escalate if diplomatic efforts fail, potentially drawing in other regional actors. These tensions have global significance and dimensions. The region and waters are part of the sensitive Red Sea trade route which is vital in global trade. Somaliland lies close to Bel el Mandeb—the strait that connects the Gulf of Aden with the Red Sea. Already facing threats from Houthi rebels who have attacked and sunk ships over the past several months, any further confrontations in the corridor could become consequential to international trade and commerce. The region already has naval bases for global powers who prioritize its vitality to trade. The US, China, France and Italy maintain naval presence in neighboring Djibouti. A major conflict could therefore lead to unintended escalations. All the powers present have urged restraints and urged dialogue.
- Sudan's humanitarian crisis is likely to worsen without significant progress in peace negotiations. The absence of the SAF (one of the two main factions) means that achieving a nationwide ceasefire is impossible. For aid agencies and other humanitarian organizations, the position of the government could mean that the humanitarian crisis will get worse. The rejection of the talks by the government threatens its prospects and effectively renders it inconsequential.
- Despite the current gains made by the Kenya-led stabilization force, there is still uncertainty surrounding the ability of the transitional government and international partners to navigate the volatile political landscape in Haiti. The United Nations estimates that nearly 600,000 people have been displaced due to the escalating conflict, with gangs committing widespread abuses, including murder, rape, looting, and kidnappings. These conditions have compounded the already dire situation in the country, creating immense challenges for the Kenyan-led force. As the mission continues, the focus will likely need to shift toward long-term solutions that address the root causes of Haiti's instability. This includes strengthening the capacity of Haitian institutions, improving governance, and addressing the socio-economic conditions that allow gangs to thrive. Haiti's transitional governments have previously succeeded in restoring democracy and organizing elections, as seen with Ertha Pascal-Trouillot in 1990-91 and Jocelerme Privert in 2016. However, the current situation requires more than just technical governance. Given past precedents, it is quite likely that the next few months will see disagreements among transitional council members, between the transitional council and the prime minister), or conflicts with various sectors of Haitian society.

10. Key Recommendations

1. Multinational organizations operating in Libya should maintain robust security measures and continuously monitor the evolving situation.
2. Companies with interests in Tanzania should closely monitor political developments leading up to the 2025 elections and prepare contingency plans.
3. Organizations involved in the Horn of Africa should diversify their regional partnerships to mitigate risks associated with potential conflicts.
4. Humanitarian organizations should prepare for potentially worsening conditions in Sudan and advocate for increased international support.
5. Businesses interested in Africa's mineral resources, particularly in countries like Sierra Leone, should engage in careful risk assessment and prioritize contributions to local stability.
6. All organizations should invest in comprehensive regional analysis capabilities to stay ahead of rapidly evolving geopolitical dynamics across Africa.
7. Long term solutions and confidence building are needed for stability in Haiti.
8. Burkina Faso needs regional security cooperation and a robust counterterrorism strategy to reverse recent trends.

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