



## Daily

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## MAX - AFRICA Region Daily Summary - May 18, 2021

*The following report reviews current events in the AFRICA region and their possible effect on business continuity and security.*

### Highlights of the Day

- **Chad:** Wakit Tama citizens' movement calls for renewed protests in N'Djamena on May 19 to denounce CMT rule; avoid nonessential movement
- **DRC:** Government launches public campaign for public support for FARDC, PNC, reported on May 17; tensions likely to persist
- **South Sudan:** 12 killed, seven injured by suspected Misseriya herders in Dungoup, Abyei territory on May 16; retaliatory attacks likely
- **Uganda:** 11 suspected perpetrators of petrol bomb attacks in Kampala on May 11 arrested, as per reports on May 17; further investigation likely

### Actionable Items

#### **Chad: Wakit Tama citizens' movement calls for renewed protests in N'Djamena on May 19 to denounce CMT rule; avoid nonessential movement**

Sources from May 11 citing the leader of the Coordination of Citizen Actions Wakit Tama indicate that the group called for renewed protests along N'Djamena's main roads to denounce the "illegal and illegitimate" Transitional Military Council (TMC). As of writing, organizers have yet to release details regarding the exact time and locations of the protests. The TMC announced that protests will be authorized under certain conditions, but that authorization must be obtained at least five days before the action. The Wakit Tama movement has reportedly refused to apply for authorization.

Given precedence, the upcoming protests are liable to witness small turnouts across multiple locations, with participation likely to number in the low-to-mid dozens. Furthermore, given the demonstrations have not been authorized and the TMC's heightened threat perception, security will likely be bolstered throughout N'Djamena with forces liable to use forcible measures including teargas to disperse any mobilization. This

is reinforced by the crackdown at the Wakit Tama demonstrations in N'Djamena on May 8, where 20 were injured. Such a response could trigger further unrest and skirmishes between protesters and police.

*Those operating or residing in N'Djamena on May 19 are advised to avoid nonessential movement throughout the city given the slated Wakit Tama protests and their associated potential for unrest and police crackdowns.*

### **South Africa: Pro-Palestine protest slated to be held at Israeli Embassy in Pretoria on May 19; maintain vigilance**

According to a notice released on social media, the South African Students' Congress (SASCO) is slated to hold a protest outside the Embassy of Israel in Pretoria at 12:00 (local time) on May 19. The protesters are required to wear facemasks and are obliged to adhere to COVID-19 rules and regulations as imposed by the government.

Consistent with previous demonstrations held to protest against the perceived actions of Israeli governments as witnessed on May 15, the protest is likely to witness participants in the mid to high dozens. There is likely to be bolstered security around the Israeli Embassy, as per standard protocol. Additionally, traffic disruptions can be expected in the vicinity of the embassy premises for the duration of the protest event.

*Those operating or residing in Pretoria on May 19 are advised to maintain vigilance in the vicinity of the Israeli Embassy due to the slated protest, and the latent potential for unrest.*

## **Notable Events**

### **DRC: FARDC orders clearing operations of Kokolo camp in Kinshasa on May 16; limited impact on criminality**

Sources indicate that high-ranking officials within the Armed Forces of DRC (FARDC) ordered for the clearing of the camp over concerns that the area has become a hub of criminal activity. During the operation, soldiers recovered 17 individual weapons, along with 56 machetes. 36 families of civilians living illegally within the military camp were also evicted.

The fact that the military hierarchy ordered the clearing operation within the still-functioning military camp is indicative of the links between security forces and criminals in the city. That said, the relatively low levels and type of weapons recovered is suggestive of the crime being largely petty in nature. The evictions of civilians is also significant, and is likely suggestive of corrupt soldiers allowing civilians to build illegal tenements within the camp, thereby also compromising operational integrity of the forces stations therein. While the clearing operation is likely to bring down crime rates in the short term, the entrenched corruption within the FARDC and land holdings allegedly belonging to influential politicians means that operations will have a limited effect on crime overall.

### **DRC: Government launches public campaign for public support for FARDC, PNC, reported on May 17; tensions likely to persist**

Reports citing PM Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde indicate that he launched the 'bendele ekweya te' campaign, or 'may the flag not be at half mast' campaign on May 15 in an effort to improve support for the Armed Forces of DRC (FARDC) and the Congolese National Police's (PNC) operations in eastern DRC. The PM reportedly reaffirmed the government's preparedness to commit to an amnesty for rebels who lay down their arms.

This incident denotes efforts to defuse tensions between security forces and civilians due to the heightened security presence in DRC's eastern states as part of the 'state of siege'. With the imposition of military rule liable to fuel civilian mistrust of security forces, as highlighted by protests that took place in Goma, North-Kivu province, on May 6, the campaign is likely an attempt to promote goodwill on the national level towards the security forces in support of the 'state of siege'. In doing so, it is likely that President Felix Tshisekedi intends to mitigate criticism against his imposition of military rule in eastern DRC.

### **Ghana: Retired DCOP accuses ruling-NPP affiliated vigilante group of assault in Ashanti, Ashanti Region on May 18; revenge assault**

Reports citing the retired Deputy Commission of Police (DCOP) claim that the ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP)-affiliated Delta Force vigilante group entered the premises of the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council. The group claimed to be national security operatives and handcuffed and assaulted the DCOP forcing him to leave the office.

This incident comes after the Delta Forces group was disbanded after the passing of a Vigilantes Offences Act prior to the 2020 elections and demonstrates the inability of such laws to ensure the on-ground disbandment of these groups. Moreover, the group may have been emboldened to enter the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council's office given that its members received a relatively minor punishment of fines after a similar attempt to remove a prior DCOP in 2017. Additionally, the DCOP was also known to prevent Delta Force members from engaging in illegal gold mining. The vigilantes may have targeted the DCOP to retaliate against these actions. Given the scale of the security breach, security forces will try to quickly locate and arrest the perpetrators over the coming weeks.

### **Kenya: Wajir County Governor Mohamud Abdi impeached by Senate on May 17; notable political development**

Reports indicate that 25 senators voted in the favor of the impeachment motion against two negative votes, and four abstentions after an 11-member committee tabled its report recommending impeachment for violating the Constitution and misuse of political office.

This comes after 37 out of 45 members of the county assembly (MCAs) from Wajir County voted in favor of Abdi's impeachment on April 27. The recent development is notable, given that Abdi becomes the third governor to be impeached after Ferdinand Watitu of Kiambu County and Mike Sonko of Nairobi County were impeached over similar charges by the Senate last year. This decision also illustrates the limitations of legal procedures on the impeachment process of the Governor, as it requires only a simple majority based on the discretion of the MCAs and gives an advantage to the opposing MCAs. Nevertheless, Abdi's impeachment is likely to create a vacuum amid a deteriorating security landscape, given that Wajir County borders Somalia. Moving forward, the decision by the Senate is also likely to pave the way for judicial inquiries against Abdi as witnessed in Sonko's case.

### **Mauritania: Algerian army kills Mauritanian gold miner crossing Algeria-Mauritania border on May 16; sporadic incidents to recur**

Reports citing an official statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicate that a convoy of six vehicles carrying gold miners crossed the Algeria-Mauritania border. The Algerian military fired warning shots at the convoy which also led to the injury of two miners. The statement also called on Mauritaniens to remain within the limits of national territory.

While the Algerian authorities have been known to arrest Mauritanian miners crossing the border, the army's decision to fire live ammunition demonstrates their heightened state of alert regarding illegal incursions, given that the border region is known as a transit point for gold and drug smuggling. Additionally, this incident comes after Algeria and Mauritania enhanced a security cooperation mechanism to fight illegal migration and smuggling in early 2021. This could explain Nouakchott's decision to warn its own civilians from remaining on national territory rather than potentially challenging the Algerian army's actions. Given the entrenched nature of informal gold mining and smuggling in the area, similar sporadic incidents are likely to recur along Mauritania's borders with Algeria and Mali.

### **South Sudan: 12 killed, seven injured by suspected Misseriya herders in Dungoup, Abyei territory on May 16; retaliatory attacks likely**

Reports indicate that those killed and injured during the attack were local police officers stationed in Dungoup, located about 12 km northeast of Abyei town in Abyei territory. Sources claim that the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) members stationed in the area were aware of the Misseriya movements, but allegedly did not respond until two hours after the incident. Local officials have called on UNISFA to investigate the attack and detain the perpetrators.

This incident follows a similar attack on May 14, likely perpetrated by Sudanese Misseriya herders, in which two ethnic Dinka individuals were killed in an area west of Abyei town. Such attacks occur periodically in the Abyei territory as administration of the area remains contested by Sudanese and South Sudanese authorities, and joint security arrangements

have yet to be fully established and implemented. While the UNISFA mandate has been extended for an additional year, as witnessed during this latest attack, the mission is not always effective in thwarting Misseriya-Dinka violence. As ethnic Dinkas were targeted in the latest attack, retaliatory attacks may follow.

### **South Sudan: ‘Gelweng’ elements injured five police officers in Rumbek East County, Lakes State on May 17; security apparatus’s weakness**

Sources citing the Lakes State police spokesperson indicate that ‘Gelweng’ armed youths seized four weapons from police officers who were deployed after receiving intelligence of an alleged planned attack on Malang-Agok community.

‘Gelweng’, literally translated as ‘cattle protectors’ in Dinka, refers to local vigilante groups established throughout Warrap and Lakes States, and have often engaged with the police. In this context, this incident underscores the complexity of South Sudan’s security apparatus with vigilantes’ often little acknowledgment of security forces’ authority throughout the country’s outlying areas. The fact that the youths reportedly seized the policemen’s weapons is indicative of the latter’s potentially limited training, which is indicative of a broader relative weakness of the security apparatus. Given that the police fled the area following this incident suggests that the alleged planned attack on the Malang-Agok community may take place with no adequate security presence to prevent it. In this context, the authorities’ limited efforts to address the security vacuum are not expected to significantly alleviate the prevalent insecurity with intercommunal clashes, motivated by resource competition or ethnic animosity, expected to recur.

### **Sudan: France pledges 1.5 billion USD bridging loan to help Sudan clear arrears to IMF, reported on May 17; a notable development**

Reports citing French President Emmanuel Macron indicate that he announced in a press conference held in Paris, France, his intention to support Sudan’s democratic transition by providing financial relief for Sudan’s 60 billion USD foreign debt. Further reports from May 17 indicate that Sudanese PM Abdallah Hamdok reportedly praised France’s role in supporting the democratic transition. Further sources indicate that the World Bank pledged two billion USD to support the energy sector and COVID-19 response, while Norway reportedly wrote off all bilateral debts.

The pledges of economic support from international partners illustrates increased confidence in Sudan’s democratic transition, and highlights the perceived increase in Sudan’s credibility following its removal from the US Sponsors of State Terrorism List. In turn, the provision of economic relief from the international community carries the potential to support Sudan’s transition with economic development likely to encourage ongoing cooperation from relevant stakeholders. Nonetheless, potential misappropriation of funds remains a challenge to Sudan’s economic improvement. As such, international and domestic stakeholders are likely to survey Sudan’s transition with caution in the coming months.

## **Uganda: 11 suspected perpetrators of petrol bomb attacks in Kampala on May 11 arrested, as per reports on May 17; further investigation likely**

Reports citing the Police spokesperson indicate that the individuals were arrested on charges of terrorism on President Yoweri Museveni's inauguration day on May 12, after two separate small scale attacks in Kampala on May 11. Reports further indicate that the assailants attempted to conduct an attack in Kasubi Royal Tombs on May 15.

The fact that government premises were targeted in the May 11 attacks likely triggered the authorities' intent to promptly react given the incident's timing, and deter further criminal elements from conducting additional attacks. The government claim of these assailants being linked to disgruntled opposition groups is plausible, given that Uganda is relatively free of militant violence. In this context, the choice of the Kasubi Tombs as a target is notable, given that the tombs hold a symbolic significance to the Buganda Kingdom, and would attract media attention. Regardless, these arrests are likely to further strengthen the security forces' intelligence gathering efforts in order to mitigate opposition forces within the capital. Furthermore, investigations will likely lead to more arrests of opposition forces, further entrenching political tension in Kampala.

## **Upcoming Notable Dates**

### **May 20, 2021**

- **Cameroon:** National Day

### **May 24, 2021**

- **Africa:** Whit Monday
- **Eritrea:** Independence Day

### **May 28, 2021**

- **Ethiopia:** Derg Downfall Day

### **May 30, 2021**

- **Nigeria:** Biafra Day