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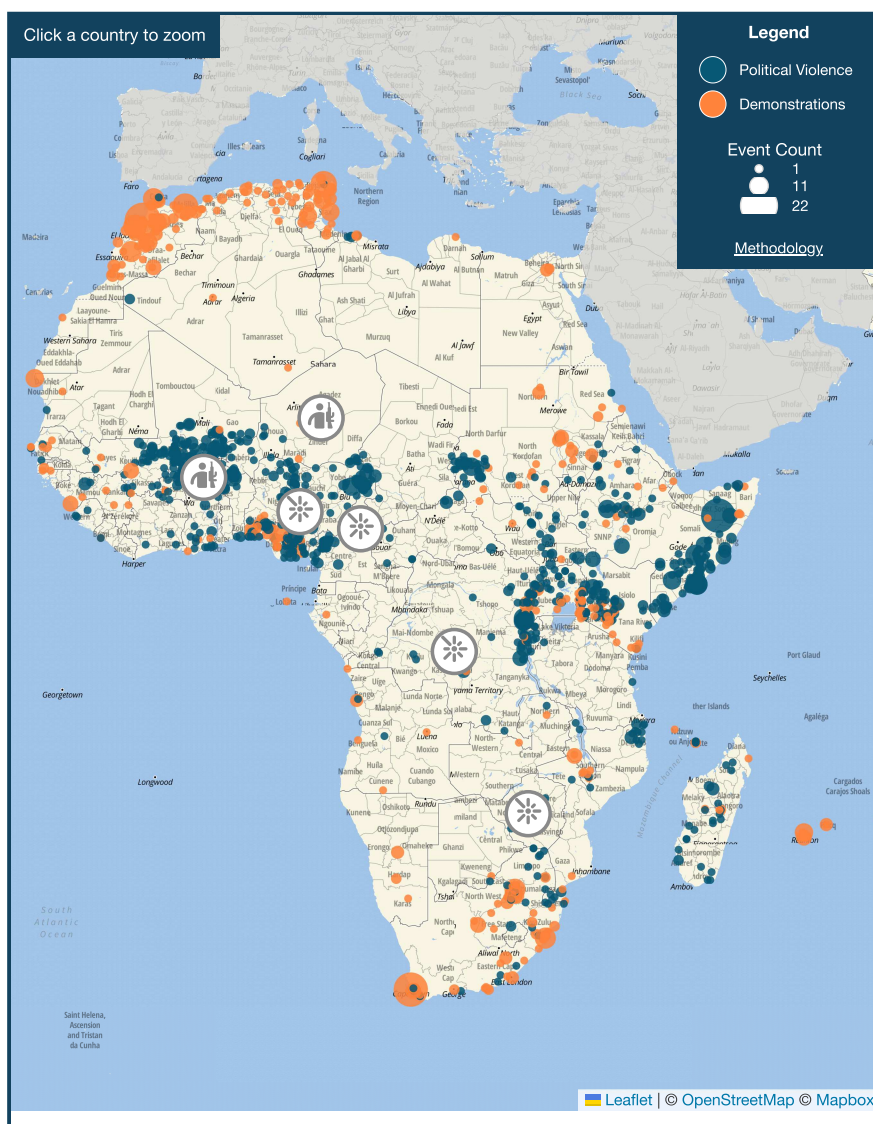
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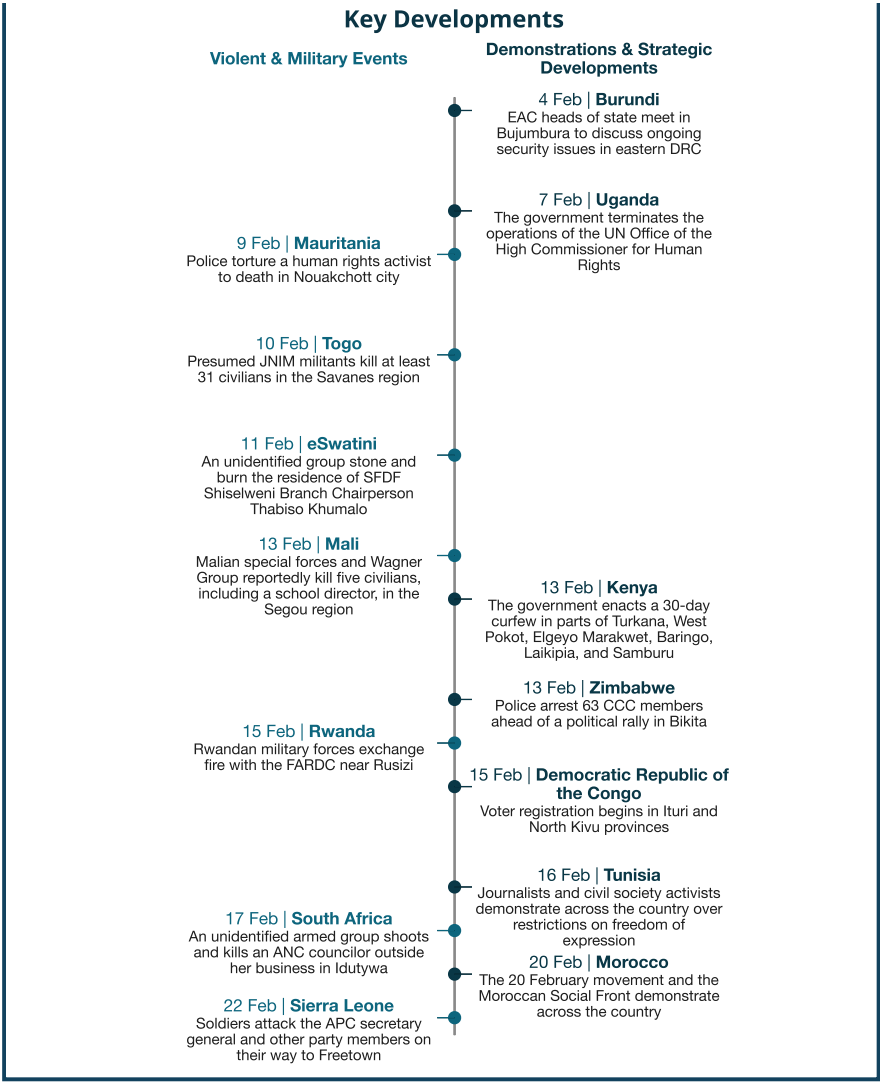
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ENGLISH

Nigeria: Violence involving political parties increases as Bola Tinubu is declared winner of the presidential election

The Nigerian elections were held on 25 February, with Bola Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) declared the winner. The electoral campaign was marred by **widespread violence**, with candidates and polling stations targeted by armed groups. Days before the election, gunmen killed the Labour Party senatorial candidate for Enugu East district, Oyibo Chukwu, as he returned from a campaign event in his home state. Attacks against members of all parties rose in the run-up to the election. In February, violence involving political parties was especially highest in the southern states, especially in Osun, Ebonyi and Rivers states, where the competition between the APC and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) has occasionally turned violent. In the battleground Rivers state, the homes and businesses of politicians and candidates, especially those affiliated with the presidential candidate of the PDP, were reportedly targeted by explosive attacks.¹ In the north, a deadly string of violence was recorded in Kano state, leading to 14 reported fatalities involving fighting between party supporters. In the South East, the Ebubeagu – a regional security network established by the southeastern governors – was reportedly linked to a new attack against the All Progressives Grand Alliance’s gubernatorial candidate in Ebonyi state.² Earlier in February, a federal court declared Ebubeagu’s activities illegal and ordered its dissolution.

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Cameroon, DRC, and Zimbabwe: Violence disrupts electoral processes

In Cameroon, the DRC, and Zimbabwe, political parties and armed groups engaged in violence to discredit the electoral process, suppress or deter rival candidates from running, and influence the electoral process. In the Anglophone region of Cameroon, Ambazonian separatists attempted to disrupt the upcoming senate elections scheduled for 12 March, with the Ambazonia Defense Forces voicing intentions to clash with military forces and attack civilians violating the ban on elections in the Anglophone region.³ In the Nord-Ouest region, Ambazonian separatists seized Wainachi Nentoh Honourine, a member of parliament for Boyo division and member of the Social Democratic Front opposition party, near Bambui while returning from her constituency.⁴ Ambazonian violence also spilled outside the Anglophone part of Cameroon into the Ouest region; in Bali-Nyonga, separatists reportedly raped and killed an 18-year-old girl whom they accused of collaborating with the military. These attacks come amid a growth in violence in the Anglophone region in recent months.

In the DRC, multiple acts of election-related violence were reported as voter registration for the 20 December elections began in Nord-Kivu and Ituri provinces on 15 February.⁵ Initially scheduled to start countrywide in December 2022, the registration process was delayed in the eastern provinces due to insecurity and was prolonged in other areas due to the low turnout of expected voters.⁶ Throughout the month, violent incidents surrounding the voter registration process escalated from previous months and were reported in 10 provinces across the country: Mai-Ndombe, Kasai-Oriental, Sud-Ubangi, Kasai, Maniema, Haut-Katanga, Nord-Kivu, Sud-Kivu, Ituri, and Kinshasa. These early cases of election-related violence may signal an escalation of violence in the run-up to the December elections.

In Zimbabwe, concerns grew over the violence surrounding upcoming general elections scheduled for July or August 2023, with critics citing state-sponsored violence and intimidation of opposition parties.⁷ Recently, violence erupted at campaign rallies in Chivi and Gokwe-Nembudziya on 12 February. The Citizen Coalition for Change (CCC) party claims that Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) supporters disrupted and attacked CCC members during their party meetings. However, the ruling ZANU-PF party also claimed that CCC activists attacked their supporters in the same locations.⁸ The fighting in Nembudziya, Midlands province, injured at least five security personnel as they tried to maintain order.

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Burkina Faso and Niger: Major offensive and deadly attacks by Islamist militants

In Burkina Faso, offensives by Islamist militias drove an increase in reported fatalities in February, which rose to their highest level in recent years – nearly double the average number of monthly fatalities in the last year. On 17 February, the Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) launched an attack on military forces in Tin Ediar, leaving an estimated 130 soldiers and militants dead. This was the deadliest attack on government forces in Burkina Faso since the onset of the crisis in 2019, surpassing the death toll from the November 2021 attack on gendarmerie stationed at the Inata gold mine. The attack in Tin Ediar is part of the broader dynamics concerning IS Sahel in the region, with militants commonly carrying out mass attacks against the military and civilians using ambushes and large numbers of concentrated forces (*for more on the Islamic State Sahel Province, see this [Actor Profile](#)*). Meanwhile, JNIM fighters also contributed to the elevated fatality estimates in February, carrying out a deadly attack on a joint force of gendarmerie and the Volunteers for the Defense of the Homeland (VDP) in the village of Koeguemsén, Namentenga province that left 18 reported fatalities. Since President Ibrahim Traoré took power in late September 2022, the VDP has become central to Traoré's counterinsurgency strategy, prompting JNIM fighters to step up attacks on military forces and the VDP, as well as civilian communities perceived to be allied with the state and the VDP.

In Niger, IS Sahel fighters carried out a deadly attack on 10 February against an army convoy in Intagarmey, Tillabéri region, reportedly killing at least 17 soldiers. Another attack by IS Sahel in the Tillabéri region near Egareck primarily targeted displaced Malians from the Dawsahak community, underscoring the cross-border dynamics of the ongoing conflict and the ethnic dimension of rivalries between the various pastoralist communities inhabiting the area. The attack came as Fulani and Djerma community groups signed a peace



agreement on 21 January in Banibangou, intended to end long-standing hostilities in the region between these two groups. Ongoing IS Sahel activity could have a detrimental effect on preserving the peace agreement and the resulting momentum of more peaceful relations between local communities from different ethnic groups. Attacks by the IS Sahel continue to disproportionately target specific ethnic groups, such as the Dawsahak, who may decide to re-arm themselves or suspect other communities of partnering with IS Sahel militants.

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