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## Group 62 - Information Centre Asylum and Migration

# Briefing Notes

9 September 2019

### Afghanistan

#### **Peace talks suspended after attacks**

After a series of attacks in Kabul, most recently on 05 September 2019, the US suspended its talks with the Taliban. Just as the last attacks, this one as well occurred in the so-called Green Village, a specially secured area in the capital's centre mainly inhabited by foreigners where international organisations have their headquarters. An explosives attack near an accommodation for German police trainers injured at least 42 and killed at least 12 people, including one US soldier. The bomb's target was a check-point staffed by members of the Afghan secret service, the police and the army. The attack led to protests on 05 September 2019. Hundreds of people demanded that installations for foreigners should be transferred to areas far removed from residential areas. It is said that the protesters started fires on the premises.

After the attack the German Federal Police suspended the training project for Afghan police for the time being. The accommodation for the policemen had become inhabitable.

#### **Number of security-relevant incidents remains high**

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported that a total of 5,856 security relevant incidents had occurred between 10 May 2019 and 08 August 2019, of these 3,294 had been armed clashes/fighting. The highest number of incidents occurred in the south, followed by the east and the south-east. Kandahar (south) was the most affected province, followed by Helmand province (south) and Nangarhar province (east).

According to analyses of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) the Taliban stepped up their attacks in the last four weeks despite its peace talks with the US. Especially affected were the following provinces: Kabul, Ghazni, Balkh, Helmand, and Kandahar as well as Baghlan, where the Taliban made territorial gains.

Western Farah province currently reports heavy fighting. Government troops are trying to fend off Taliban attacks. The Taliban spoke of a major operation.

### Algeria

#### **Presidential elections still this year?**

All parties boycotted the nomination of candidates for the presidential elections scheduled for 04 July 2019, because the election was to take place under the control of the military. Protests were held against the military's surveillance of the elections. On 03 September 2019 army chief Ahmed Gaid Salah proposed to announce a date for the elections no later than mid-September and to establish an independent committee for surveillance. This meets at least one of the key demands of the protesters. But they would prefer a transition period to democracy instead of quick elections, because in the general view these would rather strengthen the power base of the representatives of the old regime ("le pouvoir"). As army chief Salah has no legitimation to announce presidential elections. This is within the remit of the interim president.

## **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

### **First official gay parade**

Over 1,000 people attended the first Pride Parade in the capital Sarajevo on 08 September 2019. The LGBT community marched from the eternal flame in the city centre to the parliament building, about two kilometres away. The marchers included the well-known singer Bozo Vreco, US ambassador Eric Nelson and other western diplomats. Although the parade had triggered a heated debate on social media before, including demands to arrest all LGBT persons (see BN of 15 April 2019), it remained peaceful without any major incidents. On the fringes of the parade there were demonstrations of ultra-conservative groups in other places or at other times. Traditional values prevail with the Muslim Bosnians, Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats. Although outlawed, verbal and violent assaults on LGBT people happen time and again. Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only Balkan country where an official Gay Pride Parade was introduced.

## **Burkina Faso**

### **Two attacks claim at least 29 lives**

Government spokesman Remis Dandjinou informed on 09 September 2019 that at least 15 civilians were killed when a truck loaded with people and goods hit a booby trap in the area of Barsalogo (Sanmatenga province, Centre-Nord region). On the same day at least 14 more civilians died in an attack by gunmen on a food convoy of the World Food Program in Sanmatenga province. According to a count of AFP news agency more than 500 people lost their lives because of jihadist attacks in Burkina Faso since 2015.

## **Central African Republic**

### **Casualties in fighting between rebel groups**

Different sources say that up to a dozen people were killed by fighting between the rebel organisations Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC) and Mouvement de Libération de la Jeunesse de Centrafrique (MLJC) in the northern city of Birao on 1 September 2019; thousands were displaced internally.

In 2012 mainly Muslim Sélékav rebels started to fight then president François Bozizé. In February 2019 14 of the rebel groups that control large parts of the country made a peace agreement with the government of President Faustin Archange Touadéra. Over 600,000 refugees from the Central African Republic are living in the neighbouring countries mainly in Cameroon, Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition thereto 464,000 are internally displaced.

## **China**

### **Hong Kong: Concessions to the protest movement**

On 04 September 2019 Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced that the controversial bill to amend the extradition rules would be formally retracted. She thereby meets a central demand of the protest movement. Furthermore, two additional members shall be added to the police monitoring body (Independent Police Complaints Council – IPCC). Lam also said that she intended to seek talks including with representatives of Hong Kong's society to find a solution to the conflict. The protest movement thinks that these measures are insufficient. It maintains its additional demands: Establishment of an independent commission to investigate police actions during the protests; protests may not be called insurgencies anymore; introduction of democratic elections; release of all arrested protesters. By now about 1,200 people have been arrested, many temporarily.

### **Hong Kong: Protests**

Despite the government's concessions there were more protests and riots. Thousands of protesters joined a march to the US consulate requesting US support on 08 September 2019. The police forestalled protests announced for 07 September 2019 at the airport by a major show of force at the airport and controls in the means of transport to the airport. During the protests on 06 and 07 September 2019 protesters and police

clashed violently. At the beginning of the new academic year at schools and universities thousands of high school and university students joined a boycott of classes on 02 September 2019.

## **Colombia**

### **Assassination of female politician**

On 02 September 2019 the bodies of the politician Karina García and five other persons were discovered in a burnt-out car in Cauca Departement. García was a candidate in the elections for mayor in the small town of Suarez. Government representatives blamed dissidents of the rebel organisation Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC; see BN of 02 September 2019) for the murder. Regional and local elections are scheduled for 27 October 2019.

## **Ethiopia**

### **Relief organization workers killed**

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) confirmed on 06 September 2019 that two US-American staff members of the Action Against Hunger aid organisation had been killed on their way to the Nguenyiel refugee camp in Gambella state in Western Ethiopia when ambushed by armed attackers on their vehicle. Until now there is no indication who committed the crime.

UNHCR informed that currently over 400,000 refugees from South Sudan are housed in Ethiopian refugee camps, most of them in Gambella.

## **Georgia**

### **Surprise resignation of Prime Minister - successor already named**

Georgian Prime Minister Mamuka Bakhtadze surprisingly resigned on 02 September 2019 after only one year in office. It is assumed that prominent billionaire Bidsina Ivanishvili withdrew his support for Bakhtadze. Ivanishvili is considered to be Georgia's richest man and the most influential person in the governing party Georgian Dream, which he leads.

The media report that the current interior minister Giorgi Gakharia will succeed Bakhtadze. Gakharia had recently been criticized for the harsh measures taken by the police during mass protests in the capital Tbilisi in June 2019. At the protest on 21 June 2019 over 240 people were injured and about 300 temporarily arrested. Gakharia must face a parliamentary vote, however, in a parliament in which the governing party holds the absolute majority. At the same time the cabinet will be reshuffled. The former head of the state security service Vakhtang Gomelauri will become interior minister and former prime minister Irakli Garibashvili (2013 to 2015) will head the defence ministry. Both politicians are known to be close associates of Ivanishvili.

## **India**

### **Group violence by 'Cow Protectors'**

According to Human Rights Watch (HRW) the number of assaults and lynchings by radical Hindu groups, self-appointed cow vigilants, have increased in 2018. 13 people were killed and 57 injured in 31 incidents throughout the country. During the reporting period from May 2015 to December 2018 there were more than 100 assaults claiming 44 casualties, of which 36 were Muslims. The violence was mainly directed against Muslims, but also against the outcaste Dalits (untouchables) who traditionally skin carcasses for the leather industry.

## **India/Pakistan**

### **Situation in Kashmir unchanged since the revocation of autonomy rights**

The situation in the northernmost Indian federal state of Jammu and Kashmir continued unchanged since the state's autonomy rights were revoked and the siege by the Indian military began. Even after one month telephone and internet services remain cut. Amnesty International India called these measures serious interferences with the civil rights of Kashmir's population. AI said that the population's daily lives, medical care and access to basic services are massively affected thereby. The media are also reporting certain allegations of torture by the Indian military. The military also used tear gas and pellets against the population. On 04 September 2019 a 16-year-old succumbed to the serious head injuries he had sustained from pellets.

In a speech in Lahore Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan reaffirmed on 02 September 2019 that Pakistan is not planning any military action against India because of the conflict. On 04 September 2019 he met with diplomats from Saudi Arabia and the UAE to discuss the matter in Pakistan's capital Islamabad.

## **Iran**

### **Database on human rights abuses**

The exile organisation „Edalat Bara-ye Iran“ (Justice For Iran, JFI) collects data and information about perpetrators of human rights violations in Iran from outside the country and makes them available on the internet in a database in Farsi language. By now it contains data for 500 public officers and officials. The database lists their duties within the Islamic system and their major human rights violations over the last four decades. It includes those responsible for the political cleansing during the first years after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, for the mass executions in the summer of 1988 (the head of the justice system was involved then), the persecution after the protests against the controversial elections in 2009 (President Ahmadinejad) and the arrests in January 2017. JFI informed that based on this information already 12 Iranian persons or bodies have been put on the EU's international lists for human rights sanctions. The database was compiled to support human rights activists attempting to hold officials of the Islamic regime accountable. This is why only the data of living persons were collected.

### **Industrial workers strike in Arak**

Hundreds of employees of the Iranian industrial company "AzarAb" in Arak assembled in the city centre on 03 September 2019 to protest, because they have not been paid since June. They wanted to symbolically draw attention to their financial need and the lack of food supplies by protesting. „AzarAb Industries“ is an Iranian manufacturing company with a workforce of over 2,500, building power plants, petro-chemical facilities and refineries for sugar, oil and gas.

## **Iraq**

### **Security situation**

Security relevant incidents continue in Iraq. Salahaddin, Ninive, Diyala and Kirkuk provinces were most affected.

### **Security operation against IS**

In security operations against IS nine IS fighters were killed in a tunnel in Sihaji region (south-west of Mosul) and five IS fighters in Salahaddin province on 03 September 2019.

### **Action against the freedom of the press**

On 02 September 2019 the Iraqi communication and media commission ordered the temporary closure of the Iraqi offices of Al-Hurra TV station that has its seat in the US. The closure was caused by a programme on corruption in religious institutions in Iraq.

The Iraqi Observatory for the Freedom of the Press (JFO) commented the publication of lists of names a few hours after the suspension of the Al-Hurra station. The lists contain the names, photos and sometimes even

the addresses of well-known writers and journalists. The people named are also accused of cooperating with Israel. JFO voiced its concern for the security of the persons named. The observatory stated that many journalists have left Iraq since 2003 because of such lists and specific threats.

An increasing number of actions taken against journalists have been documented in recent months (see BN of 29 July 2019).

### **Mass grave discovered**

In Shoura, 60 km south of Mosul, Ninive province, a mass grave with the bodies of 13 women that became victims of IS, was found on 05 September 2019.

## **Kosovo**

### **Early parliamentary elections**

After prime minister Ramush Haradinaj resigned on 19 July 2019 and the parliament dissolved itself on 22 August 2019 (see BN of 12 August 2019) new elections shall take place on 06 October 2019. This was reported on 26 August 2019 by Radio Free Europe with reference to President Hashim Thaci's office. The report said that Kosovo's transition institutions will cooperate with the international community to guarantee a peaceful election process in which the citizen's will be absolutely free to vote according to their preferences.

### **Representatives of foreign countries banned from entry**

When the date for the early elections was announced, Serbian government representatives made it known that they intended to visit Kosovo during an election campaign. Several media then reported that this caused a ban of entry for representatives of foreign states. A foreign ministry spokesman said on 03 September 2019 that Kosovo's transition institutions will not allow any representatives of a foreign country to hold election campaigns in Kosovo. Specifically, Serbian officials would not be allowed in, because they tended to worsen the situation and increase internal tensions.

## **Lebanon**

### **Situation of transgender women in Lebanon**

On 03 September 2019 Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a report on the situation of transgender women in Lebanon. While transsexuality is not explicitly outlawed in Lebanon, gender data in identity documents cannot be changed to correspond to one's actual sexual orientation. HRW says that this restricts access to the labour and housing market for those affected. Furthermore, they are liable to criminal prosecution based on e.g. article 534 or laws to uphold public morals.

## **Lebanon/Syria**

### **Deportations to Syria**

Local media reported that between 21 May 2019 and 28 August 2019 2,731 Syrians were deported from Lebanon to Syria. The report said that this concerned people having entered Lebanon illegally since 24 April 2019. Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated that at least three of those deported were arrested upon their return to Syria. The deportees also included persons who had entered Lebanon prior to 24 April 2019.

## **Libya**

### **UNSMIL situation report**

The head of the UN mission UNSMIL in Libya, Ghassan Salamé, reported to the Security Council on the current situation in Libya on 04 September 2019. Since the offensive began on 04 April 2019 several

thousand fighters had died and at least 120,000 people became internally displaced, he said and also stated: The UN arms embargo is ineffective. Both sides are visibly war-weary and ready to negotiate, but constant interferences from outside have prevented any negotiations. Therefore the war will probably drag on, unless certain actors are prepared to help bring about a solution for peace (although he did not name any specific states, he probably referred to Egypt, France, Qatar, Turkey, and the UAE, because the presence of weapons and sometimes even troops of these countries has been amply documented).

## **Myanmar**

### **Conflict in Shan state**

On 04 September 2019 the UN informed that fighting between the Northern Alliance rebels and the government in the northern Shan state have claimed 17 victims since mid-August 2019. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW) almost 7,500 people fled the violence, 3,500 of them are still living in temporary shelters.

In 2015 a number of rebel organisations of ethnic minorities entered into a ceasefire agreement with the government. Others, including the organisations Ta'ang National Liberation Army, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Arakan Army and Kachin Independence Army, all of which formed the Northern Alliance, continue fighting.

## **North Macedonia**

### **Inhuman conditions in prisons**

On 05 September 2019 Tagesschau.de reported that the abysmal conditions in the prisons of North Macedonia continue. In particular pavilion A of Idrizovo prison which houses serious offenders had appalling hygienic and constructional conditions. Many inmates not only complain about the building and the lack of hygiene of the prison, but also about lack of food and medical care.

Already in 2016 the Council of Europe published a report that found that the prison conditions were inhuman, in particular in the country's largest prison in Idrizovo and that the penal system was inadequately organized. According to the head of the country's penal authorities, Jovica Stojkovic, most of the problems have been solved since then.

The deputy of the North Macedonian ombudsman for human rights, Vaska Bajramovska Mustafa, described the conditions in Idrizovo prison as minimum standards below human dignity. In her view the facility is a reform institution for serious criminals.

## **Palestinian Autonomous Areas**

### **Honour killing**

On 22 August 2019 21-year-old Israa Ghayeb died on the West Bank of injuries inflicted on her by her brothers and cousins. Photos on social media showing her with a man who had previously proposed to her were the reason for the violence. The parents consented to the engagement but did not make it public at first. Therefore the brothers and cousins of Israa Ghayeb found that she had stained the family's honour by showing herself with a man not belonging to the family before her official engagement. The case became known on German media only recently. On Arab social media the story has been hotly discussed for several days. On 02 September 2019 hundreds of people, mainly women, demonstrated on the West Bank. Violence against women by members of their own families is a widespread problem there.

## **Philippines**

### **Rebels hand in arms**

On 07 September 2019 over 1,000 fighters of the Muslim rebel organisation Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) handed in their arms in Sultan Kudarat on the island of Mindanao. President Rodrigo Duterte attended the accompanying celebrations. In 2014 the government and the rebels signed a peace agreement

providing for the disarmament of the about 40,000 MILF fighters which is to be completed by 2022. The rebel organisation shall be transformed into a political party. Since the end of the seventies the MILF has been fighting for an independent state on Mindanao and after decades of negotiations agreed to the establishment of an autonomous area. In January 2019 Mindanao's population approved a law by referendum that provides for the creation of the autonomous Muslim area of Bangsamoro on Mindanao. The conflict between the government and the MILF claimed at least 150,000 lives. Other rebel groups are active on Mindanao as well, including the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG).

## **Russian Federation**

### **The Kremlin's party "United Russia" defends its majority in the regional elections**

On 08 August 2019 regional elections were held in Russia for 16 new governors and 13 regional parliaments. The focus was on the election to the Duma for the city of Moscow, where massive protests had been held before, because 57 opposition candidates had been excluded. According to first reports the turnout of the roughly 56 million voters was quite low at 35 percent. Elections at the regional and local level are considered an important gauge for President Putin and his governing party United Russia. The elections of governors are the most critical for the Kremlin and surprisingly the United Russia candidates were victorious in all regions according to the preliminary count.

Although losing a few seats, the governing party United Russia again won the absolute majority in the Moscow city council, holding 25 of 45 seats. The moderate opposition party Jabloko is represented in the municipal assembly with at least three candidates. The Communist Party and the second party loyal to the system 'Just Russia' are also represented in the body. According to first estimates the voter turnout was merely around 22 per cent. The final results for all regions will be published in the course of the week.

Observers are reporting hundreds of notices of attempted manipulation and obstruction of their work. The human rights organisation Golos complained that its press officer had been arrested without any reasons. The civil society portal OVD Info posted that at least 16 people were arrested, including journalists, a local politician and Maria Aljochina, a prominent member of the Pussy Riot punk band.

## **Somalia**

### **Jubaland security minister arrested**

Jubaland security minister Abdirashid Hassan Abdinur (Abdirashid Janan) was arrested in Mogadishu by the Somali federal government (FGS) on 31 August 2019. He is charged with several crimes, including killings, torture, illegal detentions and blocking humanitarian aid in 2014 and 2015. Amnesty International demanded a fair trial by a civilian court. Jubaland's government called the arrest a "kidnapping" and "illegal". The arrest comes while tensions between the FGS and Jubaland's regional administration are heightening: in August the federal government refused to accept the results of the regional elections in which Ahmed Madobe was again elected regional president (see BN of 26 August 2019).

### **Policeman sentenced to death**

A military court in Mogadishu sentenced a policeman to death on 02 September 2019. He was convicted of killing a young man in Mogadishu on 26 July 2019. Somali military courts regularly pronounce and execute death sentences.

### **Attack in Mogadishu**

An explosives-loaded car blew up at a security check-point in Mogadishu on 02 September 2019 killing and injuring several people, including civilians. The probable target was the tax agency. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

### **Fighting**

Somali special units supported by air advanced against al-Shabaab training camps in Middle Juba and Lower Shabelle regions in several operations on 04 September 2019. Reports say that two al-Shabaab commanders died.



It is said that one al-Shabaab fighter was killed in an air strike of US-AFRICOM in the Jilib area, Middle Juba region.

## **Sudan**

### **New government sworn in**

The official news agency Suna reported that the new Sudanese government was sworn in on 08 September 2019. The 18-member cabinet includes representatives of the military and civilians. Four women are among the ministers, one of them is the country's first female foreign minister. After the ceremony the ministers pledged to seek harmonious cooperation.

## **Syria**

### **Idlib: Fragile truce**

The recently agreed ceasefire seems to be largely observed. On 03 September 2019 Turkish president Erdogan criticized that the Idlib de-escalation zone was being eaten up by the military operations of the Syrian military. The de-escalation zone had been agreed between Turkey, Russia and Iran in 2017.

Syrian state media reported on 03 September 2019 that the country's air defence had repelled attacks on the Hmeimim military airport near Latakia. The attacks were flown by drones launched from the de-escalation zone.

### **North-East: Establishment of security zone progressing**

On 04 September 2019 the co-chairman of the Kurdish dominated Democratic Council of Syria, Ilham Ahmed, informed that the preparations for a security zone along the Turkish border in Syria's north-east are making good progress. The dismantling of barriers has been monitored by Kurdish militias together with the US military. The zone from which YPG is to withdraw completely is 14 km for fighters and 20 km for heavy arms.

Ahmed also said that only former inhabitants of this area would be allowed to return there. Kurdish representatives have been concerned for some time already that Turkey might use this zone to settle Syrian refugees originating from other parts of the country.

On 08 September 2019 the Turkish defence ministry announced that Turkey and the US had started drone-supported joint patrols in northern Syria for the establishment of the security zone.

### **Second attack in Azaz**

Azaz, the northern Syrian border town under Turkish occupation was the scene of a second attack within one week on 03 September 2019 (see BN of 02 September 2019). Two bombs hidden in motorcycles killed at least one civilian and injured another 16. A third motorcycle which had also been fitted with an explosive device could be seized by the police in the nearby village of Rai.

The town is controlled by Syrian rebels supported by the Turkish military, they are blaming the Kurdish YPG militia for the attacks. In the past YPG spokesman said that they would fight the Turkish occupational forces, but not take any action against civilians. So far no-one claimed responsibility for the most recent attack.

## **Turkey**

### **Threatening to open the border**

Turkey's president Erdogan is accusing the EU of non-compliance with the financial promises made for the handling of refugees. Last week he repeatedly threatened to open the borders to Europe for Syrian refugees. He said that there was a renewed migration threat because of the refugees from the last Syrian rebel stronghold Idlib and that Turkey was unable to cope with any renewed influx of refugees on its own. Erdogan is of the opinion that the EU did not yet fully live up to its financial promises. The EU had recently announced that so far €5.6 bn of the € 6 bn it had pledged to improve the living conditions of Syrian refugees

in Turkey have been disbursed and that the remainder will follow soon. Since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria about 3.6 million refugees from Syria have been received by Turkey.

### **Prison sentence for critical tweets**

On 06 September 2019 Turkish opposition politician Canan Kaftancıoğlu, leader of the Istanbul association of the CHP opposition party, was sentenced to almost ten years in prison for several tweets critical of the government sent in the years 2012 to 2017. The media reported that an Istanbul court convicted her of insulting state institutions and president Erdogan and having disseminated terrorist propaganda. Kaftancıoğlu denies the charges and maintains that the trial was politically motivated. It is expected that she will appeal the sentence and she will go free until the appeal court's decision.

## **Ukraine**

### **Prisoner exchange between Ukraine and Russia**

On 07 September 2019 Ukraine and Russia exchanged 35 prisoners each. It is the first time since the conflict over Crimea broke out that both countries agreed on such an extensive exchange. The airplanes carrying the Russian and Ukrainian prisoners landed almost simultaneously in Kiev and Moscow. Those released from Russian detention include the 24 Ukrainian sailors that had been arrested by the Russian coastguard in November 2018 when three vessels were seized in front of the Crimean coast. Also 21-year-old Ukrainian blogger Pawlo Gryb was among the group; he had disappeared in while staying in Belarus in August 2017. Already at the end of July 2019 Moscow and Kiev had started negotiations on an exchange of prisoners following an initiative by Ukraine's President Zelenski in an effort to reduce the tensions between the two countries. Zelenski called the prisoner exchange a first step to end the conflict with Russia, Russian President Putin called it a big step towards the normalization of Russian relations with Ukraine.

## **Venezuela**

### **Manoeuvres on the border to Columbia**

On 04 September 2019 Nicolás Maduro announced two weeks of manoeuvres along the Columbian border as of 10 September 2019. He also said that alarm had been raised to orange for troops stationed near the border. The motive behind such announcements is Maduro's repeated allegation that Columbia was preparing to invade Venezuela. Columbia denies any such allegations. Since its war of independence from Spain Venezuela has never been involved in any international war.

### **Investigations against Guaidó**

In addition to all other proceedings, charges for treason have now been brought against Juan Guaidó. This is based on allegations that he was considering to waive Venezuela's claim to the region of Guayana Esequiba. Since the 19th century a territorial conflict has been smouldering about this territory, at first with the United Kingdom and after its independence with Guayana. The respective area makes up about 62% of Guayana's territory and has never been under Venezuelan control since 1899 (with the exception of one island). Since 2015 Venezuela has reasserted its claims, after Guayana had awarded oil exploitation rights for the region to Exxon Mobile. Guaidó is accused of being willing to abandon Venezuela's claim to the territory in exchange for foreign, i.e. mainly US, support.

## **Yemen**

### **War crimes in Yemen**

In a report published on 03 September 2019 the UN Human Rights Council accused all of the warring parties in Yemen of committing several war crimes. The report likewise blames the US, the UK and France of indirectly encouraging such war crimes by supplying arms to the Saudi-led coalition. The same accusations apply to Iran for supporting the Houthi rebels, the report says.

### **Protests in southern Yemen**

Thousands of Yemenites took to the streets of several cities in the south on 05 September 2019 to show their support for the Southern Transitional Council (STC). The STC took control of Aden from the Yemeni government on 10 August 2019. Furthermore, fighting ensued between various factions of the armed forces that took different sides in the conflict. Saudi Arabia and the UAE called for an end of the confrontations.

### **Zimbabwe**

#### **Ex-President Robert Mugabe dead**

On 06 September 2019 former Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe died in a hospital in Singapore aged 95. He came into power as the chairman of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) guerilla movement and governed the country from its independence in 1980 until the military forced him to resign in November 2017. At the beginning of his rule he was held in high esteem by the population. After 2000 he acted more and more like a dictator.

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