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Noticeable developments in Afghanistan, Central and Eastern Africa – April 2022

AFGHANISTAN

Anti-Taliban resistance groups

- 🌸 Increasing number of armed groups announcing their resistance to the Taliban (e.g., in April: The People's Democratic Party and the Watandost Front)
- 🌸 Most clashes/attacks taking place across almost all provinces involved the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan (NRF) & the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AAF)
- 🌸 Most affected: Badakhshan, Baghlan (over 43 people were killed), Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Parwan (at least 26 people were killed), Panjshir, Takhar

Attacks on mosques during Ramadan

- 🌸 Balkh: Two bomb blasts claimed by IS-K occurred in Mazar-e-Sharif, killed at least 42 people
Targeted group: Shiites, most of them were Hazara
- 🌸 Kunduz/Kabul: Three unclaimed bomb blasts killed over 109 people
Targeted group: Sufis (in these cases: Sunnis)

Border conflicts


Afghanistan-Pakistan

- 🌸 47 people, mainly refugees from Pakistan's North Waziristan, were killed in Pakistani airstrikes and shelling on the eastern Afghan provinces of Khost, Kunar, and Paktika



CONSEQUENCES:

- Taliban deployed security forces to the border
- Protests in Nimroz, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Kunar, Khost, and Pakistan's north-western districts of Tank and Mirali

Current situation



- Until April: Shelling and clashes along the border
 - Air violation as a reaction to the killing of Pakistan soldiers in North Waziristan in April
→ Pakistan accuses armed groups, including the TTP, operating in the border area and posing an increasing threat to Pakistan's security to have committed the murder
-  Further political risks: Retaliatory attacks by Taliban forces are possible, but depend on the level of violence in the coming weeks

Afghanistan-Iran



-  Clashes between Taliban and Iranian border forces over the Taliban's attempt to construct a road in the border area of Islam Qala-Dogharoun, Herat → Taliban arrested Iranian border forces leading to a border closure for two days, and the deployment of Iranian border forces
-  Violent protests in Herat over the mistreatment of Afghan refugees in Iran led to the suspension of Iran's consular activities in Afghanistan

ETHIOPIA


Conflict over national power: TPLF/Tigray

-  First month without violent incidents after a ceasefire was declared in March
-  First truck convoy of the World Food Programme entered Tigray since mid-December '21


Conflict over secession: OLF

-  For the first time since November, Ethiopian forces conducted an airstrike on OLF Shane militants' positions in West Shewa, Oromia
-  At least 159 people were killed in clashes between Ethiopian National Defence Forces and OLF Shane, and in an ethnically motivated attack by the group

Conflict over religion: Christians – Muslims

-  Trigger: An unknown armed group killed 20 Muslims on April 26 in Gondar city, Amhara
 - Seven Christian churches and hotels belonging to people of Christian faith were burned in Worabe and Alem Gebeya in the region of Southern Nations Nationalities and People's (SNNP), and two churches in Amhara
 - Over 370 people were arrested
 - The attack sparked protests of Muslims across the country condemning the violence

Border conflict: Ethiopia - Sudan (al-Fashqa)

-  Ethiopian and Sudanese forces reportedly clashed on April 6 after the latest violent incident occurred in December 2021

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Opposition

- ✿ Peace talks between government and around 30 armed groups in Nairobi, Kenya were backed by the UN and AU, and brokered by Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta
- ✿ The Islamic rebel group Alliance of Democratic Forces (ADF) was excluded
- ✿ No breakthrough: Some groups are willed to demobilize and be integrated into the Congolese Armed Forces, others denied because they want to set their conditions for further negotiations first

M23 operates in Rutshuru, Nord-Kivu

- ✿ April 1: M23 declared a ceasefire
- ✿ April 6: Military operations of the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) led to the death of 14 people and the displacement of nearly 37,800 people to Uganda (Kisoro district)
- ✿ No clashes between April 10 and 22, but sexual abuses and arbitrary killings
- ✿ Clashes re-occurred during peace talks on April 23

SOUTH SUDAN

Intercommunal violence

- ✿ Between February 17 and April 6 armed youth groups killed 72 people from Dok Nuer in Leer Town, Unity, leading to the displacement of approximately 40,000 people → UNMISS deployed more peacekeepers for patrolling purposes and to curb further ethnic violence
- ✿ April 22/23: Clashes between rattle raiders and Bor Dinka in Eastern Equatoria killed six; almost 8,000 people were internally displaced

SPLM/A-In-Opposition

- ✿ Vice President Machar and his rival President Kiir signed an agreement over the formation of united forces; but clashes reoccurred once on April 8 in Upper Nile

SUDAN

Darfur

- 🌸 First trial over war crimes started at the International Criminal Court in Den Haag, Netherlands
- 🌸 Massacre in West Darfur
 - Trigger: Unknown people killed two Arabs in Kereneik
 - Clashes between Rizeigat militiamen (pastoralists), supported by Rapid Support Forces and Masalit ethnic militiamen (farmers) erupted on April 22 in Kereneik and spread to El Geneina on April 25; they continued until April 30
 - WFP had to suspend the distribution of aid temporarily
 - Workers of the Doctors Without Borders were killed
 - Overall, at least 201 people were killed and approximately 100,000 internally displaced

Further developments to watch in the following months

- 🌸 Somalia after presidential elections
- 🌸 Uganda: Coping with the rising numbers of refugees from DRC → Worsening humanitarian emergency

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