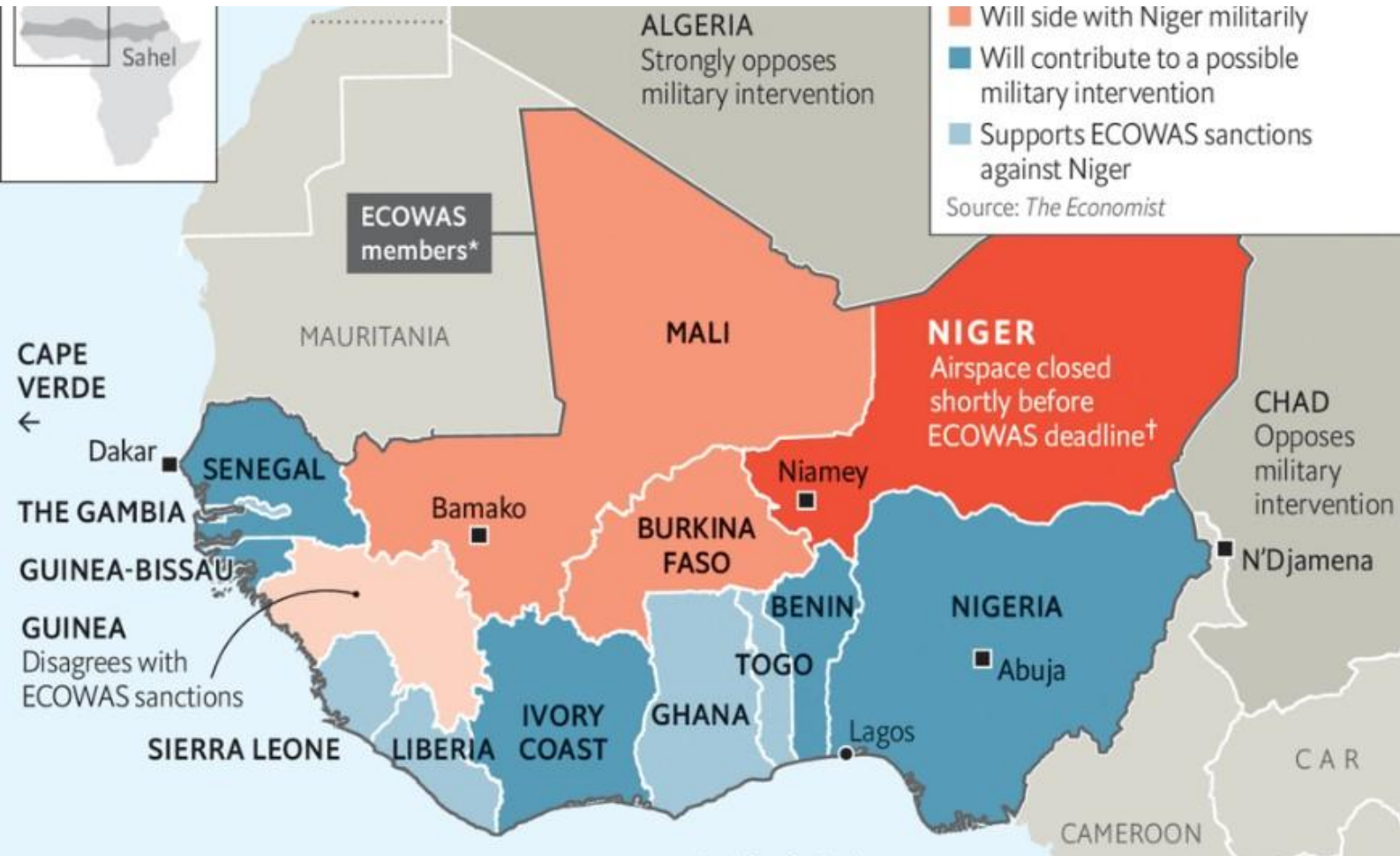


# Conflict Weekly

*A brief review of conflict and peace processes across the world*

Conflict Weekly #187&188 | Vol. 04 | Issue No.31 & 32 | 10 August 2023



(A map of African countries' stance on the coup in Niger. Image Source: The Economist)

## Continuing Standoff in Niger, Expanding War in Ukraine, and Political Crisis in Senegal



An initiative by NIAS-IPRI and KAS India Office

Gender | Environment | Ethnic Violence

External Interventions | Armed Conflicts | Peace Processes



## Niger: Standoff after the coup

Jerry Franklin

### In the news

On 10 August, the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met in the Nigerian capital Abuja to discuss the coup in Niger. Following the meeting, the leaders of the bloc agreed to assemble a “standby” military force. Meanwhile, Nigerian President Bola Tinubu said that the use of force would be the “last resort” to bring constitutional order to Niger. The meeting comes after the coup leaders disobeyed an ultimatum to reinstate the ousted president by 6 August.

On 7 August, the US Acting Deputy Secretary of State, Victoria Nuland, stated that her requests to meet with Bazoum, whom she referred to as being under “virtual house arrest,” were turned down. Nuland stated: “They are quite firm in their view of how they want to proceed, and it does not comport with the Constitution of Niger.” In response to regional threats to intervene against the coup leaders in Niger, the governing juntas of Mali and Burkina Faso dispatched delegations to Niamey to demonstrate their solidarity with Niger's coup leaders.

The same day, the spokesperson of the Niger's National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland, Amadou Abdramane announced Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine as the new Prime Minister.

### Issues at large

First, consistent regional and global pressure on Niger. ECOWAS has taken a firmer position against Niger compared to its stance against the previous coups in Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali. Following ECOWAS sanctions, Nigeria has disconnected the 80 MegaWatt Birnin-Kebbi power line and Ivory Coast has stopped both the import and export of commodities from Niger. France has called for the swift restoration of constitutional order and has ceased providing financial and developmental aid. The US had paused aid projects for Niger worth over USD 100 million. The continued sanctions on Niger are intended to increase pressure on the junta to reinstate civilian rule.

Second, increasing global support for ECOWAS. Niger's significance in the Sahel region cannot be overstated, particularly considering the strategic interests of the US, France, and the European Union. The country supplies seven per cent of global Uranium exports. Additionally, the United States and the former colonial power France view Niger as a key partner in addressing security issues in the region as it borders seven African countries, including Libya, Chad, and Nigeria, fighting multiple insecurity issues. The above reasons increased the number of countries supporting ECOWAS's position against the coup.

Third, continuing resistance from the junta. The transitional administration in Niger has refused to comply with the ultimatum issued by ECOWAS to reinstate Bazoum to power. Additionally, the coup leaders have issued warnings against any external interference. According to the French magazine, *Jeune Afrique*, the military administration of Niger had refused to give the African Union (AU) permission to deploy a joint mission with members of the UN and the ECOWAS intended to restore constitutional order. Additionally, the coup leaders defied efforts from the US and the UN to engage in talks. As a retaliation to the imposed sanctions, the coup leaders closed Niger's airspace and dismissed five military

cooperation agreements with France.

Fourth, the national, regional, and global support for coup leaders. On 3 August, during Niger's independence anniversary from France, nearly 30,000 people, mostly young individuals, gathered in central Niamey to express their support for the military takeover. They waved Russian flags and chanted slogans against France during the demonstration. The leaders and supporters of the coup are incorporating anti-French and anti-West sentiments into their propaganda. The military leaders of Mali and Burkina Faso have warned that any military attempt to reinstate Bazoum to power could be considered a "declaration of war" against them. Russian paramilitary, the Wagner Group leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, praised the coup leaders in Niger for driving the colonisers out of the country who he alleges were supporting terrorist groups in the country.

### In perspective

First, the standoff between coup leaders and ECOWAS would only add instability to Niger. To condemn the coup, the international community has frequently declared sanctions, which could potentially have unavoidable counter effects on the country at large. The sanctions have affected the socio-economic conditions of the people of Niger which significantly depends on foreign aid.

Second, comparable backing for ECOWAS and the junta. There is a possibility of conventional war if ECOWAS uses military intervention. Meanwhile, ECOWAS's strong stance on the coup in Niger will have a significant impact on future coup attempts and political conduct across West Africa.

Third, the prudent course of action is not military intervention. Nigeria may provide the largest contingent of soldiers to the ECOWAS military force; however, the country is not prepared to lead a regional conflict. Mass migration, high mortality and disruption would undoubtedly follow. A regional conflict between weaker countries would be self-destructive, given the Sahel region's enormous economic, developmental, and humanitarian issues.

## The War in Ukraine: Escalation after drone attacks

Padmashree Anandhan

### In the News

On 1 August, the Russian Ministry of Defence reported three drone strikes in Moscow and the Black Sea and accused Ukraine of launching the attacks. The strikes ranging 450 kilometres into Moscow caused damage to several ministerial buildings and oil depots. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy denied the claims and stated: "inevitable, natural and fair process...we don't attack Putin or Moscow." He added: "We fight on our territory. We're defending our villages and cities. We don't have enough weapons for these."

On 1 August, RT news reported, and BBC corroborated that another Ukraine drone attack took place in Moscow's business district. The Russian Ministry of Defence states that three drones were involved, with two destroyed in mid-air and the third suppressed by electronic warfare systems, crashing into a non-residential complex.

In response to the drone attacks, on 5 August, Russia retaliated with a series of drones and missiles using cruise missiles and Shahed-136 drones over the Caspian Sea. Russia's



spokesperson Maria Zakharova stated: “There can be no justification for such barbaric actions, they will not go unanswered, and their authors and perpetrators will inevitably be punished.”

Following the drone attacks in the Black Sea, on 8 August, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence declared war in the Black Sea against Russia. It stated that Russia’s ports surrounding the Black Sea will be a “war risk zone.”

### Issues at Large

First, increased drone attacks. According to the reports from Russia, close to 120 drone attacks have been targeted inside Russia and in the Russian-occupied region including Crimea. The attacks have concentrated across Bryansk, Belgorod, and Crimea, located in the border area of Ukraine, and few into Moscow. In 2022, Ukrainian energy infrastructures across eastern and western districts were the target of Russia’s military. This shifted by 2023 when Ukraine’s military arsenals became the key target of Russia’s drones. The concentration of these drone attacks has gradually expanded both in Ukraine and Russia from districts of Ryazan, Saratov, Kursk, and Belgorod closer to the border to farther into central cities of Moscow, Kyiv, and Lviv.

Second, Ukraine’s counter-offensive. Ukraine’s earlier counter-offensive in 2022 involved maximum ground defence and limited airpower. The June 2023, long-delayed counter-offensive demands more air defence with increased drone attacks from Russia. Ukraine, which has denied launching drone strikes into Moscow, evidence shows the usage of Ukraine-made drones. Ukraine’s long demand for air power is starting to materialize on the ground as it produces its drones with the support of private funding and aid from the West. This was possible with aid from the US and the UK in supporting Ukraine with air defence missiles, small drones, long-range drones, and munitions to deploy in the drones.

Third, escalation in war through geographic expansion. Observing the frequency and intensity of the drone attacks between February 2022 and May 2023, the fight was restricted to only Ukraine’s territory and Russia’s occupied territory. This is now beginning to expand geographically in Crimea, an occupied territory of Russia into air and maritime warfare. Geographic expansion of war indicates Ukraine’s ability to utilize the weapons supported by the West to launch wider attacks.

### In perspective

First, Ukraine’s race to scale up. Despite the denial of accepting the drone strike claims, significant efforts are being taken by Ukraine to develop its drones. According to the reports from The New York Times, the Bober, and the UJ-22 Airborne have been increasingly targeted inside Russia at twice the rate of 2022. This has been possible due to private funding and the Ukrainian government’s incentivizing private companies such as Ukrjet that engage in drone production.

Second, the threat of escalation. Increased exchange of drone attacks marks the starting point of improvement in Ukraine’s air defence. The drone incursions also mean a trigger for Russia to use its air superiority. In terms of attacks and counter-attacks, Ukraine’s gradual progress can be witnessed from holding a strong defence to an offensive stance in the ongoing counter-offensive. Followed by the on-ground exhaustion, and shift into precision striking provides space for both actors to regroup their ground forces. This will drive external players



such as the US, NATO, Europe, and Iran to further air defence. Thereby, escalating the war in terms of advanced weapons, and geography to further the war long.

Third, Russia's withdrawal from the grain deal was a trigger. The fallout of war into the air and maritime domain comes after Russia's move to withdraw from the grain deal. This has become a trigger for Ukraine to launch a war in the Black Sea affecting Russia's maritime trade. Therefore, with the cease of the grain deal and increased exchange of attack in the ports, Ukraine and Russia's maritime trade, especially oil and grain exports, can be expected to be affected.

## Senegal: New political crisis, upsets another stable democracy in West Africa

Sneha Surendran

### In the News

On 28 July, the leader of Senegal's main opposition party, the Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity (PASTE), Ousmane Sonko, was arrested. He has been implicated in plotting an insurrection, undermining state security, and encouraging political unrest.

On 31 July, Senegal's Minister of Interior and State Security, Abdoulaye Daouda, announced that the government had dissolved Sonko's party, PASTE, for "frequently calling on supporters to take part in insurrectionary movements." Violent protests broke out across the country following Sonko's arrest. On 1 August, two people died and five were injured during violence that erupted in Sonko's mayoral town of Ziguinchor; two others died on 2 August.

On 1 August, former Prime Minister Aminata Toure said that the dissolution of PASTE was an "unprecedented setback" for democracy in West Africa. PASTE representatives responded: "In his despotic determination to hold to power in Senegal, Macky Sall has just opened the floodgates to chaos by imprisoning, on spurious grounds, his main opponent Ousmane Sonko." Human Rights Watch expressed its concern, saying: "The government's decision to dissolve PASTE violates freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and democratic participation."

### Issues at Large

First, the political meltdown. Senegal has long been considered the "poster child of democracy in West Africa" and a symbol of stability in Africa, attributed to the peaceful transfer of power since 2000. However, President Macky Sall's government has been accused of using the judiciary to stifle the opposition. Hundreds of political critics have been detained, and several opposition members were jailed on corruption charges which prevented their candidature in the 2019 Presidential elections. According to Reporter Without Borders (RWB) Press Freedom Index 2023, Senegal ranked 104 compared to 49 in 2022 attributed to increasing media restrictions and frequent internet shutdowns. The dissolution of a political party, PASTE, is a first in Senegal's democratic history. Sall's government has also been denounced for deploying violence against peaceful demonstrations.

Second, the increasing economic crisis. Senegal is among the fastest-growing economies in the region, with major investments in infrastructure and energy. However, the country



struggles with rising costs of living, systemic corruption, and a lack of jobs despite promises of corrective measures by political representatives. Senegal has a substantial youth population, with the average age in the country being 19 years. Despite this, 20 per cent of the workable population remains unemployed. Recent protests in the country have been marked by high participation of the youth, including young children. According to the former director of Amnesty International for West and Central Africa: “Education no longer holds value. So when the youth revolt, their little brothers follow.” The health sector also remains underdeveloped and income inequality is a persistent concern.

Third, anti-government protests. Since 2021, anti-government protests have been recurring. In 2021, protests were triggered following the arrest of Sonko on rape charges. Although headed by Sonko’s supporters, the protests served as a platform for people to raise several issues ranging from unemployment, pandemic hardships to the political crisis. Security forces have been condemned for firing indiscriminately into crowds and using civilians as human shields. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) issued an alert appealing for regulations preventing the involvement of children in the protests.

### In perspective

First, Sonko’s arrest has been decried by his supporters as deliberate targeting by the government to prevent him from standing for the 2024 presidential elections. While Sonko’s candidature in the elections remains uncertain, observers point to a possible rise in tensions if he is barred from contesting. Furthermore, as per provisions of Senegal’s constitution, Sall too cannot stand for a third term, something which he has already confirmed. However, fears persist that the current government may attempt to amend these provisions or disregard them going forward.

Second, so far, the instability in the Sahel has not had an overreaching impact on Senegal. However, increasing instability in the neighbourhood has only exacerbated the fear of weakening democracy and instability within the country. Military takeovers in Mali, Burkina Faso, and the most recent coup in Niger have rendered the Sahel region more vulnerable than before. Furthermore, on 3 August, Senegal informed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) of their commitment to participate in any of the bloc’s military interventions to restore the government in Niger. The government's decision to involve itself militarily while conflict brews within its borders may prove detrimental in the long term.

## Issues in Peace and Conflict This Week: Regional Roundups

Rishika Yadav, Ankit Singh, Anu Maria Joseph, Femy Francis, Padmashree Anandan and Akriti Sharma

### East and Southeast Asia

#### **China: On allegations of disrupting G20 discussion on climate change**

On 2 August, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs refuted the allegations of disrupting discussions on climate change measures at the G20 meeting held in India on 28 July. The ministry described the allegations as "completely inconsistent with the facts," while the European delegation backed the accusation stating that China refused to make any commitments. The countries failed to reach a joint statement following a three-day discussion

on issues including cutting emissions, fossil fuel use, and climate finance to support poorer countries. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs commented that it “regrets” the failure in not reaching a joint conclusion which was caused by “geopolitical issues” created by other countries “for no reasons.”

#### **Taiwan: Foreign minister warns "disastrous results" if invaded**

On 2 August, Taiwan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Wu, warned that the Chinese aim of invading Taiwan would have "disastrous results" for the world, citing Taiwan’s global importance in the semiconductor industry and global shipping lanes. Wu stressed that more than 50 per cent of the global shipping containers pass through the 180 kilometres of waters separating Taiwan from China, and that the conflict would hinder the shipping lane, disrupting “crucial elements of international security and prosperity.” He added: “We hope that the Chinese government will not resort to the use of force against Taiwan, because the impact is going to be too serious for the world.”

#### **North Korea: Hackers breach Russian rocket design bureau**

On 7 August, according to technical evidence reviewed by Reuters and the Sentinel LABS which is a group of security researchers, hackers from North Korea breached computer networks at a Russian missile developer. The hackers are assumed to be linked with the North Korean government. State-sponsored hackers of ScarCruft and Lazarus are said to have installed a digital back door into NPO Mashinostroyeniya, a Russian rocket design bureau, for five months. The development comes after Russian Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu’s visit to Pyongyang on 26 July.

#### **Myanmar: Military grants clemency to Aung San Suu Kyi and ex-President Win Myint**

On 1 August, Myanmar Now reported that the Myanmar military granted clemency to Aung San Suu Kyi and ex-President Win Myint, reducing their prison sentences. Suu Kyi's sentence is reduced from 33 years to 27, and Win Myint's is now eight years. The clemency order was granted by the head of Myanmar's military council, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. Sentences on five cases out of 19 against Suu Kyi relating to violating coronavirus restrictions, illegally importing walkie-talkies, and sedition were reduced. Besides, the junta also pardoned nearly 7,750 prisoners, including 22 ethnic armed group members and 125 foreign inmates.

#### **Myanmar: Kachin militants seize military outposts**

On 8 August, Myanmar Now reported that the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) claimed to have captured two junta bases in the Hpakant Township in the state of Kachin, and another Shanni Nationalities Army (SNA) outpost near the Sagaing-Kachin border. KIA spokesperson, Colonel Naw Bu, stated that nearly 60 soldiers were stationed at the first base which was seized. Heavy artillery fire followed the attack on the junta base; several houses were damaged, and villagers were displaced following the clashes.

#### **Indonesia: OIC urged to take action against Quran burnings**

On 1 August, Antara, an Indonesia-based media, reported that Indonesia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi, urged the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to condemn the Quran burnings in Sweden and Denmark. During the OIC meeting held virtually on 31 July, Marsudi emphasised the need to respect holy books and called for legal measures against blasphemy. A spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Teuku Faizasyah, stated: "In the forum, we reaffirmed our position that freedom of expression must not hurt



those who have closeness and respect for holy books."

### **The Philippines: Defends Ayungin Shoal**

On 8 August, Philstar Global, a Filipino media, reported that the Philippine government asserted its commitment to never abandon Ayungin Shoal, a submerged reef in the Spratly Islands. National Security Council (NSC) spokesperson Jonathan Malaya reaffirmed their stance, responding to recent Chinese aggression of firing a water cannon at a Philippine Navy vessel in the West Philippines Sea. Shoal stated: "For the record, we will never abandon Ayungin Shoal. We are committed to Ayungin Shoal. We will do what is necessary to provide supplies and provision for our troops there for as long as it takes."

### South Asia

#### **India: Manipur violence continues**

On 10 August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the Monsoon Session of Parliament, addressed the people of Manipur. He assured them of efforts to bring peace and development back to the state of Manipur. Modi stated: "Crimes against women are unacceptable and the Central and State governments are working together to ensure the guilty are punished. We want to assure our mothers and daughters in Manipur that this country is with you, this House is with you." On 6 August, unidentified perpetrators set fire to 15 houses in the Langol region. The security forces had to fire tear gas to contain the violence. On 8 August, Manipur Police filed a case against Assam Rifles, accusing them of "disobeying law by public servant with intent to cause injury to any person, obstructing public servant in charge of public function." The Assam Rifles were also accused of obstructing the police from conducting a search operation after two people were killed by unidentified armed men in Manipur. The ethnic clashes in Manipur have been continuing for the past three months, which according to the Hindu, has claimed more than 160 lives.

### Central Asia, The Middle East, and Africa

#### **Palestine: Israeli attack kills three Palestinians**

On 6 August, Al Jazeera reported that Israeli forces shot three Palestinians in the West Bank dead. Following the attack, the Israeli forces stated: "A short time ago, a vehicle carrying a squad of terrorists from the Jenin refugee camp was identified while on its way to carry out an attack." The army conducting the attack claimed that they were "involved in military action against Israeli security forces and advancing military activity directed by terrorists in the Gaza Strip." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu applauded the security forces and added that the country would continue attacks against "those who seek our lives anywhere and at any time." A Hamas Gaza spokesperson Hazem Qasem, stated: "The enemy, which assassinated three of our Palestinian people, will not escape paying the price of its crimes." According to an Al Jazeera report, more than 200 Palestinians have been killed this year alone in the occupied Palestinian territories.

#### **Lebanon: 13 people killed in clashes**

On 5 August, Saudi Arabia's embassy in Lebanon called on its citizens to leave Lebanon and avoid regions affected by armed clashes. Additionally, the Kuwaiti government issued an advisory on the same day, urging Kuwaitis in Lebanon to avoid "areas of security disturbances." Al Jazeera reported on 5 August that since 29 July, at least 13 people were killed and more than 60 injured, following the clashes between Palestinian Fatah movement, and Islamist groups, including Jund al-Sham and al-Shabab al-Muslim in the Ein el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp. The director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for



Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Lebanon, Dorothee Kraus, called on "all parties to immediately return to calm and take all measures necessary to protect civilians, including children."

### Libya: At least 27 migrants found dead in the desert; Tunisia rejects the allegations of expelling

On 9 August, Al Jazeera quoted Libyan authorities, who reported that at least 27 people from sub-Saharan Africa died in the desert near the Libyan border after being expelled from Tunisia. Tunisia began expelling sub-Saharan African migrants after violence erupted in the Tunisian city of Sfax following the death of a Tunisian citizen. According to Libyan border guards, nearly 150 expelled migrants cross over the border into Libya in a day. Tunisian Ministry of Interior spokesperson Faker Bouzgaya rejected the allegations stating: "People who meet the conditions for legal entry into Tunisia will be allowed in. Tunisia is not responsible for what happens outside its borders."

### Ethiopia: Intense clashes in Amhara

On 7 August, BBC Africa reported on intense clashes between the Amhara regional forces and the Ethiopian federal forces. The clashes were reported in the cities of Bahir Dar and Gondar, in the Amhara region. A state of emergency has been declared in the region following the clashes. Amhara regional head, Yilkal Kefale, called on the federal government to intervene, claiming that security in the region had become "difficult to control within regular law enforcement mechanisms." The Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, raised concerns stating: "There could be grievances that have not been addressed, but the best way to solve them is dialogue as any other means will only hinder efforts to address the same grievances, make us lose what we have and complicate issues that we want solved permanently." Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom, expressed concerns over the ongoing violence. He commented: "Humanitarian access is difficult due to blockage of roads; communication is difficult due to internet suspension."

### Europe and the Americas

#### Cyprus: International support to combat wildfires

On 7 August, Associated Press reported that a multinational force, including firefighting aircraft and ground crews from Israel, Lebanon, Greece, and Jordan, were assisting Cyprus in battling the wildfire that burned about 3.2 square miles of land. The mountainous region near the city of Limassol is largely affected by wildfires. Agriculture and Environment Minister Petros Xenophonos said that the fire was mostly contained overnight; however, it rekindled in several areas, prompting continued air and ground efforts. He added that the cause of the rekindling is being investigated, with officials downplaying arson suspicions due to strong winds.

#### Poland: Russia and Belarus accused of orchestrating migrant influx at EU border

On 7 August, Deutsche Welle reported on Poland accusing Russian and Belarusian secret services of coordinating a surge of migrants into the EU along the Polish border. The Polish border guard requested the Polish Ministry of National Defence to send 1,000 more troops. Poland's border guard chief Tomasz Praga, claimed that the Belarusian secret services have turned into a criminal group, profiting from illegal immigration. Until now, there were at least 19,000 attempted illegal entries in 2023 compared to 16,000 in 2022, prompting the deployment of 5,000 guards and 2,000 soldiers.



### **Slovenia: Climate extremities affect 2.1 million people**

On 4 August, deadly floods in Slovenia resulted in landslides affecting more than 2.1 million people. Following the continued floods, a team from Germany's Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) has launched an operation to evaluate the damages and deploy more personnel with equipment for rescue. The Slovenian government announced the execution of a Disaster Response Mechanism (DRM), where rescue teams from other EU countries will be involved in recovery operations. Apart from this, the German Federal Foreign Office will provide USD 767000 for the operation.

### **Ukraine: War declared in Black Sea against Russia**

On 8 August, Ukrainian presidential spokesperson, Oleg Ustenko, stated that Ukraine would target anything moving in the Black Sea, as Russia withdrew from the grain deal and launched attacks on agricultural storage in Odessa. Highlighting how Ukraine's maritime infrastructure is under constant attack, Ustenko stated that the six Russian ports surrounding the Black Sea that include the ports of Anapa, Novorossiysk, Gelendzhik, Tuapse, Sochi, and Taman, will remain a "war risk area." The Ukrainian Ministry of Defence stated: "Terrorize peaceful Ukrainian cities and destroy grain condemning hundreds of millions to starvation. There would be no more safe waters or peaceful harbors for you in the Black and Azov Seas."

### **Haiti: Kenya offers to lead multinational force in de-escalation of violence**

On 29 July, Kenyan Minister of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs Alfred Mutua stated: "Kenya's commitment is to deploy a contingent of 1,000 police officers to help train and assist Haitian police to restore normalcy in the country and protect strategic installations." Kenyan security forces had a year-long presence in neighbouring Somalia to counter Islamic extremists. The escalation of violence instigated by armed gangs worsened the humanitarian crisis that has displaced thousands. Earlier this month, UN Secretary-General António Guterres appealed to the UN Security Council and major potential contributing countries to act fast to create the conditions necessary for the deployment of a multinational force to Haiti.

### **The US: Circuit court stays restrictions on asylum policy at the US-Mexico border**

On 3 August, an appeal court in the US said that President Joe Biden's new regulation restricting asylum access at the US-Mexico border can remain in effect. The San Francisco-based 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a district judge's ruling on 25 July, that argued that Biden's regulation unlawfully denied asylum to some migrants and asylum seekers caught crossing the border illegally. According to Biden's new asylum law, the majority of migrants are assumed to be ineligible for asylum if they entered other countries without first seeking refuge elsewhere, or if they did not follow the proper channels to enter the US. The rule became operative on 11 May. The new regulation was introduced after Title 42, a pandemic-era policy that expired in May 2023.

### **The US: Deadly wildfires in Hawaii destroy buildings; claim more than 60 lives**

On 9 August, fuelled by high winds from Hurricane Dora, wildfires in Maui Island territory of Hawaii guzzled 1700 buildings and turned many homeless. US President Joe Biden declared a major disaster in Hawaii and stated: "We'll get aid into the hands of people who desperately need the help. Anyone who's lost a loved one or whose home has been damaged is going to get help immediately."

### The US: Iranian Americans transferred to house arrest in an effort by Iran to unfreeze its billions of dollars

On 10 August, Iranian officials at the UN headquarters remarked that the authorities have moved five Iranian Americans from prison to house arrest in exchange for billions of dollars frozen in South Korea and the US. They acknowledged that in exchange for the release of Iranian American citizens, they would get around USD seven billion as part of the deal.

---

#### About the authors

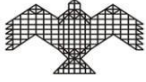
Akriti Sharma and Ankit Singh are PhD Scholars at NIAS. Anu Maria Joseph, Femy Francis and Rishika Yadav are Research Assistants at NIAS. Padmashree Anandhan is a Research Associate at NIAS. Jerry Franklin is a Postgraduate Scholar at Madras Christian College, Chennai. Sneha Surendran is a Postgraduate Scholar from OP Jindal University, Haryana.





### About NIAS-International Peace Research Initiative(IPRI)

National Institute of  
Advanced Studies



The International Peace Research Initiative (IPRI), initiated in 2018 at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), is a part of the Conflict Resolution and Peace Research Programme at the School of Conflict and Security Studies.

IPRI undertakes research on various issues relating to peace with special emphasis on radicalisation, sustainable peace, gender roles in peacebuilding and global protest movements. IPRI researches are published as briefs, reports and commentary.

### About Konrad Adenauer Stiftung



The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as “Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education,” in 1964, the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. KAS cooperates with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, KAS seeks to intensify political cooperation in the area of development cooperation on the foundations of its objectives and values. Together with the partners, KAS makes a significant contribution to the creation of a global order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible manner.

KAS has organized its program priorities in India into five working areas: Foreign and Security Policy; Economic, Climate, and Energy Policy; Rule of Law; Political Dialogue focused on Social and Political Change; and Media and Youth. The India Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation takes great pride in its cooperation with Indian partner institutions that implement jointly curated projects and programmes.

### About Conflict Weekly



The Conflict Weekly an academic endeavour to bring every Wednesday/Thursday a weekly analysis of the conflict and peace processes in the world; aiming to look at the larger peace picture. It is published by the NIAS-IPRI in collaboration with the KAS India Office.

**Editor:** D. Suba Chandran

**Assistant Editor:** Anu Maria Joseph and Dhriti Mukherjee

**Editorial Team:** Ankit Singh, Femy Francis, Akriti Sharma, Rishika Yadad and Padmashree Anandan