



Weekly Geopolitical Report

Policy, Security, and Strategic Affairs in the
Horn of Africa and Beyond

Coverage Period: June 08 – June 14

Publication Date: June 15, 2026



Issue No. 24 | 2026

For analytical and informational purposes only

Horn Review: Weekly Report

June 08 – June 14, 2026

1. Ethiopia

Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos undertook a series of high-level diplomatic engagements throughout the week, reflecting the country's increasingly active role in regional and global affairs. During a meeting with EU Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management Hadja Lahbib, the minister expressed appreciation for the European Union's continued support in critical health sectors, including Ebola response initiatives and efforts to strengthen the Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). He also briefed the Commissioner on recent peace and security developments in the Horn of Africa. In response, Lahbib reaffirmed the European Union's commitment to deepening cooperation with Ethiopia in the areas of health, humanitarian assistance, crisis preparedness, and broader strategic partnership initiatives.

Building on this momentum, on 10 June, Minister Gedion briefed African ambassadors on Ethiopia's preparations to host COP32 in its capacity as President-Designate during the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa sessions. The ambassadors reiterated their strong support for Ethiopia's leadership role and pledged close cooperation in advancing common African climate priorities. The meeting further reinforced Ethiopia's growing influence on climate diplomacy and strengthened its position as a leading advocate for African priorities in global climate negotiations. Further reinforcing Ethiopia's diplomatic outreach, the minister held productive discussions with Nigeria's Foreign Minister Bianca Odumegwu-Ojukwu, culminating in the signing of a landmark Agreement on the Exchange or Transfer of Sentenced Persons. The agreement represents an important step in strengthening justice-sector collaboration while opening new avenues for broader bilateral engagement between two of Africa's most influential nations.

These diplomatic efforts were further complemented by engagements at the continental level. On 9 June, Minister Gedion met with African Union Commission Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf to discuss AU institutional reforms and sustainable financing mechanisms, reflecting Ethiopia's longstanding commitment to a more effective, self-reliant, and responsive continental organization. Beyond institutional matters, the two sides also exchanged views on regional peace and security issues, reaffirming the importance of African-led solutions to continental challenges and enhanced cooperation between Ethiopia and the African Union.

Reinforcing this continuity in foreign relations, President Taye Atske Selassie bid farewell to the outgoing ambassadors of Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates, commending the progress achieved in economic cooperation, human resource

development, financial collaboration, and emerging opportunities in green financing supported by Ethiopia's homegrown reform agenda.

In parallel, on 11 June, Ethiopia and the European Union convened the second roundtable on foreign ministry reform aimed at enhancing institutional capacity and building a more agile and modern diplomatic service capable of responding to rapidly evolving global dynamics. The discussions focused on institutional modernization, capacity building, and knowledge transfer, supporting Ethiopia's efforts to strengthen diplomatic effectiveness and readiness in an increasingly complex international environment. Taken together, these engagements reflect Ethiopia's growing diplomatic activism, expanding partnerships, and commitment to strengthening its international standing through both multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

The week was also marked by the conclusion of Ethiopia's 7th General Election cycle, National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) Chairperson Melatwork Hailu confirmed the successful completion of voting and reported that post-election verification was progressing smoothly. By 9 June, NEBE had approved results from 24 constituencies, with the Prosperity Party securing all but one seat, while the National Movement of Amhara (NaMA) won the sole opposition seat in Gondar Zuria. By 10 June, results from 1,008 constituencies had reached the national verification center, with verified results suggesting the Prosperity Party was on course to secure another substantial parliamentary majority.

The verification process continued throughout the week, with NEBE initially targeting 11 June for the official announcement of final results while retaining the option of a ten-day extension if required. The election was conducted amid notable security and logistical challenges, with voting unable to take place across the Tigray region due to what NEBE described as unfavorable conditions and facing disruptions in parts of Amhara and Oromia. Nevertheless, special voting arrangements enabled nearly 29,000 internally displaced people and more than 126,000 military personnel to cast their ballots on 9 June.

Alongside its diplomatic engagement, Ethiopia's ongoing monetary and fiscal reforms continue to generate encouraging economic outcomes. Finance Minister Ahmed Shide highlighted that the country recorded an average annual growth rate of 6.8 percent in recent years, accelerating to 9.2 percent in 2024/25 and projected to reach 10.2 percent. At the same time, inflation has declined significantly from 34.5 percent in 2021 to 9.4 percent. According to the minister, these gains have been driven by the discontinuation of central bank deficit financing, increased agricultural productivity, and the implementation of the country's Ten-Year Development Plan.

In addition, the government reported that export earnings reached USD 8.7 billion during the first ten months of the fiscal year and remain on track to achieve the annual target of USD 10.5 billion. Authorities also indicated that negotiations with external creditors,

including Eurobond holders, continue to advance as part of Ethiopia's broader debt restructuring efforts.

Supporting these achievements, the Council of Ministers approved a draft federal budget exceeding 2.3 trillion Birr for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget is designed to finance recurrent and capital expenditures, support regional governments, and advance Sustainable Development Goals within a medium-term macroeconomic framework. Complementing these measures, the House of People's Representatives endorsed key legislative initiatives, including a proclamation on the cybersecurity of critical infrastructures aimed at protecting national sovereignty against emerging cyber threats, as well as a revised customs proclamation intended to combat contraband trade, support domestic manufacturing, and improve the investment climate.

A notable milestone in Ethiopia's financial sector liberalization was also achieved on 12 June with the licensing of United Capital Financial Services PLC, a subsidiary of Nigeria's United Capital Group, by the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority. As the first foreign investment bank to receive such authorization in Ethiopia, its entry raises the total number of licensed investment banks to seven. The development is expected to deepen capital market expertise, strengthen regional financial integration, expand investor participation, and improve access to financing, thereby supporting economic diversification, private-sector growth, and long-term economic transformation.

On 12 June, Switzerland lifted visa restrictions on Ethiopia, restoring several facilitation measures for Ethiopian travelers and officials. The decision is expected to strengthen bilateral relations by promoting greater people-to-people exchanges, business engagement, tourism, and diplomatic cooperation.

In the Horn of Africa, sustained focus remains on implementing the Pretoria Agreement to secure lasting peace. However, hardline elements within the TPLF, often perceived as serving external agendas aligned with Eritrean and Egyptian interests, continue to undermine these efforts through reported preparations for mandatory military conscription in Tigray. African Union High Representative Olusegun Obasanjo visited Mekelle for discussions with Tigray leaders amid these developments. His visit highlighted the African Union's continued commitment to safeguarding the Pretoria Agreement and preserving the gains achieved since the cessation of hostilities. Ethiopia continues to stress full adherence to the peace framework, calling for constructive dialogue to advance security, reconciliation, and inclusive development across the region while safeguarding national unity against destabilizing influences.

The week's diplomatic engagements also come as Ethiopia prepares for an increasingly prominent international role in the second half of 2026 through its COP32 leadership responsibilities beginning in July. This emerging role is expected to further shape

Ethiopia's diplomatic outreach, climate partnerships, and international engagement strategy in the months ahead.

2. Sudan

The second week of June in Sudan was defined by intensifying aerial warfare, accelerating economic deterioration, and a cluster of accountability moves that collectively illustrated how thoroughly the conflict has outrun any available enforcement mechanism. Military operations continued on multiple fronts while the RSF conducted sustained drone attacks on civilian fuel infrastructure, Sudan submitted formal atrocity allegations to the UN Security Council, and the US Congress advanced its first significant Sudan-focused legislation in years. None of these tracks intersected in a way that altered the war's underlying trajectory.

The SAF's battlefield summary for the first half of June claimed the destruction of 141 RSF combat vehicles across three fronts. The most intense operations were concentrated in Kordofan, where 92 vehicles were reportedly destroyed, and Blue Nile, where the fourth attack in under a month on the strategic town of Amouri was repelled on June 13. The RSF-SPLM-N alliance is attempting to take Amouri as a step toward Geissan, and the SAF has deployed what sources described as unprecedented reinforcements to the area. In Darfur, army strikes on Nyala targeted ammunition depots, equipment warehouses, and a major fuel depot, with the city's airport described as a reception point for external military support. Burhan visited Ailafoun east of Khartoum on June 12 and pledged before mosque worshippers to recapture all Sudanese territory, attributing the war to foreign actors and external circles.

The RSF's aerial campaign against civilian economic infrastructure intensified sharply. RSF drones struck El Obeid, capital of North Kordofan, for five consecutive days, destroying around five fuel stations and expanding to a station in Tendelti on the White Nile highway. The UN confirmed a drone strike in El Obeid killed at least four civilians, with a further strike on a vehicle in Dilling, South Kordofan, killing two more. Rights groups documented RSF drone attacks killing up to 23 civilians in central Sudan during the week. An IFRC Red Crescent volunteer was killed in North Kordofan. The week's drone toll reflects a deliberate strategy of attiring civilian logistics capacity in areas the RSF cannot hold but can disrupt.

Sudan submitted a letter to the UN Security Council on June 12 alleging that the RSF is running a transnational criminal operation inside its Darfur detention facilities. The document alleged that nearly 20,000 people are held at Daghri Prison in Nyala under conditions of torture and cholera outbreak, and that foreign medical personnel from Colombia and Serbia are harvesting organs from detainees before burying victims secretly to destroy forensic evidence. Separately, the letter described hundreds of detainees including children at Shala Prison in El Fasher, where approximately 300 wounded

detainees are alleged to have died over two months due to absence of medical care. Sudan called on the Security Council and the ICRC to demand immediate access and open an international investigation. The organ trafficking claims have not been independently verified, though the broader pattern of mass detention and lethal conditions in RSF facilities has been corroborated by prior reporting.

Human Rights Watch complicated the accountability picture by urging the SAF to ensure that RSF commanders who defected to the army are held responsible for their prior conduct. Two senior commanders defected since April 2026: Major General Al-Nour Al-Qubba in April, and Commander Ali Rizq Allah, known as Al-Safana, in May, the latter having overseen operations in Kordofan and Darfur. HRW documented both men's presence during El Fasher operations involving unlawful killings and sexual violence. Burhan publicly welcomed Al-Qubba and has issued standing amnesty offers to RSF fighters willing to lay down arms, an offer renewed in February 2026. The SAF's tactical interest in incentivizing defections and the accountability framework's insistence that command responsibility is non-transferable are structurally irreconcilable under the current approach.

The US House Foreign Affairs Committee voted on June 9 to advance H.R. 1939, the US Engagement in Sudanese Peace Act, after removing a provision that would have urged the UN General Assembly to trigger Rule 29 to strip Sudan of its international representation. The Sudanese embassy welcomed the amendment while maintaining its objection to any framework equating the SAF and the RSF. A separate bipartisan sanctions bill was introduced in the Senate. US Senior Advisor Massad Boulos held calls with the UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty on the political track and regional stability, underscoring Cairo's continued centrality to any externally mediated Sudan framework.

The pound hit an unprecedented low of 4,700 to the dollar before recovering partially to 4,400 after the government took over direct petroleum procurement, removing the private sector from fuel imports. The al-Jaili refinery, which previously supplied approximately 70 percent of domestic consumption, remains offline. Khartoum announced a phased teachers' strike beginning June 17, making it the third state after Kassala and Al-Jazirah to face educator industrial action this month, tracing the arc of public sector collapse under wartime conditions.

Sudan's second week of June produced no change in strategic direction but considerable accumulation of evidence about what this war is. The organ trafficking allegations at the Security Council, the HRW documentation of defecting commanders, the five-day fuel infrastructure assault on El Obeid, and the village burnings in Um Baru are not discrete events; they are features of a war in which both parties conduct operations with broad civilian costs and in which the accountability architecture is insufficient to deter either.

The US legislative movement is the most concrete international signal of the week, but a bill still in committee and a sanctions framework without enforcement do not alter the incentives of parties currently dictating facts on the ground. The pound's collapse to 4,700 and the spread of teacher strikes from state-to-state trace what institutional deterioration looks like from the inside: gradual, incremental, and cumulative in ways that will outlast any eventual ceasefire.

3. Egypt

Egypt is aggressively positioning itself as the indispensable regional mediator in the Middle East, driven by the strategic necessity of containing multi-front instability that threatens its own security and economic lifelines. Throughout the week, Cairo repeatedly urged the swift conclusion of a United States–Iran agreement to prevent wider regional escalation. Simultaneously, Egyptian diplomacy remained central to salvaging a truce in Gaza, pressing Israel and Jordan to abide by the UN Security Council's resolution as Israeli fire continued. For Egypt, these mediation efforts are not merely diplomatic posturing; they reflect a vital defensive strategy to secure its borders, prevent refugee spillover, and stabilize an explosive neighborhood that directly imperils its critical Suez Canal revenues and domestic stability.

Transitioning from the Levant to its southern flank, Egypt is executing a coordinated encirclement strategy designed to literally contain Ethiopia, treating Addis Ababa's hydro-hegemonic and maritime ambitions as an existential threat to Egyptian survival. Through high-level, synchronized engagements with Eritrea and Djibouti, Cairo is engineering a strategic arc across the Red Sea corridor to systematically box in its upstream adversary. Egypt's explicit rejection of unilateral destabilizing moves transcends diplomatic rhetoric; it represents an operational doctrine utilizing military pacts and regional alliances to choke off Ethiopia's strategic depth.

Domestically, Cairo is executing aggressive economic adjustments to fortify its resilience against these regional shocks, though structural vulnerabilities persist. A milestone in this effort is Egypt's full clearance of \$6.1 billion in accumulated arrears to foreign oil and gas companies, a critical reset designed to restore investor confidence and revive domestic energy exploration. This energy-sector stabilization aligns with vital food security measures, highlighted by a record wheat procurement from local farmers following structural domestic reforms. However, while inflation showed signs of easing in May, analysts warn that the relief is temporary. These developments underscore Cairo's urgent need to prioritize fundamental resource security over long-term economic transformation, masking an underlying and persistent fiscal fragility.

To sustain these complex domestic and regional balancing acts, Egypt is increasingly anchoring its strategic partnerships with Western allies, particularly the European Union. Culminating the week, Egypt's foreign minister led a prominent delegation to the EU–

Egypt Association Council meeting in Luxembourg. This engagement illustrates Cairo's calculated strategy of leveraging its position as a bulwark against regional chaos and a critical partner in energy and migration control. By tying its domestic economic survival to European security interests, Egypt seeks to extract necessary financial lifelines and political backing. Ultimately, Cairo's proactive diplomacy in Europe remains an essential mechanism for underwriting the massive costs of its regional mediation efforts and mitigating the deep-seated vulnerabilities within its domestic economy.

4. Eritrea

President Isaias Afwerki concluded a three-day visit to Egypt (7–11 June), during which he held extensive talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on bilateral cooperation, Red Sea security, developments in the Horn of Africa, and wider regional issues. According to official statements, the two sides agreed to expand cooperation in sectors including mining, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, maritime transport, connectivity, and port development, while Isaias and his delegation also toured industrial and logistics facilities in the Greater Cairo and Suez Canal zones.

While a range of economic agreements and cooperation frameworks were announced, the significance of the visit appears to lie primarily in its geopolitical dimension rather than its economic content. The visit forms part of an intensifying pattern of engagement between Cairo and Asmara that has accelerated over the past year, including high-level reciprocal visits and growing coordination on regional issues. Particular attention was given to maritime connectivity and the development of Eritrean ports, especially Assab, a location that has become central to Ethiopia's pursuit of sovereign or preferential access to the Red Sea. In this context, the strengthening Egypt–Eritrea partnership is best understood as part of Cairo's broader strategy of using Eritrea as a strategic counterweight to Ethiopia amid continuing tensions over the Nile dispute, Red Sea security, and the balance of power in the Horn of Africa.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea, Mohamed Abdelsalam Babiker, released his annual report to the Human Rights Council, highlighting continued concerns over enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, and restrictions on political, media, and religious freedoms. The report also focused on transnational repression, arguing that Eritrean authorities continue to exert pressure on diaspora communities through intimidation, surveillance, and harassment aimed at suppressing opposition activity and maintaining influence over Eritreans living abroad.

In an opinion piece published by Al Jazeera on 11 June, current Ethiopian officials Getachew Reda and Redwan Hussein argued that Eritrea was among the principal opponents of the 2022 Pretoria Agreement. The authors stated that President Isaias Afwerki viewed reconciliation between the Ethiopian federal government and the TPLF as contrary to Eritrea's interests and subsequently supported actors opposed to the peace

process. The article further stated that Eritrea cultivated ties with hardline factions within the TPLF and elements of Fano, and played a role in the formation of the Tsimdo alliance. According to the authors, Eritrean support has contributed to renewed tensions in northern Ethiopia, including efforts by TPLF hardliners to challenge the post-Pretoria political order and rebuild military capacity. The piece called on international actors to exert pressure on both the TPLF and Asmara to prevent a return to conflict.

The World Health Organization's Regional Director for Africa, Mohamed Yakub Janabi, began an official visit to Eritrea on 12 June, holding meetings with government officials and touring Orotta National Referral Hospital in Asmara. The visit reflects continued engagement between Eritrea and international institutions, particularly in the health sector, despite the country's longstanding political isolation and strained relations with many Western governments.

In an article published on 11 June, *The Economist* argued that Eritrea may be moving toward a gradual normalization of relations with the United States after decades of estrangement. The publication pointed to reports of engagement between senior U.S. officials and President Isaias Afwerki, including discussions on a potential lifting of U.S. sanctions imposed in 2021. According to the article, Washington's interest in Eritrea is driven by broader strategic concerns in the Red Sea and Horn of Africa, including regional stability and maritime security. The piece reflects growing international discussion surrounding a possible "defrosting" of U.S.-Eritrea relations, a development that has gained increasing attention amid heightened geopolitical competition in the region.

5. Djibouti

Between June 8 and June 15, 2026, Djibouti found itself at the center of an increasingly competitive geopolitical environment in the Horn of Africa, where questions of maritime access, regional alignments, sovereignty, and Red Sea security continued to shape strategic calculations. The period was marked by growing diplomatic activity surrounding the future political and economic architecture of the Horn, particularly as regional actors sought to consolidate their positions amid shifting alliances and emerging security dynamics. As the headquarters of IGAD and one of the most strategically located states along the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Djibouti continued to project itself as a stabilizing actor committed to regional cooperation, multilateral engagement, and the preservation of peace and security in one of the world's most important maritime corridors.

A significant development during the week was the launch of an IGAD-led strategic framework focusing on the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Western Indian Ocean maritime space. The initiative emphasized enhanced regional coordination in the management of shared maritime domains, maritime governance, and collective approaches to security challenges affecting coastal states. At the same time, Djiboutian policymakers closely

monitored evolving discussions surrounding Ethiopia's broader maritime access strategy and the emergence of new port and corridor initiatives across the Horn of Africa. Given the deep economic integration between Ethiopia and Djibouti, particularly through trade, logistics, and transport infrastructure, developments affecting regional connectivity naturally attracted considerable attention in Djibouti. Strategic assessments during this period focused on how ongoing infrastructure diversification efforts across the region could influence future patterns of trade, investment, and regional economic integration while preserving the long-standing partnership between Addis Ababa and Djibouti, which remains one of the strongest pillars of stability and economic cooperation in the Horn of Africa.

The week also witnessed heightened diplomatic attention surrounding Somaliland's expanding international engagement and the broader regional debates concerning sovereignty, recognition, and territorial integrity. Djiboutian officials closely followed these developments due to their potential implications for regional institutions, cross-border relations, and the future political landscape of the Horn. These discussions culminated in intensified diplomatic coordination between Djibouti and Egypt, where senior officials from both countries reaffirmed their support for principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and regional stability. Their consultations reflected broader concerns about preserving peace, preventing escalation, and encouraging solutions through dialogue and established diplomatic mechanisms. Collectively, the developments of this period demonstrated Djibouti's continued effort to balance competing regional interests while safeguarding its strategic position as a diplomatic hub, a gateway for regional commerce, and a key stakeholder in the evolving geopolitical landscape of the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa.

6. South Sudan

South Sudan's most significant stories this week reached beyond its borders in both directions: outward, through the abduction and forced rendition of a whistleblower from Nairobi to a military detention facility in Juba; and backward through time, with a landmark UK conviction exposing the arms supply networks that fed the country's wars a decade ago. Together, they illuminate the architecture of a state that has long suppressed dissent through extraterritorial means and armed its conflicts through international brokers willing to exploit the gap between embargo and enforcement.

The most urgent development was the abduction of Athorbey Al-Gaddhaffy-Dit, a 51-year-old South Sudanese businessman and corruption whistleblower who also holds Kenyan citizenship. In the early hours of June 10, armed and masked men seized him outside a casino on the outskirts of Nairobi and bundled him into a white vehicle. Amnesty International Kenya described the incident as bearing "the hallmarks of an enforced disappearance" and demanded the immediate disclosure of his whereabouts. By

June 12, Amnesty had received credible information that Athorbey had been transported by road to the Nadapal border crossing, handed to South Sudanese security personnel, and transferred to a Military Intelligence detention facility at the Giyada military complex in Juba. Community representatives seeking access were told by the head of Military Intelligence that access would be considered only after receiving an internal report explaining the circumstances of his arrest. Al-Gaddhaffy-Dit had repeatedly warned that his life was in danger due to his efforts to expose corruption linked to the South Sudanese ruling elite. His case fits a documented pattern of extraterritorial abductions of dissidents from Kenya to their countries of origin that has drawn repeated condemnation without producing accountability.

Southwark Crown Court delivered verdicts on June 11 in one of the most significant arms trafficking prosecutions in recent British legal history. David Greenhalgh, 68, a British businessman from Croydon, and Christos Farmakis, 48, a Greek national, were convicted on multiple counts of illegal arms brokering under the Export Control Order 2008 following a nine-week trial. Between 2009 and 2016, the two operated a secretive network sourcing weapons from former Soviet states for embargoed destinations including South Sudan, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran. The materiel included Mi-24 combat helicopter gunships, battle tanks, surface-to-air missile systems, fighter jets, and tens of thousands of AK-47 assault rifles. Prosecutors recovered emails showing the men discussing forged end-user certificates and routing through third countries to obscure destinations. Greenhalgh operated through his Airservices group, registered across the UK, Greece, North Macedonia, Hong Kong, and South Sudan. Both face sentencing on July 22. The conviction matters not only as a record of past conduct but as a reminder that the arms flow which shaped South Sudan's most destructive years were enabled by supply networks operating at the deliberate intersection of legal ambiguity and commercial opportunism.

Reporting carried by The New Humanitarian this month documented the continued expulsion of South Sudanese from Sudan, with humanitarian workers tracking nearly 12,000 cases over the past year, far exceeding the 2,853 cited by Sudanese officials. Deportees described armed raids, forced departure without belongings, family separations, and racial abuse. The Renk transit camp in Upper Nile was sheltering 8,000 people in facilities built for 2,000. Juba pledged in April to monitor the situation closely, but diplomatic intervention at a scale commensurate with the reported numbers has not followed.

The Athorbey case is the clearest signal this week of where South Sudan's security apparatus has placed itself relative to its own citizens. Abducting a dual national from Kenyan territory, transporting him across an international border, and holding him incommunicado at a military intelligence facility is not an improvised act; it requires institutional coordination on both sides of the border. The absence of any public

explanation from Juba, and the condition that access would follow only an internal report justifying the detention, suggests a state with no concern about the optics. That posture, combined with the UK arms conviction's reminder of how willing international networks were to treat South Sudan as simply another market during its most violent years, frames the week's news in a register that goes well beyond individual incidents. The state in Juba continues to operate its coercive apparatus with effective impunity, and the external actors most capable of conditioning that behavior have not moved to do so.

7. Somalia and Somaliland

Somalia

In the lead up to the vote in Baidoa the Independent National Electoral and Boundaries Commission issued assurances regarding the integrity of the electoral process pledging to uphold security, political neutrality and the secrecy of the ballot. These commitments were made in direct response to formal complaints lodged by presidential candidates Sharif Sheikh Aden and Abdiiaziz Osman Jawari who had raised concerns about the fairness of the proceedings. The vote was scheduled as part of federal efforts to transition toward more direct forms of election. As the Election Day neared police in Baidoa imposed a city wide curfew to address security concerns while regional lawmakers prepared to cast their ballots in what was an indirect parliamentary vote.

Following that On June 10 Adan Mohamed Nur Madobe, the Speaker of Somalia's federal parliament was elected President of South West State in that parliamentary vote securing 88 votes. His rival Abdiasis Mohamed Sheikh Osman Jawari received a single vote. Madobe was officially sworn into office on June 11 during a formal handover ceremony. The result however was immediately met with fierce denunciation. Former South West State President Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan who had boycotted the process entirely dismissed the election as predetermined and lacking legitimacy. Rival candidate Abdiasis Jawari similarly condemned the process as rigged and not credible.

At the national level President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud addressed the delays in announcing a comprehensive federal election timetable. He explained that the postponement was a deliberate decision to create space for further dialogue given the severe constitutional and electoral crisis facing the country. The President explicitly ruled out any return to the 2012 provisional constitution and defended the administration's push toward direct elections as the necessary path forward. He also signalled that the federal government remains open to initiating fresh talks with the political opposition represented by the Somali Future Council suggesting a potential avenue for de-escalation.

The diplomatic developments of the week revolved around the fallout from Israel's recognition of Somaliland and the deepening bilateral relationship between Somaliland and Israel. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in interviews reported on June 13 offered

his most forceful condemnation of the situation to date. He described the day of Israel's recognition in December 2025 as one of the darkest in Somalia's history characterizing the diplomatic move not as genuine support but as a strategic trap. The President accused Israel of cynically exploiting the dispute between Somalia and Somaliland to advance its own security interests particularly concerning the Red Sea corridor after failing to establish a working relationship with Mogadishu. He stressed that the ultimate defense against such foreign interference lies in building a strong and unified Somali state and expressed confidence that the recognition would not catalyze a wave of broader international acceptance for Somaliland.

Counterterrorism operations against Al-Shabaab continued across the Lower Shabelle region. Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency announced an operational success around June 12 and 13 reporting the seizure of a large cache of explosive chemicals in the Jilib Marka area. The materials allegedly intended for the militant group were discovered buried underground after intelligence indicated that Al-Shabaab operatives had hidden them upon learning that security forces were tracking their movements.

In a separate operation the Ministry of Defence announced that Somali security forces conducted a raid in the Kurtunwaarey district of Lower Shabelle on or around June 14. The operation resulted in the killing of fourteen Al-Shabaab fighters and reportedly targeted specific locations where commanders were present reflecting a continuing tempo of operations aimed at disrupting militant networks in rural areas.

In a development intersecting the security and diplomatic spheres, the Al-Qaeda linked militant group Al-Shabaab issued a public reaction on June 10 to the United States' decision to deny entry to Somali World Cup referee Omar Artan. The group's statement, a rare commentary on a seemingly non-political issue is a further indication of its efforts to insert itself into any narrative with nationalist dimensions and exploit public grievances for propaganda purposes.

The capital Mogadishu narrowly avoided a return to open conflict. On the night of June 11, the city was pushed to the brink of a renewed armed confrontation after the federal government deployed heavily armed troops near an opposition-controlled area raising immediate tensions before the situation was ultimately defused allowing the city to escape a night of bloodshed.

Somaliland

In a parallel and equally historic track high level diplomatic engagement with Israel culminated in the state visit in Somaliland's modern history. On June 14 President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi arrived in Jerusalem for the first ever state visit by a Somaliland president. He was formally welcomed by Israeli President Isaac Herzog with a

series of high level meetings focused on fortifying bilateral cooperation across a range of sectors including security, trade, agriculture, technology, and health. The visit included the official opening of Somaliland's embassy in Israel establishing a permanent diplomatic presence in Jerusalem and a solemn tour of the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial. Both sides characterized the visit as the beginning of a new chapter in their relationship. President Abdullahi called the visit historic and noted that it represented the first full diplomatic welcome for Somaliland in thirty five years. In a powerful display of diplomatic recognition, the flags of Somaliland were displayed throughout Jerusalem during the visit.

Following that Israel opens intelligence base in Somaliland as Somalia warns over. Israel has established an intelligence base in Somaliland and is engaged in discussions with authorities in the region over the possible establishment of an Israeli military base investigative outlet Drop Site reported on Saturday citing regional officials, a development that comes days after Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud warned that Israel's recognition of Somaliland was a trap and that a big problem was coming to Somalia the signs of which he said were already becoming visible.

Somaliland's partnership with Taiwan reached a new milestone with the official opening of a new Representative Office in Taipei on June 12. The event which featured a ribbon cutting ceremony and celebratory proceedings was attended by Taiwan's Deputy Foreign Minister Francois Wu and Somaliland's representative to Taiwan, Mahmoud Adam Jama Galaal. Speaking to reporters at the inauguration Galaal delivered a defense of Somaliland's sovereign right to conduct its foreign policy independently. He described Taiwan as a very important ally and declared that Somaliland has the prerogative to choose its own relationships. Addressing the coordinated pressure from Beijing and Mogadishu to sever ties with Taipei, Galaal stated that such pressure tactics have not succeeded in altering the friendship between the two partners. He emphasized that Somaliland's main political parties remain united in resisting external coercion and noted that his government has not had any recent communication with China.

Somaliland's diplomatic advancements drew a furious response from the Federal Republic of Somalia. The government in Mogadishu issued strong and sustained criticism of both the state visit to Israel and the foundational recognition that preceded it, issuing repeated warnings that such actions would contribute to the destabilization of the Horn of Africa region. A sharp rhetorical exchange persisted between the two sides with Somalia framing the Israeli recognition as a trap and one of the darkest days in its history accusing foreign powers of exploiting the Somalia and Somaliland dispute for their own interests.

8. Yemen

Yemen's Houthi movement announced a ban on Israeli shipping through the Red Sea and claimed to have launched missiles against Israel in response to the ongoing Israel-Iran conflict. The development signals the growing risk of the Yemen theater becoming more directly intertwined with the wider regional confrontation. While the practical implications of the announcement remain uncertain, analysts cited by the publication warned that even limited Houthi enforcement actions could disrupt maritime traffic, increase insurance costs, and heighten pressure on the strategic Red Sea-Bab al-Mandab corridor.

Saudi Arabia reported on 8 June that a ballistic missile was launched from Yemen toward Saudi territory, briefly triggering air-raid sirens in Al-Kharj Governorate before reportedly disappearing near the border. Saudi military spokesman Major General Turki al-Maliki stated that an investigation was underway and rejected reports that the missile had targeted Prince Sultan Air Base. The incident occurred amid escalating regional tensions linked to the Israel-Iran conflict and highlights the continued risk of Yemen becoming a wider theater for regional confrontation.

According to Turkish media outlet Anadolu Ajansı, heavy fighting erupted between Yemeni government forces and Houthi fighters in Hodeidah Governorate on 9 June after the Houthis reportedly launched a large-scale assault on government positions in the Hays district. State broadcaster Al-Yemen TV claimed government forces repelled the attack and inflicted significant casualties on the attackers, although the Houthis had not commented on the reports. The clashes underscore the fragility of the frontlines despite the relative reduction in hostilities since the 2022 UN-brokered truce.

9. Kenya

Kenya's politics between June 8 and June 14, 2026 showed a country trying to project strength abroad while struggling with trust at home. The main story of the week was not only foreign policy or domestic conflict, but the tension between the two. President William Ruto used his European diplomacy to present Kenya as a serious African partner for trade, clean energy, digital growth, maritime links, and global governance reform. At the same time, events inside Kenya raised questions about sovereignty, public participation, civic space, and the government's political legitimacy.

Externally, Kenya looked active and strategically positioned. Ruto's engagements with the European Union, Norway, and Finland showed an attempt to make Kenya more than just a regional economy. The message was that Kenya can be a clean energy manufacturing hub, a digital partner, a maritime gateway through Mombasa and Lamu, and a voice for Africa in international institutions such as the United Nations. Finland's

support for stronger African representation at the UN Security Council also strengthened Kenya's image as a diplomatic bridge between Africa and Europe.

But domestically, the same week exposed serious pressure points. The controversy over the United States linked Ebola quarantine facility at Laikipia Air Base became the clearest sovereignty issue. Many Kenyans questioned why such a sensitive facility should be located in Kenya, especially when courts and activists were demanding transparency. The protest in Nanyuki, where one person was reported killed, turned a health security arrangement into a national debate about foreign influence, public consent, and whether the Kenyan state was protecting citizens or defending external partners.

Internal politics also became more unstable after the High Court upheld former Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua's impeachment while also awarding him damages for violation of his fair hearing rights. This ruling gave both sides something to claim. The government could say the impeachment stood, while Gachagua and his allies could argue that the process was unfair. Instead of closing the matter, the ruling helped turn Gachagua into a useful opposition figure ahead of 2027. His appearance with other opposition leaders in Western Kenya showed that anti Ruto forces were testing a broader political alliance.

The budget added another layer of pressure. The government presented a KSh 4.82 trillion budget while trying to manage debt, fuel prices, inflation, and public anger. The Central Bank kept its policy rate at 8.75%, showing caution in the face of oil and cost of living pressures. But the opposition's "People's Budget" and the attack on a post-budget forum at All Saints Cathedral showed that fiscal policy was not just an economic issue. It was becoming a legitimacy issue.

Overall, Kenya ended the week stronger internationally than internally. Its foreign policy was ambitious and coherent, especially toward Europe. But at home, the government faced distrust over foreign security arrangements, the budget, police conduct, civic space, and political fairness. The deeper lesson is that Kenya's geopolitical power depends not only on diplomacy abroad, but also on legitimacy at home. If the state cannot manage public consent, court authority, and civic freedoms, its external partnerships may begin to look like elite diplomacy disconnected from ordinary citizens.

10. The Gulf Countries

Saudi Arabia

Turkey and Saudi Arabia signed agreements on 10 June to develop a railway corridor linking the two countries through Syria and Jordan, with long-term plans to extend the network toward Oman. According to Israeli media outlet The Times of Israel, the project is being presented as an alternative overland trade route that would reduce dependence on vulnerable maritime chokepoints, particularly the Strait of Hormuz. Turkish officials also

portrayed the initiative as strengthening regional economic integration while reducing Israel's role in emerging East-West connectivity projects. The development reflects a broader regional push to diversify trade corridors amid persistent security risks affecting maritime routes in both the Red Sea and the Gulf.

According to Turkish media outlet Anadolu Ajansı, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia welcomed what they described as the final stage of negotiations between the United States and Iran during a telephone conversation between Foreign Ministers Ishaq Dar and Prince Faisal bin Farhan on 13 June. The two ministers expressed optimism that a prospective agreement would contribute to regional stability and reduce tensions across the Middle East. The discussion reflects broader regional support for diplomatic efforts to institutionalize the ceasefire that followed the US-Iran conflict, with Gulf and regional states increasingly prioritizing de-escalation and the security of critical trade and energy corridors.

UAE

Ethiopia's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Jemal Beker, highlighted the growing strategic partnership between Addis Ababa and Abu Dhabi, describing bilateral relations as a model partnership that has deepened significantly since 2018. In remarks to the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), the ambassador pointed to expanding cooperation in investment, renewable energy, technology, and infrastructure, while promoting Ethiopia as an increasingly attractive destination for foreign investment. The comments reflect the continued importance of the UAE as one of Ethiopia's most influential economic and diplomatic partners in the Gulf, with relations remaining a key pillar of Ethiopia's broader Middle East engagement.

Reuters reported on 12 June that the United Arab Emirates had agreed to unlock between US\$10–20 billion in frozen Iranian funds as part of broader efforts to support a US-brokered de-escalation process between Washington and Tehran. According to Reuters' sources, the arrangement was linked to Iranian commitments to halt attacks against the UAE and improve bilateral relations. However, the UAE's Foreign Ministry issued a categorical denial shortly after publication, rejecting claims that any frozen Iranian assets had been released or transferred. Regardless of the veracity of the reports, the episode highlights the extent to which Gulf states are actively seeking to insulate themselves from the consequences of escalating US-Iran tensions while preserving regional stability and the security of key commercial routes.

11. Africa and The Sahel Region

Mali

Between June 8 and June 15, 2026, Mali confronted one of its most serious security challenges in recent years as armed groups expanded operations across multiple regions of the country. A particularly significant development was the emergence of coordinated activity between the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) and the Al-Qaeda-linked Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), a convergence that altered the security landscape and placed additional pressure on the transitional authorities led by Assimi Goïta. Armed operations intensified across northern and central Mali, with insurgent actors expanding their operational reach and increasing pressure on government-controlled areas. The evolving battlefield dynamics underscored the persistent challenges facing Bamako as it seeks to extend state authority across vast and difficult-to-govern territories.

The situation escalated further when JNIM publicly announced a substantial reward for information regarding the whereabouts of Assimi Goïta, reflecting an effort to increase psychological pressure on the state while signaling confidence in its expanding operational capabilities. These developments highlighted the increasingly fragmented nature of Mali's security environment, where multiple armed actors continue to compete for influence across strategic regions. The growing intensity of insurgent operations has raised concerns about governance, territorial control, and the capacity of state institutions to maintain security in remote areas. Consequently, Mali remains one of the principal security flashpoints in the Sahel, with developments carrying implications not only for the country itself but also for neighboring states confronting similar militant threats.

Burkina Faso

Between June 8 and June 15, 2026, Burkina Faso continued pursuing an economic strategy centered on state-led development, infrastructure expansion, and alternative financing mechanisms designed to reduce vulnerability to external financial constraints. Under the leadership of Ibrahim Traoré, the government advanced a broad infrastructure agenda that included large-scale transport and development projects aimed at improving national connectivity and supporting long-term economic transformation. These initiatives formed part of the administration's wider vision of economic self-reliance and domestic capacity building, reflecting efforts to maintain development momentum despite challenging regional and international economic conditions.

At the same time, authorities intensified efforts to mobilize investment through public-private partnership frameworks. Following consultations led by Prime Minister Rimtalba Jean-Emmanuel Ouédraogo, the government approved a portfolio of priority projects concentrated in the energy, health, and infrastructure sectors. The strategy was designed to attract financing for critical development needs while limiting additional sovereign debt

exposure. These measures illustrated Burkina Faso's ongoing effort to balance economic modernization, infrastructure development, and fiscal sustainability at a time when regional security pressures and international financial constraints continue to influence policymaking.

Chad

Between June 8 and June 15, 2026, Chad remained at the center of the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in neighboring Sudan, continuing to absorb large numbers of refugees crossing its eastern frontier. The sustained influx placed increasing pressure on local administrations, humanitarian agencies, and public services, reinforcing Chad's role as one of the principal frontline states affected by the Sudanese crisis. Refugee settlements expanded as new arrivals continued to seek safety, creating growing demands for food assistance, healthcare, shelter, and protection services across already vulnerable regions of eastern Chad.

These challenges were compounded by significant reductions in available humanitarian funding, forcing aid organizations and government institutions to reassess operational priorities and scale back planned assistance programs. The contraction of humanitarian resources created concerns about the long-term sustainability of support mechanisms in refugee-hosting areas and increased pressure on border management systems, healthcare facilities, and local communities. As a result, Chad's security and humanitarian environment became increasingly interconnected, with refugee protection, economic resilience, and border stability emerging as critical issues for both national authorities and international partners seeking to manage the broader regional consequences of the Sudan conflict.

12. North Africa

Morocco

The Western Sahara item centers on renewed fighting in the Mahbes sector. Sahrawi forces said they hit three Moroccan military positions and caused material losses, adding another episode to an already tense conflict zone. The significance goes beyond the immediate strike: it shows that the dispute remains active and capable of producing sudden military escalation. For readers, the key point is that the confrontation is still shaping the security environment in the far west of North Africa, with no sign of a durable de-escalation.)

The Libya-Morocco item moves in the opposite direction, toward economic cooperation. The Libyan Export Development Authority and Morocco's Agency for Investment and Export Development signed an MoU in Rabat to expand export promotion, investment support, market research, training, trade fairs, and the exchange of expertise. That makes

the story less about symbolism than about practical commercial links, suggesting a shared interest in rebuilding business ties across the Maghreb. Placed after the Western Sahara report, it gives the brief a more constructive close by showing that regional relations are not only shaped by conflict, but also by efforts to create trade opportunities.

Algeria

Algeria's strongest regional message this week was its condemnation of the attacks targeting Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain. The Foreign Ministry said Algeria firmly rejected any move that could undermine the sovereignty, security, and stability of those states, and regional reporting described the incidents as Iranian missile and drone attacks that prompted wider Arab concern about escalation. That makes this item the most urgent in the set: it is about immediate security, but it also shows Algeria presenting itself as a defender of Arab sovereignty and regional stability. It sets the tone for the second item, which moves from crisis response to diplomacy and cooperation.

Against that backdrop, Sudan is now signaling a more constructive track with Algeria. The newly appointed ambassador, Abdelhafid El-Awad Sid Ahmed El-Fekki, said Khartoum wants to strengthen distinguished ties and expand bilateral cooperation with Algeria across all sectors, while President Abdelmadjid Tebboune formally received the credentials of Sudan's new ambassador the same day. Read together, the two reports suggest that Algeria's foreign policy is not limited to reacting to regional shocks; it is also working to deepen practical economic and political links with partners in North and Northeast Africa. This continuity from security solidarity to economic diplomacy gives the week's coverage a clear and coherent arc.

Libya

Libya has moved back to the center of Europe's migration politics because arrivals from the Libyan route are now shaping policy in Athens and beyond. Greece's new law speeds up deportations of rejected asylum seekers and opens the door to "return hubs" outside the European Union, a sign that migration control is increasingly being externalized to third countries. The practical driver is the renewed pressure on Crete and Gavdos, where migrant flows from Libya have revived fears of a new maritime corridor across the central Mediterranean. The result is a more defensive European posture, with Libya treated less as a distant transit state and more as a frontline in border management.

The detention of Gaza-flotilla activists in Benghazi adds a different but related layer: eastern Libya is not only a transit zone, but also a political space where security authority is used to control movement and shape external attention. According to the reporting, around ten activists were detained after being stopped near Sirte and taken to Benghazi, including Italian citizens whose case quickly became a diplomatic issue in Rome. The episode matters because it links Libyan internal security practice with wider Gaza

solidarity politics, turning a local detention decision into an international test of leverage, access, and legitimacy.

That same incident also shows how eastern Libya's authorities can turn detention into a form of diplomacy. By holding foreign activists associated with a Gaza-bound convoy, Benghazi signaled both its security priorities and its willingness to manage sensitive regional symbolism on its own terms. Italy's public appeals for release, and the broader anger over access to the detainees, exposed the limits of European influence when eastern Libyan institutions decide that an issue touches border control, political order, or relations with actors outside Libya. In that sense, the case was not just about one convoy; it was a reminder that Libya's fragmented authority structure still gives local power centers room to project themselves outward.

At the continental level, Libya remains firmly on the African Union's security agenda, which reinforces how unresolved the country's political and military division still is. The Peace and Security Council scheduled a dedicated briefing on the situation, showing that Libya is still treated as a live regional file rather than a settled post-conflict case. That matters because AU attention often tracks not only internal instability, but also the spillovers from migration, armed fragmentation, and external interference. Libya's persistence on the Council's docket suggests that African institutions still see the country as a node where domestic breakdown can quickly become a broader regional security problem.

The wider Mediterranean context pulls these strands together. Even where direct protests or sharp incidents fall outside the narrow window, the policy direction is unmistakable: European states are hardening return rules, migration flows through the central Mediterranean remain politically sensitive, and Libya continues to sit at the center of that pressure system. Recent European migration data show overall crossings falling, but the Libyan route remains strategically important because it connects North African instability, Greek border stress, and EU debates over offshore processing. For Libya, that means external actors are reading the country less as a standalone crisis and more as a corridor through which security, migration, and diplomacy increasingly converge.

13. Middle East

Iran-Israel Conflict

The week was defined by a fragile shift from direct confrontation to conditional pause, but not to genuine settlement. The fighting showed that neither Iran nor Israel was willing to back away fully, yet both were also aware that the costs of uncontrolled escalation were rising quickly. What emerged was not peace, but a tense equilibrium in which military pressure, diplomatic messaging, and domestic politics were all moving at once. The conflict widened beyond a simple bilateral exchange and became tied to Lebanon, the

Strait of Hormuz, sanctions relief, and the internal legitimacy of each leadership. That is why the apparent de-escalation should be read less as resolution than as a temporary containment of a much broader crisis.

The first turning point was the direct exchange of strikes and counterstrikes, followed by hurried signals that both sides might stand down if the other did the same. That pause was immediately undermined by warnings that further attacks, especially through the Lebanon front, could reignite the confrontation. The important point is that restraint was never unconditional. Each side framed the pause as a test of the other side's behavior, not as an acceptance of a new status quo. This made the ceasefire inherently unstable, because every local incident could be interpreted as proof that the other side was cheating, provoking, or exploiting the lull.

Israel's role during the week was shaped by a dual logic of deterrence and political positioning. On one hand, Israeli leaders wanted to signal that any renewed attack would be met forcefully, preserving the image of military resolve. On the other hand, they were clearly aware that the emerging diplomacy could affect Israel's strategic room to maneuver. That created an awkward balance: too much escalation risked undermining the diplomatic track, while too much restraint risked appearing weak at home. The result was a posture that looked cautious in public but remained aggressive in principle. Israel was not only responding to events; it was also trying to shape the terms of whatever regional arrangement might follow.

The Lebanon front remained central throughout the week and prevented the crisis from narrowing into a purely Iran-Israel issue. Hezbollah and the southern Beirut area repeatedly reappeared as flashpoints, showing that the war's political geometry extended beyond formal state-to-state exchange. Iran treated Lebanon as a strategic lever inside the wider negotiations, while Israel saw Hezbollah as an active threat that could not be separated from the Iran file. This overlap made every strike or counterstrike more consequential than it might otherwise have been. A local escalation in Lebanon had the power to disturb the entire diplomatic structure, which is why the ceasefire remained so exposed to disruption even when the main actors were publicly signaling caution.

The diplomatic track itself was marked by speed, ambiguity, and competing narratives. Washington tried to turn battlefield pressure into a negotiated off-ramp, while Tehran insisted on preserving its red lines and keeping the agreement from looking like surrender. The gap between the two sides was not just about substance; it was also about control over timing, framing, and political ownership of the deal. One side wanted a fast, dramatic announcement. The other wanted a process that could survive domestic scrutiny. That mismatch made the talks unusually brittle. Even when both sides suggested that a deal was near, they were still arguing over what the deal meant, who would benefit, and how it would be sold at home.

The Strait of Hormuz became one of the most important bargaining chips of the week because it linked the conflict to global energy security. Any promise to reopen or stabilize the waterway immediately lowered market anxiety, but the strait also gave Iran a way to turn military pressure into diplomatic leverage. That is why sanctions relief, frozen assets, and shipping guarantees became part of the same negotiation space. The practical logic was straightforward: Iran wanted concrete economic relief, not symbolic language, and it wanted the agreement to reflect its ability to shape regional trade flows. The result was a deal structure that looked temporary and transactional rather than final, because the most sensitive issues were being postponed rather than solved.

Inside Iran, the talks exposed a familiar tension between relief and resistance. War fatigue, inflation, and broader economic strain created a strong public appetite for any arrangement that could reduce pressure. At the same time, hardliners and skeptics worried that the leadership might trade away too much for too little. That made the domestic political environment highly unstable, because any agreement had to be presented as both a survival strategy and a victory. The leadership therefore needed to show that it had preserved national dignity while also easing economic pain. This balancing act was difficult because the public mood was shifting toward pragmatism, but the political system still contained strong incentives to resist anything that looked like a concession under fire.

In Israel, domestic politics added another layer of pressure. The war unfolded against the backdrop of election calculations, coalition fragility, and public debate over trust in external partners. Netanyahu's position was especially complicated because he had to appear decisive on security while also avoiding a strategic outcome that could be seen as imposed from outside. Polling trends, opposition momentum, and the broader question of whether Washington still viewed Israeli security as a central concern all mattered because they affected the credibility of his leadership. The government therefore had to manage two audiences at once: the regional adversary and the Israeli electorate. That is one reason the public posture stayed hard even when the diplomacy was softening.

The week's larger lesson is that the conflict has moved into a more complex phase rather than a calmer one. The military exchange exposed how quickly deterrence can fail, the diplomacy showed how quickly crisis management can harden into bargaining, and the domestic politics in both countries revealed how tightly foreign policy is now tied to internal legitimacy. The apparent truce lowered immediate risk, but it did not remove the structural drivers of escalation. Lebanon remains volatile, Iran's economic pressure remains severe, Israel's political scene remains unsettled, and the U.S. role remains central but contested. The conflict may have paused, but the conditions that produced it are still in place.

Turkey

Turkey spent the week trying to turn regional turbulence into strategic leverage, but the tone of the reporting shows a government still reacting to events as much as shaping them. Erdoğan's warning that attacks on Syria and Lebanon also threaten Turkey was not just rhetorical support for those theaters; it was a signal that Ankara now sees the Israel-Iran-Lebanon arc as part of its own security perimeter. That framing matters because it widens Turkey's threat map and gives the government more room to justify a harder regional posture. At the same time, it ties Turkish policy even more tightly to the pace of wider Middle East escalation.

The central bank's decision to leave rates at 37% reinforced how deeply that regional shock is feeding into domestic policy. Holding steady for a third straight meeting, while energy prices remain elevated and inflation stayed above 32% in May, suggests the bank is prioritizing stability overgrowth and waiting to see how far the conflict-driven energy shock runs. That is a cautious stance, but it also reveals a narrow policy corridor: Turkey is vulnerable because it imports so much energy, so external conflict quickly becomes a monetary-policy problem at home. In practical terms, the war has interrupted the easing cycle and made inflation management more defensive.

Domestic politics remains the other major pressure point. The CHP crisis deepened as rival leaders held duelling meetings, after a court annulled the party's 2023 congress and reinstated Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. Then Özgür Özel's team resigned from the party assembly to force an extraordinary chairman vote, showing that the fight is now procedural as well as political. The broader significance is that Turkey's main opposition is being pushed into a legal and organizational struggle at exactly the moment when the government faces regional shocks. That combination tends to help incumbents, because opposition disarray weakens any coherent alternative and makes every internal dispute look like a test of democratic resilience.

Trade diplomacy with Canada offered a very different picture, but it fits the same logic of risk management. The two sides agreed to launch exploratory talks on a free-trade agreement, and energy cooperation was placed near the center of the discussion, including renewable and nuclear options. That is more than a standard trade opening. It shows Turkey trying to diversify partnerships while global supply chains and regional energy routes remain unstable. The mention of Canadian CANDU technology is especially telling, because it links trade to energy security and long-term industrial policy. In a week shaped by war risk and inflation pressure, Ankara was clearly looking for external economic buffers.

Turkey's climate diplomacy also carried a strategic, not just environmental, logic. As host of the upcoming COP31 summit, it proposed a voluntary target for electricity to make up 35% of global energy demand by 2035. Because the proposal is non-binding and sits in

the summit's action agenda, it functions less like a treaty demand and more like a political platform. The message is that electrification can reduce exposure to volatile fossil-fuel markets, which gives the initiative relevance far beyond climate branding. Turkey is trying to position itself as a convening power on energy transition while also speaking to the immediate instability created by the conflict in the Middle East.

The NATO protest in Ankara added an important political layer to the week's external diplomacy. Demonstrations against the upcoming summit showed that NATO will not be treated as a routine alliance meeting; it will be a contested stage for anti-war, anti-U.S., and pro-Palestinian messaging as well. The imagery from the protest, including slogans directed at NATO over Palestine and Iran, suggests that the summit will be read through the region's crises rather than only through alliance management. That matters for Turkey because it is hosting the meeting while also trying to project itself as both a NATO member and a regional mediator. The protest highlights the gap between state diplomacy and public sentiment.

The rail-link agreement with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria shows Turkey trying to turn geography into strategy. The proposed corridor is framed as a logistics and transport project, but it is really a regional integration plan with security implications. Linking Turkey to the Gulf through Syria and Jordan would reduce reliance on vulnerable maritime routes and create a commercial alternative at a time when Hormuz disruption is a real concern. The fact that the route already exists in parts, while a major section between Syria and Jordan remains unfinished, makes the project both practical and symbolic: it is a bet that infrastructure can follow diplomacy and help lock in a new regional order.

The Gaziantep gathering with Turkish and Syrian officials pushed that same logic further south. Bringing ministers, officials, and business representatives together in the same setting signals that economic normalization with Syria is no longer just a theoretical future; it is becoming an operational agenda. The summit's focus on trade, investment, customs gates, and logistics points to a slow rebuilding of cross-border connections after years of rupture. This matters because Turkey's Syria policy has always been tied to security, refugees, and border management. A business-led opening in Gaziantep suggests Ankara is now trying to convert limited normalization into tangible economic and administrative gains.

Thus, the week shows a Turkey that is responding to a more dangerous region by multiplying its options: harder security language, tighter monetary caution, active trade diversification, climate branding, and selective normalization with Syria and the Gulf. The common thread is not coherence in the abstract, but adaptation under pressure. Ankara is trying to protect itself from regional shocks while also using those shocks to justify new partnerships and new leverage. The weakness in that approach is obvious:

domestic political strain, unresolved opposition conflict, and exposure to energy volatility all limit how far Turkey can push. The strength is that it is not standing still.

Syria

Russia's discussion of a possible reformatting of its military facilities in Syria is the clearest sign that Moscow is recalibrating rather than simply holding its ground. The key point is not withdrawal but adaptation: the bases at Tartous and Hmeimim remain strategically important to Russia's Mediterranean reach, yet their purpose may be changing as the political environment around Syria shifts. That makes the military question the starting point for understanding Syria's current external posture, because it shows how one major power is trying to preserve influence while adjusting to a different balance of power on the ground.

The proposed rail corridor from Turkey and Saudi Arabia points to a second, more constructive layer of change. A line running through Jordan and Syria would reconnect freight, energy, passengers, and pilgrimage traffic across a missing regional segment, while also linking the Gulf, Turkey, and eventually Europe through a single logistics chain. The project matters analytically because infrastructure is becoming a vehicle for political normalization: Syria is not just being discussed as a conflict zone, but as territory that may once again anchor regional trade, reconstruction, and long-term commercial planning.

Against that economic backdrop, the Group of Seven meeting in France shows how Syria's surroundings are being shaped by a broader regional reset. The summit came just after the United States and Iran announced a preliminary agreement to end their war, and its agenda also included Ukraine, global economic imbalances, and supply chains for critical minerals. Syria is not the headline issue there, but the implication is clear: when major powers are recalibrating their approach to Iran and wider Middle East security, Damascus feels the effects indirectly through sanctions expectations, partner behavior, and the willingness of regional states to invest or coordinate.

The same logic applies to the article on Trump's exit strategy in the Iran war. The framework points toward a ceasefire extension, reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and later talks over sanctions relief and Iran's nuclear file, but it also leaves major questions unresolved. For Syria, that combination of de-escalation and fragility matters because lower regional tension could reduce spillover pressure, while any breakdown could quickly restore it. In other words, Syria's room for maneuver now depends less on its own isolated dynamics than on whether the U.S.-Iran thaw becomes durable enough to reshape the region around it.

The UN chief's warning ties the whole picture together by underscoring how unstable the wider Middle East remains. He has urged a return to ceasefire and expressed deep concern

that escalation could spread further, which is exactly why Syria cannot be read in isolation from developments around it. Even when Syria is not the direct subject, the regional security climate still shapes displacement, border politics, investor confidence, and the behavior of outside powers. The broader takeaway is that Syria is entering a period in which military posture, infrastructure planning, and diplomacy are moving in parallel, but each remains vulnerable to shocks from the wider regional arena.

14. Global Powers

The United States spent the week navigating a rapid transition from military escalation to diplomatic de-escalation in the Middle East, while simultaneously preparing to redirect attention toward great-power competition, Ukraine, and economic security issues.

The week began on 8 June when President Trump announced that final negotiations were underway to end the confrontation with Iran. His remarks signaled growing confidence within Washington that months of tensions, military incidents, and maritime disruptions could be resolved through diplomacy rather than further escalation. At the same time, U.S. officials continued coordinating closely with regional mediators, particularly Pakistan and Qatar, to maintain momentum toward a settlement.

The situation deteriorated sharply on 9 June when Iran reportedly shot down a U.S. Apache helicopter near the Strait of Hormuz, creating the most serious direct military confrontation between the two countries during the crisis. The incident immediately heightened fears of a wider regional war and prompted strong reactions from Washington. While diplomatic channels remained open, the United States also increased pressure on Tehran through the International Atomic Energy Agency, working with European allies to advance criticism of Iran's nuclear activities. This reflected Washington's dual-track approach of combining negotiations with sustained strategic pressure.

The military dimension intensified further on 10 June when U.S. forces launched retaliatory strikes against Iranian military targets linked to the helicopter incident. Throughout the following days, American naval and air assets remained on heightened alert across the Gulf region to protect shipping routes and secure the Strait of Hormuz. Despite this military posture, diplomacy accelerated rather than collapsed.

Between 10 and 13 June, intensive negotiations took place involving the United States, Iran, Pakistan, and Qatar. During this period, President Trump also held important consultations with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. These discussions became increasingly significant as Washington reportedly urged restraint from Israel and other regional actors whose actions could jeopardize the emerging agreement. Managing allies became almost as important as managing adversaries, reflecting the delicate nature of the negotiations.

As progress became more visible, Washington also began shifting diplomatic attention toward broader strategic priorities. Preparations for the G7 Summit highlighted growing U.S. concern regarding critical minerals, supply-chain resilience, artificial intelligence governance, and economic competition with China.

By 12–14 June, negotiations had entered their final phase. Discussions centered on reopening the Strait of Hormuz, ending hostilities, easing maritime restrictions, and establishing a framework for future talks on sanctions and Iran's nuclear program.

The breakthrough came on 14 June when President Trump announced that a preliminary agreement had been reached with Iran. The framework reportedly included a 60-day ceasefire, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, the lifting of the U.S. naval blockade on Iranian ports, and a commitment to continue negotiations on unresolved issues. Pakistan emerged as one of the key diplomatic beneficiaries of the agreement due to its mediation role. On the same day, Trump held a significant phone conversation with Vladimir Putin, discussing Ukraine, Iran, and broader security issues, indicating that Washington was already looking beyond the immediate Middle East crisis.

The administration spent the remainder of the weekend working to preserve the agreement by encouraging restraint across the region and preventing actions that could undermine the fragile settlement.

On 15 June, as leaders gathered for the G7 Summit in France, the U.S.-Iran agreement became the dominant international issue. Nevertheless, discussions quickly expanded to encompass Ukraine, China, critical minerals, supply chains, and artificial intelligence. This shift reinforced the view that the United States sees strategic competition with China and the future of the international economic order as its primary long-term concerns.

The economic impact of the agreement was immediate. Global oil prices declined and financial markets responded positively as fears of prolonged disruption in the Strait of Hormuz eased. Given the waterway's importance to global energy flows, the reopening of Hormuz represented not only a diplomatic success but also a significant contribution to international economic stability.

On 9 June, China's Foreign Ministry announced that Beijing was prepared to deepen exchanges and cooperation with North Korea across multiple sectors. The statement came as the international community continued to scrutinize growing Russia–North Korea military cooperation. Beijing's message was significant as it signaled that China intends to remain the principal external stakeholder on the Korean Peninsula and does not want North Korea drifting exclusively into Russia's orbit.

Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing participated in a video conference convened by French President Emmanuel Macron ahead of the G7 Summit. Beijing emphasized economic cooperation, inclusive growth, and opposition to trade fragmentation. The move

was significant because China sought to influence the international agenda before G7 leaders discussed economic security, supply chains, and China-related concerns.

China announced that Myanmar leader Min Aung Hlaing would undertake a state visit to China from 15–19 June at the invitation of Xi Jinping. The timing is important because it underscores Beijing's continued role as the most influential external actor in Myanmar despite international isolation of the junta. For China, stability in Myanmar is directly linked to border security, Belt and Road infrastructure, and access to the Indian Ocean.

Attention focused on Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his engagement with Russia and ASEAN partners. Beijing is carefully watching whether Manila continues deepening security cooperation with Washington while simultaneously maintaining regional diplomatic engagement. The Philippines remains the frontline state in China's maritime competition with the United States.

The most important diplomatic development occurred on 14 June when President Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a 55-minute phone conversation. According to the Kremlin, Trump emphasized that ending the war in Ukraine remained a priority and expressed readiness to work with European partners and Kyiv to pursue a settlement. Putin, however, reportedly argued that recent Ukrainian attacks would not alter battlefield realities and suggested that some Western proposals could prolong the conflict. The discussion also covered the emerging U.S.-Iran agreement, which Putin welcomed as a positive step toward regional stability.

The call was followed by indications that American envoys would continue visiting Russia to explore pathways toward a negotiated settlement. Although no immediate breakthrough emerged, the conversation demonstrated that Washington and Moscow remain engaged at the highest political level despite ongoing hostilities.

On the Ukrainian side, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also held discussions with Trump ahead of the G7 Summit. Zelenskyy argued that recent battlefield developments had created new opportunities for diplomacy and reiterated his interest in pursuing a just peace. The parallel Trump-Zelenskyy and Trump-Putin conversations highlighted Washington's continued role as the principal external actor attempting to facilitate negotiations.

15. Europe

Ahead of the G7 Summit, European policymakers increasingly discussed whether direct engagement with Putin may eventually become necessary. This reflects a growing recognition in parts of Europe that any eventual settlement will require some form of dialogue with Moscow, even as military support for Ukraine continues.

As negotiations between Washington and Tehran accelerated, Britain aligned itself with European partners in supporting a diplomatic resolution while maintaining pressure on Iran's nuclear program. The most consequential development came on 14 June when Britain, France, Germany, and Italy indicated they were prepared to consider sanctions relief if Iran complied with nuclear-related commitments under the emerging U.S.-Iran framework. This marked one of the clearest European endorsements of the diplomatic track pursued by Washington.

By 15 June, Britain's attention shifted to the G7 Summit in France. London supported discussions on Ukraine, the implementation of the U.S.-Iran agreement, critical minerals, economic security, and China's role in global supply chains. British policymakers viewed these issues as increasingly interconnected components of long-term strategic competition.

President Emmanuel Macron spent much of the week preparing the diplomatic agenda for the summit. Macron's objective was to prevent divisions among Western allies while maintaining focus on Ukraine, economic security, critical minerals, artificial intelligence, and relations with China. France also sought to keep the United States fully engaged in multilateral diplomacy following months of turbulence in transatlantic relations.

Following the announcement of the U.S.-Iran agreement on 14 June, Macron confirmed that reopening the Strait of Hormuz and the future of the agreement would become major discussion points at the G7. Given France's longstanding role in negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, Paris viewed the agreement as an opportunity to stabilize the Middle East while preserving international non-proliferation mechanisms.

On 15 June, France officially opened the G7 Summit in Évian-les-Bains. The gathering quickly became dominated by discussions on the U.S.-Iran deal, Ukraine, economic imbalances, critical minerals, and China's growing influence in the global economy. Macron also invited leaders from countries including Kenya, India, Brazil, and South Korea as part of France's effort to broaden engagement with emerging powers.

16. International and Regional Organizations

United Nation

On 15 June, the UN Security Council convened a private meeting on the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM). The briefers were Raisedon Zenenga (Deputy Special Representative for Somalia and Officer in Charge of UNTMIS) and Amb. El-Hadji Ibrahima Diene (SRCC and Head of AUSSOM).

Ahead of the meeting, Somalia raised concerns about including a UNTMIS briefer, preferring that discussions focus solely on AUSSOM and its operational challenges particularly persistent funding shortfalls and support from UNSOS. Somalia was

reportedly supported by fellow A3 members (DRC and Liberia). However, Colombia, as Council president, kept Zenenga as a briefer, citing precedents and the need to present the Secretary-General's 29 May report under resolution 2809.

Zenenga briefed on the Secretary-General's report, which warned that UNTMIS's transition is taking place amid growing political divisions in Somalia and severe funding constraints. The report noted that UNSOS is facing a \$130 million shortfall, leading to cost-cutting measures such as reducing aviation assets, delaying helicopter deployments, and limiting infrastructure repairs. Without additional funding, some activities may be scaled back or terminated.

Ambassador Diene briefed on AUSSOM's support for Somali-led operations against Al-Shabaab. A joint assessment indicated that while AUSSOM maintains deployments across 49 locations, Al-Shabaab still retains the capacity to carry out asymmetric attacks. The report called for accelerated force generation, a benchmark-based framework for transferring security responsibilities, and a joint monitoring mechanism.

AUSSOM's long-term financing is a major concern. For 2025, the mission faces a funding gap of about \$38.5 million out of a total budget of \$154.7 million. Council members remain divided on how to address this: the US opposes using UN-assessed contributions under resolution 2719, while Somalia and others support it. Several members called for broadening the donor base and promoting cost-sharing. Without a clear financing arrangement, Council members warned that AUSSOM's effectiveness could be undermined, risking a security vacuum and reversing hard-won gains in Somalia.

Africa Union

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, received Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Gedion Timothewos, that was a bilateral diplomatic engagement between the AU Commission leadership and the Ethiopian Foreign Minister on June 9, 2026. The discussions focused on ongoing AU institutional reforms, with particular attention to securing sustainable financing for the Union.

The Chairperson thanked Kenyan President H.E. William Ruto for his leadership as AU Reform Champion and briefed Minister Timothewos on progress achieved so far. Both leaders emphasized that predictable and sustainable financing is essential for an independent, effective, and sovereign African Union. They reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with all Member States to advance this critical agenda.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Following the 73rd Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF 73), held in Addis Ababa last May, IGAD continues to prioritize climate resilience and regional preparedness. The forum's technical forecast warns of a high likelihood of below-normal

rainfall for the June–September 2026 season across much of the northern Greater Horn of Africa. Elevated risks are expected in parts of Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, and western and coastal Kenya. In response, IGAD and its Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) are urging early action. Key focus areas include food security, livestock mobility, disaster risk reduction, and conflict-sensitive climate adaptation all while building on existing peace and resilience initiatives across the region.

IGAD maintained engagement on Somalia’s political and security situation, consistent with its earlier calls for de-escalation amid tensions in Mogadishu. The organization advanced cross-border cooperation, including efforts on transhumance, refugee protection, and countering hate speech/disinformation, as highlighted in its recent weekly updates.



HORN **REVIEW**

IDEAS CONNECTIONS SYNERGY

Ideas | Connections | Synergy
