



Weekly Geopolitical Report

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

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Horn Review: Weekly Report

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1. Ethiopia

Ethiopia advanced its national interest in restoring order and constitutional authority when federal forces and allied Tigray Peace Force fighters retook Mekelle October after TPLF withdrawal, which the rebels described as temporary to spare the city further destruction. The federal government quickly worked to re-establish administration, restore telecommunications and essential services, impose measures for security, and invite resident participation in building new local structures aimed at eventual elections, thereby reducing the risk of prolonged urban chaos and civilian suffering. Federal police later deployed across the city calling on residents to assist in forming a new administration, the Tigray Peace Force imposed a curfew, and the National Rehabilitation Commission designated reception points for combatants willing to enter the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration process, further supporting stabilization and civilian recovery.

This domestic recovery coincided with the formal launch of a new five-year political chapter. On 5 October the House of Peoples' Representatives opened its seventh term, appointed and swore in Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed for a second mandate under the Medemer Government following the Prosperity Party's electoral success, and set the stage for institutional consolidation focused on national unity, development and resilience against internal and external pressures. In his address that day the Prime Minister reaffirmed Ethiopia's determination to assert its interests on its own terms, pursue reliable Red Sea access through dialogue and mutual benefit, complete major infrastructure and agricultural gains such as wheat self-sufficiency, advance macroeconomic reforms, and strengthen the country's role as a decisive regional anchor while navigating external challenges including those related to the Nile.

On the same day Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a clear and principled press statement responding to the El-Alamein Joint Declaration signed by the leaders of Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia. Although the declaration made no direct reference to Ethiopia, its positions on Red Sea governance as the exclusive preserve of littoral states and rejection of unilateral Nile measures engaged established Ethiopian interests. The statement grounded regional discussion in enduring geographic and historical facts, recording that the Ethiopian highlands generate approximately 85 percent of the Nile's total flow through the Abay and that Ethiopia's nearest border lies barely thirty miles from the Red Sea coast. It insisted these realities cannot be altered by political rhetoric,

coercive measures or acts of destabilisation and must inform any serious discussion of water utilisation or maritime security architecture. This response exposed the contradictions in the El-Alamein framework. Claims of exclusive littoral control overlook Ethiopia's demographic weight, commercial traffic and logistical capacity essential for Red Sea security, while historic Egyptian bilateral water agreements that excluded Ethiopia and patterns of external support for internal challenges stand in tension with invocations of sovereignty. Reported Eritrean operational presence inside Ethiopian territory and past unilateral actions by other signatories further undercut the declaration's sovereignty rhetoric, reinforcing Ethiopia's insistence on arrangements based on geographic and economic realities rather than exclusion.

African Union clarification around the same period, following an earlier call for restraint among Ethiopia, Eritrea and Egypt, confirmed that no blame had been assigned to any neighbouring state for Ethiopia's internal developments. The Commission emphasised de-escalation, sovereignty and non-interference, helping preserve diplomatic space consistent with Ethiopia's preference for African-led solutions over external attribution.

Prime Minister Abiy welcomed South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on 5 October, expressing appreciation for congratulations on the new Medemer Government and underscoring historic ties rooted in African solidarity, peace and shared development aspirations that support Ethiopia's broader continental engagement.

Nigerian Vice President Kashim Shettima arrived on 6 October for a three-day working visit focused on experience sharing in nutrition, agriculture and multisectoral development. Received by Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos, the engagement offered opportunities for two of Africa's most populous nations to deepen practical cooperation and institutional learning aligned with Ethiopia's development priorities. Talks between Prime Minister Abiy and Vice President Shettima on 7 October further highlighted mutual learning and the potential for strengthened bilateral ties, reinforcing Ethiopia's strategy of constructive partnerships that advance shared African interests without compromising national sovereignty.

Subsequently, Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar arrived on 9 October and held talks with Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos focused on expanding cooperation in education, culture, trade, investment and digitalisation. Appreciation was expressed for Ethiopia's BRICS engagement, advancing strategic diversification beneficial to national economic and technological goals.

On October 8, the House of Peoples' Representatives endorsed the new cabinet following the participation of over 54 million citizens in the recent election, reappointing Temesgen Tiruneh as Deputy Prime Minister, confirming key figures such

as Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos, and appointing several other new ministers across key government sectors under selection criteria focused on professional competence, experience, diversity, and dedication to national service.

Around October 7, local residents and conflict monitors reported movements of Eritrean military personnel crossing into northern Tigray through Zalambessa and advancing along the Adigrat–Edaga Hamus corridor. Ethiopian authorities characterized these troop movements as an unauthorized breach of national sovereignty, citing the lack of active diplomatic relations between the two nations, and announced defensive measures to secure the northern border. Concurrently, security monitors reported Ethiopian air strikes targeting reported Eritrean vehicle convoys near Adigrat as forces adjusted positions, reflecting actions aimed at deterring further border incursions while avoiding broader regional escalation. Government-allied forces subsequently entered Adigrat and reported gains in other towns including Shire and Idaga Hamus, consolidating control in northern Tigray.

On October 9, Foreign Minister Timothewos addressed a formal letter to the UN Security Council and directly briefed UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, invoking Ethiopia's inherent right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter and calling for international recognition of the country's sovereign right to protect its borders.

In a key development toward stabilization, Getachew Reda, an adviser to the Prime Minister, pledged visible, tangible progress in Tigray beyond mere promise as Ethiopian Airlines prepared to resume regular commercial flights to Mekelle, signaling concrete administrative steps to normalize civilian life, facilitate movement, and reinforce federal authority in the region.

Saudi Arabia's ambassador later highlighted growing investment opportunities in Ethiopia, noting the Kingdom ranked first globally in imports from the country in 2025, particularly coffee, and identifying mining, agriculture and tourism as promising sectors. This underscored expanding economic partnerships that support Ethiopia's development trajectory even amid regional pressures.

Throughout the week Ethiopia combined restoration of authority in Tigray with firm yet principled defence of geographic realities on the Nile and Red Sea, institutional renewal under the Medemer Government, and diversified high-level diplomacy. These steps collectively advanced core national interests of sovereignty, territorial integrity, economic transformation and peaceful regional engagement while responding to external challenges through measured self-defence and constructive partnerships.

2. Sudan

Sudan's war intensified this week as deadly drone and air strikes added to civilian casualties, fighting expanded across Blue Nile and Kordofan, and military leaders continued to prioritize battlefield victory over negotiations. At the same time, international efforts to constrain the flow of weapons remained divided, while new allegations of chemical weapons use placed further pressure on the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). The developments underscore the growing difficulty of containing a conflict that is simultaneously deepening the humanitarian crisis and drawing in wider regional and international interests.

The Blue Nile region emerged as one of the most dangerous theatres for civilians. On 9 October, a drone strike near a displacement site in Abu Shandi, Wad al-Mahi locality, killed at least 30 civilians, mostly women and children, according to local authorities and medical groups. The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Denise Brown, subsequently reported at least 31 deaths and dozens of injuries. The attack targeted an area sheltering people displaced by earlier fighting in Geissan and Kurmuk. Sudanese authorities attributed the strike to the RSF, which had not publicly responded to the allegations. The attack highlights the increasingly regional significance of the Blue Nile front, where military operations and displacement are bringing the conflict closer to Sudan's Ethiopian border.

The civilian toll extended beyond Blue Nile. In West Kordofan, attacks attributed to the RSF reportedly killed at least 10 civilians in Abu Ajal, while other incidents across the country added to the mounting casualties. The UN condemned the repeated targeting of displacement sites and warned that attacks on civilians and humanitarian personnel constituted serious violations of international humanitarian law. These incidents come amid continued fighting across Kordofan, where the SAF is seeking to consolidate its recent gains and advance toward areas held by the RSF. The region remains strategically important because it connects central and eastern Sudan with Darfur, making control of its towns and transport routes consequential for both sides' military logistics.

Another major incident occurred on 10 October, when an air strike hit an artisanal gold-mining site near the disputed Sudan–Egypt border. Sudanese rights group Emergency Lawyers reported that at least 72 miners were killed and more than 50 injured, accusing the Egyptian military of carrying out the attack, although Cairo had issued no official comment at the time of reporting. The incident highlights the vulnerability of civilians working in informal mining areas, where economic hardship drives people toward dangerous extraction sites, while underscoring gold's significance in Sudan's wartime economy. Informal cross-border trade and smuggling networks have historically

channeled Sudanese gold into Egypt and wider regional markets, raising concerns about the movement of conflict-linked resources and the difficulty of tracing the beneficiaries of these flows. Against this backdrop, the reported strike brings renewed scrutiny to Egypt's documented involvement in the Sudan conflict, including military support for the SAF, and the strategic interests shaping its engagement. Although the circumstances of the attack and its relationship to gold-smuggling networks remain to be independently established, the incident illustrates the growing convergence of civilian protection, border security, resource extraction and regional power competition in Sudan's war.

Militarily, SAF leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan reinforced his rejection of a negotiated settlement with the RSF, declaring that the army would retake all territory held by the paramilitary force. His remarks came as fighting continued across Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile. The position narrows the immediate space for a ceasefire, particularly as the RSF retains significant territorial control and continues to conduct drone attacks. Although the SAF has made gains in parts of North Kordofan, the continuing violence demonstrates that territorial advances have not yet produced a decisive shift toward ending the war.

International diplomacy also faced a setback. On 8 October, the UN Security Council extended the Darfur arms embargo and related sanctions until 11 December, extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts until January 2027. However, the Council did not approve the United States' proposal to expand the arms embargo to cover all of Sudan, following opposition from Russia and China. Washington argued that the existing restrictions were insufficient for a conflict that now extends well beyond Darfur, while Sudan's representative rejected a nationwide embargo as an infringement on the country's right to self-defense. The decision preserves the existing sanctions framework but leaves a major gap in international efforts to limit weapons flows to the warring parties.

Separately, allegations that the SAF used chlorine-based chemical weapons continued to attract international scrutiny. The United States formally determined in April 2025 that the Sudanese government had used chemical weapons in 2024, subsequently imposing sanctions and reiterating its allegations at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In September 2026, The Washington Post published an investigation presenting internal documents, videos and communications that allegedly point to a concealed chemical weapons program, while experts stressed that definitive verification requires access to suspected sites and witnesses. During the OPCW Executive Council's latest session in October, the allegations remained a subject of international concern, with calls for transparency, cooperation and independent verification. Sudan's military has denied wrongdoing. The use of chemical weapons

would constitute a grave violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and international law.

Taken together, this week's developments reveal three mutually reinforcing trends: the expanding use of drones and air power against increasingly vulnerable civilian populations, the continued prioritization of military victory over negotiations, and the limited international consensus on constraining the conflict. The Blue Nile escalation also raises the risk that Sudan's war could become more entangled with tensions along its regional borders, although allegations of cross-border involvement require careful verification. With displacement continuing and humanitarian access increasingly dangerous, the central challenge remains translating international condemnation into effective civilian protection and meaningful pressure on the parties to pursue a political settlement.

3. Egypt

On 6 October, Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty spoke by telephone with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Kaja Kallas about Egypt–EU relations and developments in the Red Sea and Horn of Africa. Egypt's Foreign Ministry said discussions covered de-escalation, respect for states' sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, crisis containment, diplomatic solutions, and continued coordination to restore regional security and stability.

Separately, Abdelatty spoke with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan. According to the reported account, they condemned attacks against Saudi Arabia, discussed security in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandab, and stressed Sudan's unity. The consultations took place amid continuing regional tensions affecting maritime navigation and Gulf security.

On 5 October, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi marked the 53rd anniversary of Egypt's October 1973 war victory. He said challenges affecting Egypt's stability had not ended, rejected the forced displacement of Palestinians, and called for full implementation of the US Gaza ceasefire plan. He also described Gulf security as integral to Egyptian national security and reaffirmed the importance of freedom of navigation.

During his state visit to Seoul from 7 to 9 October, el-Sisi met South Korean President Lee Jae-myung. On 8 October, the two countries elevated bilateral relations to a strategic partnership. El-Sisi stated that Red Sea security and governance were the exclusive responsibility of littoral states and rejected arrangements affecting coastal states' sovereignty, unity or territorial integrity.

The Seoul visit also produced an agreement to begin negotiations on a Comprehensive

Economic Partnership Agreement. The two governments discussed cooperation concerning the Korean Peninsula and Middle East peace, reaffirmed support for safe international maritime navigation, and witnessed the signing of several agreements and memorandums. The announced arrangements covered areas including social security, communications technology and broader bilateral cooperation.

Reports published during the week described renewed Ethiopian–Eritrean tensions, including allegations of Ethiopian drone strikes against Eritrean forces and accusations concerning cross-border military activity. Ethiopia maintained that discussions about Red Sea access must account for its interests. The reporting appeared alongside continued Egyptian engagement with Red Sea coastal states, including the four-country alignment involving Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia.

On 10–11 October, el-Sisi visited Jakarta and held talks with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. Their joint statement addressed the Gulf conflict, freedom of navigation, energy security, respect for sovereignty and international law, and de-escalation. Both governments also reiterated support for an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and opposed forced displacement and Israeli settlement activity.

During the Jakarta talks, el-Sisi described Nile water security as vital to Egypt and rejected unilateral measures that could harm its water interests. Prabowo expressed support for Egypt’s position and emphasized compliance with international law governing transboundary watercourses. The leaders also discussed Horn of Africa and Red Sea developments and announced agreements covering maritime and fisheries cooperation, statistics, visas, and a bilateral trade target of \$5 billion by 2030.

4. Eritrea

The current standoff follows the unraveling of the 2018 Ethiopia–Eritrea rapprochement and the fragile implementation of the 2022 Pretoria agreement, which ended the 2020–2022 Tigray war. Eritrea had fought alongside Ethiopia’s federal forces in that war; Ethiopia, UN experts and human rights organizations later reported that Eritrean troops remained in parts of northern Tigray, a claim Asmara denied. The analysis you supplied links the deterioration in relations to both Eritrea’s intervention and Ethiopia’s increasingly prominent calls for Red Sea access. It also notes that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed described Eritrea’s role in the Tigray war as a major cause of the rupture between the two governments.

The analysis attributes the shifting regional alignment partly to divisions within the TPLF over Pretoria: it says hardliners sidelined figures who supported the agreement

and consolidated power in Tigray, then drew closer to Eritrea. The current fighting, which began on 23 September, pits federal forces against a seven-group rebel alliance led by the TPLF and including the Amhara Fano National Movement, the Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front and the Oromo Liberation Army. The analysis characterizes this alignment as a revival of Eritrean proxy politics and cites reports of logistical support for AFNM and ARDUF leaders relocating to Eritrea; those claims remain reported assessments, rather than independently verified facts.

On 7 October, ACLED analyst Jalale Getachew Birru reported that Eritrean forces crossed at Zelambesa and moved toward the Adigrat–Idaga Hamus route, where Ethiopian drones reportedly targeted their vehicles near Guada. ACLED also described a strong TDF presence in Atsbi, Kilte Awlalo, Idaga Hamus and Adigrat, and said many TPLF leaders were in rural Ahferom. Reuters cited Adigrat residents who said they saw Eritrean soldiers, while the Associated Press reported that it could not independently verify the accounts. Ethiopia’s Government Communication Service minister, as quoted by Horn Review from Bloomberg, called for Eritrean forces in Tigray to leave; Eritrea’s information minister rejected the incursion reports as an Ethiopian pretext for war.

On 8 October, ACLED said Ethiopian military drones had struck Eritrean vehicles near Adigrat on Wednesday and Thursday as the troops withdrew from positions. A diplomat and a conflict expert in contact with both sides told Reuters they had reports of Eritrean forces moving north under bombardment, but could not determine whether the troops were leaving Ethiopia or redeploying within it; an Adigrat resident reported hearing explosions. An unnamed senior Ethiopian official claimed Eritrea had one mechanized and three infantry divisions in Tigray, totaling about 6,000 troops, but Reuters could not independently verify the estimate. The reported strikes therefore indicate direct military contact if the accounts are accurate, while the Eritrean forces’ location and subsequent movements remained unclear.

The diplomatic exchange intensified on 9 and 10 October. Ethiopia told the UN Security Council that Eritrean forces had advanced up to 60 kilometres into Tigray, described the move as an “all-out invasion,” and asserted a right to defend its sovereignty; Eritrea’s foreign minister then asked the Council to condemn Ethiopia and take deterrent measures under Chapter VII, without specifying what measures. Eritrea’s information minister argued that Ethiopia’s stated aim of securing sea access—particularly through Assab—amounted to a war of aggression, while Addis Ababa has said it seeks access peacefully. On 10 October, three Adigrat residents told Reuters that Ethiopian forces and allied militia had entered the city, and Reuters verified a video of militia members there.

The sequence suggests a possible shift from Eritrean support for armed proxies toward direct intervention as the rebel offensive faltered and federal forces advanced. ACLED's analyst has proposed that Asmara may seek to prevent Ethiopian forces from reaching the border, preserve a buffer in Tigray and counter Ethiopia's interest in Assab; these are interpretations of possible strategic motives, not confirmed Eritrean intent. If the reported crossing is verified, it would be a serious breach of Ethiopian sovereignty, but the initial accounts remain contested and some details—including the scale and disposition of Eritrean forces—have not been independently confirmed. Eritrea's direct involvement, if established, would also expose the tension between its accusation that Ethiopia is the aggressor and the reported presence of its troops inside Ethiopia, raising the risk that Tigray's conflict could become an interstate confrontation with wider consequences for the Horn of Africa and Red Sea.

On 9 October, the U.S. Embassy in Asmara issued a nationwide security alert citing rising Ethiopia–Eritrea tensions and reports of continued fighting in northern Ethiopia near the border. It advised U.S. citizens to exercise increased caution, maintain independent evacuation plans and monitor local updates, while noting that travel restrictions and the embassy's limited ability to operate beyond 25 kilometres from central Asmara could constrain consular assistance.

The alert adds an external indicator that Washington views the border situation as a practical security concern, including for people inside Eritrea. Its scope is consular: it does not independently confirm the reported fighting or Eritrean deployments, nor does it signal a change in U.S. policy toward either government. The embassy's stated movement limits also underscore how restricted its capacity would be to assist U.S. citizens if the situation deteriorated beyond Asmara.

5. Djibouti

At least 139 migrants, including 15 children, have died and 84 remain missing after a vessel carrying more than 300 people capsized near Guhere, off Djibouti's eastern coast, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The vessel was travelling from Djibouti to Yemen across the Gulf of Aden, with more than 80 Ethiopian nationals reported among the survivors. Djiboutian authorities continued search and rescue operations, while the IOM warned that the confirmed death toll could rise as additional bodies are recovered and verified. The incident occurred along the Eastern Route, a major migration corridor connecting the Horn of Africa to Yemen and onward to Gulf labour markets. According to the IOM, more than half a million migrants attempted the route in 2025, with at least 900 recorded dead or missing.

The scale of the disaster underscores the persistence of irregular migration from the

Horn of Africa despite deteriorating security conditions across the Red Sea and Yemen. Economic pressures and limited employment opportunities continue to sustain migration flows, even as renewed fighting in Yemen and wider regional instability increase the risks facing migrants. Djibouti occupies an increasingly difficult position within these movements, serving simultaneously as a transit point for predominantly Ethiopian migrants travelling towards the Arabian Peninsula and a destination for people fleeing the renewed conflict in Yemen. This convergence places additional pressure on Djibouti's maritime rescue capacity and humanitarian infrastructure, particularly as migration flows persist in both directions.

More than 20,000 Ethiopian migrants have crossed into Djibouti since September 20, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with over 3,000 reportedly stranded in remote desert areas amid severe shortages of food, water, and essential supplies. The IOM has been providing emergency food assistance, drinking water, and medical services, although migrants increasingly using alternative routes have become more difficult for humanitarian teams to reach. Djibouti is also receiving Ethiopian migrants returning from Yemen, adding to the humanitarian demands facing the country. The organization has called for sustained international funding, warning that insufficient resources could undermine its capacity to maintain emergency assistance as migration flows continue.

The growing influx reflects the persistence of irregular migration from Ethiopia towards the Arabian Peninsula, despite the considerable risks associated with crossing Djibouti's desert terrain and the Gulf of Aden. Economic pressures and the prospect of employment in Gulf countries continue to sustain these movements, while renewed conflict in Yemen has complicated the migration corridor and contributed to return movements towards Djibouti. The simultaneous arrival of outbound migrants and returnees places additional pressure on Djibouti's limited humanitarian infrastructure, particularly in remote border areas where access to essential services remains constrained. The situation highlights Djibouti's position as a critical transit country whose humanitarian responsibilities are increasingly shaped by migration pressures originating in the Horn of Africa and instability across the Gulf of Aden.

Djibouti's port traffic has remained relatively stable despite disruptions to shipping through the Red Sea, according to Aboubaker Omar Hadi, chairman of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA). Speaking during the seventh Francophonie Economic Mission on October 8, Hadi reported a slight increase in cargo volumes, primarily driven by transshipment operations as major shipping companies redirect containers through Djiboutian ports to serve Red Sea and East African markets. However, he acknowledged that operating expenses, particularly fuel, equipment

maintenance, and cargo handling costs, have risen substantially amid regional instability and disruptions affecting the Strait of Hormuz. These pressures have also contributed to higher consumer prices, indicating that the reported resilience in cargo volumes has not insulated Djibouti's economy from the wider consequences of maritime insecurity.

The reported increase in transshipment activity illustrates how Djibouti's geographical position near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait allows its ports to accommodate cargo diverted by disruptions to established shipping routes. However, the benefits remain contingent on exceptional maritime conditions rather than necessarily indicating sustained growth in underlying trade demand. Rising operating costs could also constrain the commercial advantages of increased cargo handling, particularly if regional instability persists and shipping companies continue adjusting their logistics networks. For Djibouti, whose economy depends heavily on port services and its role as a maritime gateway for Ethiopia, the immediate challenge is maintaining the competitiveness and reliability of its logistics infrastructure while managing the financial pressures generated by disruptions to international shipping.

The United Kingdom has appointed Dr David Hall as its new ambassador to Djibouti, succeeding Vinay Talwar, with his tenure scheduled to begin in October 2026. Announced by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in June, the appointment brings a diplomat with extensive experience in security policy, counter-proliferation, and African affairs, including previous assignments at the British Ministry of Defence, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the British High Commission in Nairobi. Hall's security-oriented background is particularly relevant given Djibouti's strategic position near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, where maritime security and regional instability remain significant international concerns. His appointment comes as the United Kingdom maintains diplomatic engagement with Djibouti on regional security and defence, although the personnel change itself does not necessarily indicate a substantive shift in British policy towards the Horn of Africa.

On October 11, French and Djiboutian military personnel conducted joint airborne training in Djibouti as part of the Saint-Michel celebrations, the traditional observance of military paratroopers. The activities, organized by the French Forces stationed in Djibouti (FFDj) and Djibouti's Parachute Commando Battalion (BATCOPA), involved French paratroopers, Djiboutian armed forces personnel, and members of the country's internal security services. Since 2024, France has supported the training of Djiboutian personnel in parachuting, infantry, and commando tactics, including the qualification of approximately 146 personnel as paratroopers.

Beyond its immediate military purpose, this training reinforces France's institutional

presence within Djibouti's security apparatus by embedding French methods, standards, and expertise in the preparation of local forces. With approximately 1,500 military personnel stationed in the country under a defence treaty renewed in 2024 for twenty years, France retains a durable military foothold near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, allowing it to sustain influence over Djibouti's defence posture and preserve a strategic position along a critical maritime corridor. The development illustrates how Paris maintains regional relevance through an established military presence and the cultivation of long-term relationships with local security institutions, even as competition for influence in the Horn of Africa intensifies.

6. South Sudan

South Sudan's fragile transition faced renewed pressure this week as deadly intercommunal violence, worsening food insecurity and uncertainty surrounding the December elections exposed the gap between the government's political timetable and the country's security and humanitarian realities. President Salva Kiir's administration continued seeking regional support for the planned vote while attempting to maintain political dialogue, but violence in Lakes State and diminishing humanitarian resources underscored the challenges confronting the country as it approaches its first national elections since independence.

The most serious security development was the outbreak of intercommunal clashes in Rumbek, Lakes State, which reportedly killed approximately 71 people, including four soldiers, according to the caretaker government. Initial accounts indicated that a group of outsiders attempted to seize control of the town and briefly succeeded before police and military reinforcements intervened. Government forces subsequently regained control, although authorities cautioned that the reported death toll had not been fully verified. The government condemned the violence and called on communities to exercise restraint and avoid retaliation. The scale of the casualties nevertheless highlights the persistence of localized armed violence, which continues to threaten civilian security independently of the broader political conflict. The episode also raises questions about the capacity of security institutions to prevent communal disputes from escalating into deadly confrontations. With national elections approaching, sustained violence at the community level could further complicate efforts to establish a secure environment for political participation.

Humanitarian conditions deteriorated alongside these security challenges. The World Food Programme warned that more than one million vulnerable people could lose access to life-saving food and nutrition assistance as funding shortages intensify. In Malakal, one of the principal humanitarian logistics hubs in Upper Nile State, food

stocks had reportedly fallen from approximately 10,000 metric tons a year earlier to fewer than 300 tons. At the same time, South Sudan continues to receive people fleeing the war in neighboring Sudan, with roughly 3,000 refugees and returnees reportedly crossing the border each week. Many arrive with limited resources and require immediate assistance. The continuing influx is placing additional pressure on an already overstretched humanitarian response, while conflict, displacement and climate-related shocks compound existing vulnerabilities. The decline in food stocks is particularly concerning because shortages at major distribution hubs can undermine the ability of humanitarian agencies to reach communities beyond the main urban centers. Without additional funding and reliable supply arrangements, the crisis risks deepening as humanitarian needs increase and available assistance contracts.

The political transition remained centered on the government's determination to proceed with elections scheduled for 22 December. Following the dissolution of the transitional unity government on 22 September, Kiir opened inter-party dialogue intended to build consensus around the electoral process. However, opposition groups, including those associated with suspended First Vice President Riek Machar, have challenged the government's approach. Critics have questioned whether credible elections can be organized within the remaining timeframe, given persistent insecurity, concerns about political space and the absence of a permanent constitution. The dissolution also ended the existing power-sharing arrangements established under the 2018 peace agreement, raising concerns about the implications for political inclusion and the implementation of outstanding peace commitments. Although the government presents the election timetable as a necessary step towards ending the prolonged transition, the central challenge is whether the institutional and security conditions required for a credible vote can be established before polling day.

Kiir's regional engagements sought to strengthen support for the electoral process. During his 5 October meeting with Kenyan President William Ruto in Nairobi, the two leaders discussed election preparations, bilateral relations and economic cooperation. Juba reportedly sought assistance with establishing an election team and obtaining ballot papers and other electoral materials, while Ruto pledged institutional and technical support and encouraged dialogue among South Sudanese political actors. Kiir subsequently travelled to South Africa, where President Cyril Ramaphosa also pledged assistance with electoral preparations and emphasized the importance of implementing the 2018 peace agreement. These engagements demonstrate the government's effort to mobilize regional diplomatic and logistical backing for the December vote.

Yet external assistance with electoral materials and administration cannot, by itself, resolve the deeper political questions surrounding participation, security, trust and the

unfinished peace process. The regional partners' emphasis on dialogue and implementation of the peace agreement suggests that the credibility of the transition remains a broader concern than the technical organization of elections alone.

The meetings also highlighted the economic interests underpinning South Sudan's regional diplomacy. Discussions between Kiir and Ruto included the proposed Dangote East Africa Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals Special Economic Zone in Kenya's coastal Lamu region, alongside arrangements intended to improve cargo access and operationalize South Sudan's allocated dry port in Naivasha.

For landlocked South Sudan, improved transport links and access to regional energy and trade infrastructure could support economic diversification and reduce logistical constraints. However, the benefits will depend on whether proposed projects translate into practical arrangements that lower costs and improve the reliability of trade routes. The overlap between election-related support and economic cooperation also illustrates how Juba is seeking to consolidate political backing through a wider regional agenda, even as domestic conditions remain uncertain.

7. Somalia and Somaliland

Somalia

Former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed called for a broad and united national front to save Somalia and warned against the use of force against political opponents. In a statement issued on Thursday he said disputes over institutional mandates and the political transition cannot be resolved through the use of force or unilateral measures and must be handled through dialogue, consensus and constitutional rules. He rejected threatening rhetoric, the threat of force, or military mobilization against political opposition groups, stating that political disagreement is not a crime and the opposition is not an enemy of the state. He also demanded a clear, public, and credible electoral timetable, criticized recent government foreign policy engagements including sequential visits linked to Addis Ababa and Cairo, and urged focus on security, livelihoods, and national challenges rather than political confrontation.

The National Intelligence and Security Agency accused armed men linked to former President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed of attacking its forces in Mogadishu. In a statement issued on October 11 the agency said armed men described as militias loyal to Sharif attempted to provoke a confrontation with its Public Protection Forces in Wadajir district around the First Branch of the General Daa'uud Division in the Tiintinley area. The agency claimed the men carried AK-47s, PKM machine guns and RPGs and forcibly entered homes. This followed days of reports that government forces were

deploying near the residences of Sharif and former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire near the airport, closing roads, and tightening security. Opposition figures accused the government of targeting them, and Sharif rejected the agency's claims.

Forces loyal to former Southwest State leader Abdiasis Laftagaren captured the town of Qansah-dhere in the Bay region. Local reports said the town, about 90 kilometers west of Baidoa, fell on Thursday without a gunfight. It was described as the first town to pass fully out of federal control since a federal military offensive earlier in the year removed Laftagaren from power in Baidoa. Laftagaren who continues to claim legitimacy as the region's president, reportedly aimed to retake Baidoa, while the federal government continued deploying additional troops to strengthen defenses around the city.

The United Nations urged an immediate halt to fighting in Baidoa amid a deepening crisis. UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia George Conway called for de-escalation of clashes in Baidoa, the Southwest State capital, warning that repeated violence was worsening an already severe humanitarian situation. He highlighted impacts on displaced people, women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, and called for protection of civilians, civilian infrastructure, and unhindered humanitarian access. Context included displacement from recent fighting affecting tens of thousands in waves, damage to health facilities, and projections of catastrophic food insecurity with around 26,000 internally displaced persons in Baidoa at risk of IPC Phase 5 hunger between October and December, with famine risk under worst case flooding and displacement scenarios.

On another front, The Northeast State denied reports that its president escaped an abduction plot. Somalia's Northeast State dismissed social media claims regarding President Abdulkadir Ahmed Aw-Ali also known as Firdhiye.

Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency announced the killing of a former senior Al-Shabaab Amniyat leader. The agency stated that forces working with international partners killed Bashir Ahmed Haji Nunow known by aliases including Geescadde, Fanax, Gardhuub, and Ali Dheere in a planned operation in Jilib district in Middle Juba on the night of October 1. The agency described him as the former head of Al-Shabaab's Amniyat security and intelligence wing from 2016 to 2024 and linked him to major attacks, including the October 14, 2017 Soobe Junction truck bombing in Mogadishu, one of the deadliest in Somalia's history, the Ex-Control Afgooye attack, Soobe 2, and other bombings targeting civilians in the capital.

Fighting occurred in Hiiraan between Al-Shabaab and local Macaawiisley fighters. At least seven people were killed and nine wounded in hours of fighting in Tardo village in the Hiiraan region, according to a local administrator. The clash began after Al-Shabaab

fighters tried to seize a weapon from a local herder, residents intervened, and the battle intensified. Civilians were among the dead, and others fled. The incident occurred amid reports of a claimed Al-Shabaab agreement with Hawadle clan representatives, which local officials questioned. Hiiraan has been a focus of the Macaawiisley uprising against Al-Shabaab.

The government reported three territorial losses in 48 hours involving Al-Shabaab, Jubaland forces and rivals. According to Somali Guardian, Al-Shabaab captured Hees in central Hiran near Mataban on the road to Beledweyne after a brief battle with the Somali National Army on Friday cutting a key supply route. Jubaland forces seized Balad Hawo in Gedo from federal troops who had taken it months earlier. This followed Thursday's loss of Qansax Dheere in the Bay region to forces loyal to former Southwest leader Abdiiaziz Laftagareen. Jubaland was reported holding Balad Hawo, Dolow, Luuq, and El Wak, while federal-aligned forces retained Bardere and Garbaharey.

Somalia stepped up recruitment of security forces ahead of a planned African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia drawdown. Federal authorities intensified recruitment and training for the Somali National Army, police, and intelligence services in Banadir, Hirshabelle, Galmudug, and Southwest, as preparations continued for greater Somali assumption of security responsibilities.

Somalia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned an attack reported around October 3 to 5 on civilian infrastructure providing electricity to the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, Saudi Arabia. It called the incident a violation of international law and Saudi sovereignty, an affront to a holy site, and expressed full solidarity with Saudi Arabia while calling for accountability. And again, Somalia condemned Houthi attacks on Saudi airports. On October 9, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement strongly condemning Houthi attacks on Abha International Airport and King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia. The attacks, occurring between October 6 and 8, killed and injured civilians.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud denied that Turkey maintains a permanent military base in Somalia. In comments tied to an Al Jazeera Arabic interview reported on October 7, he stated that the Turkish facility is a training center for Somali forces, not a base with permanently stationed Turkish troops operating as such. He called reports of it as Turkey's first overseas military base baseless propaganda. He described Somalia-Turkey relations as strategic, citing support during the 2011 drought and security challenges, plus investments in Mogadishu's airport and seaport, oil and gas initiatives, and a satellite launch facility project.

Türkiye's ambassador to Somalia, Ferhat Alkan, and the Turkish Task Force commander visited the site of a planned Turkish spaceport in Warsheik in Middle Shabelle on or around this period following President Erdoğan's comments that construction had begun. The project has drawn attention amid broader Turkish engagement in Somalia including hydrocarbons and military training and support.

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud met UK Ambassador Charles King at Villa Somalia. On October 11, the president received the British Ambassador for talks focused on the longstanding Somalia-UK partnership. Discussions covered shared priorities including humanitarian preparedness amid El Niño and flood risks, security and stability, and the political situation. Ambassador King described the meeting as an honor and reaffirmed the UK's commitment to supporting a prosperous and stable future for Somalia.

Somalia's National Security Adviser met the AUSSOM chief at Villa Somalia. National Security Adviser Ambassador Awes Hagi Yusuf Ahmed held several hours of talks with the Head of the African Union Support and Stabilization Mission in Somalia, Ambassador El Hadji Ibrahima Diene. Discussions focused on security priorities, building Somali National Army capacity, and the phased transfer of security responsibilities to Somali forces. The government stated readiness to assume greater responsibility, and AUSSOM reaffirmed commitment to cooperation and a coordinated, sustainable transition.

Reports indicated that Egypt was preparing to deploy troops to Somalia. Technical military teams including advisors, trainers, and officers were reportedly preparing for Egyptian army deployment to Somalia under bilateral military cooperation signed in 2024 and within the AUSSOM framework. Positioning was discussed around Ceelcade in the former Cisiley Airfield area on the northern outskirts of Mogadishu in Middle Shabelle. This followed earlier Egyptian visits, multiple meetings between President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, and the recent Alamein summit.

All seven surviving Pakistani crew members from the late April hijacking of the Palau-flagged tanker MT Honour off Somalia's coast were confirmed rescued with the last group flown via Addis Ababa. Three Pakistani crew members had been killed, and remains were repatriated. This was reported on October 6.

Four Indonesian seamen returned home after a Somali pirate ordeal. They were among the crew of the Palau flagged MT Honour tanker hijacked in April and later rescued by Puntland forces. Some crew members had been killed. Their return was reported around October 7.

A U.S. Africa Command official stated that Yemen's Houthis are seeking to expand into Somalia, potentially using Al-Shabaab territory for operations that could threaten shipping and U.S. forces including at Camp Lemonnier. Concerns included possible Houthi presence alongside Al-Shabaab in northern Somalia and transfer of advanced capabilities such as drones.

Reports indicated that Somalia agreed to acquire Pakistani JF-17 Thunder fighter jets as defense ties deepen. Turkish media outlet TRHaber reported that Somalia had agreed to buy the multirole combat aircraft from Pakistan as part of efforts to rebuild its air force. Neither government publicly confirmed a final procurement deal, the number of jets, value, or delivery schedule. The reports followed expanding cooperation including an August memorandum of understanding on defense and security covering training, capacity building, and counterterrorism, and a September visit by a senior Pakistan Air Force delegation to Mogadishu that met President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, the prime minister, defense minister, and military officials.

Somaliland

The Somaliland Coast Guard commenced structural maintenance and hull overhaul of a primary patrol vessel at the Naval Forces' repair facility in Berbera. The works, which include the removal of barnacles, algae and other deposits, are intended to restore the vessel's performance, speed and fuel efficiency. This activity forms part of wider efforts to strengthen maritime operational capabilities, patrols and interdiction operations along the Gulf of Aden coastline, under the direction of Coast Guard Commander Admiral Ahmed Hurre Hariye.

Local reporting published around 8 October described ongoing competition between Somaliland and Somalia for influence over armed fighters in eastern areas linked to the Sool and Sanaag regions. Somaliland was reported to be seeking the reintegration of former members of its security forces, including the payment of salaries on or around 3 October to approximately 2,000 fighters from the Jamac Siyad clan of the Dhulbahante community who had previously served in Somaliland forces. Somalia's federal government was reportedly providing financial support to some of the same fighters as well as to an additional group of around 2,000 others undergoing training at Goja-Adde, a former Somaliland facility near Las Anod. The reporting raised concerns that fighters associated with figures linked to Las Anod-based groups could be employed in potential operations directed toward Erigavo, the capital of Sanaag, accompanied by unverified allegations of possible external military assistance. Somalilandpost News indicated that it had been unable to independently verify the reported payments, numbers or sources of funds. These developments sit within longer-running territorial and clan dynamics in the

disputed eastern regions.

On 6 October President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi Irro issued a statement extending sincere congratulations to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on his appointment by Ethiopia's House of People's Representatives and his swearing-in for a new five-year term following the general election of 1 June. The President highlighted the longstanding ties between the two sides rooted in geography, history and shared interests, and expressed the hope of deepening cooperation in trade, development and regional peace and stability. The Somaliland Ministry of Foreign Affairs and official accounts likewise issued statements congratulating Prime Minister Abiy on his re-election and reaffirming support for Ethiopia's sea access.

On 10 October the Ministry of Foreign Affairs extended warm congratulations to the Government and people of Taiwan on the occasion of Taiwan's 115th National Day and reaffirmed Somaliland's commitment to strengthening friendship and bilateral cooperation. Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded positively, thanking Somaliland and expressing gratitude for the support of its friends in Somaliland. The exchange continues the partnership established through reciprocal representative offices in 2020, which has since expanded into areas including healthcare, agriculture, education, technology, institutional development and maritime security.

Somaliland's Ambassador to Israel, Mohamed Omar Hagi Mohamoud, in comments reported around 5–6 October rejected a joint declaration issued by the Egypt–Eritrea–Sudan–Somalia summit held in New Al-Alamein City. The declaration had backed Somalia's position and rejected any recognition or support for Somaliland. The Ambassador stated that political gatherings cannot manufacture a veto over Somaliland's future, erase its history or sovereignty, or determine the aspirations of its people. He further criticized the use of the Mogadishu administration as a proxy and warned that such gatherings risk broader regional stability.

A senior presidential foreign affairs adviser, Mohamed Osman Fadal, told Middle East Eye in an interview published around this period that Somaliland seeks Israeli support against Turkey's expanding military role in Somalia, citing Turkish F-16 aircraft, drones and related cooperation. He stated that Somaliland requires air-defence systems and wishes Israel to support it against Turkey.

8. Yemen

Government forces, backed by intensive Saudi airstrikes, launched a major counter-offensive named "Dawn of Yemen" with the stated aim of reversing recent Houthi gains along the Red Sea coast and restoring control over approaches to the Bab el-Mandeb

Strait. The main effort focused on the coastal districts of Dhubab and Mokha, with supporting operations around Taiz and other fronts.

Government forces reported rapid early advances, seizing Dhubab airport, cutting the road linking Dhubab to Mokha, and reaching the outskirts of Mokha. Some official statements claimed full capture of Mokha and effective control of key coastal positions near Bab el-Mandeb. Saudi coalition aircraft, involving around 100 fighter jets at the outset, struck hundreds of Houthi targets, including weapons depots, command centres, missile sites and logistics nodes. In subsequent days government spokesmen reported thousands of precision targeting operations across multiple provinces and claimed large numbers of Houthi fighters neutralised along with destruction of vehicles and equipment. Houthis rejected the claims of major territorial losses, stating they retained control of Mokha, Mayyun Island and remaining western coastal areas, and had successfully repelled advances near Bab el-Mandeb. Independent reporting indicated fighting remained fluid and contested around Dhubab, Mokha and the high ground overlooking the strait through the middle and later part of the week.

Around Taiz, Houthis maintained pressure and continued to hold sections of the main supply routes that left the city effectively encircled. Clashes persisted in the surrounding highlands and districts, including areas south and west of the city. Secondary fighting and airstrikes were reported in Marib, al-Jawf, Saada, Hajjah and other provinces. Displacement continued to rise, with UN agencies reporting more than 200,000 people newly displaced since the broader escalation began in September, the majority from Taiz and western coastal areas.

Cross-border exchanges intensified sharply. Houthis claimed multiple ballistic missile and drone attacks on Saudi targets, including airports and energy facilities. On 10 October a strike on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh killed at least 12–13 people (including Saudi citizens and foreign nationals from several countries) and wounded more than 300; the airport was closed for an extended period and hundreds of flights were cancelled or diverted. A further projectile strike on the same airport on 11 October caused additional injuries, a fire and one further fatality. Houthis claimed responsibility for the attacks and others on Saudi airports and Aramco sites, framing them as responses to Saudi airstrikes in Yemen and warning airlines against using Saudi airspace. Saudi air defences reported multiple intercepts.

Diplomatically and geopolitically, Saudi Arabia intensified coordination with Pakistan and Turkey under the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement. The three countries agreed on the rapid deployment of forces and capabilities to Saudi Arabia. Pakistan confirmed that its troops were already present in the kingdom and reports indicated Pakistani aircraft

participated in strikes focused on Houthi missile and drone infrastructure (described as defensive in nature). Turkey emphasised the defensive character of the pact and limited its direct involvement. On 9 October UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg briefed the Security Council, stating that Yemen had slid back into full-scale war with hostilities spreading across multiple front lines. He highlighted the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Taiz, noted ongoing displacement, and called for an immediate halt to the fighting and a return to political negotiations. Earlier mediation channels remained active but secondary to the military campaign.

Throughout the week the central contest remained the Red Sea coast, Mokha and the approaches to Bab el-Mandeb, with sustained pressure around Taiz and continued Saudi airstrikes supporting government ground operations. Cross-border strikes escalated, drawing wider regional defence coordination involving Pakistan and Turkey. Humanitarian needs continued to grow as civilians fled the main fighting zones.

9. Kenya

Kenya spent the first full week of October balancing its growing regional ambitions against mounting domestic political and economic pressures. President William Ruto's administration pursued closer cooperation with neighbouring countries, advanced infrastructure investments and maintained diplomatic engagement across East Africa and the Red Sea. Meanwhile, preparations for the 2027 elections, fiscal constraints and disputes over agricultural policy continued to shape the domestic political environment. Together, these developments reflected Nairobi's determination to strengthen its position as a major commercial and diplomatic centre in East Africa.

One of the week's most significant diplomatic developments came on October 6, when Kenya and Rwanda signed eleven bilateral agreements covering immigration, security, justice, housing, water resources and institutional cooperation. The agreements reinforced economic relations between the two East African Community members. Rwanda remains an important market for Kenyan exports and depends heavily on regional transport infrastructure for access to international markets. Energy cooperation also featured prominently, with Rwanda welcoming Kenya's proposed petroleum refinery in Lamu. The project forms part of Nairobi's ambition to transform Lamu into a major industrial and logistical centre capable of serving landlocked economies, including Ethiopia, Rwanda and South Sudan.

Kenya's engagement with South Sudan further demonstrated its regional economic priorities. On October 5, President Salva Kiir met Ruto in Nairobi to discuss bilateral cooperation, infrastructure development and South Sudan's political transition ahead of its planned December elections. The discussions took place amid continuing political

tensions and insecurity in South Sudan, which threaten both regional stability and infrastructure development. For Kenya, cooperation with Juba is particularly important to the proposed Lamu Port–South Sudan–Ethiopia Transport corridor. The project could eventually connect South Sudan's petroleum resources and Ethiopia's large market to Kenya's Indian Ocean coastline, although financing and security challenges remain substantial.

Meanwhile, Kenya maintained diplomatic engagement with Yemen as insecurity around the Red Sea continued to concern regional governments. On October 5, representatives of both countries discussed maritime security, trade, investment and regional stability. Although Kenya is not directly involved in Yemen's conflict, disruptions to shipping through the Red Sea can affect international trade and petroleum supply chains. Nairobi's engagement therefore reflected its interest in protecting the commercial relevance of its ports and transport networks amid growing instability in the wider region.

Economic developments at home were equally significant. On October 7, Kenya's National Infrastructure Fund began deploying an initial KSh340 billion, approximately \$2.6 billion, through purchases of domestic government bonds. The initiative aims to attract additional investment into transport, energy, agriculture and other infrastructure projects while reducing dependence on conventional government borrowing. However, Kenya's substantial debt servicing obligations continue to constrain public finances, raising questions about the sustainability of ambitious investment programmes. Two days later, the government approved \$350 million in financing for Kenya Airways and KSh25 billion for land compensation related to the extension of the Standard Gauge Railway towards Kisumu and Malaba. While the airline financing is intended to stabilize operations, the railway project seeks to strengthen commercial links with Uganda and the wider Great Lakes region.

Domestic politics also gained momentum as the August 2027 elections approached. Opposition figures, including Kalonzo Musyoka, Fred Matiang'i and Edwin Sifuna, continued political mobilization, although disagreements over leadership and electoral coordination exposed divisions among opposition groups. Ruto, meanwhile, defended his administration's development record and criticized political opponents. During an October 10 visit to Trans Nzoia County, he clashed with Governor George Nitembeya over infrastructure projects and healthcare services. Agricultural policy also generated controversy after Ruto accused unnamed individuals of obstructing the Kenya Sugar Board and delaying the use of approximately KSh4 billion collected through the sugar levy. These disputes reflected growing political competition over economic performance, public services and institutional accountability.

Another sensitive development emerged on October 8, when Foreign Affairs Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi briefed lawmakers on Kenyan nationals involved in Russia's war against Ukraine. The government reported documenting 354 Kenyans connected to the conflict, including 84 reportedly killed or missing. Allegations that some had been recruited through deceptive overseas employment arrangements raised concerns about human trafficking and the government's ability to protect its citizens abroad. The controversy also introduced a sensitive diplomatic issue into Kenya's relations with Russia. Separately, Kenya confirmed an imported Ebola case on October 6, prompting increased surveillance and contact tracing. By October 11, authorities reported no additional confirmed cases.

For Ethiopia, Kenya's developments were particularly significant in the context of growing regional tensions and the continuing debate over access to the sea. The proposed Lamu corridor offers the possibility of an additional maritime outlet through the Indian Ocean, potentially reducing Ethiopia's dependence on existing trade routes concentrated around the Red Sea. Kenya's economic engagement with South Sudan and Rwanda also demonstrates how regional integration can advance through infrastructure and commercial cooperation despite political disagreements elsewhere in the Horn. Nevertheless, the corridor's strategic value will depend on completing the necessary infrastructure and ensuring commercially competitive transport services.

Ultimately, the developments of October 5–11 illustrated Kenya's efforts to consolidate regional economic influence while confronting domestic political and fiscal constraints. Nairobi's expanding diplomatic partnerships and infrastructure ambitions could strengthen its role in East African trade, but their success will depend on financial sustainability, political stability and effective implementation. For Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa, Kenya's growing transport network represents an important opportunity for deeper economic integration and the diversification of regional trade routes.

10. The Gulf Countries

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's security posture became increasingly centered on the Yemen conflict, protection of critical infrastructure, and the operationalization of its emerging defense partnerships. The activation of the Makkah Alliance for Defense coincided with a major offensive by Yemen's internationally recognized government against Houthi positions, while reported attacks on Saudi airports and energy facilities intensified the Kingdom's security concerns. Riyadh continued diplomatic outreach even as the conflict raised the risk of a wider regional confrontation.

On October 5, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Pakistan convened an emergency meeting of the alliance's Strategic Political and Defense Committee in Riyadh. The meeting appointed retired Pakistani Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood as the alliance's first secretary-general for a three-year term and established frameworks for the rapid deployment of military forces and capabilities to protect Saudi territory. The agreement represented a move toward operational coordination, rather than leaving the defense partnership as a primarily political commitment.

The military situation deteriorated as Yemen's internationally recognized government launched a counteroffensive, supported by Saudi airstrikes and naval assistance, to recover territory held by Houthi forces. The campaign reportedly targeted strategically important areas around Mocha and the Bab al-Mandeb Strait. The offensive linked Saudi security interests directly to control of maritime routes connecting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, where Houthi activity threatens commercial shipping and regional trade.

Houthi forces responded with reported waves of drone and ballistic missile attacks against Saudi infrastructure. Strikes on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh on October 10 and 11 reportedly caused casualties, injuries, fires, and interruptions to flight operations. Other reported threats or interceptions involved King Fahd International Airport in Dammam and the Khamis Mushait area. These incidents underscored the vulnerability of civilian aviation and critical infrastructure as the Yemen conflict expanded beyond the immediate battlefield.

The attacks prompted international expressions of support for Saudi Arabia. UN Secretary-General António Guterres and officials from Britain and Syria reportedly contacted Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan to condemn the attacks on civilian airports and express solidarity with the Kingdom. US President Donald Trump was also reported to be considering whether Washington should join or support Saudi retaliatory measures against the Houthis, raising the possibility of greater US involvement.

Despite the military escalation, Riyadh maintained diplomatic channels with Tehran. On October 12, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called Prince Faisal to discuss the worsening regional situation and efforts to reduce tensions. The contact illustrated the continuing importance of diplomatic communication even as Iran's relationship with the Houthis and the expanding conflict placed additional pressure on regional security.

Saudi Arabia's military and diplomatic priorities increasingly converged around the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandeb. Protecting these maritime chokepoints is important not only for Saudi security and commercial shipping but also for the wider strategic environment connecting the Gulf with the Horn of Africa, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti,

and Eritrea. The week's developments therefore reinforced the connection between the Yemen battlefield and the broader competition over regional maritime security.

UAE

The UAE's regional position was shaped by solidarity with Saudi Arabia following reported Houthi attacks, heightened insecurity in Gulf maritime and aviation corridors, and continuing scrutiny of Abu Dhabi's relationships across the Horn of Africa. These pressures unfolded alongside wider uncertainty linked to the confrontation involving Iran, Israel, and the United States, creating overlapping security and diplomatic challenges for the Emirati leadership.

On October 11, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the reported Houthi strike on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Abu Dhabi described the attack as a violation of Saudi sovereignty and reaffirmed its solidarity with Riyadh. The statement reflected the UAE's interest in preventing attacks on civilian infrastructure from becoming a wider threat to Gulf security and regional air connectivity.

Maritime insecurity remained another significant concern. Reports during the week described repeated shipping alerts and incidents involving tankers around the Strait of Hormuz and adjacent Gulf waters. Warnings attributed to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy increased uncertainty for commercial vessels, while shipping operators were reportedly adjusting routes and security procedures. Because the UAE relies heavily on maritime commerce and energy exports, sustained disruption in these waters carries consequences beyond immediate military risks.

Aviation security also remained unsettled. A planned meeting between Israeli transportation officials and UAE counterparts concerning aviation security and the resumption of direct commercial flights was reportedly cancelled at the last minute on October 12. The cancellation reflected continuing friction following earlier regional attacks and the difficulties of restoring normal travel arrangements amid unresolved security concerns. The UAE also maintained heightened vigilance over airspace, airline schedules, and potential disruptions associated with the wider regional conflict.

Across the Horn of Africa, the implications of the El Alamein Joint Declaration involving Egypt, Eritrea, and regional partners remained a concern in discussions of shifting alignments around Ethiopia. These developments could complicate Abu Dhabi's regional calculations because of its economic and security ties with Addis Ababa. The UAE's relationships with Ethiopia and other regional actors place it in a complex position as competition over Red Sea access, security partnerships, and regional influence intensifies.

The UAE also continued to face scrutiny over its role in Sudan. External reporting and regional analysis continued to focus on allegations of Emirati logistical support for the Rapid Support Forces, while Saudi Arabia was generally viewed as more closely aligned with the Sudanese Armed Forces. These allegations remain politically sensitive and contribute to the wider polarization surrounding the Sudan war. Taken together, the week's developments highlighted the difficulty of maintaining the UAE's regional partnerships while managing growing security risks across the Gulf, Red Sea, and Horn of Africa.

Qatar

Qatar continued to position itself as a diplomatic intermediary amid regional escalation, maintaining indirect communication between Washington and Tehran while pursuing bilateral consultations and supporting maritime security. Its approach combined mediation with a call for broader regional security arrangements, as conflict-related risks threatened shipping, aviation, and energy infrastructure across the Gulf.

On October 6, Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that indirect negotiations and exchanges of messages between the United States and Iran were continuing through Doha. The mediation effort preserved a diplomatic channel at a time when military escalation threatened to widen the regional conflict. On the same day, Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani met Iran's visiting interior minister, Eskandar Momeni, to discuss regional de-escalation and bilateral matters. These engagements reflected Doha's continuing effort to maintain communication with Tehran while supporting efforts to reduce tensions involving Washington.

Qatar also emphasized the importance of maritime security and compliance with international obligations. Amid disruptions and threats around the Strait of Hormuz, Doha reiterated the need to uphold navigational rights and protect critical maritime routes. The position reflected Qatar's interest in preventing regional confrontation from disrupting commercial movement and energy supplies, while reinforcing the argument that maritime security requires adherence to international rules rather than unilateral military pressure.

Bilateral diplomacy continued alongside these mediation efforts. On October 9, Qatar and India held their sixth round of Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi. The discussions reviewed bilateral relations and developments in West Asia, providing a channel for coordination between two countries with significant economic and regional interests. On October 11, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani also met Libya's outgoing ambassador in Doha, maintaining Qatar's diplomatic engagement with North African partners.

Qatar's position in the Horn of Africa remained connected to its broader emphasis on de-escalation and state sovereignty. In the context of rising tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Doha had urged restraint and compliance with the Pretoria Peace Agreement, while opposing military escalation against Ethiopian federal forces. Qatar continued to monitor the region's intersecting security relationships, including alignments involving Türkiye, Egypt, and Somalia, as well as the potential spillover from the Sudan conflict.

Overall, Qatar's strategy combined active mediation with diplomatic diversification and support for regional security frameworks. Its continued communication with both Washington and Tehran gave Doha a role in efforts to contain the Gulf conflict, while its engagement with India and African partners broadened its diplomatic activity beyond the immediate crisis. The challenge remains whether these channels can help reduce escalation as maritime insecurity and competing regional alignments place increasing pressure on the Gulf and Red Sea corridor.

11. Africa and The Sahel Region

Mali

Mali experienced a significant shift in the northern security environment when government forces re-entered Kidal with support from Russia's Africa Corps and allied pro-government fighters. The development offered the military authorities a symbolic opportunity to demonstrate the state's renewed reach in the north, although it did not resolve the broader insurgency or the underlying political conflict with Tuareg separatist groups.

On October 6 and 7, Malian forces returned to Kidal after the Azawad Liberation Front and allied armed groups withdrew from the city. The separatists characterized their departure as a controlled tactical withdrawal, attributing it to the extensive use of air power by the military alliance. The government, meanwhile, presented the operation as a restoration of territorial control. Following the arrival of military convoys from Anéfis, authorities said they intended to reinforce positions and facilitate the gradual return of public administration and basic services.

Russia's Africa Corps played a prominent role in the operation, reinforcing the military partnership that has become a central component of the junta's security strategy. The recapture of Kidal strengthened the government's political narrative that cooperation with Russia can support efforts to recover territory. However, control of the city does not necessarily translate into lasting authority over surrounding rural areas or the elimination of armed opposition. The withdrawal of separatist forces also leaves open

the possibility of renewed contestation.

The operation unfolded amid the continued centralization of political authority under General Assimi Goïta. Political parties remained suspended or restricted, and a clear timetable for restoring democratic government remained absent. The authorities continued to frame military operations as efforts to defend national sovereignty and restore territorial integrity, while coordinating their regional posture with Burkina Faso and Niger through the Alliance of Sahel States.

Beyond the battlefield, supply routes and food availability remained important concerns. Efforts continued to stabilize the Abidjan–Bamako corridor through military escorts, but insecurity and transport bottlenecks continued to affect access to food and fuel in northern and central areas, including Kidal and Menaka. Mali’s return to Kidal therefore represented a notable military and political development, but the wider challenge remains whether territorial advances can be translated into durable security, functioning administration, and improved living conditions.

Niger

Niger’s political and economic developments reflected the government’s continuing effort to manage internal security pressures while strengthening regional infrastructure and securing external financing. The military authorities remained in control following the failed mutiny in Niamey, while the country continued to face threats from armed groups and sustained diplomatic distance from traditional Western and West African partners.

An important economic development came on October 8, when the International Monetary Fund announced a staff-level agreement with Niger’s authorities on a new 38-month Extended Credit Facility program worth approximately \$203 million. The agreement also covered the tenth and final review of the previous program and followed discussions on the country’s economic outlook and reform priorities. Subject to approval by the IMF Executive Board, the new arrangement would permit an initial disbursement of approximately \$36 million to support external financing needs and the government’s development strategy. The proposed assistance was intended to consolidate macroeconomic stability, strengthen public financial management, and support private-sector-led growth. However, the agreement remained conditional on formal approval rather than constituting an immediately available disbursement.

Niger also advanced regional digital connectivity through its cooperation with Algeria. On October 6, the two countries commissioned a 100-gigabit-per-second fibre-optic link at Assamaka. The connection forms part of a wider trans-Saharan telecommunications

backbone intended to improve connectivity between Algeria and Niger, reduce communication costs, and strengthen regional infrastructure links. The project represented a practical area of cooperation at a time when Niger was seeking to diversify its partnerships.

Security remained a central concern for the authorities. General Abdourahamane Tiani's government continued to manage the aftermath of the failed August mutiny, which targeted key military and government sites in Niamey. The authorities maintained a heightened security posture amid continuing threats from Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin across the wider Sahel. These challenges reinforced the government's dependence on security partnerships outside its former Western framework.

Regionally, Niger continued to deepen its alignment with Mali and Burkina Faso through the Alliance of Sahel States while remaining estranged from ECOWAS and traditional Western partners. The combination of new financial arrangements, infrastructure cooperation with Algeria, and continued military rule illustrated the government's attempt to balance economic requirements with its political and security realignment. Whether these initiatives can produce durable improvements will depend on the authorities' ability to manage insurgent threats, sustain economic reforms, and improve conditions for a population exposed to persistent insecurity and economic vulnerability.

DRC

The Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to face a combination of military confrontation in the east, diplomatic disagreements over regional security arrangements, and uncertainty surrounding international assistance and infrastructure development. While diplomatic initiatives sought to advance disarmament and peace efforts, fighting between government forces and armed groups continued to complicate prospects for stabilization.

President Félix Tshisekedi's envoy reportedly undertook regional consultations to support a plan for the demobilization of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, while African Union mediators engaged stakeholders in Goma and Kigali. These initiatives reflected continued efforts to address the regional dimensions of the conflict and advance arrangements for disarmament. However, disagreements over responsibility for armed groups and the role of foreign forces continued to obstruct a shared approach.

Domestic political pressure also remained evident. Opposition leaders reportedly called

for a peace process led primarily by Congolese actors and demanded the withdrawal of foreign forces. Their position challenged the government's existing strategy and raised further questions about Uganda's military presence. The dispute highlighted the tension between seeking regional military support and maintaining domestic confidence in the country's approach to sovereignty and conflict resolution.

The security situation in eastern Congo remained volatile. The Congolese armed forces, working alongside Wazalendo militias, reportedly recaptured Remeka and advanced in southern Masisi. Heavy fighting nevertheless continued in Rutshuru, eastern Masisi, and other areas involving government forces, M23/AFC rebels, and additional armed groups. These developments indicated that localized territorial gains had not ended the broader conflict or the insecurity affecting civilian communities.

Economic and diplomatic questions added to the country's challenges. Reporting on a five-year United States–DRC security memorandum of understanding signed in December 2025 described a framework intended to support territorial integrity and protect mineral assets through military training, with assistance linked to human rights and reform conditions. Separately, the withdrawal of a Chinese company from the consortium supporting the US-backed Ruzizi hydropower project reportedly delayed implementation. The combination of continuing conflict and infrastructure uncertainty underscored the difficulty of translating international partnerships into durable security and economic gains.

Chad

Chad's political and security environment remained shaped by the spillover from Sudan's war, growing humanitarian pressure along its eastern border, and efforts to diversify its external security partnerships. The government continued to manage the domestic consequences of regional instability while engaging European and French partners through evolving security arrangements.

The humanitarian situation in eastern Chad remained particularly serious. Updated assessments from UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations highlighted continuing refugee arrivals from Sudan alongside critical funding shortfalls. Reduced resources threatened the provision of food, shelter, and other essential assistance to displaced families, placing additional pressure on host communities and state services. The situation also illustrated how the Sudan conflict is intensifying existing pressures associated with resource scarcity and climate-related vulnerability in eastern Chad.

Chad's external security relationships also continued to evolve. The European Union reportedly advanced a new Sahel-focused security initiative intended to support Chad

and Mauritania in areas including counterterrorism and irregular migration. Separately, reports indicated that N'Djamena was pursuing renewed defense discussions with France following the departure of permanent French military forces. These developments point toward a more selective model of security cooperation, in which Chad seeks external assistance while retaining greater control over the terms of engagement.

Human rights diplomacy provided another dimension to Chad's international relations. Around the European and World Day against the Death Penalty, European institutions acknowledged Chad's steps toward ratifying an international protocol prohibiting capital punishment. This engagement built on the country's domestic abolition measures and placed legal commitments alongside the more immediate priorities of border security and humanitarian response.

Domestically, President Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno continued to preside over a consolidated political system following constitutional changes that strengthened executive authority. No major political transition was reported during the week, and the administration's security-centered approach remained in place. Overall, Chad's immediate challenges continued to arise from the interaction between domestic political control, humanitarian demands generated by Sudan's war, and the need to recalibrate its relationships with external security partners.

12. North Africa

Libya

On 11 October, representatives of rival eastern and western Libyan political camps in the 4+4 Group signed an agreement in Tripoli concerning electoral arrangements and restructuring the High National Elections Commission. Reported provisions included recommendations for commission appointments, separate presidential and parliamentary results, a unified executive and institutions before elections, eligibility for civilian and military candidates, and a 50-percent-plus-one electoral threshold.

On 5 October, Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah announced a three-track proposal addressing Libya's political deadlock. The plan included a merit-based government overhaul, a national inquiry project, and a mechanism for preparing elections without establishing a rival government. Dbeibah also reported a successful security operation against an armed group in Tripoli as his administration addressed the continuing political impasse.

Libya hosted the African Union Committee of Ten ministerial meeting on United

Nations Security Council reform on 10–11 October. Delegations discussed the common African position concerning representation and reform of the Security Council and adopted the Tripoli Document. The meeting reaffirmed existing African positions, including the Sirte Declaration and Ezulwini Consensus, calling for an end to the continent's historical underrepresentation.

Egypt and Italy reiterated their support for an inclusive political settlement in Libya around 9 October. The two governments called for the participation of all Libyan parties in resolving the political crisis and preparing the country for elections. Their stated position centred on an inclusive process rather than a settlement excluding one of the competing political camps.

Turkey's intelligence chief received a senior Libyan delegation as US-led diplomatic efforts continued to facilitate power-sharing between Libya's rival political camps. The meeting was reported during the October reporting period, although publicly available details did not fully specify the participants, agenda or agreements reached. The engagement took place while negotiations continued over political institutions and preparations for elections.

Algeria

On 11 October, Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf attended the African Union Committee of Ten ministerial meeting on Security Council reform in Tripoli. Participants reaffirmed the common African position established through the Sirte Declaration and Ezulwini Consensus and adopted the Tripoli Document. The discussions called for reform that addresses Africa's historical underrepresentation and strengthens the continent's representation within the United Nations Security Council.

On 5 October, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune instructed Algeria's prime minister to intensify coordination with Niger and Chad over existing bilateral projects. The directive identified energy, education, health and telecommunications cooperation with Chad as priorities. The instruction formed part of Algeria's ongoing engagement with neighbouring Sahel states through economic and development initiatives alongside its regional diplomatic and security contacts.

Tebboune confirmed that Algeria had sent Su-30 fighter aircraft to Niger in late August after an attempted coup in Niamey. He said the deployment was requested by Niger and was intended to help thwart the attempted takeover. The disclosure was reported in early October. The president did not identify the alleged external actors behind the plot or specify the aircraft's mission parameters.

In remarks widely reported on 5 October, Tebboune criticised the proposed Atlantic gas

corridor linking Nigeria and Morocco, dismissing its prospects and questioning its economic feasibility. He reiterated Algeria's support for the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline running through Niger. The comments placed the competing gas-export proposals at the centre of public disagreement over regional energy infrastructure and routes to international markets.

Algerian security services announced around 11–12 October that they had dismantled a network involving 61 Moroccan nationals allegedly preparing sabotage operations inside Algeria. The announcement attributed the planned activities to the arrested network, but the available report provided limited public detail about specific targets, locations, dates or evidence. The allegations were presented by Algerian authorities and were not independently established in the supplied material.

Morocco

On 9 October, King Mohammed VI said Morocco's existing migration cooperation model with Spain had reached its limits amid recurring crises. He cited difficulties repatriating undocumented migrants and unaccompanied minors, criticised Spanish court decisions he considered outdated, and rejected the use of migration as political pressure. He described the bilateral partnership as a sovereign choice that should not be subject to threats or blackmail.

Following the royal address, Moroccan Foreign Ministry officials said the country would propose a new migration-cooperation strategy to its northern partners. The proposed framework would emphasise shared development, economic competitiveness and regional stability. Officials said Morocco aimed to become the first southern country to present a practical strategic document for restructuring migration cooperation, replacing the existing model with a more collaborative arrangement.

A United Nations Secretary-General report on Western Sahara, reviewed developments during the first full year under Security Council Resolution 2797. The document reportedly noted three rounds of direct talks in 2026, with Morocco's autonomy proposal serving as the negotiating basis. The Security Council was preparing consultations on the MINURSO mandate, which was due to expire on 31 October.

Around 11 October, Morocco's delegation to the AU's Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Security and Safety called for strengthening continental peace and security arrangements. The delegation urged activation of the African Standby Force and support for the G5 Sahel force to address threats from non-state armed actors. Its stated priorities included regional stability and protecting African states' territorial integrity.

13. Middle East

Israel-Iran

Iran's Supreme National Security Council secretary, Mohsen Rezaei, said on October 11 that Washington's reply to Tehran's seven conditions for reopening the Strait of Hormuz was "insufficient." Iran said the conditions could restore normal maritime passage within seven days, but some US responses remained unclear. Tehran said it would not continue replying until outstanding points were clarified.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard said a supertanker in the Strait of Hormuz had hit one of its naval mines and caught fire. Maritime reporting said the vessel had been struck by an unidentified projectile. The Guards warned against unauthorized transit through the waterway, amid a broader rise in attacks on commercial shipping.

US Central Command said a fighter jet disabled the Panama-flagged cargo vessel M/V Ocean Molica, also known as Arika Sun, in the Gulf of Oman on October 10. CENTCOM said the crew ignored repeated warnings and attempted to breach the blockade after leaving an Iranian port. A precision munition disabled its propulsion; the crew was reported unharmed.

On October 8, Putin told Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian that Russia would help end the war. Trump described US-Iran discussions as productive and ruled out attacks before November 3. Reports said the Pentagon had prepared a three-day strike plan; Israeli Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir reportedly warned renewed fighting could threaten Israel's October 27 election.

The US Treasury Department announced sanctions targeting individuals, networks and 17 vessels accused of transporting Iranian crude oil, petrochemicals and oil products. Washington said the measures targeted Iran's "shadow fleet" and revenue streams supporting its war effort, missile development and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The announcement came as the US naval blockade of Iranian ports remained in force.

Israeli and Western reporting said Iran retained the ability to manufacture missiles and drones despite months of strikes, and was receiving military supplies from Russia. One report cited intelligence assessments that Iran retained roughly three-quarters of its pre-war missile stockpile. The reports did not publicly detail quantities, delivery routes or independently verifiable evidence for each claim.

Satellite imagery reviewed by the Institute for Science and International Security showed renewed activity at Iran's Minzadayi compound, described as a nuclear-related

site damaged in earlier Israeli strikes. The imagery reportedly showed vehicle movements, excavation and construction, including a new building. Reports did not establish what work was being conducted or whether the site had resumed nuclear operations.

The United States removed B-1 bombers from Britain's RAF Fairford after officials cited concerns about a suspected Iranian-linked drone plot targeting the airbase. British police separately arrested a 22-year-old man in London on suspicion of preparing terrorist acts. Iran denied involvement, while US European Command declined to discuss intelligence or specific aircraft-protection measures.

On October 11, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened Defense Minister Israel Katz and senior security officials at the Kirya headquarters in Tel Aviv. They discussed Iran, Gaza, Lebanon and Syria after Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia and amid concern about escalation in the US-Iran war. The government did not announce a new operational decision.

Israeli police arrested a resident of Eizariya, east of Jerusalem, on suspicion of planning an imminent terror attack, according to reports on October 11. After receiving a warning, Border Police and officers from the Ma'ale Adumim station established roadblocks and searched for the suspect. Authorities did not publicly disclose the intended target or alleged attack method.

Shin Bet personnel joined UAE questioning of Omani co-pilot Hamam al-Hammami after he allegedly tried to hijack a Flydubai flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv on September 30. Reports said he stabbed the captain with a cockpit axe and intended to harm 166 Israeli passengers. Investigators were assessing whether he acted alone, belonged to an organization or had Iranian links.

Israeli forces in southern Gaza killed a person who crossed the Yellow Line from territory controlled by Hamas toward an area held by Israeli forces on October 11, according to the military. The IDF said troops identified the individual as hostile and assessed that he posed an immediate threat. The report did not identify the person.

The IDF and Shin Bet said forces killed two Palestinian armed-group operatives in separate strikes around Khan Younis during the week. They identified one as Muhammad Abu Shalouf, a Palestinian Islamic Jihad commander involved in the October 7, 2023 attack, and the other as Musa Abu Dan, a Hamas Nukhba member. Officials said both had advanced attacks.

In southern Lebanon, the IDF fired interceptor missiles after detecting suspicious aerial targets near Israeli forces operating in the area on October 11. The military reported that

no warning sirens sounded inside Israel and said interception results were being reviewed. The report did not identify the targets, their origin, or whether they were destroyed.

Defense Minister Israel Katz threatened “all-out war” against the Palestinian Authority if its security forces or affiliated armed groups turned their weapons against Israel. He described a possible campaign involving ground and air forces, attacks on senior figures and destruction of infrastructure. IDF and Shin Bet sources told the Jerusalem Post they had no concrete intelligence indicating such a plan existed.

On October 7, the IDF and Border Police announced several West Bank operations beginning that evening to arrest and question dozens of people wanted for terrorism or incitement, focusing on those who expressed support for the October 7 attack. The military also conducted an operation to demolish memorials it said glorified terrorism, according to the report.

Israel’s Shin Bet said it had uncovered a cell in Segev Shalom near Beersheba, whose members allegedly planned to establish an armed group and conduct attacks. Five suspects had been arrested for questioning in May and June, according to the agency’s October 8 statement. Investigators cited plans targeting a police station, bus station and nightclub.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas cancelled the legislative election scheduled for November 28, 2026, and set November 11, 2027, for presidential and legislative elections, according to WAFA. The presidency cited Israeli restrictions and attacks in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, saying conditions did not permit free, fair and safe voting on the previous timetable.

Police reportedly believe Otzma Yehudit lawmaker Yitzhak Kroizer and party executive Itiel Neiman assaulted officers during an October 1 riot at Mitzpe Yeriho in the West Bank. The riot allegedly disrupted an attempt to arrest a suspect accused of violence against Palestinians. Two officers were hospitalized, and the suspect remained at large, Haaretz reported.

Israel’s Foreign Ministry urged Israelis abroad to exercise heightened vigilance ahead of demonstrations planned for October 10 to mark the third anniversary of the October 7 attack. It advised avoiding protest areas and locations where confrontations or antisemitic incidents might occur. The warning identified a major march in central London among several expected demonstrations.

KAN’s October 11 poll placed Gadi Eisenkot’s Yashar party at 22 seats and Likud at 20, with 53 seats projected for Benjamin Netanyahu’s bloc and 50 for the opposing bloc.

Eisenkot led Netanyahu 43% to 38% on prime-ministerial suitability. Fifty-four percent supported a televised debate, while 30% remained undecided about their party choice.

Two sets of electoral partners announced surplus-vote agreements ahead of the October 27 election. Likud signed with Religious Zionism on October 6, while Shas and United Torah Judaism announced their agreement on October 11 and pledged cooperation in the next Knesset. The deals pool surplus votes for seat allocation but do not merge parties or waive the threshold.

The Arab-led Joint List said it was prepared to provide an electoral “safety net” to help an anti-Netanyahu bloc replace the government, potentially through external support or abstention rather than joining a coalition. Chairman Yousef Jabareen said support would come with conditions, including a funded plan to combat crime in Arab communities and a pathway toward Palestinian statehood.

Former prime minister Naftali Bennett said a future government could include Benjamin Netanyahu, even as a minister, if Netanyahu accepted the opposition’s platform, including a state commission of inquiry into October 7. Bennett later said the remarks were not intended seriously. Gadi Eisenkot, Yair Golan and Avigdor Liberman rejected cooperation with Netanyahu, while Benny Gantz expressed support.

Blue and White leader Benny Gantz and People of Israel leader Ofer Winter said they would remain in the October 27 election race despite polls showing their parties near or below the threshold. Gantz rejected calls to withdraw; Winter said he would recommend Netanyahu and ruled out joining an Eisenkot-led government, calling Eisenkot dangerous.

Netanyahu’s former military secretary Avi Gil alleged that the prime minister’s office sought to alter call records from October 7, 2023. Channel 12 reported a transcript in which chief of staff Tzachi Braverman allegedly urged a stenographer to move a call’s time from 6:40 to 6:29. Braverman’s representative disputed the account; Eisenkot called for a criminal probe.

Former attorney general Avichai Mandelblit testified as a defense witness in Netanyahu’s corruption trial on October 11. Mandelblit said he had formally authorized major investigative steps but acknowledged that police had taken some serious actions without his approval, including actions that angered him. Netanyahu attended part of the hearing, and Likud subsequently called for the trial to be halted.

Marking three years since the October 7, 2023 Hamas-led attack, IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir said Israel had a duty to investigate the failures and learn their lessons. He compared the surprise attack with failures before the 1973 Yom Kippur War, urged

commanders to question assumptions, and said a newly formed training division would become an operational reserve formation.

A study released October 11 found that one in five Israelis continued to report severe impairment in daily functioning because of mental-health difficulties linked to the October 7 attack and subsequent conflict. The National Mental Health Barometer used a nationally representative sample updated through May 2026. Researchers reported higher impairment among women, including 32% of women aged 18–35.

Turkey

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced in early October that Turkey had begun constructing a spaceport in Somalia. Turkey's ambassador to Somalia and the commander of its TURKSOM military training base reportedly visited the site. The announcement came as Ankara continued its military training, maritime security and offshore-energy cooperation with Mogadishu under bilateral security and economic arrangements.

On or around 9 October, Turkish Ambassador Ferhat Alkan visited the frigates TCG Gelibolu and TCG Gökusu operating with Turkey's Somali Naval Task Group. The vessels were reportedly escorting the Çağrı Bey drilling ship during operations at the Curad-1 well. The mission was linked to the ten-year Turkey–Somalia defence and economic agreement and the protection of offshore exploration activities.

Reports published around the reporting period described Turkey's military role in Somalia's internal political and security disputes. Turkish F-16 aircraft and drones were alleged to have been involved in fighting around Baidoa and earlier incidents. Turkey continued training Somali forces, with reporting placing the number trained at approximately 35,000, while maintaining its largest overseas military base in Somalia.

On 5 October, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan convened an emergency meeting of the Makkah Alliance for Defense's strategic political and defence committee in Riyadh. Participants discussed regional security threats and measures to develop the alliance. The committee appointed retired Pakistani Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood as its first secretary-general and approved steps to implement collective-defence commitments and arrange the provision and rapid deployment of agreed military capabilities.

During the same period, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan reportedly said preparations had been completed to submit the mutual-defence agreement with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to Turkey's parliament for ratification. The proposed parliamentary process concerned the legal status of the agreement signed by the three countries in August. Reporting also described consultations over possible military support to Saudi

Arabia following Houthi attacks.

On 7 October, Erdoğan spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin and said Turkey was prepared to contribute to direct Russia–Ukraine negotiations. He also raised the safety of Black Sea commercial shipping following attacks on merchant vessels. Separately, a Russian drone strike on 5 October hit a Turkish-owned cargo vessel carrying corn in Romania’s exclusive economic zone, killing two people and prompting the rescue of eleven crew members.

Defence Minister Yaşar Güler identified the continuing Russia–Ukraine war and its effects on Black Sea security, changing security balances in the Caucasus, Middle East developments, Cyprus and Eastern Mediterranean rights as major Turkish defence-policy concerns. In public remarks around 7–8 October, he said Ankara would maintain a balanced approach while addressing regional developments affecting its security interests.

Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia continued developing their trilateral defence framework following a meeting in Shusha on 2 October, where the three defence ministers signed a protocol. Subsequent reporting highlighted cooperation involving defence and regional connectivity. The framework brought together the three neighbouring states in the South Caucasus and addressed their shared security and infrastructure interests.

Around 10–11 October, Erdoğan criticised the international system, saying binding agreements and judicial rulings were increasingly disregarded. He also argued that the United Nations lacked legitimacy because its structure did not adequately reflect the will of the wider international community. His remarks formed part of his broader public commentary on international institutions and the handling of contemporary conflicts.

On 11–12 October, Erdoğan addressed the Turkic World Youth Gathering and said cooperation among Turkic nations extended beyond national borders. He announced that the thirteenth Organization of Turkic States summit would be held in Ankara later in October. The announcement concerned the next meeting of the regional organization, which brings together Turkey and other Turkic states for political and economic cooperation.

On 11 October, Turkey’s Foreign Ministry condemned a Houthi attack targeting King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Ankara expressed condolences and called for an immediate end to actions threatening regional security. Turkey subsequently joined Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan in condemning the attacks, expressing support for Saudi Arabia’s security and calling for an end to further strikes against the kingdom.

Turkey's handling of invitations for the upcoming COP31 summit in Antalya also generated a diplomatic dispute with the European Union. Reports said Ankara initially sought to exclude Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides from invitations to leaders, before partially retreating after European criticism. The disagreement concerned Cyprus's participation in the leaders' programme at the climate summit Turkey is scheduled to host.

Around 7 October, Erdoğan said Turkey had no time for domestic quarrels while major changes were taking place across the Middle East and beyond. He described the government's principal concern as advancing the "Century of Türkiye" agenda. The remarks were delivered amid regional security developments and ahead of the Organization of Turkic States summit scheduled to take place in Ankara later in the month.

14. Global Powers

Washington continued to pursue negotiations with Tehran despite the absence of a breakthrough. On October 8, Trump announced that the United States would not launch another attack on Iran before the November 3 congressional midterm elections, citing what he described as productive discussions. However, negotiations remained difficult, with disagreements over Iran's uranium enrichment program and the conditions for restoring normal navigation through the Strait of Hormuz. Tehran rejected Washington's latest response to its peace proposal as insufficient, leaving the prospects for a settlement uncertain.

The crisis expanded further as fighting intensified around Yemen and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Saudi Arabia and Yemeni government forces escalated military operations against the Houthis, who responded with missile and drone attacks against Saudi territory and energy infrastructure. Following a deadly strike on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport on October 10, Trump said Washington was considering whether to join Saudi Arabia's campaign directly. U.S. assistance to the Saudi-led effort has included intelligence sharing, target identification and operational planning, although Washington had previously avoided committing its forces to a renewed offensive against the Houthis.

The widening confrontation is particularly consequential for the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. With maritime traffic already affected by the disruption around Hormuz, renewed fighting near Bab el-Mandeb threatens another critical passage for international trade and energy shipments. A decision by Washington to enter the Yemen campaign directly would further expand the geographical scope of the conflict and increase the risks facing countries dependent on Red Sea shipping.

Trump's handling of the Russia-Ukraine war became another major source of controversy. On October 9, he announced an agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin under which Russia would supply hundreds of thousands of tonnes of diesel immediately, followed by additional deliveries in subsequent months. The U.S. Treasury Department subsequently issued a temporary general license authorizing transactions involving Russian-origin diesel through April 7, 2027. The administration presented the arrangement as a measure to ease fuel prices amid the energy disruption caused by the Iran conflict.

The decision drew criticism from American lawmakers and Ukrainian officials, who argued that purchasing Russian fuel risks generating additional revenue for Moscow while undermining sanctions imposed over its invasion of Ukraine. The controversy intensified on October 11, when Trump announced an immediate Russia-Ukraine "energy ceasefire" without providing detailed terms. Neither Moscow nor Kyiv had clearly confirmed the arrangement by the end of the reporting period, and Ukrainian officials reported continued Russian attacks on energy infrastructure. Trump also publicly criticized Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, further straining relations with Kyiv.

The episode highlights a tension within Washington's policy. The administration continues to pursue an end to the war but is increasingly willing to apply pressure to Kyiv and make selective economic arrangements with Moscow to achieve its immediate objectives. Rising fuel prices and the approaching midterm elections appear to be important factors shaping these decisions.

Alongside diplomatic engagement, Washington continued its economic campaign against Tehran. On October 8, the Treasury Department announced further sanctions targeting Iran's remaining shadow-fleet network, which it said facilitates the export of Iranian petroleum and petroleum products. The action formed part of Operation Economic Outcast, the administration's broader effort to restrict Iran's oil revenues and financial channels. Earlier in the month, Treasury had also targeted the A7 Network, a shadow-banking system with links to Russia that Washington accused of facilitating Iranian sanctions evasion and financing activities associated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Iranian-linked groups.

These measures demonstrate that Washington is maintaining financial pressure even while exploring a diplomatic settlement. However, the combination of sanctions, military pressure and negotiations has yet to produce an agreement that resolves the central disputes over Iran's nuclear program and maritime security.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited Iceland, Greece and Portugal from October 5 to

8, focusing on Arctic security, defense cooperation, energy and transatlantic relations. In Iceland, Rubio sought to reassure the government about Washington's intentions while emphasizing the importance of cooperation in the strategically significant Arctic region. The discussions followed tensions over American ambitions in the North Atlantic and the neighboring Greenland region. In Greece, Washington announced a new counterterrorism information-sharing arrangement and agreed to deepen defense cooperation through the U.S.-Greece Strategic Dialogue. Rubio subsequently visited Portugal, where he reiterated the administration's position that European NATO members must increase their defense contributions to strengthen collective deterrence.

The tour reflected Washington's continuing effort to secure European cooperation while pressing allies to assume greater responsibility for their own defense. It also connected European security with the administration's wider priorities, including maritime protection, energy security and the strategic importance of the Arctic.

On October 9, the Trump administration imposed new sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC), escalating its confrontation with the institution. Washington has long opposed ICC investigations involving American personnel and Israeli officials, arguing that the court is acting beyond its legitimate authority. The sanctions prompted criticism from the ICC and concern among European officials, raising questions about the consequences for international judicial cooperation and the ability of the court to work with companies and financial institutions.

Regarding China, the most consequential diplomatic development was the European Union's renewed effort to address its growing trade imbalance with China. On October 8, EU Trade Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič met Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao in Beijing for negotiations aimed at narrowing the bloc's trade deficit, which has reached approximately €360 billion annually.

The discussions reflected growing European concerns about Chinese industrial subsidies, excess manufacturing capacity and the influx of competitively priced Chinese products into European markets. European officials have warned that these trends threaten employment and industrial competitiveness, particularly in the automotive and steel sectors. Beijing, meanwhile, defended its economic policies and rejected accusations that its exchange-rate policy artificially advantages Chinese exporters.

By October 10, the two sides had announced a preliminary trade understanding intended to ease tensions over electric and hybrid vehicles, improve market access for selected European products and stabilize rare-earth supply chains. The arrangement could reduce Chinese hybrid-vehicle exports to the European market while improving access for European goods in China, although it still requires further approval and implementation.

The allocation includes funding for the daily operations of county- and district-level governments, alongside additional resources for infrastructure projects. The measures reflect growing concern about weak domestic consumption, the prolonged property-sector downturn and the risk that China could struggle to meet its annual growth target of 4.5–5 percent.

On October 12, Beijing imposed sanctions on Paraguay's Communications Minister Gustavo Villate and Belize's Foreign Minister Francis Fonseca because their countries maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The measures include restrictions on travel to Hong Kong and Macau and prohibitions on certain transactions and cooperation with Chinese individuals and organizations. Both countries are among the small number of states that maintain formal diplomatic relations with Taipei. Beijing justified the sanctions on sovereignty and national-security grounds, continuing its campaign to isolate Taiwan diplomatically.

China also continued its diplomatic engagement with African governments. Beijing announced that Botswana's President Duma Gideon Boko would make a state visit to China from October 12 to 17, at Xi Jinping's invitation. The visit is intended to strengthen bilateral relations and follows a period of continued Chinese engagement with African governments on economic and diplomatic cooperation.

Coming to Russia, on 7 October, EU envoys approved new sanctions listings targeting individuals and entities connected to Russia's military-industrial complex. Reuters reported that the proposed measures included missile research and production facilities, rocket-engine manufacturers, drone producers and submarine shipyards.

15. European Countries

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham visited German Chancellor Friedrich Merz in Berlin on 8 October. The visit highlighted the importance of British-German coordination on European security and economic cooperation. It also came amid renewed discussion about the UK's future relationship with the EU, with European officials signalling openness to deeper engagement.

On 11 October, Burnham reiterated Britain's commitment to strengthening sanctions against Russia, as disagreements emerged between Washington and several European capitals over the handling of the Ukraine war. The UK's position reflects a broader European concern that easing economic pressure on Moscow without a verifiable change in Russian conduct could weaken Ukraine's negotiating position.

On 6 October, Macron observed a test launch of the M51.3 missile from a French nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarine. The launch was non-nuclear and

demonstrated France's continuing investment in its sea-based nuclear deterrent. Macron has also advocated a stronger European role in deterrence, including closer coordination with allies.

On 11 October, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul reaffirmed Berlin's support for Zelenskyy following Trump's call for a change in Ukrainian leadership. Wadephul argued that Russia should face greater pressure to return to negotiations, not reduced pressure. Germany also maintained its commitment to sanctions against Moscow

On 11 October, Polish authorities announced the arrest of a man suspected of planning an attack against Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Defence Minister Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz. Officials provided limited details about the alleged plot, and no publicly established connection to Russia was demonstrated in the initial reporting. The arrest nevertheless came amid heightened Polish security concerns over threats against political leaders and possible foreign interference.

On 5 October, the EU issued a statement expressing alarm over escalating violence in Ethiopia and rising tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It warned that the situation could trigger a broader conflict across the Horn of Africa, with serious implications for regional stability. Brussels called for immediate de-escalation, protection of civilians, unhindered humanitarian access and full implementation of the Pretoria Agreement within the African Union framework. It also urged external actors to refrain from interference and use their influence to prevent further escalation.

On 6 October, the UK addressed the UN Security Council during a discussion on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. British Deputy Permanent Representative Kate Foster emphasised the importance of coordinated international action in African conflicts.

She highlighted three developments directly relevant to the Horn: the role of African Union forces in Somalia, international efforts to support a Sudanese-led political process, and the importance of UN–AU cooperation in responding to renewed fighting in northern Ethiopia. The UK also reported providing £16.5 million in direct support to AUSSOM, alongside a further £8.5 million to the UN trust fund supporting Somalia.

On 9 October, Germany updated its travel advice for Ethiopia, warning against travel to Tigray, Amhara, several other regions and border areas. Its advisory identified renewed fighting since 22 September, the suspension of flights to Tigray and Lalibela, and heightened tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It also noted that the two countries

had severed diplomatic relations on 1 October.

16. International and Regional Organizations

United Nation

Closed consultations on the deteriorating situation in northern Ethiopia were prepared and expected in the first week of October. Council members' concerns centred on risks to the 2022 Pretoria Agreement, the sharp deterioration in Ethiopia and Eritrea relations and potential regional spillover including GERD and Red Sea issues. The Secretary-General's spokesperson described the situation as extremely worrying and murky, citing escalating drone activity, airstrikes and constrained humanitarian access. The annual UN AU cooperation briefing and the 20th joint consultative meeting between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council remained scheduled for 22–23 October in New York.

The UN Security Council convened its 10233rd meeting on 6 October 2026 to discuss cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations focusing on the African Union during which Special Representative of the Secretary General to the AU Parfait Onanga-Anyanga presented the Secretary General's latest report on strengthening the UN-AU partnership on peace and security in Africa .

Onanga-Anyanga underscored that the scale and complexity of challenges facing Africa demand a stronger partnership that anticipates crises, addresses underlying pressures and converts shared commitment into prompt, predictable and accountable action, identifying three priorities the changing nature of conflicts, structural factors driving regional instability and practical implementation of UN and AU cooperation in peace support operations . He highlighted the Horn of Africa the Great Lakes region and the Sahel as particularly urgent challenges, while AU Senior Adviser Zinurine Alghali noted that the AU-UN partnership has established instruments it did not have a year ago, including the Declaration signed at the Tenth AU-UN Annual Conference in Addis Ababa on 13 May 2026 .

Alghali emphasized that the measure of this partnership must ultimately be its impact on the lives of people affected by conflict and called on the Council to align parallel initiatives with an inclusive, Sudanese owned political process . Council members echoed the need to turn political commitments into concrete action, with several speakers underscoring the importance of implementing resolution 2719 (2023) on predictable financing for African-led peace support operations and shifting the partnership from cooperation by circumstance to partnership by design.

Discussions on sustainable financing for AUSSOM and UNSOS logistical support continued. The United States 12-month drawdown arrangement for UNSOS beginning January 2027 and the EU's additional €75 million commitment covering stipends until 30 June 2026 remained the most recent concrete pledges. UNTMIS operations were scheduled to conclude by 31 October 2026 after which UNSOS would handle residual administrative and logistical functions on a cost recovery basis before entering liquidation.

Africa Union

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, has expressed profound sorrow over the tragic loss of 109 lives, including children after a boat carrying migrants capsized off the coast of Djibouti. He extended heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and expressed solidarity with all those affected. The boat was carrying 305 people mostly Ethiopian nationals when it went down near Obock.

Mr. Youssouf underscored the urgent need for strengthened regional and international cooperation to address the root causes of irregular migration, combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons and promote safe, orderly and regular migration in line with relevant AU frameworks and international commitments. He reaffirmed the AU Commission's commitment to working with Member States and partners to protect the lives and dignity of migrants, particularly vulnerable groups including children and to advance coordinated efforts to prevent such tragedies.

The African Union Commission has strongly condemned the attack attributed to the Houthis against King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh on 10 October 2026, which reportedly claimed 12 lives and injured more than 300 people according to Saudi authorities. In a press statement issued Sunday, the 55 member continental organization underscored that civilians and civilian infrastructure must be protected in accordance with international law and must never be targeted.

The AU Commission expressed its solidarity with the Government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, extended its condolences to the bereaved families and countries concerned and wished the injured a speedy recovery. It called for an immediate cessation of attacks and urgent de-escalation to prevent further escalation and safeguard regional peace and security. According to the Saudi aviation authority, the fatalities included four Saudi citizens and eight foreign residents two Bangladeshis and one each from the United States, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Palestine and Sudan. The attack came as the Houthi group and Saudi Arabia continued exchanging strikes on major airports and other facilities.

The African Union Commission continued to urge maximum restraint after Ethiopia closed its embassy in Eritrea and expelled diplomats (1 October), Eritrea severed diplomatic relations and reciprocal expulsions occurred with Egypt. Fighting in Tigray, including the recapture of Mekelle airport by federal forces, remained under AU watch. On 4 October, Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia held a quadrilateral summit in New Alamein City, Egypt issuing a joint declaration opposing unilateral actions and affirming the role of Red Sea littoral states. The AU Commission restated its readiness to support de-escalation, dialogue and peaceful resolution in line with the Constitutive Act and the 2022 Pretoria Agreement framework.

AUSSOM continued support to Somali-led operations amid Al-Shabaab threats. Mandate implementation, logistical support and financing sustainability remained central topics in partner discussions. Reports of possible Ethiopian troop adjustments linked to domestic pressures continued to circulate, though no formal notification of large-scale withdrawal was confirmed by Mogadishu in this window. The mission's mandate runs to 31 December 2026.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

in Nairobi for high-level talks aimed at strengthening preparedness and response efforts. The meeting followed Kenya's confirmation on 6 October of an imported case of Bundibugyo Ebola virus disease. The patient was a Kenyan citizen who had been living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and had travelled through Uganda before reaching Nairobi where he was diagnosed and later passed away. Even though the outbreak itself began in the DRC this imported case sparked concerns about cross-border disease surveillance and the possibility of further transmission in the region.

IGAD represented by Ambassador Dr Fatuma Adan, reiterated its commitment to supporting Kenya through the PREPARE Project. This includes mobilising USD 1 million for surveillance, laboratory capacity and rapid response measures. The funding is part of a larger USD 7 million regional commitment to strengthen epidemic preparedness across seven IGAD member states. The discussions also covered contact tracing, border health security and coordination between national and regional health authorities.

IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu attended the inaugural African Chiefs of Defence Forces Conference on Military Operations Other Than War in Uganda, presided over by President Museveni where he called for stronger military cooperation, joint readiness and expanded engagement beyond traditional defence to advance enduring peace, regional stability and shared prosperity.

European Union

Implementation work advanced from the 28–29 September meetings in Nairobi. The newly established Regional Trade Facilitation Committee chaired by Somalia began operationalising the Horn of Africa Trade Development Action Plan 2026–2031 and the Regional Trade Facilitation Scorecard. Sudan’s formal readmission and its proposals on border crossings/economic zones remained on the agenda. Ethiopia continued to highlight energy and trade facilitation priorities, including the Ethio-Djibouti pipeline and Eastern Africa Power Pool.

The European Union has issued a stark warning over the escalating violence in Ethiopia and the heightened tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea cautioning that the situation risks triggering a broader regional conflict with severe consequences for peace and stability across the Horn of Africa. In a statement released on 5 October 2026, the EU called for immediate de-escalation on all fronts and urged all involved parties to refrain from actions or rhetoric that could further inflame tensions while also pressing the parties to the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement to recommit to its full implementation within the African Union framework.

The EU emphasized that respect for international humanitarian law is imperative, stressing that civilians must be protected at all times and that unhindered humanitarian access must be ensured a concern echoed by UNICEF which reported that children were being injured and killed and that residential areas and public facilities had been damaged amid the renewed fighting in northern Ethiopia. The bloc firmly reiterated that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected and called on external actors to refrain from interference and use their influence to prevent further escalation and advance political solutions and diplomacy.

The statement comes during reports that Eritrean soldiers had crossed into northern Ethiopia with sources indicating they advanced up to 60 kilometers inside Tigray and entered towns including Adigrat and Idaga Hamus, prompting Ethiopia to accuse Eritrea of flagrant aggression and to request UN support while Eritrea countered by accusing Ethiopia of waging a long-standing war of aggression. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to regional stability, peaceful cooperation and economic integration in the Horn of Africa, stating it stands ready to support diplomatic efforts towards meaningful dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts.



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