

# Regional Overview: Africa 19-25 January 2020

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## ACLED

Bringing clarity to crisis

Last week, heightened levels of demonstration activity continued on the back of ongoing nationwide anti-government demonstrations in Guinea. In the Sahel countries, militants employed contrasting tactics in their ongoing insurgency, predominantly targeting civilians in Burkina Faso and state forces in Mali. Meanwhile, Boko Haram launched attacks on civilians across the neighboring countries of Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon.

The week began with the so-called Berlin Conference, in which foreign parties agreed to enforce an arms embargo and refrain from escalating their involvement in the conflict in **Libya** ([AP, 19 January 2020](#)). The agreement, however, did little to reinforce a stuttering ceasefire. Government of National Accord (GNA) and Libyan National Army (LNA) forces continued to clash, despite an overall reduction in violence. Fighting was largely centred in the Tripoli region, where GNA artillery fire reportedly destroyed six vehicles and killed an unspecified number of LNA soldiers.

In **Guinea**, opposition-led demonstrations continued across the country over fears that President Alpha Condé intends to seek a third term as president. At least three people, including an ambulance driver, were killed during violent demonstrations in Labe town.

In **Burkina Faso**, suspected Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) militants carried out several attacks on civilian populations in Sanmatenga province in the Centre-North region. Militants reportedly killed thirty-two civilians during one such attack on the village of Nagraogo. Militants were also active in the Sahel region, attacking two health centres in Oudalan province.

Across the border in the Mopti region of **Mali**, JNIM militants launched several IED attacks on Malian military forces, resulting in multiple fatalities. JNIM also attacked the Malian army base in Dioungani, killing at least seven soldiers and seizing vehicles, arms,

ammunition, and other equipment. Meanwhile, IED attacks in the Tombouctou and Gao regions resulted in injuries to French soldiers and Belgian peacekeepers, respectively.

In **Cameroon**, state forces continued their recent raids on villages and towns in the Anglophone Southwest and Northwest regions. Significant civilian fatalities were reported during raids in Donga-Mantung, Mezam, and Ngo-ketunjia departments in the Northwest, and Fako, Meme and Ndian departments in the Southwest. Meanwhile, Ambazonian separatists continued their attempts to disrupt the upcoming February elections, with a series of attacks on the Cameroon electoral body's (ELECAM) offices in the Northwest. Separatists also carried out an arson attack on the home of a local Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) party chairman in the Southwest.

Meanwhile, Boko Haram orchestrated attacks in Cameroon's Far-North, as well as neighbouring administrative regions in **Nigeria, Chad, and Niger**. Militants continued their recent attacks on villages in Nigeria's Borno state and the Far-North of Cameroon, also clashing with state forces on both sides of the border. They also engaged in numerous abduction raids in Niger's Diffa, and executed a suicide bomb attack in the Lac region of Chad, which claimed multiple civilian lives.

In **Somalia**, despite a falling number of armed clashes, Al Shabaab maintained an active operational presence in the Middle Shabelle and Lower Shabelle regions. In these regions, they employed targeted IED attacks on both African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali forces. In Lower Juba, Al Shabaab also executed three captives they accused of being Somali soldiers.

Finally, fighting re-emerged between the Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC) and the Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice (MLCJ) in the Birao area of the **Central African Republic**. Two days of clashes resulted in substantial fatalities. MLCJ fighters also attacked and burned a humanitarian vehicle during the violence. The two groups have been sporadically fighting in the area since September, despite both signing the Political Accord for Peace and Reconciliation in February last year ([ISS, 1 October 2019](#)).



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