



Briefing Notes

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

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Afghanistan

Taliban redeploy troops to Daikundi province

It was reported in the media on 02.11.22 that a vehicle of the ministry for rural development blew up when it passed over a mine in Kabul. According to the Taliban, eight people were injured. No-one has claimed responsibility for the attack. On the same day, it was reported from Daikundi province that the Taliban had redeployed units to several of the province's districts, forcing people out of their homes and closing schools in order to accommodate the troops. No details have been disclosed regarding the background to the redeployment.

Human rights activist arrested by the Taliban, election of neighbourhood headmen banned

According to a report in the media on 04.11.22, the Taliban arrested ethnic Hazara and well-known women's rights activist Zarifa Yaqubi with four male colleagues in Kabul's Dasht-e Barchi district at a rally where they were intending to found the "Afghanistan Women's Movement" organisation. On 31.10.22 residents of the city of Herat's eighth district gathered at a mosque to elect a neighbourhood headman. The Taliban reportedly broke up the gathering, arresting and beating some of the men. The Taliban had previously spoken out against the election of neighbourhood headmen in other contexts.

Economic and humanitarian situation

According to a new report published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the cultivation of opium has risen by 32 % compared to the time before the Taliban came to power, despite a ban which was declared in April 2022. 80 % of the opium traded around the world currently comes from Afghanistan. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported on 03.11.22 that 90 % of the Afghan working population currently earn the equivalent of approx. US\$ 1.90 per day. It also reports that 700,000 people have lost their employment since last year.

Cameroon

Staff abducted from hospital

Nine employees were abducted from a hospital in the town of Batibo in the anglophone North-West region on 03.11.22. No information has emerged to date regarding the kidnappers' identities or motives. Attacks on health institutions and medical staff have been a regular occurrence since the beginning of the anglophone crisis in 2017.

China

Arrests following protests in Lhasa

Some 200 people were arrested in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, following protests against the Chinese government's COVID-19 policy on 26.10. and 27.10.22. Those arrested included people of both Tibetan and Han Chinese origins. According to reports in the media, the latter were released shortly after being arrested, while the whereabouts of the Tibetan detainees remain unclear. A strict lockdown has been in place since 08.08.22, following the discovery of 22 COVID-19 infections in Tibet by the authorities. People have not been allowed to leave their homes or housing complexes since this date. Tens of thousands of people who have tested positive, contact persons and suspect cases have been taken to quarantine camps. The individuals concerned are held at these camps for an indefinite period and often receive inadequate supplies of food and medicine, which has already led to a number of deaths.

Colombia

Law providing for social service for peace as an alternative to compulsory military service

President Petro signed the first law into force under his government on 04.11.22. The so-called Ley de Paz Total (law of total peace) extends a law which initially entered into force on a temporary basis in 1997 and which has since undergone continual extension as the basis on which congress mandated the head of state to negotiate peace agreements. The main focus of the current government is on involving all armed groups in peace policy, and the new law is intended to provide the framework for negotiations with the ELN guerillas and to enable negotiations with FARC dissident groups. The new law additionally provides for the option of completing of twelve months of compulsory social service for peace, instead of compulsory military service. Social service can be completed in eleven different areas, including working with victims of armed conflict, supporting the peace agreement, promoting literacy or protecting nature and biodiversity.

DR Congo

North Kivu: Rutshuru under rule of M23; human rights, humanitarian and security situation

On 28.10.22 the UN Security Council expressed concern at increasing activity by non-state armed groups in the conflict-ridden provinces of eastern Congo and the resumption of armed combat operations by the Tutsi-dominated rebel group Mouvement 23 Mars (M23). On 03.11.22 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Volker Türk, reported a rapid decline in the already precarious security situation in the eastern province of North Kivu, above all in Rutshuru Territory, and warned of a dire worsening of the human rights situation. According to reports in the media, the M23 rebels and the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) resumed hostilities in Rutshuru on 20.10.22, following several weeks of quiet. The OHCHR reports that more than a dozen civilians have been killed and at least 40 injured in the renewed fighting, for which the warring parties are blaming each other. Türk estimates that more than 90,000 have fled the area since fighting resumed, while the spokesperson of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in DR Congo mentions a figure of at least 160,000. The UN estimates that earlier hostilities between M23 and FARDC in parts of North Kivu caused 200,000 people to flee the fighting and led to a number of civilian deaths.

It is unanimously agreed that M23 has almost doubled the territory under its influence and control since 20.10.22 and that Rutshuru Territory is largely under its rule. On 30.10.22, it captured the district capital, Rutshuru Centre, the second-largest town in North Kivu province, and later the largest military camp in North Kivu, Rumangabo. These two locations are situated 70 km and 40 km north of the provincial capital, Goma. Isolated sources refer to fighting close to Goma or directly outside the city. As a result of the large-scale territorial conquests, the city of Goma with its population of over one million is cut off from the northern half of the province, which plays a crucial role in ensuring the supply of goods and food to the city. The already precarious humanitarian situation in North Kivu, and in Rutshuru Territory in particular, has further deteriorated for those living in the areas under M23 rule and for the internally displaced people. The World Food Programme reported as recently as in August 2022 that 94 % of households in Rutshuru Territory are exposed to food insecurity. A number of humanitarian organisations have already left Rutshuru Territory and some have also departed from Goma.

There are reports of parallel administrations being established in the regions which have been under M23's control for some time now, and also in the recently conquered areas. Violence and reprisals against civilians are also reported.

DR Congo has repeatedly accused neighbouring Rwanda of supporting M23. While Rwanda rejects this assertion, it does appear to be corroborated by an unpublished UN report from July 2022 and a statement released by US monitoring group Kivu Security Tracker on 05.11.22. As part of the response to the M23 offensive, the Rwandan ambassador was recently expelled from the country. According to reports in the media, mass protests against Rwanda have occurred in various towns and cities. Congolese police forces reportedly used tear gas and warning shots to prevent demonstrators, some of whom were armed, from crossing the Rwandan border.

Kinshasa: Human trafficking and sexual exploitation

The coordinator of the government agency to prevent and combat human trafficking (APLTP), Cécile Meta, has described the capital, Kinshasa, as a starting point, transit location and destination for human trafficking. Meta claims that human trafficking and people smuggling take place here in part within organised crime structures. Victims of human trafficking who have been lured here or abducted come from various parts of the country, he says. They are transported to Kinshasa by air, road or waterways and accommodated in a number of areas on the outskirts, with those destined for prostitution housed above all in the municipalities of Gombe and Ngaliema. Some victims are allegedly taken abroad.

Ecuador

Violence in Guayas and Esmeraldas provinces

More than 18 coordinated attacks on police stations and filling stations, in some cases involving car bombs and firearms, took place in various towns in the provinces of Guayas and Esmeraldas between 01.11. and 03.11.22. At least five police officers were killed and at least seven were injured. According to information from the government, this new wave of violence in the country is a response by drugs gangs to the relocation of more than 1,000 prisoners from the El Litoral prison to other prisons in the country. The El Pais newspaper talks of a gang war between local allies of the two Mexican cartels, Sinaloa and CJNG. According to official information, the Los Choneros criminal group operates in Ecuador for the Sinaloa cartel, while Los Lobos, Tiguerones and Chone Killers represent the rival CJNG. The newspaper reports that members of the three latter Ecuadorian groups were affected by the relocation, in view of which the groups suspected collaboration between the authorities and the rival cartel and threatened a wave of violence in video messages from the prison. According to official information, more than 300 tonnes of drugs were seized in joint operations by civilian security forces (national police) and the military on 01.11. and 02.11.22. 53 people were also arrested and are now being brought to justice. Since 03.11.22 six individuals have been remanded in custody in connection with the attacks and one juvenile has been placed under house arrest. The authorities report that the situation at the El Litoral prison was also brought under control by a joint security operation on 03.11.22. In the rioting at the prison two inmates were killed and a number of prisoners and members of the security forces were injured. In the face of the violence in the country, president Lasso has declared a state of emergency for the sixth time in 2022.

Egypt

More than 118 people arrested for calling for protest actions

According to information from NGOs, the authorities have arrested more than 118 throughout the country since 25.10.22 for calling for protest actions in connection with the World Climate Summit which is to take place in Sharm el-Sheikh from 06.11. to 18.11.22. The detained individuals have been accused of belonging to a terrorist organisation, spreading fake news and misusing social networks. There are calls in the social media for actions to be held in protest at the rising cost of living on 11.11.22.

Ethiopia

Ethiopian government and TPLF agree ceasefire

The Ethiopian government and the government of the regional state of Tigray, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), signed an agreement on an immediate ceasefire in Pretoria, South Africa, on 02.11.22. According to the African Union (AU), which brokered the accord, the two parties have also agreed a disarmament deal. The aim of the agreement is to restore law and order, access to relief supplies and public services. The Ethiopian military's recent successes forced the TPLF to make a number of concessions: Disarming of its troops, recognition of the authority of the Ethiopian state and the installation of a transitional government for Tigray. The AU intends to monitor implementation of the peace process. Very few people had expected such a comprehensive peace plan to come about.

This is not the first attempt to bring a peaceful end to the conflict, which has been ongoing since November 2020. A humanitarian ceasefire was announced back in March 2022, but heavy fighting resumed in August 2022 (cf. BN of 28.03.22. and 29.08.22). At the end of the talks, the AU stressed that the situation in Tigray was fragile and that the persisting problems underlying the conflict could only be resolved through dialogue.

In this context, knowledgeable observers refer in particular to the status of the Eritrean army, which is fighting on the side of the Ethiopian forces in the conflict. Although the agreement states that the Ethiopian military is to be stationed along the national borders, it is not stipulated whether it will ensure Eritrea's withdrawal. Neither Eritrea, which was not involved in the talks, nor Amhara's regional government have responded to requests for statements on this matter. It further remains unclear whether Western Tigray, which is controlled by Amharic security forces and militias, is to be restored to Tigray, whether the return of the approx. 800,000 internally displaced Tigrayans is possible and what is to happen to the approx. 200,000 Amhara who are settled there. It is also unknown who is to monitor the demobilisation of the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF), which is to be completed within 30 days, and who will then provide for the security of the local population.

Regardless of the peace agreement, Tigrayan media have reported that the fighting has continued, with air raids which have claimed civilian lives and offensives by the Ethiopian and Eritrean armies.

The Gambia

Continuing problem of crimes against media representatives going unpunished; freedom of the press

On 02.11.22 the president of the Gambia Press Union (GPU), Muhammed S. Bah, stated that more than 15 attacks on media representatives had gone unpunished since the change of government from president Yahya Jammeh to president Adama Barrow at the end of 2016/beginning of 2017. Bah asserted that either the police or the political powers, including the supporters of the governing and opposition parties, were to blame for this state of affairs. He further noted that, similarly, no-one had faced criminal prosecution for the crimes committed against media representatives during the Jammeh era, including extra-legal killings, enforced disappearances and torture. He lamented the fact that the Barrow government's promises to allow greater freedom, to guarantee the safety of media representatives and to reform the repressive media legislation which remained in place had still yet to be fulfilled, years after the change of power. In contrast, the co-editor of the newspaper The Point, Baba Hydara, has echoed the views of the editor-in-chief of the Gambian newspaper The Voice (cf. BN of 25.07.22) in expressing his appreciation of the progress achieved in the area of freedom of the press since the change at the head of state. He nevertheless adds that the safety of media representatives is a continuing problem and that the pressure to exercise self-censorship remains because media houses and media representatives are still exposed to threats and intimidation.

Guinea

Justice minister orders investigations into members of former government

News agencies and media report that justice minister Alphonse Charles Wright sent a list containing 188 names to public prosecutors on 03.11.22, instructing them to investigate the individuals concerned for corruption, embezzlement of public funds, unlawful enrichment, money laundering, forgery and complicity. The accounts of

the people on the list have been frozen. Among the accused are former president Alpha Condé, who is officially in Türkiye for treatment, ex-prime minister Ibrahim Kassory Fofana and around 40 members of the former government. A number of these individuals, including Fofana, have already been in custody for some months, and Condé has also previously been the subject of investigations (cf. BN of 11.04. and 09.05.22). In his letter, the justice minister highlighted the aim of fighting corruption (cf. BN of 04.04.22).

Iran

Protests and clashes continue

It has been reported in the media that further well-attended protest actions occurred between 03.11. and 06.11.22 in parts of Tehran and Karaj, Amol (Mazandaran province), Arak (Markazi), Khash (Sistan and Baluchistan), Rasht (Gilan), Shiraz (Fars), Tabriz (East Azerbaijan) and several towns in the Kurdish provinces. According to reports from a Kurdish human rights network, the law enforcement forces fired shots, used tear gas and made arrests in the towns of Kamyaran and Mariwan (both in Kordestan province) Demonstrators had allegedly attacked an administration building. Around 35 people were reportedly injured. The demonstrations were sparked by the death of a student from Mariwan at protests in Tehran on 05.11.22. Some 16 demonstrators were shot dead at protests in Khash on 04.11.22. 03.11.22 witnessed a number of clashes between security forces and demonstrators, in the course of which firearms, tear gas and stun grenades were used. Demonstrators apparently attacked units and vehicles of security forces who had blocked the access roads to a cemetery. There were reportedly casualties on both sides. Claims that at least two people died are as yet unconfirmed. The protests were held in memory of killed demonstrators, at the end of the forty days of mourning which are customary in Islam. Among those commemorated was a woman who was allegedly shot dead by security forces at the end of September 2022. The security services deny any such incidents. Rather, state media carry reports about arson by protesters, for example at a local police office in Karaj.

According to estimates by human rights organisations, the total death toll in the protests which have been ongoing since the end of September exceeds 300 people in 22 provinces, including around 40 minors. Thousands of demonstrators have reportedly been arrested to date. It has been reported in the media that more than 2,000 people have already been charged. According to reporting by state media, on 06.11.22 227 out of a total of 290 MPs called on the judiciary to hand down severe sentences for detained protesters. Foreign media also report isolated critical voices from parliament regarding the security forces' use of firearms against demonstrators, particularly in Sistan and Baluchistan province, in which the largest number of people have been killed in the protests to date.

Iraq

Relations between KRG and the new government

On 01.11.22 the prime minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Barzani, spoke about the matter of relations between Erbil and Baghdad under the new government. He referred to the drafting of a joint law on the exploitation of hydrocarbons as a key objective of domestic policy. The dispute centring on revenues and jurisdiction over the gas and oil wells of the KRG is a crucial issue in intra-Iraqi relations. Barzani supported the formation of the new government under prime minister Al Sudani.

Turkish military intervention

At least one PKK fighter was killed and two injured in a drone attack in Shingal on 03.11.22. The drone is believed to belong to the Turkish forces.

Kazakhstan

Amnesty for prisoners

On 02.11.22 president Tokayev signed a law granting amnesty to around 1,500 people who were arrested and convicted in connection with the sometimes violent protests against the government in January 2022 (cf. BN of 10.01.22 and 17.01.22). Persons who have already received prison terms for minor offences are to be released; those

found guilty of more serious crimes are to have their prison terms reduced by up to 75 %. According to reports in the media, the amnesty is not to apply to persons charged with offences including terrorism, high treason or organising the disturbances.

Lebanon

Economic situation

Banks continue to be raided by customers demanding the return of their frozen deposits. Three deposit holders were arrested after US\$ 55,000 was paid out on 02.11.22. One of the three was admitted to hospital with acute health problems two days later. The individual concerned requires a wheelchair and refused food while in custody. The number of people infected with cholera continues to rise steadily. The country's infrastructure, which is overstrained and in large part outdated and defective, is conducive to the spread of the disease, as are the very crowded living conditions. Large parts of the population currently have no alternative to water which is likely to be contaminated with cholera bacteria. The outbreak has caused 18 confirmed deaths to date.

Return to Syria

The second major return initiative to Syria took place on 05.11.22. The Lebanese authorities claim that the returnees are acting on a voluntary basis. Some 350 people were taken to the Syrian border. Around 500 people were taken out of the country in the same manner on 26.10.22. Since 2018 there have been repeated attempts to encourage large numbers of Syrian nationals to return to their native country. Various forms of pressure are applied here, causing international observers to doubt the voluntary nature of many of the reported returns. The two initiatives in October and November 2022 represented the first such transfers for over two years. The crisis in Lebanon has evidently led to voluntary returns among Syrians, however. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are generally more exposed than Lebanese nationals to the consequences of the country's economic collapse, as many services are unavailable to them and they have only very limited legal access to the labour market. Lebanon is not a signatory to the Geneva Convention on Refugees.

Liberia

Ex-rebel leader sentenced to life imprisonment

On 02.11.22 Liberian ex-militiaman Kunti Kamara was sentenced in France to life imprisonment for a series of atrocities in 1993 and 1994. This emerges from reports in the media which also illuminate the background to the trial. An estimated 250,000 people died in successive conflicts in Liberia between 1989 and 2003. The conflicts involved a toxic mix of rivalries between ethnic groups, the struggle for political influence and fighting over the country's natural resources, including diamonds. According to reports in the media, Kamara came to the French judiciary's attention by chance. The now 47 year-old former rebel commander lived for many years in the Netherlands. In 2016 he moved to France. A victims' association subsequently took legal action against him. In Liberia itself, the many crimes from the period between 1989 and 2002 have not been addressed by the judicial system.

Mali

Demonstrations against anti-Islamic blasphemy

Following the publication of a video in social media showing a man stamping on a Koran and making offensive remarks about Islam, thousands of people took to the streets in Mali's capital, Bamako, on 04.11.22 to protest against the blasphemy. The High Islamic Council of Mali (HCIM) had called for the demonstration. It has been reported in the media that six people have been arrested on charges of participating in blasphemy.

HRW report on civilian victims of ISGS in the Ménaka and Gao regions

A report published by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on 27.10.22 speaks of evidently coordinated massacres of civilians in the Ménaka and Gao regions (in the north-east of the country) by Islamic groups allied with IS in the

Greater Sahara (ISGS). Numerous villages were reportedly attacked and hundreds of civilians massacred between March and June 2022. Tens of thousands of people were forced to flee. The report describes heavily armed attackers on motorcycles firing their weapons indiscriminately and carrying out executions and looting. These attacks are aimed for the most part at the Dawsahak, an ethnic group of the Tuareg people. They stem from increased tensions between ISGS and MSA-D, a Dawsahak faction within the Tuareg group Mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad (MSA). HRW's report is based in part on interviews with witnesses and community officials. HRW also refers to reports of retaliatory attacks on suspected ISGS supporters.

The HRW adds that the army and the UN's MINUSMA mission lack the necessary capacity to protect the civilian population in the regions of Gao and in particular Ménaka, where ISGS controls three out of four districts. On 16.06.22 Amnesty International (ai) also published a report on violence against civilians in the Ménaka region. Serious fighting is reported to be taking place here at present between ISGS and the rival Support Group for Islam and Muslims (JNIM). According to a report in the media on 02.11.22, ISGS claims to have killed 40 JNIM combatants, while for its part JNIM alleges that it killed more than 70 ISGS members in the period from 27.10. to 29.10.22.

Montenegro

Civil rights organisations and NGOs consider amended law to be unconstitutional

It was recently reported in the media that parliament passed a new law with a tight majority of 41 votes (out of 81) on 01.11.22 which restricts the president's powers and paves the way for parliament to elect a new government. On 02.11.22 the NGO Centre for Democratic Transition (CDT) and other citizens' organisations objected that in restricting the president's powers the law was in contravention of the country's constitution. The new law enables a parliamentary majority to nominate a designated prime minister for election by submitting a signed petition, should the president refuse to nominate a candidate of their own. Under the new law, the president is obliged to nominate a designated prime minister supported by 41 MPs in this way for election. NGOs claim that the new law undermines the president's constitutional authority and places party interests before the will of the electorate. Following the fall of the minority government led by outgoing prime minister Dritan Abazovic on 19.08.22 (cf. BN of 22.08.22), on 20.09.22 president Milo Djukanovic proposed fresh elections. He had previously refused to confirm the candidate of the three governing political blocs, Miodrag Lekic, as the designated prime minister because his nomination was not signed by 41 MPs within the 30-day deadline stipulated in the constitution.

Mozambique

Journalist briefly detained

The journalist Arlindo Chissale was arrested in the district of Balama (Cabo Delgado region) on 29.10.22 after having carried out research into the continuing violence in the north of the country. He was reportedly held in solitary confinement and refused access to a legal representative. He was released for lack of evidence on 03.11.22. In addition to Chissale, who was accused of spying, a number of journalists covering the security situation in Cabo Delgado have been arrested in the past.

Nicaragua

Two AUN members arrested and disappeared

The student opposition organisation La Alianza Universitaria Nicaragüense (AUN) claims that two of its members were arrested by members of the armed forces in the municipality of Cárdenas (Rivas) on 01.11.22. According to mobile phone location data, they were subsequently taken to a military base in Las Colinas, Managua. They have apparently not been handed over to the police and the reasons for their arrests remain unclear. Inquiries by media and relatives to official agencies regarding the students and their whereabouts have so far remained unanswered. According to another AUN member, the two had already been under observation by the police and pro-Sandinistan forces in the weeks prior to their arrests. One of the two individuals furthermore received a warning from the citizens' councils (Consejos de Poder Ciudadano), which are loyal to the government and which serve, among other

things, to secure political control at local level, advising him to refrain from organising any demonstrations or causing trouble in the run-up to the local elections on 06.11.22.

Nigeria

North-west: Kidnappers release minors

According to reports in the media, 21 kidnapped minors in Faskari Local Government Area (LGA) in Katsina State were released on 30.10.22. Their release was reportedly announced by a police spokesperson via a WhatsApp message on 05.11.22. It was not ascertainable whether any ransom money was paid or what amounts may have been involved. The 17 girls and four boys were abducted by unknown attackers on motorcycles while working in the fields. According to reports in the media, Faskari LGA is among the regions in Katsina State in which kidnappings are relatively common. The aim of the kidnappers is generally to extort ransom money.

Terror alert

In October a number of states issued warnings of possible terrorist attacks in the capital, Abuja, and elsewhere in Nigeria. In addition, the USA ordered non-urgently required diplomatic staff and their dependants to leave Abuja on 27.10.22. The German Federal Foreign Office advises on its website against travelling to Abuja at present, except for essential journeys. Nigeria is confronted with various security problems, including attacks on towns, villages and travellers, kidnappings, communal clashes and Islamist violence. People who live in the region of the capital are increasingly concerned since an attack on a prison near Abuja which enabled hundreds of people to escape on 05.07.22. The escaped prisoners are believed to include suspected members of Islamist groups (cf. BN of 11.07.22).

Separatist leader remains in prison

Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the independence movement Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), who has been in prison since summer 2021, is not to be released. It was reported in the media on 28.10.22 that the Nigerian government has lodged an appeal against a court ruling of 13.10.22 (cf. BN of 17.10.22) which found Kanu's imprisonment and the current court proceedings against him to be unlawful. There has since been a further court ruling in his favour: On 26.10.22 a Federal High Court in Umuahia in Abia State, south-eastern Nigeria, ruled that Kanu was to be deported to Kenya - the country in which he was arrested in 2021. The court also found him entitled to compensation to the sum of 500 million naira (approx. EUR 1.15 million as per 07.11.22). Kanu is accused, among other charges, of terrorism and treason (cf. BN of 02.05.22 and 25.10.21). The IPOB independence movement, which was banned in 2017, is campaigning for secession from Nigeria's south-east region.

Pakistan

Ex-prime minister Khan shot during protest march

Former prime minister Imran Khan was shot at the beginning of the protest march on 03.11.22 (cf. BN of 31.10.22). Shots hit his truck, from which he was leading the crowd. He suffered a gunshot wound to his right leg. One party supporter was killed and at least a dozen people were injured.

Supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party gathered in Lahore on 04.11.22 and called for the march to be continued. They set fire to tyres and blocked main roads. Similar protests occurred throughout the country, leading to clashes with security forces. Late in the evening Khan stated that he was suspending the protest march until he had recovered from his gunshot wound. Prime minister Shehbaz Sharif rejected accusations that he may have been involved in the attack and promised prompt investigations. Khan welcomed this undertaking in a video message from a hospital in Lahore on 06.11.22.

Palestinian territories / Israel

West Bank/East Jerusalem: Highest death toll since 2005 at least

On 05.11.22 the health ministry of the Palestinian National Authority confirmed that an eighteen year-old man had died after being shot by Israeli security forces. The ministry stated that another man had been seriously wounded

in the same incident. According to the Israeli military, the two Palestinians had been throwing stones at Israeli vehicles on a road near Silwad, a town to the north-east of Ramallah. A number of cars were reportedly damaged before Israeli soldiers opened fire on the attackers.

The health ministry has further reported that at least two people living at Jenin refugee camp, a stronghold of militant groups, died during a raid on 04.11.22. Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) has released a statement claiming that one of those killed was a PIJ commander.

The Israeli police have reported that a Palestinian died on 03.11.22 when he threw an incendiary at Israeli security forces during a raid in the West Bank, whereupon the police opened fire on him.

On the same day, a Palestinian was killed by Israeli security forces in the Old City of Jerusalem after attacking a police officer with a knife. The policeman incurred minor injuries.

On 03.11.22 the Israeli authorities removed checkpoints on the access roads to Nablus, where they had been carrying out a number of operations against the Lions' Den militia for around a week, in the course of which they killed or arrested a number of the militia's leaders.

According to UN information, the number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank and East Jerusalem since the beginning of the year stands at 130. This means that more Palestinians have died in clashes with Israelis in 2022 than in any year since the UN began keeping records in 2005.

Rockets fired from Yemen

Unknown persons fired a number of rockets at Israel from the Gaza Strip on the evening of 03.11.22. The Israeli army reports that one of the rockets was intercepted. Three others failed to launch correctly and exploded in the Gaza Strip. Israel responded with an air raid on an underground Hamas position where the military claims that such rockets which are used to attack Israel are produced. There are no reports of any deaths or injuries.

Russian Federation

Putin declares partial mobilisation over

On 01.11.22 president Putin officially announced the end of partial mobilisation for the Russian armed forces. Defence minister Shoigu had already stated on 28.10.22 that the conscription of 300,000 reservists which was ordered on 21.09.22 to reinforce the Russian forces in the war in Ukraine had been completed (cf. BN of 31.10.22). Kremlin spokesman Peskov rejected the assumption that a new decree from the president was required in order to end the partial mobilisation. He said that an examination by the presidential administration's legal department had revealed that no official terminating decree needed to be issued.

While the partial mobilisation may have been completed for the time being, there are growing indications that the call-up of 300,000 reservists was not a one-off measure. It has been reported in the media that the relevant figures in Putin's decree of 21.09.22 on partial mobilisation have been kept secret and that the decree allegedly specifies that at least one million people can be called up as reservists. This means that further waves of mobilisation must be expected, depending on the course of the war in Ukraine.

There are also reports that a loophole is to be removed for the purposes of future mobilisations: To date, reservists who fail to comply with call-up orders can only be punished with a small fine under the law as it stands – although many Russian nationals are unaware of this and fear more severe punishments. On 01.11.22, Duma member Ernest Valeev announced the possible introduction of a new criminal offence punishable with high fines and up to five years' imprisonment, should reservists fail to appear at the military service department after receiving their call-up papers.

Somalia

Suicide attack on military training camp

According to reports in the media, at least eleven people, including members of the armed forces and civilians, were killed and at least 15 injured in a suicide attack outside the entrance to a military training camp on 05.11.22. The attacker gained access to the grounds by disguising himself as a soldier. Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that the suicide attacker killed 100 members of the armed forces.

South Sudan

Food shortages

In a joint report published on 03.11.22, the UN organisations FAO, UNICEF and WFP warn of an increase in the number of people affected by food shortages and malnutrition in South Sudan. The three organisations assume that two thirds of South Sudan's population, i.e. approx. 7.6 million people, will be acutely affected during the coming dry season from April to July 2023. This means that in the period from April to July 2023 the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) will be at the highest level ever recorded for South Sudan. The IPC uses a scale ranging from phase one to five, with phase one denoting a less severe situation and phase five acute famine. For the period from April to July 2023 the report foresees only one region in phase two, while the rest of the country will be classified as IPC phase three or higher. The report states that the IPC classification expressly takes account of humanitarian aid. Should the extent of aid be lower, this would result in a correspondingly more severe IPC classification.

In addition to the poor security and economic situation, the report also identifies climate change-related phenomena, such as flooding or droughts, as causes for the continuing deterioration in the food situation and increasing food shortages.

Sudan

Further demonstrations

The central committee of Sudanese doctors has reported that a total of 74 people were injured in demonstrations on 03.11.22: 55 at demonstrations in Khartoum, 17 in Omdurman and four in the East Nile region. Among the injured, some people were found to have been hit by bullets and tear gas cartridges. One person was reportedly hit by a vehicle of the security forces.

The association of Sudanese emergency lawyers has reported the release of eight detained demonstrators. The individuals concerned have stated that they suffered torture and beatings in prison. In addition, their personal valuables were stolen by security personnel.

Unlawful imprisonment

According to information from the Darfur State Bar Association, 350 people originating from Darfur are currently being held unlawfully in Sudanese prisons. The law association states that most of the detainees are internally displaced people, including minors. Both the Bar Association and the West and North Darfur Detainees Defence Committee have announced that they will be campaigning for the detainees' release.

The Bar Association claims that some of the unlawful arrests were ordered by so-called peace committees of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). For several months now, the RSF has been attempting to mediate in the conflicts affecting Darfur, although its attempts are criticised as being superficial and not in the interest of the people. Anyone who fails to follow the RSF or who opposes their efforts allegedly faces arrest.

Syria

Idlib: Heavy attack on camp for displaced people

According to reports in the media, a large tent camp to the north-west of the governorate capital of Idlib was targeted by artillery shelling and air raids on 06.11.22. UN representatives spoke of an escalation of the conflict. A ceasefire between the warring parties has actually applied for the region since 2020, but has been regularly disregarded ever since its introduction.

The pro-opposition Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) claims that government troops fired around 30 rockets at rebel-controlled areas. According to SOHR, the rockets also reached the Maram camp and other camps for displaced people, killing nine people and injuring 77. SOHR reports that among the dead was a refugee who was only deported from Türkiye to Syria two months ago.

According to government media, the Syrian army shelled positions of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Syrian and Russian combat aircraft were reportedly also involved in the attacks.

SOHR has reported that the rebels responded by attacking Saraqib, an area to the east of Idlib, and the Al-Ghab plain with artillery and rocket fire.

Türkiye

Anti-LGBTIQ demonstration

An anti-LGBTIQ demonstration attended by several hundred people was held in Izmir on 06.11.22. This was the fifth such event to take place in various Turkish cities since 2022.

The rector of İzmir Katip Çelebi University, Saffet Köse, who participated in the demonstration, said that the demonstration was being held in protest at international rallies propagating “genderless people, societies without families and unnatural relationships”. The first anti-LGBTIQ rally took place in Istanbul on 18.09.22. This was followed last month by rallies in the capital, Ankara, and in Konya and Urfa.

Femicides

A report published by the organisation We Will Stop Femicides on 04.11.22 claims that at least 275 women were killed by men in Türkiye between January and October 2022. The data in the report show that 19 (a total of 7 %) of the murdered women had secured injunctions against their subsequent murderers. According to the organisation’s information, at least one femicide has taken place on every day of the year, while the figures for October 2022 show an 88 % rise compared with the same month in 2021. “Rejection” is the most commonly cited motive for the murders. 18 of the murder victims were killed by their husbands. 20 women were killed at home and seven in broad daylight. 26 femicides were recorded as “death in suspicious circumstances”.

Tunisia

Preparations for parliamentary elections – gender parity repealed

It has been reported in the media that the candidatures for the constituencies in the parliamentary election on 17.12.22 have been finalised. The Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE) announced on 03.11.22 that more than 1,400 candidacies had been reviewed. In all, 1,058 applications were successful, with 936 men and 122 women duly registered. The markedly lower number of women is attributable to the new electoral law, which repeals gender parity by abolishing party candidate lists in favour of candidatures for constituencies based on the support of registered voters, although the new constitution stipulates that the achievements attained for women to date are to be maintained.

Most opposition parties have announced that they will be boycotting the elections.

Establishment of a regional mechanism to combat human trafficking

It was reported in the media on 03.11.22 that the president of the national office to combat people trafficking called at a joint meeting of states bordering on the Mediterranean and other countries for an administrative mechanism similar to Interpol to improve the coordination, identification and referral of victims of human trafficking on migration routes. The primary aims of the programme are to develop links with African countries affected by human trafficking and to coordinate regional efforts to combat human trafficking.

Ukraine

Humanitarian situation; war events and migration flows

According to reports in the media, the power supply situation, which has been highly strained for many weeks as a result of the war, remains critical. The mayor of the capital, Kiev, has stated that a complete collapse of the power, heating and water supply in the city cannot be ruled out, calling on Kiev’s civilian population to stock up accordingly or to leave the city temporarily, should such an emergency occur. He added that plans to set up around 1,000 heat rooms in Kiev are in progress. According to president Zelenskyy, more than 4.5 million households were cut off from the power grid on the evening of 06.11.22, for the most part in the city of Kiev and the surrounding area. It has been reported in the media that warnings of possible interruptions in the supply of medicines due to power

cuts have been displayed in pharmacies. According to information from the administrative authorities installed by Russia, the power and water supply was also down in the embattled Kherson region, including the regional capital of the same name, on 06.11.22. On 04.11.22 the Russian defence ministry announced that some 5,000 people had left their homes in the Kherson region in the preceding days, following the resumption of evacuation measures. Current UNHCR information puts the number of people who have fled the country because of the war at over 14 million and the number of internally displaced people in the Ukraine at around 6.24 million. Ongoing hostilities and rocket attacks continued to be reported from numerous towns and villages on 06.11. and 07.11.22, particularly along the front line. According to information from the Ukrainian general staff, around 30 towns and villages were attacked in the areas of Mykolaiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Luhansk and Sumy.

Venezuela

NGO report: Medical examinations at selected police station detention centres

On 27.10.22 the NGO Una ventana a la libertad (UVL) published a new report on the results of medical examinations which were carried out over a period of eleven days at 177 police station detention centres in nine of the country's states (Anzoátegui, Aragua, Bolívar, Carabobo, Miranda, Nueva Esparta, Vargas, Zulia and the capital district). The majority of the cell complexes at the police stations are under civilian state control (158), while 19 are controlled by the military police (GNB). The current report refers to the data obtained on 820 prisoners examined at the facilities concerned, 90 % of whom were men. At least 17 deaths were recorded at these police station detention centres between April and September 2022. The causes of the prisoners' deaths included malnutrition and infectious diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis of COVID-19, for which they did not receive any treatment, according to their dependants. The UVL report states that 39 prisoners were severely malnourished, 156 individuals were suffering from tuberculosis and 57 from HIV. 126 people also tested positive for COVID-19 at the time of the medical examinations. The NGO criticised the standard of medical care as "inadequate", adding that diseases spread more easily as a result of severe overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions. The current level of overcrowding at the investigated police station detention centres was found to be 218 % (10,193 people instead of 4,679); only around 50 % of the facilities had toilets and only 80 a regular supply of drinking water. The facilities were furthermore found to be unsuitable for accommodating detainees over prolonged periods.

Illegal border crossing points between Colombia and Venezuela

Despite the opening of the official border crossing points between Colombia and Venezuela in September 2022, according to various reports in the media and information from Colombian president Petro the majority of trade continues to take place via the informal border crossing points (so-called trochas). Petro's government is thus seeking to close these trochas. According to the NGO FundaRedes there are currently around 400 such trochas leading across the green border, including 250 between the federal states of Norte de Santander and Táchira alone.

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