



# Briefing Notes

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

6 December 2022

## Afghanistan

### Security situation

An attack took place on the director of the Pakistani embassy in Kabul on 02.12.22. His bodyguard was shot and wounded. The Pakistani government called on the Taliban to investigate the incident as a matter of urgency. The Taliban have publicly condemned the attack. One day after the attack, Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) claimed responsibility. The Pakistani embassy will continue to operate in Kabul, despite the attack. The Kabul headquarters of the Hezb-e Islami party, which is led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, also came under attack on 02.12.22. Armed men attempted to storm the mosque located on the grounds during Friday prayers. Two attackers and an uncertain number of security personnel were reportedly killed in the incident. No-one has claimed responsibility for the attack. 21 people were killed and 24 injured in an attack on an Islamic school (Al-Jihad Seminar) during midday prayers in the town of Aybak (Samangan province) on 30.11.22. Most of the victims were students. No-one has claimed responsibility for the attack. The school had reportedly only recently been reopened by the Taliban.

### Persecution

Local Taliban punished three men and two women who were accused of various offences with 50 lashes in Samangan province on 30.11.22. The Taliban reportedly arrested two former soldiers in Jowzjan province on 29.11.22. It has been reported that the Taliban arrested two young women on 30.11.22 who were intending to travel to Iran without being accompanied by direct male relatives (mahram). A female escort and a male escort who is not related to the two women concerned were also arrested.

### Government affairs

The Taliban have promulgated a decree from their leader, mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, which enables the expropriation of unregistered land. The decree is to be applied to expropriate land which allegedly belongs to the state and which is being used by employees of the former government. The majority of land holdings in Afghanistan are not officially registered. In the wake of border conflicts (cf. BN of 15.11.22 and 21.11.22), the Pakistani foreign minister, Hina Rabbani Khan, and the foreign minister appointed by the Taliban, Amir Khan Motaqi, met for talks on 29.11.22. It was reported on 01.12.22 that a new directive had been issued by the ministry of information and culture, banning broadcasting by the stations Voice of America and Radio Azadi.

## DR Congo

### Western Congo: Violent inter-ethnic clashes reach Kinshasa; attacks by government forces

According to the provincial MP for the city province of Kinshasa, Papy Epiana Nzamu, the ongoing inter-ethnic hostilities between the Teke and Yaka have reached Kinshasa city province. This was duly confirmed by the government on 02.12.22. In the absence of effective action by the state, members of the Yaka ethnic group have,

among other acts, allegedly killed 15 Teke and injured others in the territories of the Muluku municipality in Tshangu district. The ethnic conflict, which was originally limited to Kwamouth Territory in Maï -Ndombe province to the north-east of the capital, Kinshasa, has since spread to the neighbouring province of Kwilu (cf. BN of 14.11. and 17.10.22). The conflict is giving rise to substantial internal displacement and has claimed the lives of more than 200 civilians. As per November 2022, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates the number of internally displaced people at more than 55,000. Citing a source from the realm of civil society, UN radio station Okapi has reported that the Congolese armed forces which have been dispatched to Kwamouth continue to be accused of carrying out attacks on the civilian population. In the past, the Congolese forces have been accused, among other acts, of extra-legal killings of civilians (cf. BN of 05.09.22).

#### **UN: Ethnically motivated killings and violence**

The special adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the prevention of genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, has expressed concern at the ongoing violent inter-ethnic conflicts in western and eastern Congo. According to Nderitu, targeted killings of civilians continue in the eastern conflict-ridden provinces, and these are linked in part to the victims' ethnicity. Public hate speech and incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence are on the increase throughout the country, in particular with regard to Kinyarwanda speakers and the Banyamulenge minority. Nderitu notes that Banyamulenge are particularly exposed to systematic attacks, including sexual violence, on account of their ethnicity and their alleged loyalty to neighbouring countries. There are frequent reports of repressive measures or ethnically motivated attempted or actual killings of and violence against Rwandans, Rwandan-language speakers and people of Tutsi descent, including Banyamulenge or people who are suspected of belonging to any of these groups solely on account of their physiognomy or speech (cf. BN of 21.11., 25.07. and 20.06.22).

#### **Cases of excessive force by the police against demonstrators, use of firearms, arrests**

Okapi has reported that police used force and live ammunition to break up a demonstration by students of Kisangini University in Kisangini (Tshopo province) on 01.12.22. The demonstration was concerned solely with internal issues relating to the university. Students and police apparently clashed in the course of the demonstration and six students reportedly sustained gunshot wounds. For their part, the police refer solely to six people having suffered minor injuries due to stones thrown by students.

The security forces used force against allegedly peaceful demonstrators at a demonstration in Goma (North Kivu) on 01.12.22 which was organised by a number of citizens' movements and civil society groups and which had been banned in advance by the authorities. Local sources have reported the arrest of a number of initiators of the demonstration and seven media representatives who were covering the event. The media representatives were allegedly beaten up during their arrests and some of their equipment was damaged. According to the NGO Journaliste en danger (JED), all the media representatives were only briefly detained. The demonstration was staged, among other issues, in protest at the presence of international forces in the province of North Kivu, which is under a state of emergency. In particular, the announcement of the arrival of 1,000 Ugandan military personnel in North Kivu as part of the East African Community (EAC) rapid response force has been condemned, as Uganda is accused, together with Rwanda, of supporting the rebel group Mouvement 23-Mars (M23). M23 currently continues to hold extensive territories along the borders with Rwanda and Uganda in Rutshuru Territory in North Kivu (cf. BN of 07.11.22).

#### **North Kivu, Rutshuru Territory: Numerous reprisal attacks on civilian population, massacre**

According to various consistent reports in the media, the M23 rebels, the majority of whom are of Tutsi origin, have recently carried out reprisal attacks on the civilian population in the extreme west of Rutshuru Territory, which is largely controlled by M23, at the border with Masisi Territory. A massacre reportedly took place on the local population when the town of Kishishe in the groupement of Bambo was recaptured by M23 on 29.11.22. The Congolese government has revised the civilian death toll from the original figure of 50 to 272. Independent verification of the figures is not possible. According to the UN and the NGO Human Rights Watch, there are reports of a high number of civilian casualties in Kishishe. M23, which denies having carried out the massacre, has since conceded that eight civilians died as a result of "stray bullets" in the course of fighting with other armed groups in Kishishe. A number of local sources have reported that the local population has been the target of punishments and reprisals because M23 has recently been attacked and driven out of various locations, including Kishishe, by the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), an armed group consisting predominantly of ethnic

Hutu, and its allies, including the Maï-Maï-Nyatura Hutu group. Civilians in other towns and villages of this region who are suspected of supporting or collaborating with the Maï-Maï groups or the FDLR have reportedly also been killed or abducted. This information cannot be independently verified.

## **El Salvador**

### **Large-scale operation in Soyapango to combat gang crime**

According to government information, 8,500 soldiers and 1,500 police were dispatched to the city of Soyapango on 03.12.22 to hunt for gang members. The city was apparently surrounded and sealed off in the large-scale operation against the juvenile gangs which are referred to as 'maras'. The operation followed president Nayib Bukele's announcement that the army would be deployed to seal off entire towns in order to tackle gang crime. Following a wave of violence, the government declared a state of emergency in March 2022 (cf. BN of 28.03.22) and has arrested around 60,000 people to date who are accused of having links to the juvenile gangs. In addition to the curtailment of basic rights, human rights organisations also denounce numerous violations of human rights, including arbitrary arrests, torture and overcrowding in prisons.

## **Ethiopia**

### **Media report on massacre of Tigrayan prisoners in November 2021 / Withdrawal of TPLF troops**

It has been reported that 83 members of the Tigrayan military were killed by members of the Ethiopian army at a prison near Mirab Abaya in the south of Ethiopia on 21.11.21. In all, 2,000 Tigrayan soldiers are said to have been held at the detention centre. Almost one year later, the massacre has now been appraised by reference to interviews.

According to recent information from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), just under a month after the ceasefire agreement was concluded between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF (cf. BN of 07.11.22) more than half (65 %) of the Tigrayan troops have withdrawn from the front.

## **The Gambia**

### **Stigmatisation and discrimination persist against people with HIV/AIDS**

The National Aids Secretariat and the National Human Rights Commission stated in a joint declaration on 01.12.22 that people who are HIV-positive or suffering from AIDS still experience difficulties accessing health services due to continuing discrimination, unequal treatment and stigmatisation. According to another source of information, the fear of an infection with HIV/AIDS becoming known and the possible attendant consequences sometimes prevents infected individuals from being identified and receiving treatment.

## **Guinea**

### **Ex-prime minister's release prevented once again**

Although the investigation chamber of the special court for white-collar and financial crime (CRIEF), before which former prime minister Ibrahima Kassory Fofana faces charges (cf. BN v. 11.04.22), ordered his release subject to strict conditions on 01.12.22, Fofana must remain in custody. According to a report in the media citing Fofana's defence, the public prosecutor at CRIEF has filed an objection with suspensory effect for the fourth time. The chamber's three judges held that no new findings had come to light, in addition to which his state of health exposed him to serious risks. Numerous members of the government headed by toppled president Alpha Condé face investigations into accusations of corruption, embezzlement and similar offences (cf. BN of 07.11.22).

## Honduras

### **State of emergency in the cities of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula**

On 03.12.22 the government announced the suspension of a number of constitutional rights in some of the poorest districts of the capital, Tegucigalpa, and the northern city of San Pedro Sula under a state of emergency which has been declared for security reasons. The state of emergency is to enter into force for 30 days on 06.12.22 and is intended to curb gang crime. In addition, some 600 police have been mobilised to bolster the border guard and prevent members of criminal gangs from entering Honduras from neighbouring countries, in particular El Salvador. Honduras is contending with a growing number of extortion cases and other types of crime, such as drug trafficking and corruption.

## Iran

### **Protests and nationwide strikes**

Following calls by local groups of activists, large-scale protests and nationwide strikes are reportedly planned from 05.12. to 07.12.22 (14./15./16.09. according to the Persian calendar). Ahead of these protests, there have been calls to boycott economic activities in order to prevent any money from circulating. According to reports in the media, shops and market stands joined the boycott in many towns and cities. Demonstrations against the Islamic leadership also continued in various towns and cities throughout the country. No clashes were reported, but arrests apparently took place in preceding protests of various sizes on 02.12.22 in towns and cities including Arak (Markazi province), Bandar Anzali (Gilan), Izeh (Khuzestan), Tehran, Zahedan and Iranshahr (Sistan and Baluchestan). In addition, a Kurdish human rights portal reported on 05.12.22 that around 20 people had been arrested at protests in the small town of Murmuri (Ilam). Prior to these protests, the national security council had announced that resolute action was to continue to be brought to bear against protests. An official death count has been released for the first time since the beginning of the protests in September 2022, stating that around 200 people have been killed to date, including members of the security forces. Prior to this announcement, a commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC or 'Sepah') had stated that more than 300 people had died. Human rights organisations put the number of deaths to date at around 470, however.

### **Unconfirmed reports of announcements by the Iranian leadership**

Citing ambiguous statements by the chief public prosecutor, it has been reported internationally that the morality police (Persian: gasht-e ershad) have been disbanded. There has been no official confirmation of this to date. A spokesperson for the unit has reportedly stated that the morality police's mission is over, but new methods are to be employed to enforce the mandatory clothing regulations for women (compulsory wearing of the hijab). The morality police have shown an increased public presence under president Ebrahim Raisi since July 2022 (cf. BN of 11.07.22). According to other reports, the chief public prosecutor has announced that a statement on the clothing regulations which have applied to date is being prepared for release around 16.12.22. Meanwhile, the Iranian leadership has reportedly announced that a committee of inquiry is to be set up to investigate the events since the beginning of the nationwide demonstrations in September 2022. This committee is not to include any critics or demonstrators, however, but solely independent bodies and legal experts.

### **Four people executed on charges including spying**

According to information from the Iranian judiciary, death sentences on four persons were executed on 04.12.22. The supreme court confirmed the death sentences handed down to the four Iranian nationals, who had been in custody since June 2022. The four were convicted of spying, collaborating with the Israeli secret services and abduction.

## Iraq

### **Turkish offensive**

An air strike took place on a village in Sulaimaniyya on 02.12.22. At least one civilian died and five were injured. The attack is being attributed to the Turkish armed forces.

### **Combating domestic violence**

The minister of employment and social affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq announced on 28.11.22 that his ministry intends to set up further women's refuges in Zakho and Soran which are to offer shelter for at least 72 hours. Domestic violence is a widespread problem in Iraq and laws to counter it often fail to be applied in practice.

### **Anti-LGBTIQ campaign**

The influential Shiite cleric and politician Muqtada as-Sadr launched a comprehensive campaign against sexual minorities on 30.11.22. Starting with a social media post, he called for all forms of sexually deviant behaviour to be combated, while stressing that this must take place without violence. During Friday prayers, signatures were collected at mosques with close links to him and his movement, affirming a vow to oppose LGBTIQ and its recognition under law. The assertion that the vow also covered the fight "to abolish the law on homosexuals" caused a degree of irritation, as no such law exists in Iraq.

## **Kazakhstan**

### **Incumbent wins early presidential election**

The incumbent, Qassym-Schomart Tokayev, won the early presidential election on 20.11.22, taking 81.3 % of the vote. As unknown entities, the five opposing candidates had no real prospect of success and each received less than 5.8 % of the votes cast "against everyone". The turnout stood at 69.4 %. It was particularly low in the major city of Almaty, at 28.7 %. Tokayev called the early election at short notice on 21.09.22. According to reports in the media, in his election campaign he promised a "New Kazakhstan" with democratic progress and economic reforms. The OSCE election monitoring mission has criticised a lack of pluralism and political competition in the election, noting that independent candidates were not permitted to run, and the requirements to be met by prospective candidates, such as several years' experience in the civil service or in a political office, were inconsistent with undertakings towards the OSCE.

Tokayev was re-inaugurated on 26.11.22. Following a constitutional reform adopted by referendum (cf. BN of 13.06.22), the presidential tenure now stands at seven years, as opposed to the previous five-year term. Following this term in office, the president will not be able to run again. A protest rally took place in Astana on the day of the inauguration. On 28.11.22 a court sentenced an activist to 15 days' imprisonment for organising the rally.

## **Lebanon**

### **Economic situation**

A further bank raid took place on 30.11.22, when a bank customer poured petrol over himself and a number of bank employees and demanded his savings in order to finance his wife's cancer treatment. Following hours of negotiations, he received US\$ 42,500 instead of the US\$ 50,000 which he had originally demanded and an unknown amount of money in Lebanese pounds. He subsequently gave himself up and was later released on bail. Another bank customer staged an unarmed sit-in to no avail.

On 02.12.22 the European Council approved financial aid for the Lebanese military forces to the sum of US\$ 6 million. This is to be allocated primarily to medical equipment and supplies.

On 02.12.22 the Lebanese pound fell to an all-time low against the US dollar of 1:41,000.

## **Mali**

### **Restrictions on freedom of the press**

There have been further instances of restrictions on the freedom of the press and freedom of speech in Mali. On 03.11.22 the high authority for communication (Haute autorité de la communication, HAC) suspended broadcasting by Joliba TV for two months. The suspension came three weeks after a report was broadcast in which a journalist commented on the growing threat to free speech in Mali. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), media

representatives who express criticism of the interim government face increasing harassment and intimidation. On 01.12.22 the HAC announced that the suspension of television station Joliba TV was to be lifted.

## Myanmar

### **Fighting and attacks on civilian targets in various parts of the country**

Fighting between the Myanmar military and local resistance groups or ethnic armies occurred in various parts of the country in November 2022. The fighting took place in the district of Nyaung Laypin (Bago region) and the townships of Hpakant, Momauk (Kachin State), Ann, Buthidaung, Maungdaw, Minbya, Ponnagyun, Sittwe (Rakhine State), Paletwa (Chin State), Monywa and Tamu (Sagaing region).

The military additionally carried out attacks from the air and on the ground against civilian targets in the federal states of Rakhine, Kayin, Kayah, Chin and Shan, and in the Sagaing, Tanintharyi and Bago regions. In the course of these attacks, 36 civilians were killed and 72 injured in the townships of Ponnagyun, Maungdaw and Kyauktaw (Rakhine) between 01.11. and 16.11.22. Three civilians died in the district of Seik Gyi (Kayin) on 16.11.22 and a child died when a kindergarten was shelled in Demoso township (Kayah) on 15.11.22. Local residents found burned human remains in a village of Mindat township (Chin) following a military raid on 07.11.22. Nine people are missing from the village. Junta forces abducted 15 civilians in Monywa on 06.11.22 and killed at least twelve of the victims. A further seven people, including a child, were killed and two people were injured as a result of the artillery shelling of villages in the townships of Kanbalu, Monywa and Wetlet (Sagaing) between 03.11. and 06.11.22. Four children were injured when a bible school was shelled in Kutkai township (Shan).

On 26.11.22 the military and the Rakhine-based Arakan Army (AA) agreed a ceasefire which is intended to end the armed conflict which has been ongoing between the two sides since August 2022.

## Nigeria

### **Believers abducted from mosque**

Armed attackers abducted around 20 believers who were gathering for prayers at a mosque in the town of Funtua in Katsina State on 03.12.22. According to reports in the media, the mosque's imam and another believer were injured in the attack. A number of the kidnap victims have reportedly been liberated from the attackers by security forces comprising police, members of the military and local civil defence militias. On 28.11.22 security forces rescued nine victims of another kidnapping from a forest hide-out in the neighbouring federal state of Kaduna. According to reports in the media, four motorcycles and 90 stolen cattle were also recovered in the rescue operation in Chikun local government area (LGA). Kidnapping crime is one facet of the security crisis which currently prevails throughout large parts of Nigeria. A major focus of media attention is also on relatively common attacks on towns, villages and travellers in a number of federal states, conflicts at local level, violence in connection with separatist ambitions in the south-east and acts of violence by Islamist groups, particularly in the north-east of the country.

## Pakistan

### **Security situation: Suicide attack by TTP in Quetta, attack on girls' school in South Waziristan**

According to reports in the media, armed men opened fire on a girls' school in the district of South Waziristan on 01.12.22. One person was killed and one injured. The attackers fled. While no-one has claimed responsibility for the attack, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had recently revoked its ceasefire with the government. A suicide attack in Quetta, capital of Balochistan province, on 30.11.22 claimed the lives of three civilians, including one woman, two children and a police officer. 26 people were injured, including 23 members of the security forces. TTP has claimed responsibility for the attack. The target was a police convoy which was accompanying a polio vaccination team.

## Russian Federation

### **Gatchina municipal court: Conscription of evangelical Christian unlawful**

On 30.11.22 the municipal court of Gatchina in Leningrad oblast pronounced the conscription of a member of an evangelical religious community unlawful. According to reports in the media, the plaintiff had been admitted to community service (instead of compulsory basic military service) a number of years previously and had completed this service. Although the court had already allowed the plaintiff's application back on 12.10.22 for issuance of a provisional order to suspend his conscription until the court's decision was pronounced, the plaintiff was reportedly already on military service at his unit's location at the time concerned. He is not to return to his place of residence until the verdict becomes final.

### **Tightening of the law on LGBTIQ**

President Putin signed a legal amendment into law on 05.12.22 which extends the purview of the ban which has been in force since 2013 on "propagating non-traditional sexual relations" in the presence of minors to further include other persons and circumstances. This means that a general ban on the positive presentation of such relations and orientations will apply in future, also extending to such presentation among adults and in social media, books and films. Merely presenting information to minors on LGBTIQ-related topics and content which may arouse wishes for a change of sex will be prohibited in future. Under the regulatory offences act, any contraventions of these legal provisions will be punishable with fines of up to RUB 400,000 (approx. EUR 6,340 as per 06.12.22) for individuals and up to RUB 5 million (approx. EUR 79,240 as per 06.12.22) or a ban of up to 90 days on conducting business for corporate bodies and legal entities. The law also allows the media supervisory authority to block internet sites with such content without requiring a corresponding court ruling.

Human rights activists fear that the law will trigger an increase in hate crime and violent crime against LGBTIQ individuals, that the police and the judiciary will apply the law arbitrarily and that sexual minorities will be forced entirely out of the public arena. In view of the law's vague wording, activists consider it possible that merely admitting to one's homosexuality or transsexuality in public may be deemed "propaganda" in future. According to reports in the media, a number of smaller organisations which support the rights of LGBTIQ people have discontinued their work in response to the impending sanctions.

## South Africa

### **Government crisis: Corruption charges against president Ramaphosa**

On 01.12.22 parliament published a report on an inquiry in which president Cyril Ramaphosa is accused of having a conflict of interests and of breaching anti-corruption laws. It came to light in June 2022 that between US\$ 580,000 and US\$ 8 million had been stolen in cash from his farm in 2020. He is accused of failing to report his ownership of the foreign currency and the attack on his farm. Ramaphosa denies the accusations. The parliamentary committee of inquiry recommends impeachment proceedings. The opposition is calling for his resignation and a fresh election.

## Sudan

### **Agreement reached on hand-over of power**

After weeks of negotiations, the military and representatives of the alliance of parties known as Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) signed a framework agreement for the restoration of a civilian interim government on 05.12.22. In a second phase of the process, more detailed agreements on the precise implementation of the framework agreement are to be elaborated and adopted. The framework agreement also provides for a revision of the peace agreement of Juba and the constitutional declaration of 2019. The interim constitution envisioned in the process which has now been set in train is to become the country's supreme law, also incorporating the previous agreements. The newly formed interim government is to remain in office for two years and prepare subsequent elections.

According to reports in the media, the signed framework agreement is highly vague on many points, in keeping with the two-phase plan. The point in time when the interim government is to begin work is not stipulated, for

example, although the date on which the interim government begins work and the new prime minister is appointed is to mark the beginning of the two-year transitional phase. While the reform of the army and merging of the army with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) are mentioned as an objective, the precise procedure by which this is to be achieved and the appurtenant timetable have not been elaborated. The process by which the planned transformation of the justice system is to be carried out is equally unclear.

Since the negotiations on a possible agreement between the FFC and the military came to light, this cooperation has been the object of strong criticism from the resistance committees and a number of parties and rebel groups who oppose any cooperation with the military and its involvement in a future government. There has also been and continues to be criticism of the framework agreement within the FFC. Not all members of the FFC support the cooperation and some have left the association in protest.

## Syria

### **Suweida: Protesters set fire to government office**

Syrian state media have confirmed that “outlaws” stormed the governor’s office in Suweida, capital of the governorate of the same name, on 04.12.22 and burned numerous official documents and files. Opposition media have reported on protests prior to this incident which were countered with live ammunition from security forces. The protests centred on the poor state of the economy, inadequate food supplies and the ongoing energy crisis. According to information from the pro-opposition Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), one protester and one police officer were killed in clashes between protesters and security forces and seven people were injured. The governorate, which has a majority Druze population, was for a long time less seriously affected by the conflict in Syria than other parts of the country. Recent years have witnessed an increase in protests in Suweida, however, in the face of a severe worsening of living conditions.

### **Dar'a: IS leader killed in fighting**

On 30.11.22 the jihadist militia confirmed the death of its leader, Abu al-Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi. The supreme command of US forces in the region has affirmed this announcement, stating that Al-Qurashi was killed by Syrian rebels in the south of Syria back in mid-October. He was reportedly staying at a house in Jasim, a small town to the north of the governorate's capital, Dar'a, when he was tracked down by a local anti-government militia. In the ensuing battle he is said to have ignited an explosive vest, thereby taking his own life.

This is the first time that an IS leader has been killed without the involvement of the US-led coalition to fight IS. It is also the first time that an IS leader has died in the south of the country, rather than in the Islamist-controlled north. On 02.12.22 the state news agency, SANA, reported that the Syrian army had also been involved in the operation.

Al-Qurashi was chosen as the terrorist militia's new caliph as recently as March 2022 (cf. BN of 14.03.22). IS named his successor in an audio message of 01.12.12: He is said to go by the name of Abu al-Hussein al-Husseini al-Qurashi.

## Tanzania

### **Eleven people sentenced to death for murder**

On 02.12.22 eleven people were sentenced to death for the murder of a South African environmentalist in Dar es Salaam in 2017. The convicted individuals comprise nine Tanzanian and two Burundi nationals. The last execution was carried out in 1994.

## Togo

### **Lethal attack on members of the military**

According to reports in the media, unknown attackers killed at least a dozen members of the army near to the town of Tiwoli in the north of Togo on 24.11.22. The scene of the attack in the Savanes region is not far from the borders with the neighbouring countries of Burkina Faso and Benin. Attacks on Togolese security forces have been

occurring here since November 2021, and in particular since May 2022 (cf. BN of 15.11.21, 16.05.22, 23.05.22, 30.05.22, 20.06.22 and 18.07.22). A state of emergency has been in force in the Savanes region for security reasons since June 2022 (cf. BN of 12.09.22). In Togo, Benin, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire there are fears that extremist groups operating primarily in the neighbouring countries of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger could extend their activities into their national territories.

## Türkiye

### **Arrests of individuals with alleged links to PKK**

Security forces arrested 19 women on 29.11.22 in raids carried out in 14 provinces in connection with investigations into the PKK. According to information in the media, the investigations, which have been launched by the public prosecutor's office in Ankara, are based on witnesses' statements, photographs and findings by the investigation unit for financial crime. The suspects are accused of having carried out activities for the women's units of the PKK in Syria, Iraq, Iran and Türkiye since 2014. The activities concerned are said to include funding terrorism, spreading terrorist propaganda and meeting with suspected terrorists. The security forces were searching for 50 suspects in all. These include the HDP mayor of the district of Diyarbakır in Ağrı province as well as other members of the HDP and BDP and people with links to such members.

### **Arrests of individuals with alleged links to IS**

According to information from the interior ministry, Turkish security forces arrested nine people in simultaneous operations carried out in nine provinces on 02.12.22. The arrested suspects are accused of providing financial support for members of IS. In all, the security forces were searching for 14 suspects who have allegedly collected money to support families of IS members through networks in social media.

## Ukraine

### **Renewed rocket attacks; the course of hostilities**

Air-raid alarms sounded in Ukraine on 05.12.22 as the Russian forces launched large-scale rocket attacks once again. There has been official confirmation from the Ukrainian side of attacks on Kyiv, Odessa and Vinnytsia oblasts. Once again, the attacks were aimed primarily at the Ukrainian infrastructure. Blackouts occurred in various parts of the country and water supplies also failed in some areas. According to official Ukrainian information, most of the missiles were destroyed by its air defence systems. Meanwhile, the most intensive fighting is taking place near to the city of Bakhmut (Donetsk oblast). Having failed to capture Bakhmut via a frontal assault, the Russian forces are now attempting to encircle the city. Rockets are reported to have hit the city centre of Donetsk, which is controlled by Russian forces.

## Yemen

### **Arms smuggling**

The US navy has reported that it seized around 50 t of ammunition in the Gulf of Oman on 01.12.22. The consignment was hidden on a deep-sea fishing boat and included 1 million rounds of ammunition and thousands of rocket fuses. US representatives accuse Iran of supplying weapons to the Houthis, which constitutes a violation of UN resolution 2216, for example. This is the second large-scale seizure of weapons in the Gulf of Oman in the space of a few weeks (cf. BN of 15.11.22).