



(Middle East Monitor, 2019)

## New forms of violence in Libya; Morocco's PPS threatens to leave the government

03/05/2019-09/05/2019

*Protesters continue to gather in Algeria while the Algerian army rejected a 'transitional period'. Egypt and Tunisia have respectively arrested a number of illegal migrants. Egypt dedicates a higher financial contribution to its operations against illegal migration. Violence in Libya have reached a new level with the use of armed drones.*

*The dispute between the Mauritanian government and opposition over the composition of the INEC is still ongoing. Meanwhile, the Moroccan PPS threatens to leave the government and called for a national dialogue.*

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## Algeria

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Protests are continuing in Algeria across the country despite a further crackdown on former regime officials charged with corruption (*Courrier International; Le Point*)<sup>1</sup>. The Algerian army for their part has publicly rejected a ‘transitional period’, and reaffirmed its intention to implement a ‘political roadmap’ (*ObservAlgerie*)<sup>2</sup>. Former colonial power France has also expressed its wish for elections to be held in ‘good conditions’ (*Algérie Presse Service*)<sup>3</sup>.

Elsewhere, according to the Spanish newspaper El Pais, Algeria is the second-highest country in North Africa for irregular migration into Europe after its neighbor Morocco (*ObservAlgerie*)<sup>4</sup>.

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## Egypt

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In a dispute with the transitional military council in Sudan, Egypt has demanded that the Sudanese hand over the ‘leadership’ of the Muslim Brotherhood, including a list of 405 people accused of financing and supporting the now-designated terrorist organization (*Middle East Monitor*)<sup>5</sup>. For their part, Egypt deported 79 Sudanese nationals who were accused of attempting to cross the Egyptian-Libyan border, in a plan to reach Europe (*Ynetnews.com*)<sup>6</sup>.

Also, in this context, Egypt has reportedly provided a 70 million Egyptian Pound financial boost to assist its operations against illegal migration (*Egypt Independent*)<sup>7</sup>. And global economists have welcomed the moves of both Egypt and Morocco in issuing new sovereign bonds which should help boost government financial reserves significantly over the upcoming year (*Global Finance*)<sup>8</sup>.

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## Libya

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A new report by the UN has found evidence of likely use of armed drone by either Haftar or a ‘third party’ in the current armed conflict near Tripoli (*Middle East Monitor*)<sup>9</sup>. This news comes as some Tripoli-government forces claim to have shot down an enemy plane over the capital and captured its European pilot (*Fox News*)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.courrierinternational.com/article/manifestations-en-algerie-la-mobilisation-pour-la-democratie-ne-sessouffle-pas>; [https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/arrestations-en-algerie-le-mouvement-de-contestation-satisfait-mais-mefiant-08-05-2019-2311340\\_24.php](https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/arrestations-en-algerie-le-mouvement-de-contestation-satisfait-mais-mefiant-08-05-2019-2311340_24.php)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.observalgerie.com/actualite-algerie/algerie-larmee-hausse-le-ton-et-rejette-la-periode-de-transition/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.aps.dz/algerie/89212-la-france-souhaite-le-deroulement-de-la-presidentielle-algerienne-dans-de-bonnes-conditions>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.observalgerie.com/actualite-algerie/espagne-le-maroc-premier-pays-source-dimmigration-algerie-deuxieme-rapport/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190508-exclusive-egypt-has-three-demands-to-sudanese-transitional-military-council/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5506716,00.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://egyptindependent.com/egypt-injects-le70-million-for-facing-illegal-immigration/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gfmag.com/magazine/may-2019/egypt-and-morocco-boost-reserves-bonds>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190509-un-report-finds-likely-use-of-armed-drone-in-libya-by-haftar-or-third-party/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/world/libya-force-says-it-seized-foreign-pilot-after-downing-plane>

Head of the Tripoli government, Fayez al-Serraj has urged France to adopt a ‘clear political position’ on the situation in Libya, and accused his rival Khalifa Haftar of ‘ending all hope to a political settlement’ due to his actions (*France 24*)<sup>11</sup>. Haftar, for his part has reportedly ordered his forces to continue fighting throughout the month of Ramadan (*The Libya Observer*)<sup>12</sup>. Meanwhile, the International Criminal Court has warned both sides that they are willing to investigate and prosecute anyone found to be committing war crimes or crimes against humanity (*The Washington Post*)<sup>13</sup>.

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## Mauritania

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The government and opposition cannot find an agreement on the composition of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) (*L'Authentique*)<sup>14</sup>. Opposition representatives from the party Hatem, have criticized the government’s rejection of opposition candidates to INEC as a ‘confused behavior’ (*Sahara Medias*)<sup>15</sup>. The President of INEC has stated that there is a ‘big problem’ for his institution when it is ‘hated by the State, and not liked by the opposition’ (*Sahara Medias*)<sup>16</sup>.

In other news, the Chairperson for the Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the African Commission on Human Rights has criticized Mauritania for commodifying education in the country to the benefit of some individuals close to President Aziz (*Mondafrique*)<sup>17</sup>. Mauritania has also announced its intention to expand its gold mining operations in the Tiris Zemour region (*Sahara Medias*)<sup>18</sup>.

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## Morocco

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Morocco’s Royal Navy rescued 27 sub-Saharan migrants off Mehdia. The Navy had rescued nearly 151 Sub-Saharan migrants off the coast of the Strait of Gibraltar at sea on the night of Saturday May 4 to Sunday May 5 (*HuffPost*)<sup>19</sup>.

Meanwhile, the secretary general of the Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS), Nabil Benabdallah, called for a national dialogue in order to bring a new democratic dimension at the institutional, economic and social levels (*2M*)<sup>20</sup>. This came at a time when the PPS threatens to leave the government (*Le 360*)<sup>21</sup>. For his part, Prime Minister El Otmani pleaded for a restructuring of the Moroccan tax system to make it more equitable and fair (*2M*)<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/20190508-exclusive-interview-libya-pm-fayez-al-sarraj-gna-macron-haftar-tripoli>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/libyas-haftar-orders-his-forces-continue-fighting-during-ramadan>

<sup>13</sup> <https://wapo.st/30brUO3>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.lauthentic.info/lnauth/article/Desaccord-persistent-autour-de-la-CENI-avant-l-election-presidentielle-en>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.saharamedias.net/fr/mauritanie-lopposition-doute-de-la-bonne-volonte-du-pouvoir-a-propos-de-la-ceni/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.saharamedias.net/fr/mohamed-vall-o-bellal-letat-deteste-la-ceni-lopposition-aussi/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://mondafrique.com/mauritanie-on-privatise-les-ecoles-les-amis-daziz-senrichissent/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.saharamedias.net/fr/mauritanie-la-zone-de-prospection-aurifere-elargie/>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/la-marine-royale-porte-secours-a-27-subsahariens-au-large-de-mehdia\\_mg\\_5cd2b9bbe4b0e524a47d7665](https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/la-marine-royale-porte-secours-a-27-subsahariens-au-large-de-mehdia_mg_5cd2b9bbe4b0e524a47d7665)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.2m.ma/fr/news/benabdallah-appelle-a-un-dialogue-national-pour-un-nouveau-souffle-democratique-20190505/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://fr.le360.ma/politique/crise-de-la-majorite-le-pps-menace-de-se-retirer-du-gouvernement-189605>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.2m.ma/fr/news/el-otmani-souligne-la-necessite-dune-revision-globale-et-profonde-du-systeme-fiscal-national-20190503/>

In other news, Morocco could be interested in using the new UN technology's security program, which aims to detect terrorist travel (*Morocco World news*)<sup>23</sup>. And the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) elected Morocco as a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (*Morocco World News*)<sup>24</sup>.

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## Tunisia

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In a blow to the national airline Tunisair, Youssef Chahed stated that the State cannot financially save the airline, implying that the carrier will soon be privatised (*African Manager*)<sup>25</sup>. There has also been discontent between the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries and the government, with the former rejecting the latter's intention to sign the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU (*Huffpost Maghreb*)<sup>26</sup>.

In other news, former Tunisian President Ben Ali is very sick, and has reportedly claimed that should he die he wishes not to be buried in Tunisia (*Tunisie Numérique*)<sup>27</sup>. And between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May, Tunisian authorities arrested about 50 irregular migrants who were attempting to reach Europe (*Webdo*)<sup>28</sup>.

### About:

*This is a weekly, non-exhaustive snapshot of regional, and international news regarding the politics of the North African region. Selections demonstrate varying perspectives and opinions from French, Arabic and English media sources. Taking such an approach enables regional trends to be observed and documented so they may be used and applied in our detailed research projects.*

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2019/05/272570/morocco-to-use-new-un-technology-to-detect-terrorist-travel/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2019/05/272541/ecosoc-morocco-narcotic-drugs/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://africanmanager.com/youssef-chahed-donne-le-coup-de-grace-a-tunisair-flous-bahh/>

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/aleca-la-menace-plane-sur-le-secteur-agricole-tunisien\\_mg\\_5cd02da7e4b0e4d75735bde5](https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/aleca-la-menace-plane-sur-le-secteur-agricole-tunisien_mg_5cd02da7e4b0e4d75735bde5)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.tunisienumerique.com/tunisie-gravement-malade-ben-ali-prefere-etre-inhume-en-arabie-saoudite-selon-mohsen-marzouk/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.webdo.tn/2019/05/09/tunisie-une-cinquantaine-de-candidats-a-lemigration-irreguliere-interpelles/>

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