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## Travel Ban Imposed on Tunisian Politician/TV Founder Karoui; New Bomb Attack in Benghazi Causes Further Libyan Casualties

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*A new court ruling saw the founder of the Tunisian TV channel Nessma and presidential candidate Nabil Karoui banned from leaving Tunisia frozen from his assets. Setbacks for Khalifa Haftar in Libya as another bomb attack leaves at least three dead in Benghazi. And Mauritanian political figures began a process of dialogue between the establishment, and prominent opposition figure Biram Dah Abeid.*

*Algeria's interim President has had his mandate extended, as the country continues to wait for new presidential elections. Egypt's prison system and conditions have again come under scrutiny, and there are new developments for the Saharan issue in Morocco.*

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## Algeria

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Algeria's interim president, Abdelkader Bensalah, who was due to step down on 9<sup>th</sup> July, had his mission extended by the Constitutional Council until the election of a new President of the Republic. (*Libération*)<sup>1</sup>. In reference to this extension, Ahmed Gaïd Salah, the head of Algeria's armed forces, confirmed that Bensalah still has his support (*RFI*)<sup>2</sup>.

Elsewhere the Islamist, Slimane Chenin, was elected the new president of the National People's Congress (*Jeune Afrique*)<sup>3</sup>. While Saïd Barkat, the former Minister for National Solidarity, was placed under arrest warrant by the investigating judge of the Supreme Court of Algeria. (*Jeune Afrique*)<sup>4</sup>.

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## Egypt

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Egypt's prison system has again come under scrutiny this week. Amnesty International has reported that Egyptian detainees are trapped in the 'revolving doors' of the Egyptian prison system, as authorities bypass release orders (*Amnesty International*)<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, a female Egyptian journalist, Abeer Al-Safti, has reportedly been subjected to sexual harassment in prison (*Middle East Monitor*)<sup>6</sup>.

In other news, Saudi Arabia and Egypt have strengthened their ties by signing three agreements for the former to finance a range of industrial development projects in Egypt (*Asharq al-Awsat*)<sup>7</sup>.

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## Libya

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Khalifa Haftar's advance on Tripoli has received various setbacks this week. A new operation has started by forces allied to the Tripoli-government in an attempt to drive out the remaining fighters of Haftar's forces from their frontlines in southern Tripoli (*Libyan Express*)<sup>8</sup>. Haftar's links to France have again come under scrutiny as French authorities have come out in denial regarding evidence of weapons supplied to the general (*Middle East Eye*)<sup>9</sup>. And in Benghazi, the base of Haftar's power, at least three people killed, with another 15 wounded, due to a car bomb at the funeral of a former senior military commander (*Reuters*)<sup>10</sup>.

Meanwhile, militants from the ISIS extremist group have released a video claiming that it was taken in the desert region in Libya, where they pledged their loyalty to the group's leader, Abu Bakr al-

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2019/07/09/algerie-bensalah-reste-en-place-l-opposition-tiraillee\\_1739073](https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2019/07/09/algerie-bensalah-reste-en-place-l-opposition-tiraillee_1739073)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20190710-algerie-chef-etat-major-gaid-salah-ton-ferme-egard-manifestants>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/801466/politique/algerie-lislamiste-slimane-chenine-elu-nouveau-president-de-lassemblee-populaire-nationale/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/800638/societe/algerie-said-barkat-ex-ministre-dabdelaziz-bouteflika-place-en-detention-provisoire/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/07/egypt-detainees-trapped-in-revolving-doors-of-prison-system-as-authorities-bypass-release-orders/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190711-female-egypt-journalist-sexually-harassed-in-prison/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1807876/saudi-arabia-funds-development-projects-egypt>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.libyanexpress.com/violent-calshes-return-to-southern-tripoli-frontlines/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/france-denies-supplying-weapons-found-rebel-site-libya>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/two-killed-as-car-bomb-targets-funeral-in-libyas-benghazi-military-source-idUSKCN1U61QW>

Baghdadi (*Libya Observer*)<sup>11</sup>. And the European Commission has approved five new migration-related programs in Libya, costing €61.5 million (*Libya Observer*)<sup>12</sup>.

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## Mauritania

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An official delegation led by government spokesman Seyedna Ali Ould Mohamed Khouna visited, for the first time, the headquarters of anti-slavery activist and Presidential runner-up, Biram Dah Abeid, in an effort to open dialogue (*RFI*)<sup>13</sup>. However, Dah Abeid accused some unofficial circles of the current regime of infiltrating the opposition camp in an attempt to disrupt the dialogue (*Sahara Medias*)<sup>14</sup>. Meanwhile, the Vivre Ensemble coalition does not currently participate in the dialogue with the government and does not recognize the election of Ghazouani (*C.R.I.D.E.M.*)<sup>15</sup>.

In other news, the European Union will make available to G5 Sahel an additional €138 million to finance the G5 (*Africanews*)<sup>16</sup>.

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## Morocco

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Further developments regarding the Saharan issue this week. The development of the Saharan regions, for which a budget exceeding 85 billion dirhams has been allocated, will be at the focus of an upcoming national forum in Morocco, in which more than 200 NGOs will participate (*Le360*)<sup>17</sup>. However, there are reports that a French human rights activist was expelled from Morocco while she went to visit her husband, who is a Saharawi political prisoner (*RFI*)<sup>18</sup>.

Elsewhere, the Supreme Council of the Judiciary has decided to bring 4 Moroccan judges before a disciplinary commission for criticizing the institution's delay in distributing non-confidential documents relating to its work (*Yabiliadi*)<sup>19</sup>. And Alstom, the French multinational firm, has strengthened its presence in Morocco and doubled the capacity of its factory in Fez (*Huffpost*)<sup>20</sup>.

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## Tunisia

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Due to accusations of hidden financial arrangements, the founder of the television channel Nessma TV and candidate for the November presidential election Nabil Karoui, was banned by court from

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/isis-extremists-pop-southern-libya-desert-vowing-jihad>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/eu-adopts-five-new-programs-back-libya's-migration-file>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20190710-mauritanie-opposant-biram-dah-abeid-rencontre-autorites>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.saharamedias.net/fr/biram-accuse-certains-milieus-de-la-majorite-de-vouloir-saboter-le-dialogue/>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.cridem.org/C\\_Info.php?article=725267](http://www.cridem.org/C_Info.php?article=725267)

<sup>16</sup> <https://fr.africanews.com/2019/07/10/g5-sahel-lue-annonce-une-aide-additionnelle-de138-millions-d-ueuros/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://fr.le360.ma/politique/video-sahara-developpement-et-autonomie-au-coeur-dun-forum-national-a-marrakech-194093>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20190709-maroc-epouse-francaise-militant-sahraoui-prison-expulsee-pays>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.yabiliadi.com/articles/details/80904/magistrats-maroc-s-inquietent-contraintes-leur.html>

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/alstom-renforce-sa-presence-au-maroc-et-double-les-capacites-de-son-usine-a-fes\\_mg\\_5d239bc3e4b0d11a784593aa](https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/alstom-renforce-sa-presence-au-maroc-et-double-les-capacites-de-son-usine-a-fes_mg_5d239bc3e4b0d11a784593aa)

leaving Tunisian territory (*BBC*)<sup>21</sup>. The ruling also saw his assets frozen. In other political news, the Tunisian government banned the niqab from being worn in public institutions (*FRANCE24*)<sup>22</sup>.

Rising temperatures over the past week have resulted in the explosion of 40 mines planted by terrorists in the closed military zone of Mount Chaâmbi (*Tunisie Numerique*)<sup>23</sup>. And the Tunisian National Guard recovered 90 migrants who had left the Tunisian coast for Italy (*Le Monde*)<sup>24</sup>. There were also four suspected Tunisian smugglers arrested in the incident.

## 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.*

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/afrique/region-48917352>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.france24.com/fr/20190706-tunisie-interdit-niqab-institutions-publiques-raisons-securite-double-attentat-tunis>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.tunisienumerique.com/tunisie-40-mines-plantees-par-les-groupes-terroristes-au-mont-chaambi-explosent-sous-leffet-de-la-chaaleur/>

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2019/07/11/en-tunisie-90-migrants-recuperes-au-large-de-sfax\\_5488047\\_3212.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2019/07/11/en-tunisie-90-migrants-recuperes-au-large-de-sfax_5488047_3212.html)

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We base our activities in three spheres of work: Social Outreach, Insights and Democratic Development. Combined, they provide a global perspective with actions focused on influencing the individual.

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