



(Hazem Ahmed/AP, 2019)

# Migrant Detention Center Hit by Airstrike in Tripoli; Mauritania's Opposition Rejects Election Results

28/06/2019-04/07/2019

*A new scandal has rocked Libya as a migrant detention center was directly hit by an airstrike, drawing international condemnation. Following last weeks presidential elections, the Mauritanian opposition has rejected the victory of the winning candidate Ghazouani.*

*Algeria's political unrest continues into another week, including the resignation of the parliamentary president. Egypt marks the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 30<sup>th</sup> June revolution with political events, and increased security. In Tunisia, security services have been actively targeting jihadist networks following last weeks' bombings in Tunis. And Morocco has strengthened its partnership with the US following a new weapons contract worth \$250 million.*

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## Algeria

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Further political turmoil in Algeria as Abdelkader Bensalah, Algeria's interim president, proposed a new dialogue for reconciliation, without 'State' involvement (*Jeune Afrique*)<sup>1</sup>. This comes as Algeria's parliamentary president, Mouad Bouchareb, resigned this week following continual pressure from public protestors (*Africanews*)<sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, seven prominent political figures in Algeria posted a social media message that called for new, massive public demonstrations to commence on 5<sup>th</sup> July (*TSA*)<sup>3</sup>.

In other news, there was an outcry following the arrest of Lakhdar Bouregaâ, a prominent veteran from Algeria's war of independence, on charges of 'conspiracy' (*Franceinfo*)<sup>4</sup>.

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## Egypt

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On 30<sup>th</sup> June, the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the revolutionary events that brought him to power, President Sisi delivered a speech addressing the Egyptian people, reinforcing patriotic values and rejecting 'terrorism' (*Egypt Independent*)<sup>5</sup>. Other events to mark the anniversary took place across Egypt, including events held by Egypt's current political parties. However, these events coincided with increased security measures across the country (*Egypt Independent*)<sup>6</sup>.

Elsewhere, the Free Egyptian Party has called for a boycott of Turkish products as part of a campaign called 'defend your country' (*Al-Monitor*)<sup>7</sup>. This follows increased tensions between the two countries in recent weeks. In addition, Egypt is reportedly keen to be involved in the reconstruction talks for Libya and Iraq, recognising the potentially lucrative opportunities for development (*Al-Monitor*)<sup>8</sup>.

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## Libya

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An airstrike hit a migrant detention center in Tripoli killing more than 40 people, according to the United Nations (*CBS*)<sup>9</sup>. According to the UN Special Envoy for Libya, Ghassan Salamé, the airstrike may constitute a war crime under international law (*Bloomberg*)<sup>10</sup>. The incident was further scandalized by reports to the UN that prison guards fired upon migrants who attempted to flee the attack on the center (*BBC*)<sup>11</sup>. Despite the gravity of the situation, the UN Security Council failed to issue a statement

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/798496/politique/algerie-abdelkader-bensalah-propose-un-dialogue-sans-la-participation-de-letat/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.africanews.com/2019/07/03/algeria-s-speaker-of-parliament-resigns/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tsa-algerie.com/lappel-de-personnalites-au-peuple-algerien/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/politique-africaine/algerie-vague-d-indignation-apres-l-arrestation-d-un-celebre-veteran-de-la-guerre-d-independance\\_3516027.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/politique-africaine/algerie-vague-d-indignation-apres-l-arrestation-d-un-celebre-veteran-de-la-guerre-d-independance_3516027.html)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.egyptindependent.com/sisi-delivers-speech-on-6th-anniversary-of-june-30/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.egyptindependent.com/egypts-parties-celebrate-june-30-revolution-anniversary-amid-tight-security/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/06/egyptians-call-to-boycott-turkish-products-erdogan-hostility.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/06/builders-of-egypt-forum-to-join-reconstruction-of-libya-iraq.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/libya-airstrike-tripoli-migrant-detention-center-today-kills-scores-khalifa-haftar-lna-2019-07-03/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-07-03/libyan-migrant-center-hit-by-air-strike-killing-more-than-30>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48871430>

condemning the attack, a failure reportedly due to concerns made by the United States (*Deutsche Welle*)<sup>12</sup>.

Six Turkish sailors detained by Khalifa Haftar were released, a day after Turkey warned that Haftar's forces would become 'legitimate' targets unless the men were released immediately (*The Guardian*)<sup>13</sup>.

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## Mauritania

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The Mauritanian Constitutional Council validated the victory of Ghazouani in the first round of the presidential elections, with 52% of all votes cast (*RFI*)<sup>14</sup>. Following this, the Council of Ministers approved appointments for the Ministries of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and Hydraulics and Sanitation (*Sahara Medias*)<sup>15</sup>. There are also reports that the government has begun to release some protestors following arrests during the post-election riots (*Jenue Afrique*)<sup>16</sup>.

However, the 15 political parties that supported the opposition candidates have rejected the results of the election, and of the findings of the Constitutional Council (*Tawary*)<sup>17</sup>. And despite the release of some protestors, Ahmedou Ould Wedia, a prominent journalist and politician active in the National Rally for Reform and Development (RNRD), was arrested (*Le360*)<sup>18</sup>. This particular arrest has mobilized the Mauritanian press and opposition in calling for his release (*C.R.I.D.E.M.*)<sup>19</sup>.

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## Morocco

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The partnership between Morocco and the US was strengthened with an approved sale of \$250 million of military equipment to the Kingdom by the US Department of Foreign Affairs (*H24*)<sup>20</sup>. This comes as the US and Morocco have publicly reaffirmed their commitment to fighting terrorism (*HuffPost*)<sup>21</sup>.

There was further backing for Morocco's autonomy initiative for the Sahara, as it received full support during the session of the Committee of 24 of the United Nations (*Le360*)<sup>22</sup>. In other news, a violent fire has affected the migrant camp in Oulad Ziane, prompting new concern for the conditions of migrants there (*Franceinfo*)<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/us-thwarts-un-security-council-condemnation-of-attack-on-libya-migrant-center/a-49465403>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/01/six-turkish-sailors-freed-by-libya-warlord-khalifa-haftar>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20190701-presidentielle-mauritanie-victoire-general-ghazouani-confirme>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.saharamedias.net/fr/mauritanie-des-nominations-aux-ministres-du-commerce-et-de-lhydraulique/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/798046/politique/mauritanie-liberation-des-manifestants-arretes-lors-des-heurts-post-electoraux/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://bit.ly/2YwLqD3>

<sup>18</sup> <http://afrique.le360.ma/mauritanie/politique/2019/07/04/26995-mauritanie-interpellation-du-journaliste-et-homme-politique-ahmedou-ould-wedia-26995>

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.cridem.org/C\\_Info.php?article=725079](http://www.cridem.org/C_Info.php?article=725079)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.h24info.ma/maroc/le-departement-detat-americain-approuve-la-vente-des-f16-au-maroc/>

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/le-maroc-et-les-etats-unis-reaffirment-leur-engagement-dans-la-lutte-antiterroriste\\_mg\\_5d1e045ae4b01b834732af15](https://www.huffpostmaghreb.com/entry/le-maroc-et-les-etats-unis-reaffirment-leur-engagement-dans-la-lutte-antiterroriste_mg_5d1e045ae4b01b834732af15)

<sup>22</sup> <http://fr.le360.ma/politique/sahara-le-comite-des-24-de-lonu-apporte-un-soutien-plein-et-entier-a-linitiative-marocaine-193456>

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/societe-africaine/au-maroc-un-violent-incendie-ravage-le-camp-de-migrants-d-oulad-ziane\\_3516113.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/societe-africaine/au-maroc-un-violent-incendie-ravage-le-camp-de-migrants-d-oulad-ziane_3516113.html)

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## Tunisia

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Another victim has died, a week after the double-bombing in Tunis (*Jeune Afrique*)<sup>24</sup>. Following the attacks, the Tunisian security services have stepped up operations to root out jihadists. Prime Minister Youssef Chahed confirmed that a jihadist killed in a security operation on the night of the 2<sup>nd</sup> July was part of the same group that orchestrated the double-bombing (*Franceinfo*)<sup>25</sup>. In addition, Tunisian security services have discovered about 10kg of explosives in the courtyard of Al Ghofrane mosque in Intilaka City (*Tunisie Numerique*)<sup>26</sup>.

Meanwhile in another humanitarian catastrophe, a boat containing more than 80 migrants sank between Libya and Tunisia (*Le Parisien*)<sup>27</sup>. Also, following his urgent hospitalization, President Essebsi left hospital this week (*BFMTV*)<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.*

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/798826/politique/tunisie-une-deuxieme-victime-decede-une-semaine-apres-le-double-attentat-de-tunis/>

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/tunisie/tunisie-le-jihadiste-tue-dans-la-nuit-etait-le-cerveau-du-recent-double-attentat\\_3519249.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/afrique/tunisie/tunisie-le-jihadiste-tue-dans-la-nuit-etait-le-cerveau-du-recent-double-attentat_3519249.html)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.tunisienumerique.com/tunisie-decouverte-de-10-kg-dexplosifs-caches-dans-une-mosquee-a-la-cite-intilaka/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/tunisie-plus-de-80-migrants-portes-disparus-apres-un-nauffrage-04-07-2019-8110017.php>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.bfmtv.com/international/tunisie-le-chef-de-l-etat-est-sorti-de-l-hopital-1723789.html>

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