

This monthly press review covers Eurafrican migration control, migration and displacement in African countries and news on the European border regime. In case there is a news item, report, or campaign you would like to flag for in next month's review please write us to migr-contr@ffm-online.org or on Twitter [@MigControl](https://twitter.com/MigControl)

EAST AFRICA

Ethiopia 11.02.21: Al Jazeera: **Ethiopia shuts two Tigray camps housing Eritrean refugees**: "The United Nations' refugee agency (UNHCR) has called for protection for the residents of the Shimelba and Hitsats camps, which it says were attacked by armed men who killed and abducted refugees. Last week, it said occupants – who often leave to escape mandatory, indefinite military service and repression or search for better opportunities out of one of the world's most isolated states – had reported that Eritrean soldiers had forced some refugees back into Eritrea."

See also 07.02.20: Al Jazeera: **UN, Ethiopia strike a deal over aid workers' access to Tigray**; 02.02.21: Al Jazeera: **Ethiopia: UN says 20,000 refugees missing in Tigray**; 26.02.21: Süddeutsche Zeitung: **Amnesty International: Hunderte tote Zivilisten bei Massaker (Amnesty International: Hundreds of civilians killed in massacre)**

Somalia 23.02.21: taz: **Staatskrise in Somalia: Chaos auf unbestimmte Zeit: (State crisis in Somalia: Chaos indefinitely)**: "Farmaajo's power as president of the federal government is limited to the capital; in the rest of the country – apart from the Republic of Somaliland in the North, – five sub-governments rule. Because they could not agree on the election procedure, the election of a president, already due in December, was postponed. So far, no agreement has been reached."

See also 12.02.21: ISS: **Somalia misses vital meeting with the 'electorate'**

Somalia 25.02.21: ISS: **AMISOM should provide more than security in Somalia**: The African Union Mission to Somalia is drawing to a close. It is scheduled to exit in December 2021, after the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) extended the 28 February mandate deadline. But instead of preparing to leave, the growing political and security problems in Somalia have seen the focus shift to what AMISOM's continued role in the country should be.

WEST AFRICA

Chad/G5 Sahel 16.02.21: France 24: **G5 Sahel : Le Tchad annonce l'envoi de 1 200 soldats dans la zone des "trois frontières" (G5 Sahel: Chad announces the dispatch of 1,200 soldiers to the "three borders" area)**: On Monday, February 15 Chadian President Idriss Déby Itno announced the dispatch of 1,200 soldiers to the tri-border

Liptako-Gourma region, between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso to fight against jihadists. The announcement was issued on the side-lines of the G5 Sahel Summit in N'Djamena. It comes following France's announcement to slowly decrease the number of soldiers deployed in the region.

See also 16.02.21: [Reuters](#): **France rules out immediate troop cuts in the Sahel, Chad deploys reinforcements**; 15.02.21: [ISS](#): **G5 Sahel: N'Djamena summit should redefine France-Sahel cooperation**; 14.02.21: [Aljazeera](#): **Ahead of Sahel summit, where do France and G5 countries stand?**; 14.02.21: [Le Monde](#): **«Plus de civils ou suspects non armés ont été tués au Sahel en 2020 par des forces de sécurité que par des groupes extrémistes»** (“More unarmed civilians or suspects were killed in the Sahel in 2020 by security forces than by extremist groups”)

Chad 09.02.21: [The North Africa Journal & MEA Risk](#): **Sahel: Political life in Chad heats up ahead of October presidential election**: Opposition parties last week set up a coalition called Alliance Victoire (Victory Alliance), seeking to overcome long-standing divisions that have helped Deby to remain in power. The presidential election will be followed by a legislative ballot, set for October 24. It has been repeatedly postponed since 2015.

See also 25.01.21: [The Guardian](#): **The lockdown was political!': Chad under strain ahead of election**; 06.02.21: [France 24](#): **Chad police clash with protesters after Deby nominated for sixth term**

G5 Sahel 09.02.21: [La Tribune Arique](#): **Mauritanie : inauguration du centre de simulation opérationnelle du G5 Sahel à Nouakchott (Mauritania: inauguration of the G5 Sahel operational simulation centre in Nouakchott)**: The mission of the G5 Sahel Defence College is to provide the defence and security forces of the G5 Sahel countries with training in the planning and conduct of military operations. The new centre, funded by an investment of nearly 1 million euros, provides the G5 Sahel with a powerful operational simulation tool based on the use of artificial intelligence.

Mali 09.02.21: [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue](#): **Peace agreement signed between the Fulani, Dafing and Dogon communities of the area ('circle') of Bankass in Central Mali**: The Fulani, Dafing and Dogon communities signed a humanitarian peace agreement on 7 February 2021. Through this agreement, the communities commit to ensuring the physical integrity and free circulation of persons, goods, and livestock, while condemning the violence in the circle of Bankass, in Central Mali. Among the main points in the peace agreement, the communities agreed to stop the violence, help displaced people, increase humanitarian aid and establish a dialogue between armed groups.

Mali 20.02.21: [RFI](#): **Mali creates group to open dialogue with Islamist insurgents**: Mali's interim Prime Minister Moctar Ouane has created a platform in order to open talks with the Islamist militants who have wreaked havoc in the north of the country. The Prime Minister commented: “Dialogue is not an exclusive solution, but rather an additional means of bringing back into the bosom of the Republic those who left it, often for existential reasons far removed from any fanaticism.”

See also 23.02.21: [DW](#): **Mali: faut-il dialoguer avec les djihadistes? (Mali: should we dialogue with jihadists?)**

Niger 04.03.21: [Amnesty International](#): **Niger: Post-election period marred by violence, mass arrests and internet disruption**: On 21 February Mohamed Bazoum was declared winner in the country's presidential elections. The opposition candidate Mahame Ousmane contested the results and proclaimed himself winner. Protests erupted in the country's capital and several other towns on 23 February, which were met with violence and the arrests of more than 470 individuals as well as the temporary shut down of the internet.

See also 23.02.21: [Libération](#): **Au Niger, Mohamed Bazoum remporte la victoire aux points (In Niger, Mohamed Bazoum won on points)**; 25.02.21: [taz](#): **Bazoum gewinnt Wahl in Niger (Bazoum wins election in Niger)**; 28.02.21: [DW](#): **Niger elections marred by 'fraud', Ousmane tells DW**

Senegal 08.03.21: [Deutsche Welle](#): **Senegal opposition leader freed amid new clashes**: Senegal has seen its worst unrest in nearly a decade following the arrest of opposition leader Ousman Sonko. Sonko was arrested on the ground of rape allegation. He claims that his arrest was political motivated, in the run up to the 2024 elections. Protests sparked all over the country and was met with violence. According to Amnesty International eight people have died in the capital, Dakar. Sonko was released on 8 March.

Senegal 25.02.21: [North African Journal & MEA Risk](#): **Senegal braces for Jihadist spillover from the Sahel**: "Senegal's President Macky Sall said Tuesday that his native country and neighbouring West African states must "prepare to do battle" to stop jihadist expansion beyond the Sahel. In an interview broadcast that day by French radio RFI, the president also urged a more combative role for United Nations peacekeepers in Mali."

See also 09.02.21: [The Defense Post](#): **Senegal Uncovers Jihadist Cell in East of Country**

Senegal 26.02.21: [Enquête+](#): **Des policiers sénégalais en Allemagne, pour rapatrier plus de 700 compatriotes (Senegalese police in Germany to repatriate more than 700 compatriots)**: Following a demand of the German government, Senegalese police officers will reportedly be send to Germany until mid-March to identify undocumented Senegalese who are in an irregular situation in order to repatriate them.

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria 22.02.21: [Al Jazeera](#): **Algerians mark protest movement anniversary with fresh rallies**: "Thousands rally in Algiers and elsewhere to mark two years since the beginning of a mass movement that toppled the long-time president. Demonstrators in central Algiers on Monday chanted slogans against the country's powerful military and President Abdelmadjid Tebboune as they marched towards the iconic Grand Poste building. Elsewhere in the country, marches were being held Monday including

in Annaba, Oran, Setif and Mostaganem, according to witnesses and accounts on social media.”

See also 16.02.21: [Al Jazeera](#): **Thousands rally on protest movement anniversary**; 22.02.21: [North Africa Journal](#): **Algerians take back their streets, reaffirm illegitimacy of Tebboune regime**; 26.02.21: [taz](#): **Der „Hirak“ formiert sich neu (The "Hirak" is regrouping)**

Libya 19.02.21: [ECRE](#): **Pullbacks to Libya**: “According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Libya, 318 people were intercepted by the so-called Libyan coast guard between 9 and 15 February and were pulled back to Libya from where they had escaped.”

See also 11.02.21: [North Africa Journal](#): **Libya: Large numbers of migrants continue to brave the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe**

Morocco 16.02.21: [North African Journal](#): **Morocco: Protests in northern Morocco over social and economic despair**: “The Moroccan authorities dispatched police reinforcement to the northern city of Fnideq, where protests have erupted over social and economic despair among the population. Moroccan media reported rallies as having erupted because of the closure of the border with the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, essentially starving smugglers from conducting their business. However, the protests are not unlike the protests that have rocked Tunisia and Algeria over lack of economic prospects and governments in disarray. Sit-ins have been held by protesters since the end of January 2021 to decry the worsening living conditions, amplified by the Covid-19 crisis.”

Sudan 03.02.21: [Dabanga](#): **New UN mission head arrives in Sudan to take up office**: The head of the new UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan, Volker Perthes, arrived in Khartoum on Tuesday to take up office, the mission’s press liaison has announced. Dr Perthes was received on behalf of the Sudanese government by Ambassador Omer El Sheikh, head of the National Executive Committee for Coordination with UNITAMS.

Sudan 05.02.21: [Dabanga](#): **Protests over bread, transport, and excessive violence by authorities continue in Sudan**: Protests continued in the city of El Gedaref, accompanied by acts of violence, vandalism, and looting. About 100,000 people were displaced when large groups of gunmen attacked a number of districts of El Geneina and the two Kerending camps for displaced people on Saturday and Sunday. 60,000 of them sought refuge in schools and government buildings in central El Geneina, while 40,000 others fled to neighbouring villages. 1,500 families have recently arrived in Tawila locality.

See also 21.01.21: [Dabanga](#): **Darfur: More information on the El Geneina attacks**; 16.02.21: [The Guardian](#): **Sudan declared states of emergency after protests over soaring food prices**; 17.02.21: [Der Standard](#): **Politischer Neustart und “Hungerrevolution” im Sudan (Political restart and “hunger revolution” in Sudan)**; 11.02.21: [Dabanga](#): **More violent protests in Darfur**

Sudan 09.02.21: Dabanga: **PM Hamdok announces Sudan's new government**: Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok announced the members of the transitional government's new cabinet in a press conference in Khartoum in the beginning of February. The new cabinet brings in a total of 25 ministers, many of whom are part of the rebel parties that signed the Juba Peace Agreement.

Sudan 26.02.21: Dabanga: **Sudanese govt 'committed' to trial of Darfur war criminals**: "Sudan's Attorney General, Tajelsir El Hibir, confirmed that the transitional government is committed to implementing peace agreements that mandate the trial of those accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Darfur region, at El Salam Rotana Hotel in Khartoum yesterday."

See also 05.02.21: Dabanga: **ICC rejects former Darfur janjaweed leader's appeal for interim release**

EUROPEAN UNION

EASO 18.02.21: EUobserver: **Asylum applications at lowest since 2013**: "The EU's asylum support agency, EASO, on Thursday said applications for asylum in the EU (plus Norway and Switzerland) last year were at the lowest levels since 2013. Applications in 2020 decreased by 31 percent, compared to 2019, as a result of emergency travel restrictions, it said. Syrians filed the most applications (64,540), followed by Afghans and Venezuelans."

EU 09.02.21: Statewatch: **Migration and asylum: updates to the EU-Africa 'Joint Valletta Action Plan' on the way**: "In November 2015 European and African heads of state met at a summit in Valletta, Malta, 'to discuss a coordinated answer to the crisis of migration and refugee governance in Europe.' Since then, joint activities on migration and asylum have increased significantly [...]. The Council is now examining an update to the 'Joint Valletta Action Plan' (JVAP) and considering how to give it "a renewed sense of purpose".

EU 10.02.21: European Commission: **Return and readmission: improving cooperation within the EU and with external partners**: The European Commission presented its assessment to the Council on cooperation with partner countries on readmission, as required under the revised Visa Code and as part of the comprehensive approach to migration policy outlined in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. According to the Commission, effective return and readmission as well as sustainable reintegration are essential elements of comprehensive, balanced, tailor-made and mutually beneficial migration partnerships with countries outside the EU.

See also 10.02.21: European Commission: **Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Enhancing cooperation on return and readmission as part of a fair, effective and comprehensive EU migration policy**

EU 02.03.21: European Commission: **Action Document: The EUTF for Stability and Addressing the Root causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced in Africa**: "This Action Document is a reformulation of an earlier approved version of the Action

Document “Support to Integrated border and migration management in Libya - Phase II. This Action proposes interventions in Libya under the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (the 'EUTF'), that provide additional support to Libyan authorities to enable them to better perform lifesaving Search and Rescue (SAR) operations at sea and improve the control/management of their borders.

EU 05.02.21: ISS: EU peace and security funds can now bypass the African Union: “The European Union (EU) will this year change the way it funds African peace and security. The changes are likely to have big implications, especially for the African Union (AU) Commission. For 14 years the EU has channelled its peace and security support finances through the African Peace Facility (APF) – the fund it runs in partnership with the AU Commission. This helps pay for African-led peace support operations, capacity building for AU institutions and AU-led conflict prevention initiatives. The APF will now give way to a European Peace Facility enabling the EU to provide military support anywhere in the world. For Africa, the shift will allow the EU to bypass the AU and directly pay for regional and national military initiatives. It will also, for the first time, allow Brussels to finance lethal equipment for African armies.

Frontex 10.02.21: Der Standard: Wie die EU Massenüberwachung an Migranten erprobt (How the EU is testing mass surveillance on migrants): The EU wants to use biometric data, drones and self-learning systems with artificial intelligence (AI) to create a comprehensive surveillance network against migration. These objectives have been expressed in the EU New Pact on Migration which was launched last year.

See also 26.02.21: Der Spiegel: »Frontex schafft sich eine Art polizeiliches Spezialkommando« (“Frontex creates a kind of special police command”.); 06.02.21: Zeit Online: EU-Grenzagentur Frontex soll heimlich Waffenlobbyisten getroffen haben (EU border agency Frontex alleged to have secretly met arms lobbyists); 05.20.21: ZDF Magazin Royale: Frontex Files

Frontex 04.03.21: Federal News Network: Probe into EU border agency leaves some questions unanswered: An inquiry into claims that the European Union’s Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) was involved in illegally pushing back migrants has found no link to Frontex in any of the incidents but has been unable to establish what happened in five cases, according to the official report into the allegations. The report was conducted by a special working group set up to investigate media allegations that staff, ships or aircraft working with Frontex took part in, or were close to, more than a dozen pushback incidents at the border between Greece and Turkey last year, mostly in the Aegean Sea.

See also 04.03.21: Der Spiegel: Verwaltungsrat verweigert Frontex-Chef die Entlastung (Administrative Council refuses to grant discharge to Frontex head); 03.03.21: EUobserver: EU Parliament to hold Frontex probe behind closed doors; 22.02.21: Politico: EU Commissioner Johansson criticizes Frontex boss

Austria 24.02.21: Maurr-Medium: **Skandalöser Umgang mit Tschetschen*innen in Österreich (Scandalous treatment of Chechens in Austria)**: A series of life-threatening failures by the authorities against Chechens threatens to continue.

Germany 22.02.21: MIGAZIN: **Polizeieinsatz im Flüchtlingsheim Ellwangen war rechtswidrig (Police operation in a refugee accommodation in Erlangen was unlawful)**: The Administrative Court of Stuttgart has now partially ruled in favor of the plaintiff, finding that the police operation with hundreds of officers in a refugee accommodation in Erlangen was disproportionate.

Italy 20.02.21: MEDU: **Ancora critica la situazione dei migranti sulla rotta Nord-Ovest delle Alpi (The situation of migrants on the North-West Alpine route remains critical)**: The situation of migrants attempting to cross the North-West Alpine border into France remains extremely critical. As already denounced by Doctors for Human Rights (MEDU) in November, the number of migrants is considerable and composed in most cases of entire families, some with very young children. They arrive in extremely precarious physical and psychological conditions due to the harshness of the journey and the violence they have suffered.

Italy 03.03.21: Iuventa10: **Italian prosecutor presses charges against Search and Rescue Crew from the Mediterranean Sea**: “The Prosecutor of Trapani officially charged 21 individuals and three organisations of aiding and abetting illegal immigration. All the accusations are related to operations conducted between 2016 and 2017.” Iuventa highlighted that this was political declaration of intent to criminalise solidarity, and it has a deadly consequence: people die, when they could be saved.

Spain 05.02.21: El Diario: **El campamento para migrantes de Las Raíces comienza a funcionar con temperaturas de 8 grados y en plena alerta por nieve (The “Las Raíces” camp for migrants begins to operate with temperatures of eight degrees and in full alert for snow)**: The largest migrant camp in the Canary Islands, with a capacity for 2,000 people, began operating this Friday. A hundred people who were staying in other shelters on Tenerife have entered the emergency resort of Las Raices, with the Island on full alert for snow.

Spain/Melilla 24.02.21: The Guardian: **People hide among broken glass and toxic ash in attempt to reach Europe**: “Spanish police have released photographs and video footage of people trying to reach Europe from north Africa by hiding in containers of broken bottles and in sealed bags of toxic ash. Last Friday, officers from Spain’s Guardia Civil rescued 41 people who were trying to enter Europe via the port in the Spanish enclave of Melilla in north Africa.”

REPORTS

02/2021: Mixed Migration Centre: **A Gateway Re-opens: the growing popularity of the Atlantic route, as told by those who risk it**: The research for this paper was undertaken with the intention of rapidly bringing together information and analysis related to the Atlantic route towards the Canary Islands from the coast of West Africa, in the context of an increase in departures and arrivals to the Canary Islands since late 2019. Findings include that the Spain’s recent visits to Mauritania and Senegal has

put emphasis on security responses as well as the fact that third country nationals are deported to Mauritania under a readmission agreement signed in 2003. After deportation Senegalese and Malian nationals are left without support at their country's respective borders.

02/2021: SWP-Studie: Unser schwieriger Partner: Deutschlands und Frankreichs erfolgloses Engagement in Libyen und Mali (Our difficult partner: Germany and France's unsuccessful engagement in Libya and Mali): This study points to the disappointing record German and French policy in the crisis states of Mali and Libya . While German engagement has remained largely ineffective, French policy has often demonstrably contributed to further destabilisation. The reason for Germany's and France's unsuccessful or even counterproductive strategies in both states is the subordinate role granted to.

02/2021: Clingendael: Between hope and despair: Pastoralist adaptation in Burkina Faso: "This report takes an empathetic approach to pastoralists as it explores what drives pastoralists and probes into structural problems. It argues that deep-seated socio-political and economic relations have changed at the micro and macro levels and uncovers the underlying structural causes and driving forces that stand at the heart of various conflicts in the Sahel."

01.02.21: Legal Centre Lesbos: New Report on Crimes against Humanity in the Aegean: Following the Legal Centre Lesbos' first report, the present report is based on evidence shared by over fifty survivors of collective expulsions, and underscores the widespread, systematic and violent nature of this attack against migrants. Beyond being egregious violations of international, European and national human rights law, this report argues that the constituent elements of the modus operandi of collective expulsions in the Aegean amount to crimes against humanity within the definition of Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

04.02.21: Mixed Migration Center: Covid-19 and the socio-economic situation of migrants in Niger: Analysis of 4Mi data collected in Niger between July and September 2020: This survey considers the impact of Covid-19 on the mobility, livelihood situation and socio-economic rights, such as access to health services, sanitation, housing and education in Niger between July and September. 527 migrants (30% and 70%) were questioned. Among others, 91 % of all respondents stated that Covid-19 impacted their journeys and 41% stated that it impacted their migration plans. 60% reported that the pandemic did not affect their decision to migrate. Further, a significant proportion (52%) felt that they could access healthcare if needed, while 20% were unsure.

05.02.21: borderline-europe: EU ad hoc relocation: A lottery from the sea to the hotspots and back to unsafety - What happens to people after being rescued from distress at sea?: Since 2019, borderline-europe, in cooperation with Borderline Sicilia, Council of Refugees Berlin, Equal Rights Beyond Borders and Sea-Watch investigated institutional practices linked to relocation in Italy, Malta and Germany. The report finds among others that the hotspot approach as the European solution does not encourage relocation but instead leads to a massive deprivation of rights and violence. The Maltese case study illustrates that Maltese practices of detention inhibit asylum

seekers access to legal and social support. Based on a case study, there the German security check-ups are critically scrutinized. Finally, the German case study highlights that German authorities do not provide sufficient psycho-sociological support, information and assistance.

11.02.21: **Mare Liberum: Pushback Report 2020**: “A new report by the organization Mare Liberum shows an unprecedented escalation of human rights violations in the Aegean during the last year, both at sea and on land. Mare Liberum documented that from March to December alone, over 9,000 people on the move were violently pushed back to Turkey and thus deprived of their right to asylum.”

CAMPAIGNS

Action Amnesty International: Drop the investigation against the Iuventa10: “The Iuventa10 is a group of volunteer rescuers built by captains, paramedics, firefighters, students, an astrophysicist and IT developers. They chose to be eyewitnesses, reporters, and to use their privilege to save lives in the Central Mediterranean. Now they risk 20 years in prison in Italy for rescuing over 14,000 people from drowning.”

Action Push-Back Alarm Austria: Alarm Hotline in Austria was launched. Push-Back Alarm Austria is an activist hotline that provides a 24/7 number for people who have crossed into Austria and seek to apply for asylum. You can find flyers in various languages on the Facebook page.

Campaign Europe Must Act: #NoMoreCamps: “For the past five years, the Greek government and the EU have built and sustained camps in the Aegean as a way to manage migration at Europe’s border with Turkey. We must stop these new camps from existing before it is too late and push for viable and humane alternatives to detention.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Book Launch 10.03.21: Goldsmiths University: The Coloniality of Asylum: Mobility, Autonomy and Solidarity in the Wake of Europe's Refugee Crisis by Fiorenza Picozza

Webinar 11.03.21 // 15 – 17h: Migreurop&Casa da gente: Militarisation des frontières et criminalisation des solidarités (Militarisation of borders and criminalisation of solidarity). *Translated into French, English and Spanish.*

Webinar launch of new report 11.03.21 // 16 – 17.30h: Danish Institute for International Studies: Does more information save migrants’ lives?