1. Cameroon

**Cameroonians fleeing unrest hide in the forest with little help**
Cameroonians fleeing an increasingly bloody separatist conflict have received little aid as humanitarian agencies struggle to access the area, the United Nations said. More than 200,000 people have fled their homes in the volatile western regions since late last year, in addition to at least 21,000 who have fled into Nigeria, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Tuesday. [Al Jazeera](https://www.aljazeera.com)

**Cameroon's main opposition SDF files to contest Oct. 7 presidential polls**
The Social Democratic Front (SDF), Cameroon's main opposition party has officially filed the candidacy of its flagbearer for presidential polls slated for October 7, 2018. Local media reports that a mammoth crowd accompanied 49-year-old Joshua Osih Nabangi on Wednesday (July 18) as he submitted his papers at the Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) regional offices in Douala. [Africa news](https://www.africanews.com)

2. Democratic of Congo

**DRC president Kabila to make address to the nation**
Democratic Republic of Congo President Joseph Kabila will make a speech to parliament on Thursday, less than a week before candidates can begin to register in postponed presidential elections. The vast African country is in the grip of a crisis over whether Kabila will run in crucial, long-delayed elections in December despite his constitutional limit expiring in 2016.

3. Ethiopia

**First direct Ethiopia-Eritrea flight in 20 years takes off**

Ethiopian Airlines conducted the first direct passenger flights between Addis Ababa and Asmara, reconnecting Eritrea and Ethiopia after a 20-year military standoff. The carrier said flight ET0312 to Asmara departed Bole International Airport on Wednesday after a ceremony inaugurating the historic flight. [Al Jazeera](https://www.aljazeera.com)
4. Kenya

Kenya’s Chinese-funded railway makes losses

Kenya’s flagship railway project registered losses of $100m (£76m) in its first year of operation, according to the transport ministry. The China-funded standard gauge railway - which links the coastal city of Mombasa to the capital, Nairobi, - was funded by a $3bn loan from China’s Exim bank, to be repaid over 15 years. Kenya dismissed concerns that the railway project was overpriced, unsustainable and economically unviable. The railway line was central to President Uhuru Kenyatta’s re-election strategy, launched only months before the presidential poll last year. BBC

Appeal court: Bomachoge Chache MP Miruka won fairly

The Court of Appeal has confirmed the election of Bomachoge Chache MP Alpha Miruka. The three-judge bench sitting in Kisumu on Wednesday dismissed the petition because Mr. Jeremiah Matoke filed it late. Justice Erastus Githinji pointed out that Mr. Matoke filed his appeal 80 days after the judgement, which fell out of the 30-day deadline set by the court. Daily nation

Hundreds flee as Al Shabaab militants begin recruiting children

Hundreds of local residents are fleeing their homes in Middle Shabelle region after Al-Shabaab accelerated its child recruitment. According to news report from Halbeeg News carried by Amisom Media Monitoring, heavily armed Al-Shabab fighters have been engaging in gun battles with locals who recently turned down the group’s order to recruit their children in Adale District. Al-Shabaab reportedly ordered elders and parents and other community members in rural areas, to provide hundreds of children for recruitment. The development sparked off clashes between Al-Shabaab militias and the locals in Gullane and Kadere villages. Standard Media

Gangs rain death and terror on boda boda men

At least 72 boda boda operators were killed and 525 injured in the past year after they were attacked by unknown assailants. Some of them also lost motorcycles in the attacks. Police are now raising the alarm over the rising cases of the attacks on riders, mostly by strangers that first pose as passengers. The motorcycle is a popular mode of transport in Western Kenya, but according to police statistics, it has become a death trap for riders. Standard media

Confusion over number of Chinese workers under SGR

The mystery surrounding the number of Chinese directly employed by the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) continued to deepen yesterday. Figures given by the Government are different from those given by the Chinese firm contracted to manage SGR. Standard media

Please note: The news items presented here are for informational purposes only. The views expressed within them are those of the authors and/or individuals quoted, not those of the Africa Policy Institute.
Uhuru’s inner circle takes shape in security reshuffle

Recent changes executed by President Uhuru Kenyatta have generated debate across the political divide. Many observers say the changes are emboldened by the fact that Uhuru is serving his last term as President and is keen to build a powerful legacy. In the most recent changes five days ago, which touched on the President’s security, Recce Company Commandant Josephat Kirimi was promoted as the new commandant of the Presidential Escort Unit. Standard media

5. South Sudan

South Sudan leaders ’to decide on power-sharing deal’

Sudan's Foreign Minister Al-Dirdiri Mohamed Ahmed - who is mediating efforts to end South Sudan's conflict - says rival politicians are due to decide in the next few hours whether to agree to a proposed power-sharing deal. South Sudan's President Salva Kiir and his rival Riek Machar signed a permanent ceasefire last month, although there has been some violence since that agreement. The latest proposal would see an expanded government with five positions of vice-president - including one woman. Since the fighting broke out in 2013, more than four million people have been displaced. BBC

South Sudan’s Kiir names new Foreign minister

South Sudanese President Salva Kiir appointed Mr. Nhial Deng Nhial as new Foreign Affairs minister, under the terms of the 2015 August peace agreement. The announcement was made in a live broadcast on state television in Juba on Tuesday. Mr. Alor has been in exile since March and is a member of former political detainees. The East African

6. Eastern and Southern Countries

COMESA elects Kapwepwe as first woman sec-gen

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has elected Chileshe Kapwepwe as its first woman secretary-general. MS Kapwepwe, 59, a former alternate director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), replaces Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, who has worked at the regional body for 34 years in various capacities. Daily Nation

7. Zimbabwe

Kofi Annan leads delegation to Zimbabwe to engage political stakeholders

Former United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan along with a team from ‘The Elders’ begin a three-day trip to Zimbabwe to engage political stakeholders ahead of general elections slated for later this month. During the July 19 – 21 trip, the delegation is expected
among others to meet political leaders, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, the diplomatic community, civil society representatives and media. *Africa news*

**Zimbabwe's opposition appeals to SADC ahead of election**

Zimbabwe's charismatic opposition leader Nelson Chamisa has an appeal for African observers. After denouncing the lack of transparency in the printing of the ballot papers and demanding an independent audit of the electoral lists, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Alliance leader is calling for an extraordinary summit in order to eliminate all doubts about the credibility of this long-awaited election on July 30. *Africa news*

**Zimbabwe declares election day a public holiday**

The Zimbabwean government has reportedly declared July 30 a public holiday "to enable the electorate to vote without hassles from work-related commitments"