EUROPE

Albania

Albania parties fail to agree on flagship electoral reform
Government and opposition parties on Sunday failed to meet a deadline they had set for themselves to agree on changes to the electoral code – which Brussels has requested before it will open EU membership negotiations.
Read full article: Balkan Insight (06/01)

Belarus

Lukashenka names new PM ahead of Belarus presidential vote
Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has named the previous head of a state body overseeing the defense industry as prime minister, two months before a presidential election. ... Analysts say the appointment of a man with experience in the defense sector is intended to consolidate Lukashenka's rule and could signal that the 65-year-old Belarusian leader's readiness to get tough if necessary to hold on to power.
Read full article: RFE/RL (06/04)
Kosovo

Kosovo to restart EU/US-led Serbia talks
Restarting talks on Serbia relations will be the new Kosovo prime minister's top priority, he said, but will the EU or the US lead the process? "The priority [of the new government] will be taking the responsibility to move forward on the dialogue [with Serbia] in cooperation with the EU and the USA, but not allowing change of territory or territorial exchange," Avdullah Hoti, the new leader, said after MPs voted him into office on Wednesday (3 June).
Read full article: EU Observer (06/04)

Kosovo parliament confirms new government under Hoti
Kosovo’s parliament on Wednesday confirmed in office a new government led by Avdullah Hoti, the deputy leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK, the junior party in the last government that initiated the no-confidence motion in March that toppled it.
Read full article: Balkan Insight (06/03)

AFRICA

Burundi

Burundian opposition leader files case contesting presidential vote
Burundian opposition leader Agathon Rwasa filed on Thursday a case at the constitutional court challenging last week’s presidential election outcome, saying he had evidence of fraud.
Read full article: Reuters Africa (05/29)

Tough presidency awaits Evariste Ndayishimiye
Burundi’s newly elected president is taking over a divided country from former strongman Pierre Nkurunziza. Can Evariste Ndayishimiye succeed where his predecessor failed?
Read full article: DW (05/25)

Central African Republic

Five years later, more efforts to be done to get Special Criminal Court fully operational
[...] The Special Criminal Court was created by law on 3 June 2015. It is a "hybrid" tribunal that has jurisdiction over grave human rights violations and serious violations of international humanitarian law committed since 2003. Its inaugural session was held in October 2018. According to the latest publicly available information, there are currently eight cases in which the investigation is closed, eight cases under investigation and about 15 cases under preliminary examination.
Read full article: allAfrica (06/03)
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ituri governor appeals for help to stop 'ongoing genocide'
Jean Bamanisa Saidi, the governor of Ituri Province in northeastern Congo, tells DW he has called for international troops to the troubled region. Thousands have been killed by militia in the past three years.
*Read full article: DW* (05/30)

Militia kills 16 villagers in Democratic Republic of Congo raid
Militia fighters killed 16 people in a raid on a village in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo on Wednesday, the latest in a spate of ethnic attacks that the United Nations has said could be crimes against humanity.
*Read full article: Reuters Africa* (06/04)

Congo declares new Ebola epidemic, 1,000 km from eastern outbreak
Democratic Republic of Congo declared a new Ebola epidemic on Monday in the western city of Mbandaka, more than 1,000 km (620 miles) away from an ongoing outbreak of the same deadly virus in the east.
*Read full article: Reuters Africa* (06/01)

Gabon

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and UNOCA
*Read report: S/2020/463* (05/29)

Libya

GNA regains full control of Tripoli from General Haftar
Libya's UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) has regained full control of Tripoli after recapturing the capital's airport. Gen Khalifa Haftar's forces have been besieging the city since April 2019. But intensified military support from Turkey helped government forces drive Gen Haftar's Russian-backed troops back from the frontlines.
*Read full article: BBC* (06/04) *Al Jazeera* (06/03)
*Related coverage: Turkey is winning in Libya, but challenges remain Al Jazeera* (06/04)

UN says Libya sides agree to truce talks
Libya’s warring parties have agreed to restart ceasefire talks, the United Nations mission to the country said late on Monday after weeks of intense fighting near the capital Tripoli fuelled by foreign arms. In a statement posted online, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) said it welcomed their plan to resume talks based on earlier so-called 5+5 meetings, involving five senior officers appointed by each side.
*Read full article: Reuters* (06/02)
Mali

UN chief says peacekeeping force must remain in Mali
The United Nations peacekeeping force in Mali must remain in the country, and at its current strength, Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said in a new report, after Washington questioned its validity. ... For more than a year, the US - the largest financial contributor to the UN - has regularly questioned the validity of the mission, deemed ill-suited to the ongoing violence in the west African nation.
Read full article: MEO (06/04)

Germany extends Bundeswehr mission in Mali
Germany's parliament on Friday extended its mandate for the country's troops deployed with the European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM). A sizeable majority of 437 MPs supported the extension of the Bundeswehr's directive until May 2021.
Read full article: allAfrica (05/29)

Niger

Recent attack in western Niger sends more than 1,000 fleeing
The UN refugee agency reports more than 1,000 people have fled a site in western Niger following an attack by unidentified armed men on Sunday. ... The agency said there has been a sharp increase in attacks in the past few months in the Liptako Gourma region where the borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger intersect.
Read full article: VOA News (06/02)

Sideling the Islamic State in Niger's Tillabery
Two years ago, Niger suspended counter-terrorism cooperation with Malian militias in northern Tillabery and began trying to counter the Islamic State through outreach to communities where it is present. Since then, however, militants have killed local leaders and launched even deadlier attacks, and Niger has returned to a military approach.
Read full report: International Crisis Group (06/02)

Sudan (Darfur)

Security Council establishes Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan
The Security Council, in a 4 June videoconference meeting, decided to establish a new political mission in Sudan to assist the country in its transition towards democratic governance, provide support for peace negotiations and bolster efforts to maintain accountable rule of law and security institutions. Unanimously adopting resolution 2524 (2020), the Council decided that the new United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) will provide technical assistance to the Constitution drafting process, supporting implementation of all human rights, equality, accountability and rule-of-law provisions in the Constitutional Document.
Read full article: UN Press Release (06/04)
Security Council extends UNAMID until 31 December
The Security Council in a 4 June videoconference meeting extended the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) until 31 December, deciding that the peacekeeping mission will maintain its current troop and police ceilings during this period. 
Read full article: UN Press Release (06/04)

MIDDLE EAST

Yemen
UN forced to cut aid to Yemen, even as virus increases need
Aid organizations are making an urgent plea for funding to shore up their operations in war-torn Yemen, saying they have already been forced to stop some of their work even as the coronavirus rips through the country. Some 75% of U.N. programs in Yemen have had to shut their doors or reduce operations.
Read full article: VOA News (06/01)

CENTRAL ASIA

Afghanistan
Khalilzad sounds upbeat note on chances for intra-Afghan peace talks
The U.S. special envoy for Afghanistan sounded upbeat on Monday about the chances for peace talks starting between the Kabul government and the Taliban militant group but suggested further prisoner releases were needed first.
Read full article: Reuters (06/01)

UN report says Taliban is maintaining relations with al Qaeda despite deal with US
A new United Nations report says that the Taliban assured al Qaeda that it would maintain their close links despite the "peace" deal with the organization which the Trump administration has touted as signifying a break between the Taliban and the terror group responsible for the 9/11 terror attacks. "The senior leadership of Al-Qaeda remains present in Afghanistan, as well as hundreds of armed operatives, Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent, and groups of foreign terrorist fighters aligned with the Taliban," the UN report said, estimating that some 400 to 600 armed al Qaeda operatives are currently in Afghanistan.
Read full article: CNN (06/01)
OTHER PEACEKEEPING RELEVANT NEWS

Placing people at the center of UN peace operations
United Nations peace operations are predominantly state-centric, in that a significant portion of their efforts are focused on supporting host government and state institutions, or threats to them. The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is an opportune time to consider how placing people at the center of the way peace operations are planned, and their performance assessed, will make them more accountable, locally grounded, and effective.
*Read full article: IPI Global Observatory* (05/29)

COVID-19

Peacekeeping during pandemics: how the UN can be part of the solution
Even at the best of times, peacekeeping is a dangerous, difficult job. In the age of COVID-19, United Nations peacekeepers must navigate not only bullets and bureaucratic red tape, but also a deadly virus. Following the May 29 announcement of the first two deaths of peacekeepers from COVID-19, one question looms large: can peacekeeping—after years of budget cuts and growing uncertainty about the scope of its mission—cope with a pandemic?
*Read full article: IPI Global Observatory* (06/03)

How COVID is affecting elections in Africa
The novel coronavirus has complicated the election-year calendar for Africa, as elsewhere, prompting some polling delays, suspensions and uncertainties. It also has created openings for leaders to exploit fears and tighten their grips on power, political observers say.
*Read full article: VOA News* (06/03)

COVID-19: NATO in the age of pandemics
What impact will the coronavirus pandemic have on the international strategic environment, notions of threat and security, the evolution of warfare and other key areas? What concerns do all of these issues create for NATO as a politico-military alliance? In the seven chapters of this publication, Thierry Tardy et al respond.
*Read full publication: CSS ETH Zürich* (May 2020)