

Africa Diary

1 December 2025 to 28 February 2026

A selection of events about, and from across, Africa that are significant or interesting, or both. Compiled by the New Agenda Editorial Collective at the Institute for African Alternatives



Moroccan fans were not happy at the final of the African Cup of Nations in a game that was tense and ended inconclusively. Senegal won, but the losers, Morocco, felt Senegal should have been eliminated for staging a walk-off by the entire team during the game – and took it up with the Confederation of African Football, who reached the highly contested decision in March to strip Senegal of the title and awarded the cup to Morocco instead, which caused outrage in the Afcon community.

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February

23 February: Ghana renamed its main airport from Kotoka to Accra International. Kotoka was a general who was instrumental in the overthrow of the government of Ghana's founding father, Kwame Nkrumah, exactly 60 years ago. Kotoka himself was killed at the airport the following year, 1967, during a failed counter-coup attempt.



*Protests in Tanzania in late 2025 against ruling Samia Suluhu Hassan turned violent.
Photo: Dawan Africa images*

15 February: As previously planned, Samia Suluhu Hassan, the brutal ruler of Tanzania, became the African Union (AU) Champion for Maternal and Child Health after being endorsed by the 39th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa. Hundreds of people were killed by state security forces in October and November 2025 when Tanzanians protested on the streets about political oppression and a fraudulent election in which Mrs Samia claimed 98% of the vote. Dan Paget, a professor at the University of Sussex in the UK, reckons the last time mainland Tanzania experienced such brutality was under German colonial rule more than a century ago.



January



File photo – The Rubaya coltan mine in eastern DRC. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

28 January: More than 200 people died in a collapse at the Rubaya coltan mine in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), near Goma. The area is occupied by M23, a rebel group backed by Rwanda, which has controlled the mines since 2024. Rubaya mines hold 15% of the world’s coltan, a mineral used in phones, much of it mined illegally.

24 January: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) deployed its Emergency Response Team (ERT) to support the governments of Mozambique and South Africa, following serious flooding and extreme weather. Prolonged rainfall resulted in river overflows, dam spillages, flash floods, and flooding of low-lying areas across Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, with Mozambique and South Africa experiencing the most severe impacts. Over one million people have been affected, some losing their lives.

21 January: Egypt and Morocco were the only African countries invited to join the “Board of Peace” chaired by US President Trump. Both accepted. The board will oversee a “Gaza Executive Board”, formed by Trump following the Gaza ‘peace agreement’ and a United Nations Security Council resolution. The board will focus on “effective international peace-building”. Its charter designates



Trump (in his personal capacity) as chairperson for life. Only he may invite counties to join.

18 January: Senegal was awarded the African Cup of Nations after a game that was tense and eventually became chaotic. At one point the entire Senegalese team walked off the pitch in protest against a referee decision. The losers, Morocco, who were hosts of the tournament, announced the next day that they would challenge the outcome. They felt Senegal should have forfeited the game because of their walk-off. *Editor's note - In March, the Confederation of African Football's disciplinary committee decided to strip Senegal of the title and award it to Morocco instead. Senegal has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport. At the time of writing Senegal still held the trophy.*

17 January: Yoweri Museveni was declared the winner of the election in Uganda, amid an internet shutdown and claims of fraud by his opponent. Museveni is 81 years old and has been the president of the country for 40 years. This will be his seventh term. The head of the Ugandan army posted on social media that his men had killed 22 opposition supporters and said he wished death on Bobi Wine, the runner-up. Wine went into hiding.

9 January: The South African Navy hosted visiting warships from China, Russia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, some of whom participated in joint naval exercises off the coast of Cape Town over the following week. Some other nations of the BRICS-Plus group also attended as observers. Ethiopia and Egypt were the African countries mentioned in this regard. Military co-operation is a new feature of BRICS engagements. India, the 2026 BRICS chair, was not involved.

December:

26 December: Somaliland, a former possession of colonial Britain, celebrated being recognised as a sovereign state. The territory declared its independence from Somalia in 1991 but is not recognised by the African Union, or any other nation – except, recently, Israel. Somalia and Egypt condemned Israel's move, and the African Union, China, and the European Union criticised it.

Map of Somaliland



For Israelis who don't know where to locate their 'new friend', Somaliland, landmarks are provided in Hebrew.

Source: GetArchive collections

25 December: The Nigerian government confirmed it had co-ordinated Christmas Day airstrikes launched by the US against an Islamist group in the northern state of Sokoto, near the border with Niger. It was not known how many fighters were killed. Nigeria has been unable to control numerous security crises, which include mass kidnappings and abductions for ransom as well as oppression by bandits.

12 December: Dr Joy Kategekwa of the African Development Bank Group said the prospect for visa-free travel for Africans between African countries was “[F]ull of promise but in need of accelerated action”.¹ Africans needed a visa for country-to-country travel within Africa in 72% of cases in 2025. Some countries have very expensive visa fees – up to US\$250. Free movement of people is the human engine of Africa’s integration. It is a flagship project of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, which aims to remove restrictions on Africans’ ability to travel, work, and live on the African continent.

ENDNOTE

¹ See www.visaopenness.org / BBC Focus on Africa podcast: The difficulty of intra-African travel, 19 Dec 2025



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