



**Weekly Update**  
**From 19 May to 25 May 2014**

**1) Morocco**

**\*26.05.2014: Palace Print Media Courting Participative Salafis**

Newspapers and magazines close to the palace have been giving special coverage to participative Salafi figures. *MarocHebdo* ran an interview with Abou Hafs in its issues no.1071 and no. 1072 “Abou Hafs, the Modern Salafist”, while the daily *Annahar Almaghribiya* (16/5/2014) pictured King Mohamed IV greeting Sheikh Fizazi in a frontpage story with the headline “Fizazi Proposes Mediation with Jihadi Salafi Detainees”. The exchange reportedly took place following Mohamed VI’s attendance at Friday Prayers, led by Fizazi, in a mosque in Tangier two weeks ago. Fizazi was sentenced to thirty years in the 2003 Casablanca bombing case on charges of offering religious grounds for the bombing attacks. He was however released in 2011, after 8 years in prison, following a review of his case.

<http://www.annahar.ma> (Arabic – archive copy still to be released)

<http://www.maroc-hebdo.press.ma/boock/index.html#/MHI/48> (French)

**2) Libya**

**\*20-26.05.2014: Libya’s Version of Mutually Assured Deterrence at Work**

General Hafter’s “Dignity Operation” is struggling to achieve its declared aim despite the daily upbeat propaganda in some Libyan and Saudi-funded broadcasting and print media outlets. The General National Congress (GNC)’s decision to mobilise the Misrata-based Middle Shield units to Tripoli sent a strong signal to General Hafter, who had earlier attempted to storm the GNC’s building through his alliance with the Zintan brigades. With Zintan’s moves checked, General Hafter turned to political manoeuvring. He called on the High Judicial Council to take over the GNC’s legislative powers, while also seeking to convene a conference of Libya’s tribes in order to decide a new political roadmap. By May 26, it looked like both manoeuvres had stumbled. The Labidaat tribe, the largest in the east, withdrew from the tribes’ conference, while the Judiciary Council tacitly declined Hafter’s call and proposed instead a national dialogue initiative to be convened by a number of respected figures. Meanwhile, the Constitutional Assembly (CA) emerged in the midst of the ongoing crisis to report that it had equipped itself with an internal law (sub-committees, voting system, etc.) and that the CA is now ready to attend to its task.

<http://www.libyaherald.com/2014/05/25/constitutional-assembly-president-gives-updates-on-progress/#axzz32s8cTgiw>

**3) Tunisia**

**\*26.05.2014: League for the Protection of the Revolution dissolved**

A Tunis court ordered, Monday, the League for the Protection of the Revolution dissolved and its assets liquidated. The decision was not surprising to Tunisians and observers as the issue was part of the consensus package of the national dialogue led by the Quartet few months ago.

**4) Egypt**

**\*26-27.05.2014: Egyptian Presidential Elections**

Egyptians are voting on May 26-27 in elections to elect a new president, with former military chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi expected to win, and only one other candidate, leftist politician Hamdeen Sabahi, who finished third in the 2012 presidential election which saw Mohamed Morsi come to power. The election comes almost a year after the last elected president was forced from office by a military-backed mass revolt.

Egyptians are desperately looking to restore security and revive the economy. Failure to show tangible results could trigger a new wave of unrest that some fear could be even more violent. The question remains

whether Egypt can move towards the democracy sought by the 2011 uprising: Morsi's backers say the ouster of an elected president crushed those hopes, Sisi's supporters say he saved democracy from Islamists, while his secular critics fear he will instal a new autocracy.

The Muslim Brotherhood has called on its supporters to boycott the election, accusing Sisi of staging a coup and masterminding the removal of Morsi.

The International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS) headed by renowned Islamic scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi recently issued a "Fatwa" and said participation in Egypt's presidential elections is forbidden (haram). Qaradawi said that Sisi had "disobeyed God" and that his victory in the poll would please the "Zionists" and "enemies of the nation".

Meanwhile on Saturday May 24, Sisi supporters threw Molotov cocktails at anti-Sisi protesters marching through downtown Cairo and calling for the release of more than 21,000 political detainees.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/25/us-egypt-election-qaradawi-idUSBREA4007G20140525>

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/africa/11681-egypt-pro-sisi-crowd-attacks-anti-sisi-protest-with-molotov>

## **5) Yemen**

\*26.05.2014: **Yemen's political stalemate persists:**

Yemeni political stakeholders do not seem to have any intention of holding democratic elections soon, despite the fact that such elections are the most pressing democratic need since the uprising in early 2011. Political parties are calling for the implementation of the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference, and discussions of other issues have been postponed. These issues include presidential and parliamentary elections, as well as a cabinet reshuffling or the replacement of the current government with a government that encompasses competent members.

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/05/yemen-political-stalemate-houthis-gain-influence.html>

## **6) Mauritania**

\*25-26.05.2014: **Islam in the Presidential Election Campaign**

"Mauritania is an Islamic State and *Not* a Secular One" was the topic of a conference organised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The meeting coincided with the publication of a book by the Al Moustakbal Association for Preaching, Culture and Education, which was closed by the government a month ago. The book aimed to explain the vision, mission and the educational and preaching activities of the association. Al Moustakbal Association was considered close to Sheikh Hassan Dedew, who is in turn viewed as close to the Muslim Brotherhood.

<http://ani.mr/?menuLink=9bf31c7ff062936a96d3c8bd1f8f2ff3&idNews=24706> (Arabic)

<http://ani.mr/?menuLink=9bf31c7ff062936a96d3c8bd1f8f2ff3&idNews=24692> (Arabic)

## **7) Mali**

\*23-26.05.2014: **Intra-Tuareg Movements' Power Struggle Threatens Fragile Ceasefire**

The failed Wednesday offensive by the Malian army to regain control of Kidal seemed to have prompted Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, in his capacity as current president of the African Union, to fly to Kidal on Friday, to try to convince warring Tuareg movements to talk to Bamakao. The Arab Azawad Movement (MAA) claimed, however, in a communique issued on Monday that its elements were attacked in Tabenkourt by the MNLA and its allies involved in drug trafficking. The MAA warned of the grave consequences of the alliance of the MNLA with the drug trafficking mafia and reiterated its commitment to the Ouagadougou Agreement. Mbebrouck Ag Mohamed, MNLA, reportedly told a Mauritanian news agency that the MNLA had clashed with the MUJAO in Timbuktu on Sunday, and that it was seeking permission to neutralise the MUJAO. In Algiers, a spokesperson for the army told the state radio that the situation on Algeria's borders is "very worrying", while Ramtan Lamamra, Foreign Minister, announced that Tuareg groups would meet for talks in Algiers next month.

<http://www.alakhbar.info/news/4363-2014-05-26-11-43-40.html> (Communique of MAA, Arabic)

<http://fr.alakhbar.info/9031-0-Le-MNLA-demande-le-feu-vert-pour-utiliser-son-armement-contre-les-terroristes.html>

<http://www.lesoirdalgerie.com/articles/2014/05/27/article.php?sid=164010&cid=2>

### **8) Chad**

#### **\*21.05.2014: Strengthening Fight against Boko Haram and Search for Missing Schoolgirls**

Following the May 17, 2014 Paris Summit on Boko Haram, a coalition of neighbouring African nations has been reinforced with international support to fight the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. The United States has deployed about 80 military personnel to Chad as part of its effort to help find and return more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Islamist militant group Boko Haram.

Meanwhile, the presidents of Cameroon and Chad met on Thursday May 22 to map out ways to combat the Islamist group Boko Haram.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/21/us-marines-nigeria-missing-girls\\_n\\_5367425.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/21/us-marines-nigeria-missing-girls_n_5367425.html)

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201405230109.html>

### **9) Niger**

#### **\*25.05.2014: Opposition Supporters arrested on suspicion of Coup Attempt**

Niger arrests some 40 armed opposition supporters on suspicion of attempting a military coup. The arrests come after a gun attack on the home of a ruling party legislator and a petrol bomb attack on the party's headquarters in which three people were wounded.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/25/uk-niger-opposition-arrest-idUKKBN0E50VP20140525>

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