



THE EARLY WARNING MONITOR

GLIC Weekly Report

23rd May, 2025

Top of the Agenda

GOWON, AKINYEMI EXPRESS CONFIDENCE IN THE RETURN OF MALI, NIGER, BURKINA FASO TO ECOWAS FOLD

The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in conjunction with a German organization, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung organized a two-day international conference tagged ‘ECOWAS at 50: A Story of Resilience and Integration’ from 20th-21st May, 2025. The conference was well attended by high profile dignitaries and Diplomats who aired their opinions about the challenges and prospects of the ECOWAS. Former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon (rtd), and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, have expressed confidence that countries that recently left the economic countries of West African states will in the immediate future return to the regional body as diplomatic efforts to reintegrate the countries of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso gain momentum.

African Independence Television (AIT): [Gowon, Akinyemi Express Confidence in Return of Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso to Ecowas Fold](#) 23rd May, 2025.

Analysis

Since its establishment in 1975, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has recorded some several feat. However, the regional bloc has shown resilience and has gone on to mark its footprints in the sand of time through its achievements in the promotion of peace and security, and regional and economic integration. Nonetheless, ECOWAS still faces some challenges including the exit of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, to form the Alliance States of the Sahel (AES), rising terrorism and violent extremism, political instability and economic disparities. As ECOWAS commemorates fifty years of its existence, while celebrating its achievements, it is also a time for somber reflection and recalibration to further position ECOWAS for the future we want. There’s need for institutional reform, a more robust engagement with the civil society, promote youth inclusion, and promote regional identity and solidarity among member states. In addition, in addressing the insecurity and terrorism in the region, there’s need to promote synergy and intelligence sharing among member states, and ensure full operationalization of the regional counter-terrorism force. In all, ECOWAS has taken a giant stride and significant progress in the overall development of the region. A hearty congratulations to ECOWAS on its golden jubilee.

NIGERIA

13,500 TERRORISTS, OTHERS KILLED IN TWO YEARS –NSA

Over 13,543 terrorists and other criminal elements have been neutralised across Nigeria since May 2023. The National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, disclosed on Thursday at the All Progressives Congress National Policy and Development Summit held at the State House Banquet Hall in Abuja. Ribadu said the military and intelligence agencies had made gains in ongoing counter-terrorism efforts, noting that 13,543 insurgents and criminals were killed during various operations nationwide over the past two years of President Bola Tinubu in office. Ribadu also revealed that no fewer than 124,408 fighters of Boko Haram and its offshoot, the Islamic State in West Africa Province, along with their family members, have surrendered to Nigerian forces and are undergoing rehabilitation through the government's de-radicalisation and reintegration programme.

PunchNG: 13,500 terrorists, others killed in two years –NSA 23rd May, 2025.

POLITICIANS, MILITARY, ARE BOKO HARAM INFORMANTS, SAYS ZULUM

The Governor of Borno State, Babagana Zulum, has alleged that some Nigerian politicians and military personnel are among those leaking information to Boko Haram. Zulum said this in an interview on national television on Wednesday. But, the governor, who said insurgency could be conquered in six months, assured his administration will continue to strengthen intelligence to deal with the situation. He said, "We have informants and collaborators within the Nigerian armed forces, within the politicians, and within the communities. What we shall do is to strengthen our intelligence and to deal with them ruthlessly.

The Nation Online: Politicians, military, are Boko Haram informants, says Zulum 23rd May, 2025.

LAGOS SECURES OVER 120 CONVICTIONS OF SEX OFFENDERS IN ONE YEAR

No fewer than 120 individuals were convicted for various forms of sexual and gender-based violence in Lagos State between January and December 2024, the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency has revealed. The agency disclosed following its report that a staggering 9,279 domestic violence cases were recorded in the state within the same year. The report also highlighted that about 3,215 children were subjected to different forms of abuse during the period, with most of the perpetrators being relatives or individuals familiar to the victims. In response to the alarming figures, the DSVSA said the state government was adopting a technology-driven and preventive approach to tackle the crisis.

PunchNG: Lagos secures over 120 convictions of sex offenders in one year 23rd May, 2025.

52,000 NIGERIANS RELOCATED TO THE UK IN 2024

Approximately 52,000 Nigerians migrated to the United Kingdom in 2024, according to newly released data from the UK Office for National Statistics on Thursday, placing Nigeria among the top sources of non-EU+ migration during the year. The influx came despite a significant decline in overall net migration to the UK, which dropped by nearly “50 percent in the year ending December 2024.” The ONS estimates net migration at “431,000, down from 860,000 in the previous year.” Most Nigerian migrants arrived in the UK for work or study purposes. Of the total, 27,000 came on work-related visas, 22,000 on study visas, and the remaining 3,000 under other immigration categories.

PunchNG: 52,000 Nigerians relocated to the UK in 2024 23rd May, 2025.

AFRICA

ILLEGAL LOGGING IN REBEL-HELD CONGO THREATENS GORILLAS, ALARMS ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Tropical forests in eastern Congo that fell into rebel hands this year have seen a spike in illegal logging to produce charcoal and timber, residents and environmentalists said, raising fears of large-scale degradation. The Kahuzi-Biega National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage site west of Bukavu, the second-largest city in eastern Congo, which was seized by Rwanda-backed M23 rebels in February. It is home to hundreds of species of birds and one of the last groups of eastern lowland gorillas, also known as Grauer's gorillas.

Reuters: Illegal logging in rebel-held Congo threatens gorillas, alarms environmentalists 22nd May, 2025.

SOUTH AFRICANS EXASPERATED BY TRUMP FALSE CLAIMS DURING RAMAPHOSA MEETING

South Africans expressed dismay on Thursday at how U.S. President Donald Trump's false claims of a white genocide dominated a conversation with President Cyril Ramaphosa, and many wondered if his trip to Washington was worth the trouble. Ramaphosa included popular white South African golfers in his delegation and he had hoped talks with Trump in the White House on Wednesday would reset relations with the United States, which have nosedived since the U.S. leader took office in January.

Reuters: South Africans exasperated by Trump false claims during Ramaphosa meeting 21st May, 2025.

SENEGAL TO EXPEL ALL FOREIGN TROOPS – PM

Senegalese Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko has declared that all foreign military personnel stationed in the country must withdraw by the end of July. French troops remain the only foreign military presence in Senegal, operating under a 2012 defense partnership agreement. As part of a phased withdrawal, France officially transferred control of the Rear Admiral Protet naval base in

Dakar to Senegalese authorities on May 15. This follows the earlier handover of the Marshall and Saint-Exupéry facilities in March. The remaining bases are scheduled to be transferred in subsequent phases. These steps are believed to be taken by Senegal to assert their sovereignty.

RT: Senegal to expel all foreign troops – PM 21st May, 2025.

THE GLOBE

TRUMP'S GULF TOUR RESHAPES MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMATIC MAP

Nothing captured Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's isolation more starkly this week than the image of U.S. President Donald Trump shaking hands with Syria's Islamist leader Ahmed al-Sharaa - a man Israel has branded "an al-Qaeda terrorist in a suit." "He's got the potential. He's a real leader," Trump told reporters after talks with Sharaa on Wednesday in Riyadh - a meeting brokered by his Saudi hosts, with whom the U.S. president agreed a slew of arms, business and technology deals.

Reuters: Trump's Gulf tour reshapes Middle East diplomatic map 19th May, 2025.

AID TRUCKS ENTER GAZA AFTER DELAYS, AS PRESSURE MOUNTS ON ISRAEL

Israel allowed 100 aid trucks carrying flour, baby food and medical equipment into the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, the Israeli military said, as UN officials reported that distribution issues had meant that no aid had so far reached people in need. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would be open to a temporary ceasefire to enable the return of hostages. But otherwise he said it would press ahead with a military campaign to gain total control of Gaza.

Reuters: Aid trucks enter Gaza after delays, as pressure mounts on Israel 22nd May, 2025.

BRITAIN HANDS OVER CONTROL OF CHAGOS ISLANDS TO MAURITIUS

The British government signed a deal on Thursday to transfer the Chagos Islands to Mauritius after a last-minute injunction following a challenge in court by two Chagossian women was lifted by a judge. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the decision to hand over sovereignty of the archipelago to Mauritius ensures the future of a US-UK military base. "This is absolutely vital for our defense and intelligence, and therefore, for the safety and security of the British people. The full assessment of why this is so important is highly classified," Starmer said at a press conference on Thursday. The Indian Ocean archipelago is home to a strategically important naval and bomber base on the largest of the islands, Diego Garcia. Under the agreement, the UK will pay Mauritius 101 million pounds per year to lease back the base for at least 99 years. The signing was delayed for several hours after a UK judge imposed a last-minute injunction blocking the transfer. That was later lifted by another judge.

Africa News: Britain hands over control of Chagos Islands to Mauritius 23rd May, 2025.

ISRAELI TROOPS FIRE WARNING SHOTS AS INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATS VISIT WEST BANK

A group of diplomats came under fire while visiting Jenin, a city in the Israel-occupied West Bank, according to the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli military said the visit had been approved, but the delegation of European diplomats “deviated from the approved route” and Israeli soldiers fired warning shots to distance them from the area.

AP News: Israeli troops fire warning shots as international diplomats visit West Bank 21st May, 2025.

NO NEW DIRECT RUSSIA-UKRAINE PEACE TALKS ARE SCHEDULED, KREMLIN SAYS

Russia and Ukraine have no direct peace talks scheduled, the Kremlin said Thursday, nearly a week after their first face-to-face session since shortly after Moscow’s invasion in 2022 and days after U.S. President Donald Trump said they would start ceasefire negotiations “immediately.” During two hours of talks in Istanbul on May 16, Kyiv and Moscow agreed to exchange 1,000 prisoners of war each, in what would be their biggest such swap. Apart from that step, the meeting delivered no significant breakthrough. Meanwhile, Russia is readying a summer offensive to capture more Ukrainian land, Ukrainian government and military analysts say. European leaders have accused Putin of dragging his feet in peace efforts while he tries to press his bigger army’s battlefield initiative and capture more Ukrainian land.

AP News: No new direct Russia-Ukraine peace talks are scheduled, Kremlin says 22nd May, 2025.

OVER 100 UKRAINIAN DRONES INTERCEPTED ABOVE RUSSIA OVERNIGHT – MOD

Russian air defenses have shot down 112 Ukrainian drones overnight, the Defense Ministry in Moscow has reported. The interceptions took place in 13 Russian regions, the ministry said in a statement on Friday morning. Most of the drones – 24 – were destroyed in Moscow Region, followed by Crimea, where 22 UAVs were downed, the statement read. A total of 18 interceptions took place above Tula Region, with 11 more above Kursk Region, it added. Air defenses were also deployed in the Orel, Bryansk, Ryazan, Kaluga, Belgorod, Ivanovo, Vladimir, Voronezh, and Lipetsk regions, the ministry said. Airports in Moscow and several other regions were forced to put flights on hold due to the drone incursions.

RT: Over 100 Ukrainian drones intercepted above Russia overnight – MOD 23rd May, 2025.

IRAN AND THE US HOLDING A FIFTH ROUND OF NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS IN ROME WITH ENRICHMENT A KEY ISSUE

U.S. officials up to President Donald Trump insist Iran cannot continue to enrich uranium at all in any deal that could see sanctions lifted on Tehran’s struggling economy. Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi early Friday insisted online that no enrichment would mean “we do NOT have a

deal.” The talks seek to limit Iran’s nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of some of the crushing economic sanctions the U.S. has imposed on the Islamic Republic, closing in on half a century of enmity.

AP News: Iran and the US holding a fifth round of nuclear negotiations in Rome with enrichment a key issue 23rd May, 2025.

INDIA’S OIL IMPORTS FROM RUSSIA SURGE – REUTERS

India's imports of Russian crude oil are expected to reach around 1.8 million barrels per day in May, the highest level in 10 months, Reuters has reported, citing ship-tracking data from Kpler. The surge is attributed to refiners purchasing more light grades, such as Russia’s ESPO Blend. Traders predict that the strong demand for lighter Russian grades will continue until July, driven by Indian refiners who have ordered over 10 cargoes of ESPO crude for June loading, the Reuters report added. ESPO crude refers to oil from the Eastern Siberian-Pacific Ocean pipeline. The most recent purchases of Russian crude by India were made before the EU and UK imposed the latest round of sanctions targeting Moscow's so-called “shadow fleet” of oil tankers and financial firms. Despite Western concerns, India has strengthened its economic ties with Russia and increased its imports of Russian crude oil throughout the Ukraine conflict.

RT: India’s oil imports from Russia surge – Reuters 22nd May, 2025.

SPUTNIK V CREATOR WARNS OF GLOBAL ‘CAT FLU’ PANDEMIC

The head of Gamaleya Research Institute, Alexander Gintsburg, has warned that H5N1 avian flu is spreading among cats and could jump to humans, potentially triggering a deadly pandemic. Gintsburg said the threat is serious enough to warrant immediate vaccine development. The institution was behind Sputnik V, the world’s first registered Covid-19 vaccine. According to Gintsburg, a mutation of H5N1 allowing airborne human transmission could lead to a crisis worse than smallpox. “The fatality rate is 50–70%, and if transmitted by air, smallpox will seem like child’s play compared to what could happen after one or two mutations,” he said.

RT: Sputnik V creator warns of global ‘cat flu’ pandemic 21st May, 2025.

ISRAEL COULD STRIKE IRANIAN NUCLEAR FACILITIES – CNN

The chance of an Israeli military strike on Iranian nuclear facilities “has gone up significantly” in recent months, CNN reported on Tuesday, citing multiple US officials familiar with new intelligence assessments. While Israeli leadership has not made a final decision, recently intercepted communications suggest that planning is actively underway, unnamed sources have told the network. US intelligence has also noted Israeli military activities, including the movement of air munitions and the completion of air exercises, which could indicate preparations for an “imminent strike.”

RT: Israel could strike Iranian nuclear facilities – CNN 21st May, 2025.



