

# NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL REPORT

High-level overview and brief analysis of regional political, economic and security activity, distributed every fortnight.

## TUNISIA

**On 6 June, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was received in Tunis by Tunisian President Kais Saied as part of an official visit.** During her visit, the two presidents discussed migration issues. For several weeks now, Tunisia and Italy have been deploying a joint diplomatic strategy. In exchange for Tunisia's efforts to contain migrants, Italy is campaigning for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU) to provide financial assistance to Tunisia. Italy's aim is to prevent Tunisia from becoming socially destabilized in order to avoid a migratory flow from Tunisia to Italy.

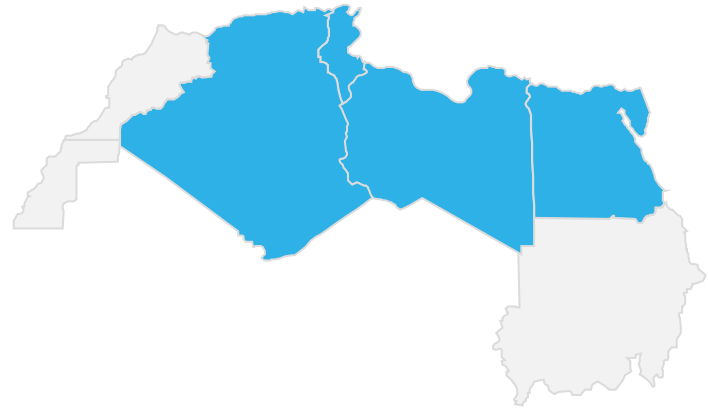
## LIBYA

**On 5 June, the Speaker of the Libyan Parliament, Aguila Saleh Issa, and the Head of the High Council of State in Libya, Khaled al-Michri, arrived in Bouznika, Morocco, to discuss the joint commission for the preparation of electoral laws.** The committee began talks in Bouznika to lay the foundations for holding legislative and presidential elections in 2023, in application of a roadmap announced by UN Special Envoy Abdoulaye Bathily in February. The situation appears to favor an easing of tensions to work towards the possible holding of elections at the end of 2023.

## ALGERIA

**On 6 June, Algeria has been elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term.** The country, which also holds the presidency of the Arab League Summit, now has a greater political voice and influence, particularly on the issue of Western Sahara, a subject of tension between Morocco and Algeria. The Polisario Front, a Sahrawi separatist political group supported by Algeria, enthusiastically welcomed the latter's entry into the Security Council. Polisario Foreign Minister Mohamed Sidati said in a statement that Algeria will now be able to defend the Sahrawi cause more effectively.

## The Region at a Glance



## EGYPT

**On 3 June, three Israeli soldiers were killed by an Egyptian police officer near the Israeli-Egyptian border. The assailant was subsequently shot dead in an exchange of fire with the IDF near the Israeli military base of Harif.** According to the Egyptian army's version, the policeman was chasing drug traffickers and crossed a checkpoint, leading to an exchange of fire between the IDF and the Egyptian officer. The circumstances surrounding this event remain unclear, making it difficult to ascertain whether it was an accident resulting from drug smuggling or a deliberate act by the Egyptian officer. Security reports indicate that the Egyptian police officer may have been radicalized. Despite the gravity of the incident, the Israeli and Egyptian authorities quickly reaffirmed their cooperation. This event is unlikely to have any direct repercussions on relations between Egypt and Israel, but it could potentially influence public opinion.

# NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL REPORT

High-level overview and brief analysis of regional political, economic and security activity, distributed every fortnight.

## MOROCCO AND ISRAEL'S RAPPROACHMENT

At a time when relations between Morocco and the GCC countries are tense due to Syria's integration into the Arab League, and with Algeria's growing influence in the region, the kingdom is seeking to strengthen its ties with its Israeli ally in the Middle East.

So far, the new cooperation has existed on two separate lines. The first is on military and Security cooperation while the second has been on reinforcing political connections through diplomacy.

### *Military & Security*

- For the first time since the normalization of relations between Morocco and Israel in 2020, twelve IDF soldiers will be actively participating in military maneuvers on Moroccan soil, during the African Lion 2023 international exercise, the largest on the African continent, which began on 6 June and will last until 19 June.
- On May 29, according to two newspapers, twelve senior Moroccan officers and five French officers took part in a meeting in Israel aimed at destabilizing Algeria by provoking unrest in certain, undisclosed, regions of Algeria. According to the newspaper, this meeting between Moroccan, French and Israeli intelligence was also intended to undermine relations between Algeria and Tunisia.

### *Diplomatic Visits*

- On 7 June, Knesset Speaker Amir Ohana visited Morocco, in response to an invitation from his Moroccan counterpart Rachid Talbi el-Alami. Ohana and El-Alami signed a formal memorandum of understanding to develop inter-parliamentary cooperation and strengthen relations between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Morocco. He also held talks with the Chairman of the Morocco-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group and several members of the Moroccan House of Representatives, as well as with senior government officials and leaders of the Kingdom's Jewish community.
- According to several Israeli diplomatic sources, the second Negev Summit will be held in Dakhla, Moroccan Sahara, at the end of June. This event will be marked by Israel's official and definitive recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara, and will be reaffirmed by the United States.

Between the announced visit to Morocco of Amir Ohana, President of the Israeli Parliament, and Israel's participation in the African Lion exercises, which include the Western Sahara, there are multiple signs of a rapprochement between the two countries. These events are unlikely to be opposed by the majority of Arab countries, with the exception of Algeria, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

