STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE DAILY

Region: Somalia-Democratic Republic of the Congo-Nigeria-Niger
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Executive Assessment

Security dynamics across the Sahel and Horn of Africa remain characterized by sustained militant activity, localized tactical gains by state forces, and persistent civilian vulnerability. In Somalia, coordinated operations supported by international partners indicate continued pressure on Al-Shabaab and IS-Somalia elements, while abductions and rural insecurity persist, reflecting limited territorial control outside key operational zones.

In the Sahel, JNIM activity in Mali and Niger highlights ongoing coercion of local populations and effective use of asymmetric tactics such as IED attacks on military convoys. Simultaneously, Malian air operations suggest reliance on strike capabilities to disrupt militant presence, though without clear evidence of sustained area control.

Nigeria presents a mixed security picture, with successful counterterrorism operations and hostage rescues offset by continued high-casualty attacks and ISWAP's demonstrated capability to execute complex ambushes against military reinforcements. This underscores persistent operational gaps in force protection and rural security.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, escalating clashes between AFC/M23 and Wazalendo, alongside increased drone-based airstrikes, indicate intensifying conflict dynamics that risk undermining ongoing diplomatic processes.

SOMALIA

• President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud met China's Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa Hu Changchun at Villa Somalia in Mogadishu to discuss strengthening bilateral relations, and enhancing cooperation on peace, security, and economic engagement.

• The Ministry of Defense announced that the Somali National Armed Forces, together with Jubbaland Security Forces and supported by international air assets, neutralized 27 Al-Shabaab militants during operations in the Jilib, Xagar, and Afmadow areas.

• Puntland forces announced that they captured an IS-Somalia militant in the Yalho area of Bari region and recovered stolen livestock; it was also reported that IS-Somalia militants abducted two shepherds along with their livestock on the Daray-Madoobe road.

MALI

• According to local sources, JNIM abducted a civilian in December 2025 in Kirchamba, Diré district of the Timbuktu region, allegedly for intending to join the Malian army, and later executed him while in custody, as announced during a village meeting.

• The Malian army announced that 15 terrorists were neutralized in an airstrike conducted in a forested area approximately 45 km northwest of Didiéni in the Koulikoro region.

NIGER

• JNIM released footage of an IED attack targeting a military convoy between Samir and Balkab in the Tillabéri region; the footage shows multiple soldiers inside the vehicle at the time of the strike.

• Niger and the Kingdom of Morocco signed 14 new cooperation agreements in Niamey during the Joint Cooperation Commission meeting, co-chaired by Foreign Ministers Nasser Bourita and Bakary Yaou Sangaré, to strengthen their strategic partnership.

NIGERIA

• Türkiye delivered humanitarian aid to civilians residing in the Malkohi Internally Displaced Persons Camp near Yola in Adamawa State.

• The Nigerian Army announced that it rescued at least 11 kidnapped civilians and arrested several terror and criminal suspects in coordinated nationwide operations conducted within the last 24 hours.

• An army spokesperson stated that drones were also used during the attack in the Monguno area.

• Bandits reportedly killed at least 18 civilians in Bunkasau village, located in the Zarummai area of Bukkuyum Local Government Area, Zamfara State.

• ISWAP claimed responsibility for the attack on military positions in Monguno, stating that reinforcements were lured into an ambush and targeted with IEDs, resulting in the deaths of seven soldiers, including Colonel I.A. Muhammad; the Nigerian Army confirmed the casualties.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

• AFC/M23 accused the Congolese army of launching new attacks on April 13 in Kalehe, Masisi, and Minembwe, stating that these developments threaten the ongoing talks in Switzerland.

• According to local sources, clashes occurred between AFC/M23 and Wazalendo in the Masisi area.

• ACLED United Nations and Human Rights Watch, reported a significant increase in airstrikes particularly those conducted by army drones in the South Kivu highlands.