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1.0 Introduction

The November 2025 Issue of Mashariki Monthly Outlook analyzes key developments shaping the Greater Eastern Africa region through a conflict and geopolitical foresight lens. During this period the region navigated a complex and interconnected landscape of political, security, economic, humanitarian, and diplomatic developments. Governance disruptions in Djibouti, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Madagascar exposed latent institutional vulnerabilities, highlighting potential challenges for political oversight, accountability, and stability. Cross-border tensions, particularly between Ethiopia and Eritrea, alongside localised violence in Uganda and evolving conflict dynamics in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, underscored enduring security risks with potential spillover effects on civilian protection, trade corridors, and border management. Economic integration and infrastructure initiatives advanced in Kenya and Uganda through joint investments in the Kenya Pipeline Company and extensions of the Standard Gauge Railway, even as urban transport financing setbacks in Nairobi revealed fragilities in external funding and project implementation. Humanitarian pressures intensified as prolonged drought in Somalia strained rural livelihoods and urban service systems, while Uganda's restrictive refugee policies signalled emerging challenges in regional population mobility and displacement management. Diplomatic engagement across the continent and Indian Ocean littoral, including strengthened strategic partnerships, multilateral legal participation, and maritime cooperation, reflected evolving regional alignments with implications for both security and economic governance. These developments suggest potential systemic stresses that could affect cross-border stability, resource allocation, and regional coordination in the coming months. Against this backdrop, the November 2025 Issue, provides an integrated, evidence-based examination of these trends, framing the operational and policy-relevant considerations that will guide subsequent analysis and recommendations across governance, security, economic, humanitarian, and diplomatic domains.

2.0 Key Themes

2.1 Regional Political Governance

In Djibouti, the ruling Rassemblement Populaire pour le Progrès (RPP) officially nominated President Ismail Omar Guelleh for the April 2026 presidential election following a constitutional amendment that removed the maximum age limit for candidates, consolidating executive control and limiting political competition (Geeska, November 2025). In South Sudan, President Salva Kiir dismissed Vice President Benjamin Bol Mel along with the governors of the central bank and the revenue authority, signalling intensified elite consolidation and factional realignment within state institutions (Reuters, November 2025). Madagascar, experiencing institutional breakdown and political crisis, formally relinquished its anticipated rotating presidency of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), prompting South Africa to assume interim leadership to maintain continuity and regional coordination (CapMad, November 2025; The Star, November 2025). Tanzania witnessed widespread post-election protests following the October 29 vote; the government responded with mass arrests and treason charges against hundreds of demonstrators. Reports of hundreds of civilian deaths prompted the UN human rights chief to call for an independent investigation, citing credible evidence of violations and alleged concealment of casualties (Africanews, November 2025; Al Jazeera, November 2025). On the regional implications, executive entrenchment in Djibouti and South Sudan undermines democratic pluralism, weakens institutional checks and balances, and risks internal discontent or elite fragmentation, with potential cross-border political consequences. Madagascar's withdrawal from SADC leadership reduces institutional continuity within the regional bloc, diminishing its capacity to mediate crises, coordinate collective policy responses, and manage regional political tensions. In Tanzania, the post-election crackdown erodes public trust in governance,

threatens internal displacement and potential cross-border migration, and weakens the credibility of democratic institutions, with possible implications for regional political norms and stability.

Foresight Recommendations

Enhance electoral transparency: Djibouti should implement international observer programs and ensure the timely publication of electoral data to strengthen public confidence and reduce political uncertainty.

Strengthen crisis response: Tanzanian authorities, supported by African Union technical teams, must conduct transparent investigations into post-election violence to prevent escalation, uphold human rights, and restore civic trust.

Support institutional resilience: South Sudan and Madagascar should pursue reforms to strengthen parliamentary oversight, judicial independence, and accountability mechanisms, thereby reducing risks of elite capture and institutional collapse.

Regional coordination: SADC and AU should actively monitor member states, provide guidance to prevent political spillovers, and support stabilisation initiatives.

Forward-looking scenario: Prompt implementation of these measures may stabilise political tensions, reduce cross-border displacement, and reinforce governance norms; failure to act risks entrenched authoritarianism, weakened democratic processes, and increased inter-state political friction.

2.2 Regional Security & Conflict Dynamics

In western Uganda, coordinated attacks on police stations in Kasese and Bundibugyo were thwarted by security forces, resulting in the deaths of five assailants and the arrest of fifteen individuals, including one woman, highlighting persistent localised security vulnerabilities even in relatively stable districts (Uganda Monitor, November 2025). Ethiopia formally accused Eritrea of violating its territorial sovereignty, asserting that Eritrean forces occupied several northern administrative areas and provided support to armed groups, including factions linked to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Fano militia, raising the risk of cross-border escalation and undermining Red Sea security (Addis Standard, November 2025). In Sudan, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) announced a unilateral three-month humanitarian truce, aimed at protecting civilians and facilitating aid delivery, while the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Government of Japan pledged an additional USD 800,000 to support peacebuilding initiatives (EIN Presswire, November 2025). Concurrently, the European Union imposed new sanctions on RSF second-in-command Abdel-Rahim Hamdan Dagalo over alleged ongoing atrocities, reinforcing international pressure on the conflict parties (AP, November 2025). Additionally, the 19th African Conference of Commandants convened in Kigali on November 11, gathering senior military educators and defence leaders to promote digital innovation in training and advance continental interoperability for crisis response (IGIHE, November 2025). On the regional implications, the attacks in Uganda demonstrate that sudden violence can destabilise local communities, increasing the risk of internal displacement and straining security and humanitarian systems. Ethiopia-Eritrea tensions threaten broader Horn of Africa stability, including trade corridors and Red Sea security, and may exacerbate regional military competition. Sudan's fragile truce remains vulnerable to collapse, which could reignite mass displacement and further

humanitarian crises. The Kigali defence conference presents a critical opportunity to strengthen regional security architecture through interoperable digital training, knowledge sharing, and coordinated rapid response capabilities across member states.

Foresight Recommendations

Deploy regional security teams: IGAD and AU should coordinate joint monitoring along the Ethiopia-Eritrea and Uganda border zones to prevent escalation and improve early-warning capacities.

Strengthen humanitarian oversight: Authorities must monitor compliance with Sudan's humanitarian truce, ensuring uninterrupted aid delivery and civilian protection.

Control transnational conflict risks: Early-warning systems for militia movements in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Sudan should be implemented to anticipate and mitigate potential outbreaks of violence.

Facilitate regional training and interoperability: African military academies and defence institutions should leverage digital platforms to enhance joint preparedness, coordination, and rapid response capabilities.

Forward-looking scenario: Effective deployment of regional security teams, robust monitoring, and enhanced training interoperability could stabilise borders, reduce civilian casualties, and improve crisis preparedness; failure to act risks renewed conflict, humanitarian collapse, and weakened regional coordination.

2.3 Regional Economic Integration & Infrastructure Development

In Kenya, the United States withdrew funding for a KSh 7.76 billion Geographic Information System (GIS) transport platform, stalling Nairobi's efforts to modernise its multimodal urban transport network and delaying its planned completion by the 2027 fiscal year (Kenyans.co.ke, November 2025; Prime Africa, November 2025). The East African Court of Justice (EACJ) suspended the Kenya-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), prompting the Kenyan government to pursue legal remedies to protect trade and investment interests (Africanews, November 2025). Conversely, Kenya and Uganda announced joint infrastructure initiatives, including public listing of Kenya Pipeline Company shares on the Nairobi Securities Exchange with Ugandan participation, pipeline extensions from Eldoret through Kampala toward Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and an expansion of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) from Naivasha to Kampala to enhance regional connectivity (Standard Media, November 2025). Mauritius strengthened strategic partnerships with India and France, advancing maritime security cooperation, the blue economy, and sustainable energy initiatives through the MAHASAGAR program and the "déclaration d'intention" on marine and renewable resource management (Maritime Fair Trade, November 2025; RFI, November 2025). On the regional implications, the suspension of Nairobi's GIS project may slow urban mobility reforms, limit investment confidence, and affect broader economic modernisation efforts. The EPA suspension introduces legal and regulatory uncertainty, with potential disruption of regional supply chains and trade flows. Joint Kenya-Uganda infrastructure ventures could enhance cross-border energy and transport integration, supporting economic connectivity, industrialisation, and regional trade corridors. Mauritius's strategic partnerships demonstrate how coastal states can leverage

bilateral and multilateral engagements to advance sustainable development, maritime security, and regional blue economy initiatives.

Foresight Recommendations

Diversify funding sources: Kenya should explore alternative donor financing, public-private partnerships, and multilateral support to resume and accelerate the Nairobi transport project

Expedite legal processes: The government should fast-track EPA appeal proceedings to reduce trade uncertainty, safeguard regional integration, and protect investor confidence

Advance joint investments: Kenya and Uganda must implement transparent procurement processes, environmental safeguards, and stakeholder engagement for KPC and SGR extensions to ensure sustainable and equitable infrastructure development.

Enhance regional integration: Regional coordination mechanisms should be strengthened to harmonise infrastructure planning, maximise connectivity, and promote cross-border economic benefits

Forward-looking scenario: Successful implementation of regional economic integration and infrastructure development could improve regional trade, transport and energy connectivity, and investor confidence; delays or failures may generate cost overruns, hinder regional integration, and limit economic development opportunities.

2.4 Regional Humanitarian Stress, Climate-Driven Mobility & Refugee Policy

In Somalia, prolonged drought conditions worsened across several regions, prompting a national appeal for relief, with the government allocating USD 1 million to reinforce urgent humanitarian operations and stabilise rural livelihoods (AllAfrica, November 2025). Simultaneously, Uganda announced a policy halting the granting of new refugee status to nationals from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia, while maintaining protections for those already recognised under asylum frameworks (Monitor, November 2025; Nile Post, November 2025). These developments occur amid sustained regional climate shocks, including water scarcity, disrupted agricultural production, and intensified competition over natural resources, heightening the vulnerability of affected populations and challenging national and regional humanitarian response capacity. On the regional implications, Somalia's worsening drought is likely to drive population movements toward neighbouring countries, including Ethiopia and Kenya, placing additional pressure on urban and rural services, food security, and local governance structures. Uganda's restrictive refugee policy may redirect migration flows, increase irregular cross-border movements, and heighten social tensions in border communities. Combined climate and policy pressures risk compounding humanitarian vulnerability, straining regional coordination mechanisms, and destabilising host communities, with potential long-term consequences for economic and social resilience.

Foresight Recommendations

Establish early-warning mechanisms: AU and IGAD should monitor displacement patterns across Somalia, Uganda, and Eritrea to anticipate movements and pre-position resources effectively

Harmonise refugee policy: Short-term regional dialogue should align asylum procedures, temporary protection measures, and border management strategies to prevent irregular flows and reduce tensions

Scale up humanitarian aid: Rapid mobilisation of financial and logistical resources for drought-affected regions is critical to stabilise communities and prevent secondary displacement

Promote climate resilience: Investment in water infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, and local adaptation strategies can reduce vulnerability and enhance community resilience to recurring shocks

Forward-looking scenario: Coordinated regional action could stabilise displacement flows, safeguard livelihoods, and mitigate humanitarian crises; failure to act risks exacerbating vulnerability, cross-border tensions, and regional instability.

2.5 Regional Diplomacy, Partnerships & Strategic Realignments

In November 2025, the 7th AU-EU Summit held in Luanda reaffirmed commitments to peace, climate action, trade, industrialisation, migration, and regional integration under the EU Global Gateway framework, emphasising practical cooperation and investment mobilisation for African development (EU News, November 2025). Comoros formally intervened in the ICJ case; *South Africa v. Israel*, marking a significant step for African states in asserting legal influence and engagement with international normative structures (Middle East Monitor, November 2025). Mauritius strengthened strategic partnerships with India and France, signing agreements on maritime security, renewable energy development, and blue economy initiatives to enhance sustainable maritime trade and regional resilience (Maritime Fair Trade, November 2025; RFI, November 2025). These developments collectively highlight a trend toward proactive continental diplomacy, strategic partnerships, and normative engagement at both regional and global levels. On the regional implications, the AU-EU Summit commitments could catalyse investment flows for critical infrastructure, climate adaptation, and industrial capacity development across greater Eastern Africa. Comoros's engagement in the ICJ case demonstrates a growing willingness among African states to participate actively in global legal frameworks, potentially shaping regional norms and asserting continental interests. Mauritius's maritime and blue economy initiatives offer a replicable model for other coastal states in the region, providing opportunities for enhanced maritime security, renewable energy integration, and sustainable trade strategies. Collectively, these trends may strengthen regional connectivity, foster economic growth, and elevate Africa's strategic influence internationally.

Foresight Recommendations

Operationalise AU-EU commitments: Establish a dedicated task force to monitor and track the implementation of investment, cooperation, and industrialisation initiatives, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Expand maritime cooperation: Coastal states in Eastern Africa should adopt Mauritius's blue economy and maritime security framework to improve trade security, resource management, and renewable energy deployment.

Strengthen continental diplomacy: African states should coordinate legal participation in international courts and dispute mechanisms to reinforce continental influence and normative authority.

Mobilise investment: Governments and multilateral institutions should secure private and multilateral funding to support industrialisation, regional integration, and climate adaptation projects.

Forward-looking scenario: Prompt and coordinated implementation of these measures could deepen Africa-Europe partnerships, enhance strategic capacity, and reinforce continental influence; failure to act may result in missed investment opportunities and diminished global leverage.

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