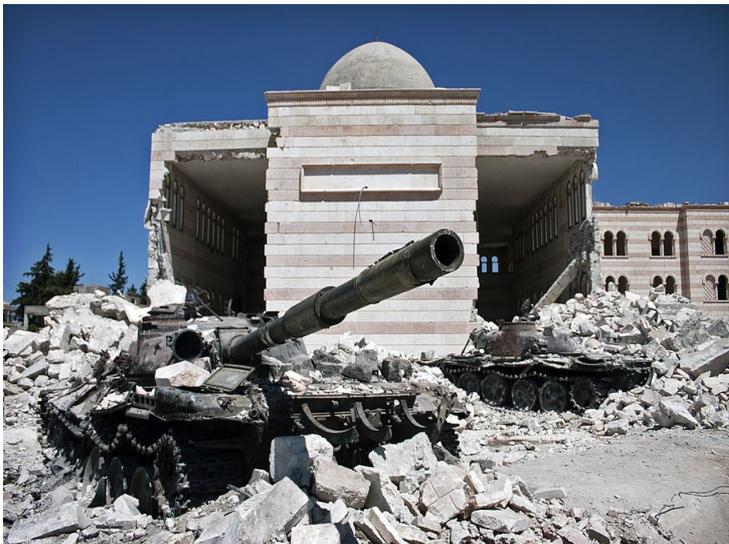


News Report 30th January - 29th February

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- **Syria: a ceasefire that is not a ceasefire**
- **Nigeria: attack in Dalori, resettled refugees, freed hostages and Flintlock**
- **Libya: unity government and military mission to stabilise the country**
- **World: changes in armaments and the arms trade**
- **France: more emergency measures**
- **Ukraine: new peak in the conflict**
- **Ethiopia and Uganda: crackdown on oppositions**

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Syria: a ceasefire that is not a ceasefire

An agreement [was announced](#) on 21st February between Russia and the United States to establish a partial truce among combatants in Syria. More precisely, Secretary of State John Kerry spoke of a “cessation of hostilities”, a term - [according to](#) *The New York Times* – that is far from being fortuitous: the perspective of a full cease-fire is indeed still weak. A first – inconsistent – step, as [put](#) by Scott Lucas: not a ceasefire, nor a cessation of hostilities, but a proposal for a cessation of hostilities. And a proposal, as reminded by *BBC News*, [accepted](#) by many warring parties, but not by the Islamic State and al-Nusra, two key actors in the conflict. As [admitted](#) by Kerry - who seems to have rejected the hypothesis - even the creation of a “safe zone” would need the deployment of between 15,000 and 30,000 soldiers.

Nigeria: attack in Dalori, resettled refugees, freed hostages and Flintlock

On 30th January, an attack in the Nigerian village of Dalori proved particularly lethal, with [85 people](#) killed by Boko Haram forces. The attack was one of the most brutal in the list of assaults carried out by various groups in the Sahel region.

But, few weeks later, Nigeria was the object of two other important events. As [unveiled](#) by *The Associated Press*, in mid-February the Nigerian government began forcing internally displaced people hosted in schools out, so as to let students restart classes. The attempt

gained momentum a week later, with the deployment of security forces trying to move individuals out, some of them back to camps previously attacked by Boko Haram. But the army allegedly obtained some successes, too: the Nigerian and Cameroonian armies [claimed](#) on 26th February that they managed to rescue some 1,900 hostages from Boko Haram, during the past two weeks. Finally, on 8th February the annual joint military exercise [Flintlock](#) began in Senegal. Focused on the fight against jihadism, the event [included](#) for the first time the training of police forces.

Libya: unity government and military mission to stabilise the country

A unity government [was declared](#) in Libya on 15th February. Furthermore, in order to help stabilise the country, a multilateral force – the “Libyan international assistance mission” (LIAM) - [has recently been established](#). The planning for the establishment of this multinational mission may have been carried out since as early as December 2015. As [unveiled](#) by *CTV News*, Canada asked to join LIAM in that period. The mission is expected to play a key role in Libya’s future.

World: changes in armaments and the arms trade

Some 5,000 tons of ammunitions [entered](#) Stuttgart (Germany) on 21st February. Ammunitions were delivered to U.S. Army Europe (USAEUR) in line with the escalating tensions in Eastern Europe between the United States and Russia. The news came just two days after the [revelation](#) by anonymous sources that the Russian government may be considering cuts in defence procurement spending. A few days later Saudi Arabia announced another cut - [\\$4 billion](#) - this time in funds for Lebanese security forces. The country has already been hit by the European Parliament’s [call](#) for an embargo on Saudi weapons. The only country seemingly improving its power internationally seems to be China: [According to](#) SIPRI, China has indeed doubled arms sales between 2011 and 2015.

France: more emergency measures

Despite Christiane Taubira's resignation, on 10th February the French National Assembly [passed](#) a bill to include in the constitution the stripping of dual-nationals of their French citizenship, were they accused of terrorism. In line with this, the emergency legislation introduced after the Paris attacks was extended on 16th February. The choice was [described](#) by *Human Rights Watch* as a “recipe for abuse”.

Ukraine: new peak in the conflict

A new peak in the conflict was revealed by *The New York Times* on 21st February. According to the American newspaper, a new escalation of the conflict seems to be currently taking place in the country. The new hotspot for the war – NYT's Andrew Kramer [argues](#) – appears to be in Maryinka, where the ceasefire signed on 1st September seems to now be unravelling.

Ethiopia and Uganda: crackdown on oppositions

On 21st February, *Human Rights Watch* reported a recrudescence in the repression of protests in the Oromia region by Ethiopian security forces. The regime [is accused](#) of shooting at protesters, detaining other thousands without charge, since the beginning of the protest four months ago. Meanwhile, the post-electoral period is being managed by Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni in line with the [choice](#) to arrest his main contender Kizza Besigye: he [deployed](#) a heavy military presence in Uganda's capital city Kampala, thereby trying to prevent protests.