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By Global News Service

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## Global News Dispatches: 4 Stories

**Credit Line:** from the [Peoples Dispatch](#) / [Globetrotter News Service](#)

**Note to Editors:** This is a selection of news wire reports that have been edited to be relevant for audiences for the next two weeks. You are welcome to select and publish individual items or the whole stack.

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[NEWS ITEM TEXT]

**Over 20 Killed as Kenyans Take to the Streets Against President William Ruto's 'Reforms'**

[302 words]

Up to 23 people have reportedly died in the crackdown by police against the July 2023 protests in Kenya denouncing the new tax regime introduced by President William Ruto's government.

The protests first broke out on July 7 against the new taxes, introduced as part of the Finance Act 2023, which has been praised by the U.S. for the opportunities it opens up for its capital to operate in Kenya. Another major round of agitations took place on July 12.

In the meantime, the legality of the new taxes that the government has been collecting since July 1, as envisaged in the Act, is being contested. On June 30, a day before the Act was to take effect, the Milimani High Court temporarily suspended its implementation. Subsequently, on July 10, the Milimani High Court refused the government's appeal to lift the temporary suspension, extending it indefinitely.

The June 30 verdict did not stop the government from [doubling the VAT on fuel](#) on July 1 from 8 percent to 16 percent—a measure the IMF had been [pressuring](#) Kenya to implement since at least 2021.

Fuel prices in Kenya had already reached a [historic high](#) after Ruto's government lifted subsidies at the insistence of the IMF. With the doubling of VAT, taxes now amount to [40 percent of the cost per liter](#), which has [reached a 12-year high](#).

The Finance Act also envisages a tax on sugar and maize flour and a housing levy. Booker Ngesa Omole, the national vice-chairperson of the Communist Party of Kenya, said the levy is for a public-private partnership, in which the public money will be given to private contractors to construct houses. Only the wealthy can afford to buy the newly-constructed houses, he added.

Protests are set to continue, with the [third round scheduled on July 19](#).

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### **Is Tunisia Becoming the EU's Border Police?**

**[273 words]**

Tunisia and the European Union signed a “strategic and comprehensive partnership” agreement on Sunday, July 16, to control the movement of migrants and asylum seekers.

Every year, thousands of people cross the Mediterranean to seek asylum and refugee status in Europe. However, the EU has increasingly refused to admit them, calling them irregular migrants. The EU has signed agreements with countries such as Libya and Turkey to stop these migrants and deport them back to their countries of origin, sometimes in complete violation of the UN Convention on Refugees and other [human rights](#) laws.

The deal was announced during the visit of the president of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to Tunisia. She was accompanied by Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. This was their second visit to Tunisia in a little over a month.

The EU promised a \$1 billion “aid package” to Tunisia last month. On Sunday, von der Leyen [announced](#) the allocation of around \$200 million, of which around [\\$112 million](#)

will be used for the border control mechanism, and the rest to strengthen Tunisia's economy, education, and energy sectors.

The opposition in Tunisia, including the Workers Party, has [alleged](#) that the government of President Kais Saied is trying to convert the country into the EU's border guard.

The condition of migrants in Tunisia has worsened since February when Saied said migration was part of a conspiracy to bring about demographic change. On July 3, hundreds of sub-Saharan African migrants were [forced out](#) of the country's second biggest city, Sfax, following the death of a Tunisian man during clashes that took place there.

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### **People's Movements From Africa Debate the Crisis of Capitalism and Socialist Alternatives**

**[245 words]**

On July 17, 200 delegates from progressive organizations, political parties, people's movements, and trade unions across Africa gathered in Bela-Bela, South Africa for the "Dilemmas of Humanity: Pan African Dialogues to Build Socialism" conference.

The delegates are deliberating the challenges that capitalism poses for working people, and are advancing proposals of action to build socialism "[within our lifetime.](#)"

The conference is part of the [Dilemmas of Humanity](#) process and is one of several regional conferences ahead of the 3rd International Dilemmas of Humanity Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa in October, which is [organized](#) by the International Peoples' Assembly.

The movements and organizations represented at the conference have been at the frontlines of the struggle for land, for the dignity of the working class in the face of poverty wages and neoliberal austerity, and the fight for self-determination and sovereignty.

Hosted by Pan Africanism Today, the conference will bring together almost 40 organizations from 17 countries, including the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, the Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG), and the Socialist Party of Zambia, as well as social and peasant movements including Abahlali baseMjondolo from South Africa and Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania from Tanzania.

"It is important for progressive anti-imperialist forces around the world to meet and strategize, to think through these changes," Kwesi Pratt Jr., General Secretary of the SMG, told Peoples Dispatch. "And to develop a means of solidarity and a means of activating our struggles until final victory."

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## **Ahead of Third CELAC-EU Summit, Movements From Both Continents Build People's Summit**

**[304 words]**

On July 17 and 18, leaders from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the European Union (EU) are converging in Brussels, the seat of the EU, for the third CELAC-EU Summit. The two-day summit is chaired by Ralph Gonsalves, pro tempore president of CELAC and prime minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Charles Michel, president of the European Council.

This edition of the summit has already caused a stir, with authorities from Cuba and Venezuela strongly condemning the conduct of the EU in the preceding days, specifically regarding the format and content of the meeting, as well as political positions that have singled out members of the CELAC bloc.

Parallel to the heads of state summit, people's movements, unions, and left parties from across Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe joined hands to organize the People's Summit. The People's Summit, also taking place in Brussels from July 17-18, seeks to be a democratic space for exchange and open discussion about the key issues facing the people of both regions.

The two-day program will feature speeches and interventions by movement leaders, such as Joao Pedro Stedile of the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST) of Brazil, Haitian activist Camille Chalmers of the PAPDA party, Peruvian activist and feminist Aída García-Naranjo, and "Mocha." On the night of July 17, participants heard from prominent progressive figures such as Colombian President Gustavo Petro, British MP Jeremy Corbyn, and Jean Luc Melenchon of La France Insoumise.

Paula Andrea Polanco Palacio, a member of INTAL Globalize Solidarity and part of the organizing team of the People's Summit, the space is "an opportunity to go beyond the officially imposed issues and raise the question of what kind of regional integration we want for our two continents and what kind of healthy, democratic and mutually beneficial relations."