



CONFLICT BAROMETER | 2022

Heidelberg Institute for
International Conflict Research



disputes
non-violent crises
violent crises
limited wars
wars

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The HIIK evolved from the 1991 research project COSIMO (Conflict Simulation Model), led by Prof. Dr. Frank R. Pfetsch, University of Heidelberg, and financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

For more information please visit our website:

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HIK

Heidelberg Institute for
International Conflict Research

CONFLICT BAROMETER|2022

Analyzed Period: 01/01/22 – 12/31/22

PREFACE

With the 31st edition of the Conflict Barometer, the HIIK continues its annual series of reports covering political conflicts worldwide. The global political conflict panorama in 2021 was marked by an increase in the number of highly violent conflicts. Both the number of wars and of limited wars increased from 20 to 21 respectively. As opposed to last year, one war was observed in Europe [→ Russia – Ukraine] and another war in the Americas [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)]. Out of the 21 limited wars observed this year, nine escalated from violent crises or non-violent conflicts. The number of violent crises also increased from 164 to 174, of which around 30 percent or 53 in total were observed in Asia & Oceania. Violent intrastate conflicts continued to be the most numerous conflict type, encompassing 136 or around 30% of all observed conflicts.

2022 marked the first year since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic that HIIK could undertake parts of its activities in person. In November, we spent several days in Limburg an der Lahn, growing together as a team and preparing for the final editing phase, which could again partially take place in Heidelberg. Starting in September, HIIK cooperated with the International Peace Bureau for a twelve-week social media and online seminar series on “Hidden Conflicts” around the globe. We discussed the background and dynamics of several conflicts according to our methodology, with additional input from activists and academics from the field. In December, we also joined the discussion on how to measure the complexity of three interconnected crises - Climate change, Covid-19 and Conflict - organized by the European Commission’s Community of Practice on Composite Indicators and Scoreboards, sharing our experiences and ideas. Moreover, HIIK continued its educational activities to explain political conflicts and talk with youth on the topic, notably leading to the joint work with Lessing-Gymnasium’s Social Studies Class in Mannheim, Germany.

The Board of Directors would like to thank all editors, heads of regional working groups, and everyone else who contributed to this report for their outstanding efforts, especially during the final stages of editing. Without your commitment, a publication like this would be impossible. When time resources seem to be more limited than ever, voluntary efforts spent on a project like this become even more extraordinary.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

METHODOLOGY	8
GLOBAL CONFLICT PANORAMA	11
Global Development	17
Global Conflict Statistics 2021	20
Authoritative Decisions by the International Court of Justice	22
International Criminal Court & International Arbitration	23
SPOTLIGHTS	24
Three Futures in Three Tears for the Colombian-Venezuelan Border <i>Simon Albrecht, Santiago Moncada, Teresa Santos and Rafael Uribe-Neira</i>	25
From Regional Conflict to Global Implications: EU, USA et al. - Russia <i>Thomas Cranshaw</i>	28
Identity Politics Revisited: Deconstructing Feminist and Ethnic Narratives of the Iranian Protest Movement on German Media <i>Mostafa Bostani, Louise Lüdke, and Hans Stanka</i>	30
2022 Burkina Faso's Turmoil Recap: Coups d'État as a Trend for Security's Sake <i>Francesca Lenzi</i>	33
EUROPE	35
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	52
THE AMERICAS	94
ASIA AND OCEANIA	119
WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN	153
IMPRINT	178

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

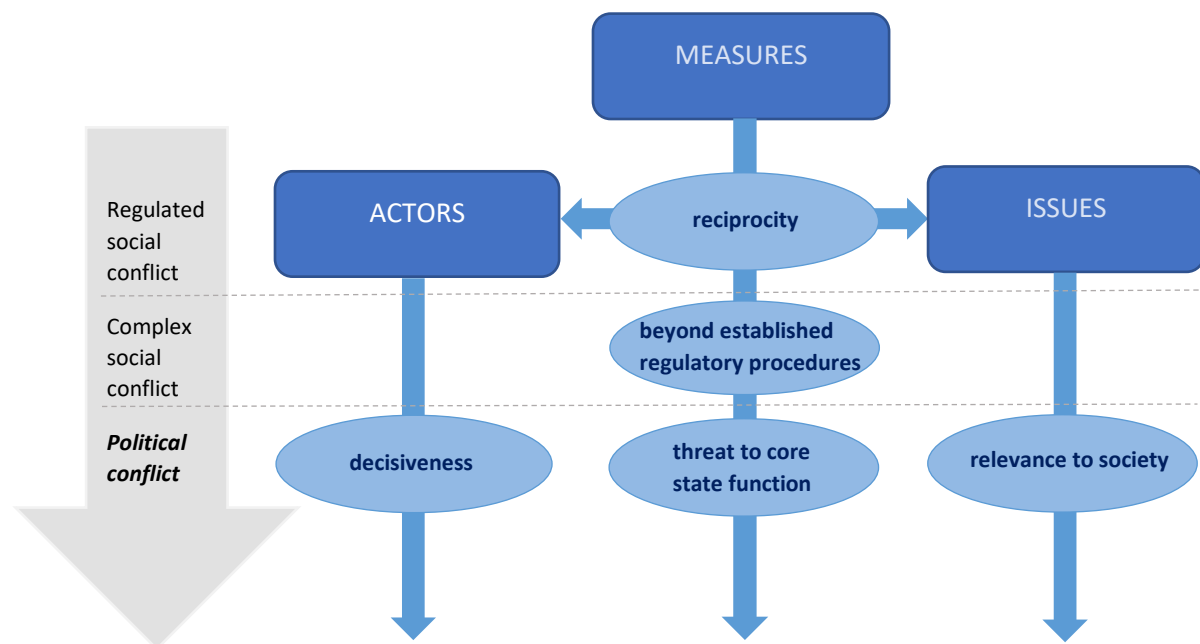
Since 1991, conflict research at HIIK has analyzed political conflicts by focusing on conflict processes rather than purely quantitative thresholds of casualties. Thus, HIIK's methodology is based on a set of specified actions and acts of communication between conflict parties. This process-oriented approach enriches the analysis of political conflicts with a broader and more detailed empirical foundation.

Located at Heidelberg University, HIIK has continuously taken steps to further elaborate its methodological approach. Notably, in 2011 the institute revised its definition of political conflicts and restructured its conflict intensity assessment. The latter now accounts for not only the intensity of a given conflict area in a given year, but also determines the intensity of a conflict for first-level subnational political units and per month. As such, it allows for a much more detailed measurement of conflict dynamics.

Furthermore, conflict actions and acts of communication can be operationalized with the help of qualitative and quantitative indicators of the means and consequences of violence. This allows for a more comprehensive overview of political dynamics and intensities.

Most recently, in 2017, HIIK introduced the concept of inactive conflicts to widen the span of observed cases and create space for dormant dynamics that may become active again within three years. These changes have further enhanced the accuracy, reliability, and reproducibility of the conflict information provided.

HIIK's Basic Concept of Political Conflict



According to HIIK's approach, a political conflict is an incompatibility of intentions between at least individual or collective actors. Such an incompatibility emerges in the form of observable and interrelated actions and acts of communication (measures) with regard to certain positional differences of values (issues) relevant to society and threatening (the continuity of) state functions or the international order. Actors, measures, and issues are the constitutive attributes of political conflict.

METHODOLOGY

CONFLICT ACTORS

Conflict actors are collective actors or individuals as part of a collective in direct pursuit of a conflict item, which are acknowledged by other conflict actors in their decision-making processes and are thus perceived to be relevant. Their actions must in turn provoke reaction; there must be reciprocity between actors to fulfill the definition. Collective actors such as states, international organizations, and non-state actors share a certain level of unitary conception, internal cohesion and a common structure of preferences. Actors may be considered as a coalition if their preferences are on the same side of a conflict dynamic and contrary to those of another actor or coalition. There may also be indirect actors involved: so-called supporters help a direct actor to claim or aspire to the conflict item, while so-called interveners wish to end the conflict without supporting either coalition in their actions regarding the item.

CONFLICT MEASURES

Conflict measures are actions and acts of communication carried out by a conflict actor in the context of a political conflict. They are constitutive for a conflict and its intensity if they occur outside established regulatory procedures and – possibly in conjunction with other measures – if they threaten the international order or a core function of the state or have the prospect to do so. Established regulatory procedures are defined as those mechanisms of conflict management that are accepted by all conflict actors in their respective context and performed without the use or threat of physical violence. Examples of conflict regulations include elections, court proceedings, public fora, round tables, or other forms of negotiations. Core state functions encompass the provision of security for a given population, as well as the guarantee of integrity of a given territory and of a specific political, socioeconomic, or cultural order. If, from a conflict actor's point of view, the fulfilment of state functions or the maintenance of the local or global order cannot be upheld, established procedures are threatened.

CONFLICT ISSUES

Conflict issues are material or immaterial goods pursued by conflict actors via conflict measures. They can become relevant for the entire society if they impact the coexistence of individuals or groups within a given polity or the relations between polities. Conflict issues are classified on the basis of ten items representing common objectives of conflict actors: (i) System/Ideology is encoded if a conflict actor aspires to change the ideological, religious, socioeconomic or judicial orientation of the political system or of the regime type itself. (ii) National Power refers to the power to govern a state, whereas (iii) Autonomy refers to attaining or extending the political self-rule of a population within a state or of a dependent territory without striving for independence. (iv) Secession refers to the aspired separation of a territory of a state aiming to establish a new state or to merge with another state. Furthermore, the goal of (v) Decolonization is the independence of a dependent territory. (vi) Subnational Predominance focuses on the attainment of the de-facto control by a government or a non-state actor over a territory or a population. The item (vii) Resources is encoded if the possession of raw materials, pasture, or the profits gained thereof, are pursued. (viii) Territory refers to a contested change of the delimitation of an international border. (ix)

International Power as an item describes an aspired shift in the power constellation in the international system or a regional system therein, through the change of military or institutional capabilities, related violent measures, or of an actor's political or economic influence. The item (x) Other is used as a residual category. Conflict actors can have multiple demands, and thus claim more than one item at the same time.

CONFLICT TYPES

IIK's methodology distinguishes between interstate, intrastate, substate, and transstate conflicts. While interstate conflicts only involve internationally recognized state actors, intrastate conflicts involve both state actors and non-state actors. Statehood is viewed as non-contested if the state is an official UN member state; states with limited recognition that are recognized by at least one other official UN member state are marked with a °. Substate conflicts are carried out solely among non-state actors. Transstate conflicts involve at least two sovereign states, both of which meet the criteria of a political conflict, and (at least) one non-state actor. This means that the actors are in conflict with each other and pursue their goals through conflict measures on the territory of at least two states.

CONFLICT START, INACTIVITY AND CLOSURE

When assessing levels of violence, IIK differentiates between violent and non-violent conflicts. A conflict is observed in the Conflict Barometer if it fulfills the minimum criteria defining a conflict. It may start at any level of intensity, therefore also at a non-violent level. As the start date, we define the day of the first recorded constitutive measure. Conflicts may be opened in retrospect.

Should the basic conflict criteria be fulfilled but no active measures can be observed at any specific time, a conflict's status can be set to inactive. An inactive conflict only comprises so-called persistent measures in which claims and goals are not renewed but implied without actions or statements, such as the tacit stipulation of a goal in a charter or effective declaration of the actor, dormant territorial demands or ongoing demobilization processes. The absence of reporting within this period is an indicator for continued inactivity. After 24 months of inactivity, a conflict is usually seen as passively closed at the end of the year, unless a re-occurrence of any violent or non-violent measures continues to be likely.

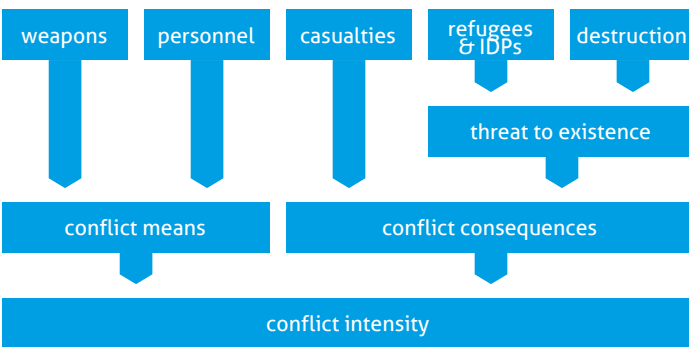
A conflict is actively closed if the basic conflict criteria are no longer fulfilled, with a set date of closure that justifies the decision. This may be the day a peace agreement is enforced between all conflict actors, for instance. Other forms of closure include the annihilation of a conflict actor, its dissolution, or unification with another.

ASSESSING THE INTENSITIES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS

THE CONCEPT OF CONFLICT INTENSITY

intensity Level	terminology	level of violence	intensity class
1	dispute	non-violent conflicts	low intensity
2	non-violent crisis		
3	violent crisis	violent conflicts	medium intensity
4	limited war		high intensity
5	war		

In order to measure the three levels of violent conflict, five proxies are used to indicate their means and consequences. The dimension of means encompasses the use of weapons and deployment of personnel, the dimension of consequences, the number of casualties, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the level of destruction.



Each indicator is scored on a ternary scale. Aggregating the five individual scores results in the total regional monthly intensity (RMI). The regions are the first-level administrative units of a country.

		conflict means		
		0 points	1 point	2 points
conflict consequences	0 points	violent crisis	violent crisis	limited war
	1 point	violent crisis	limited war	war
	2 points	limited war	war	war

WEAPONS

		weapons employment	
		light	heavy
weapon type	light	0 points	
	heavy	1 point	2 points

The weapons indicator determines whether light or heavy arms are used (e.g. handguns or hand grenades vs. artillery or heavy bombs, respectively). Regarding the extent to which the fighting capacity of heavy arms is exploited, we differentiate between limited and extensive use. The former is characterized by a light exertion of violence compared to its actual capacity, the latter by a powerful exertion of violence.

PERSONNEL

low	medium	high
≤ 50	> 50 ≤ 400	> 400
0 points	1 point	2 points

The personnel indicator measures the highest number of participants in an individual measure. All persons are counted who, by their engagement in a concerted action, represent a conflict actor in the context of a violent measure. Low, medium, and high numbers of personnel are distinguished, based on two thresholds: 50 and 400 persons.

CASUALTIES

low	medium	high
≤ 20	> 20 ≤ 60	> 60
0 points	1 point	2 points

Third, the overall number of casualties in the conflict in a region per month is counted, comprising the number of deaths from violent measures or their direct consequences. They include combatants as well as civilians who were injured or killed. Persons dying due to indirect effects, e.g. starvation or disease, are not included. The thresholds employed for the indicator are 20 and 60 persons killed.

REFUGEES & IDPs

low	medium	high
≤ 1 000	> 1 000 ≤ 20 000	> 20 000
0 points	1 point	2 points

Fourth, the overall number of cross-border refugees and IDPs in a region per month is tallied. Displacement is defined as the migration of human beings provoked by conflict measures, e.g. by the creation of inhumane living conditions. Taken into account is flow, not stock data. The thresholds employed for the indicator are 1,000 and 20,000 refugees, respectively.

DESTRUCTION

low	medium	high
within 0 dimensions	within 1 - 2 dimensions	within 3 - 4 dimensions
0 points	1 point	2 points

Lastly, destruction resulting from the conflict in a region per month is determined by four dimensions that are considered essential for civilian populations: (civilian and military) infrastructure, habitation, economy/self-sufficiency, and identity-establishing goods. The level of destruction is classified as low, medium, or high, depending on the number of dimensions affected. Any form of destruction counted within this indicator has to be on a massive scale, i.e. the damaged object must be crucial for the functioning of the category in question.

UP- AND DOWNGRADING

Regional monthly intensities (RMIs, see above) are the first pillar for determining the yearly conflict intensity of a specific conflict region (region/year intensity) as well as the overall yearly conflict area intensity (area/year intensity). A conflict area usually equals an internationally recognized country and is the sum of all subnational units affected by the respective conflict. Typically, the area/year intensity is equal to the highest RMI in a given area per year. As such, intensities of a certain spatiotemporal unit would directly translate to a corresponding yearly conflict intensity level. However, methodological issues such as a considerable variance in the size of administrative regions might threaten the comparability between different conflicts on the same intensity level. Thus, up- and downgrading becomes the determining factor when reassessing the given RMIs, if violence occurred. For instance, two conflicts might have an area/year intensity of a violent crisis according to the assessment based on the first pillar. The first conflict accounted for 30 casualties in three RMIs with ten fatalities each, while the second conflict accounted for more than 370 casualties in 37 RMIs. In this case, it might be disproportional to assign the same conflict intensity to both conflicts. Therefore, we apply up- and downgrading rules – the second pillar of our conflict intensity assessment –, which allows us to fine-tune conflict intensities to ensure comparability.

This decision is based on the conflicts' annual and area-wide numbers of refugees and IDPs, and casualties. A violent crisis must thereby be upgraded to the level of a limited war if more than 360 casualties or more than 18,000 refugees and IDPs were counted in the whole year in the conflict area. A limited war must be upgraded to the level of a war if more than 1,080 casualties or more than 360,000 refugees and IDPs were counted. In contrast, a limited war must be downgraded to the level of a violent crisis if less than 120 casualties and less than 6,000 refugees and IDPs were counted. Likewise, a war must be downgraded to the level of a limited war if less than 360 casualties and less than 120,000 refugees and IDPs were counted. In the Conflict Barometer, the area/year intensity is displayed above each conflict description and in the regional conflict overview.

Updated in 2020 by:

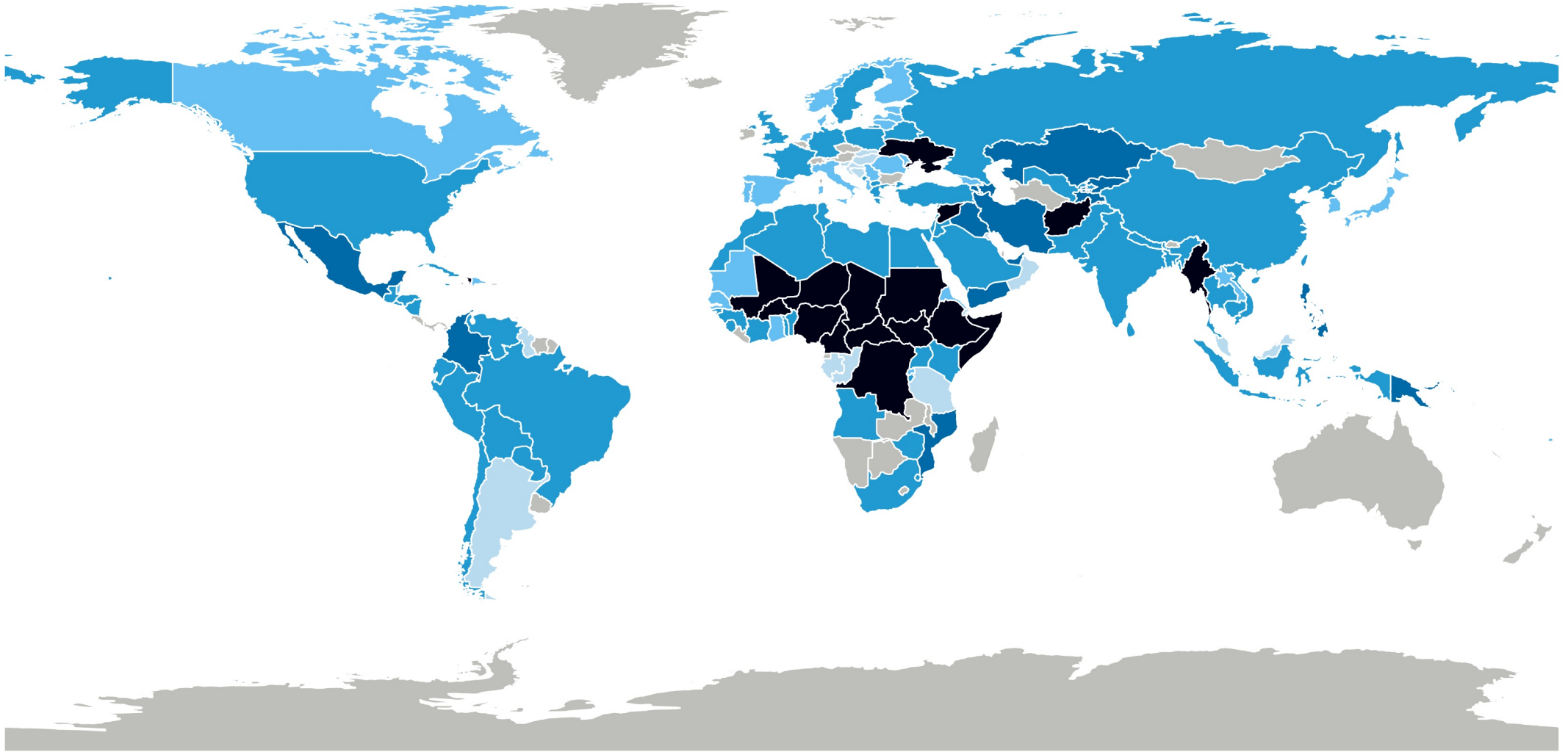
Katharina Valjak, Mostafa Bostani, Hannah Brandt, Nathalie Brügger

Methodology Revision in 2011 by:

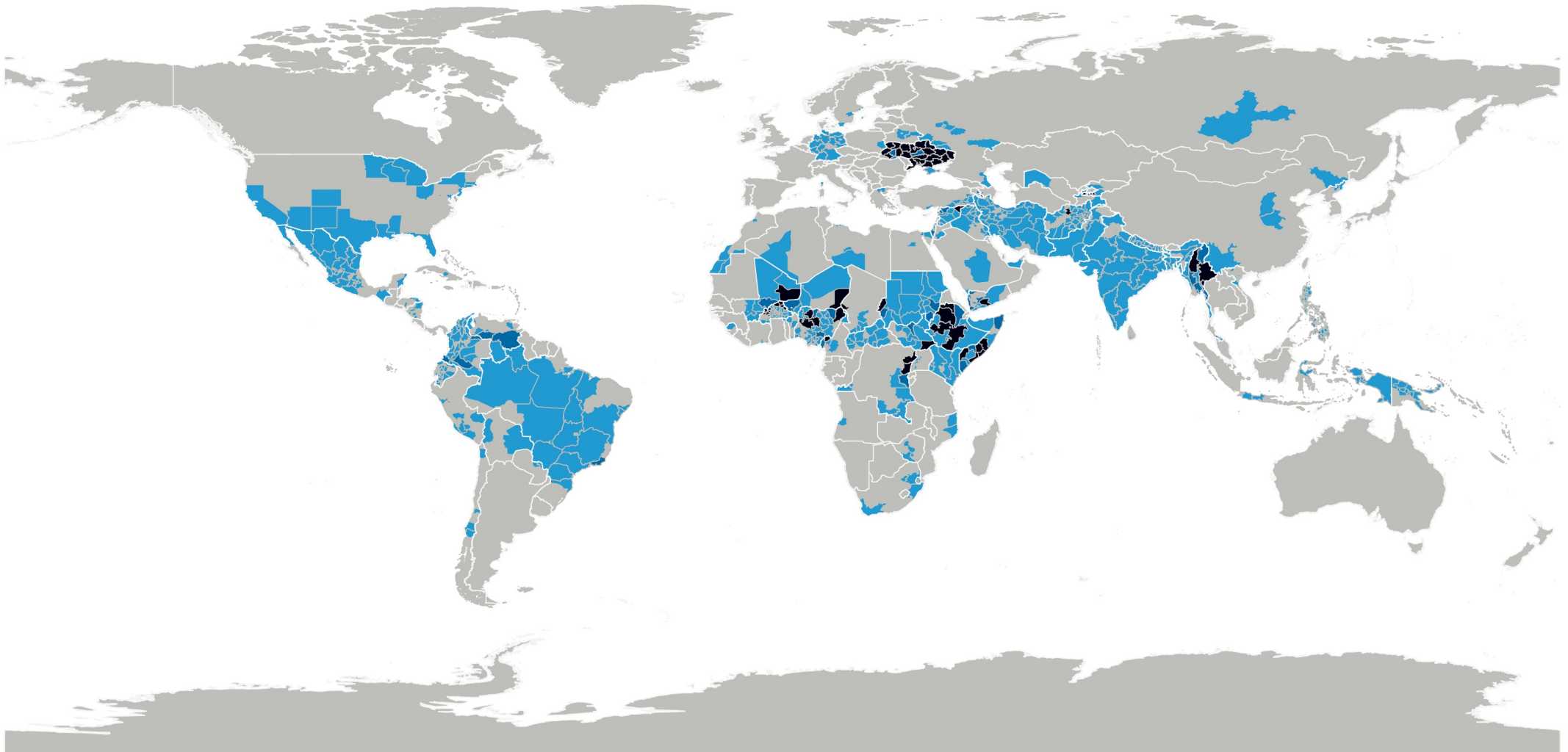
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Global Conflict Panorama

CONFLICTS IN 2022
(NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL)



VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN 2022 (SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)



HIGHLY VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN 2022

WARS (21)

LIMITED WARS (21)

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan (opposition)
Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)

Iran (opposition)
Syria (opposition)
Türkiye (PKK, KCK)
Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Cameroon (English-speaking minority)
Central African Republic (militant groups)
DR Congo (M23 factions)
DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)
DR Congo, Uganda (ADF)
Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)
Ethiopia (OLF / Oromia)
Ethiopia, Eritrea (TPLF / Tigray)
Mali et al. (IS-Sahel)
Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)
Nigeria (bandits)
Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)
Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)
Somalia, Kenya (al-Shabaab)
South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)
Sudan (Darfur)

Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)
DR Congo (Ituri militias)
Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)
Mozambique (ASWJ)
Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)

THE AMERICAS

Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)

Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)
Mexico (drug cartels)
Mexico (Inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Myanmar (opposition)

Kazakhstan (opposition)
Kyrgyzstan – Uzbekistan – Tajikistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)
Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)
Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)
Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et al. / Karen State, Kayah State)
Papua New Guinea (inter-communal rivalry)
Papua New Guinea (opposition)
Philippines (CPP, NPA)

EUROPE

Russia – Ukraine

Armenia – Azerbaijan

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2022, HIIK observed a total of 363 conflicts worldwide. About 60 percent or 216 were fought violently, while 147 were on a non-violent level. Compared to 2021, the overall number of both full-scale as well as limited wars increased from 20 to 21, respectively. HIIK opened six new conflicts in 2022 and eight retroactively. It ended the observation of seven conflicts after two or more years of inactivity and of one active conflict. Additionally, one conflict ended by being merged with another conflict. Those closed and merged conflicts as well as another 16 currently inactive conflicts are not reflected in the above figures and following statistics.

WARS

HIIK observed 21 wars in 2022, one more than in 2021. Two disputes escalated to full-scale wars, while four highest intensity wars were observed this year for the first time since HIIK started its observations. Two of these four conflicts were in Sub-Saharan Africa, one in the Americas and one in the region West Asia, North Africa and Afghanistan. Globally, four full-scale wars in 2022 de-escalated to limited wars or violent crises. 15 wars continued at the same intensity as last year. While the number of full-scale wars remained the same in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and Oceania, both Europe and the Americas saw a respective increase from zero to one, whereas wars decreased in West Asia, North Africa and Afghanistan from three to two. Sub-Saharan Africa remained the region with the highest number of conflicts on the level of a full-scale war. While 13 conflicts continued on the level of a war, one escalated from a non-violent crisis, two were opened retroactively or split from existing conflicts and three de-escalated to limited war or violent crises, resulting in an unchanged number of wars at 16.

In Europe, a war between Russia and Ukraine over territory, international power, and resources escalated from a non-violent crisis last year. On February 24, Russia invaded Ukraine's territory with the alleged aim of supporting the independence of the self-proclaimed Donetsk (DPR) and Luhansk (LPR) People's Republics in eastern Ukraine [→ Russia – Ukraine]. This year, at least 6,913 civilians were killed and at least 11,044 injured, according to the UN. Moreover, at least 18,000 Armed Forces of Ukraine personnel were killed and 54,000 injured, with the actual death toll estimated to be about 46,500. At the same time at least 30,000 Armed Forces of Russia personnel, militants from DPR and LPR, and military contractors (such as Wagner PMC) were killed and 75,000 injured, the actual death toll for the Russian troops alone estimated to be about 60,000. The war further triggered Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II.

West Asia, North Africa, and Afghanistan remained the region with the second highest number of conflicts on a full-scale war level. While HIIK started its observation of one new war in 2022, one war de-escalated to the level of a limited war and another ended the previous year, decreasing the number of wars to two.

The so-called Islamic State (IS) remained a major security threat to Syria, Iraq and other countries. This year, the war over the orientation of the international system and the control of resources such as oil left at least 1,871 dead. The Islamic State Khorasan Province also continued its attacks in Afghanistan, mainly targeting Shiite and other religious minorities as well as the Islamic Emirate's security forces [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. Moreover, a war over the orientation of the political system erupted in Afghanistan between various

armed opposition groups and the Taliban-led government, following the Taliban's take-over of Afghanistan in August last year [→ Afghanistan (opposition)].

In Asia and Oceania, Myanmar experienced the only full-scale war in the region. The war between the opposition, consisting of the National League for Democracy, People's Defense Forces and the National Unity Government, on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army, on the other, continued, with at least 1,300 civilian deaths [→ Myanmar (opposition)].

Like last year, Sub-Saharan Africa saw the highest numbers of full-scale wars, with 16 active wars. One dispute in the Democratic Republic of the Congo escalated to a full-scale war [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)] in 2022. Moreover, thirteen full-scale wars continued, while three de-escalated to limited wars or violent crises in Mozambique [→ Mozambique (ASWJ)], the Democratic Republic of the Congo [→ DR Congo (Ituri militias)] and Nigeria [→ Nigeria (farmers – pastoralists)].

In the Central African Republic, the security situation remained volatile, especially in western and central parts of the country because of the war over national power and resources between militant groups and the government, supported by the Central African Armed Forces and MINUSCA, as well as Russian private military contractors [→ Central African Republic (militant groups)]. The war over autonomy or secession of the Southern Cameroons region between various groups of the English-speaking minorities, such as the Ambazonia Defense Forces (ADF), the Ambazonia Self-Defense Council (ASC), and the Southern Cameroons Defense Forces, on the one hand, and the French-speaking Cameroonian government, on the other, also continued [→ Cameroon (English-speaking minority)]. Violent clashes between government forces and separatists resulted in at least 507 deaths and 597,000 IDPs.

The security situation in Nigeria continued to be volatile with the number of observed wars remaining at three. In the north-east of Nigeria, the war between the Boko Haram affiliated factions, Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS) and its splinter Islamic State's West African Province (ISWAP), on the one hand, and the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, on the other, continued for a twelfth consecutive year [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram); Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. This year also saw unprecedented attacks by ISWAP outside of Nigeria's northeast targeting Taraba State, Kogi State, Edo State, Ondo State, Niger State, and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja, indicating an increase in its logistical and operational capabilities. Attacks by JAS on the other hand continued to decline while a presence of JAS fighters was reported in the country's northwestern Niger State and Kaduna State. Moreover, bandits have become increasingly sophisticated in their operations with reports suggesting the bandit groups to occasionally receive operational help from Islamist militant cells in the region [→ Nigeria (bandits)].

In the DR Congo, HIIK also observed three wars. In South Kivu province, various Raia Mutomboki factions and Mayi-Mayi groups continued to attack civilians and clash with government forces, resulting in at least 360 deaths [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)]. The Islamist group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continued its attacks on the local population in Beni territory, North Kivu province, and Irumu territory, Ituri province, prompting the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) and Ugandan Armed Forces to carry out large scale attacks against its bases [→ DR Congo, Uganda (ADF)]. Moreover, in North Kivu province a non-violent crisis between the militant group M23, allegedly supported by Rwanda, and the government, supported by MONUSCO and sometimes by

local militias, escalated to a war. This year, the conflict left at least 409 dead and forced approx. 390,000 refugees and IDPs to flee [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)].

The security situation in Ethiopia also remained complex and fragile at a high level of conflict intensity. The war between the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) with its armed wing, the Tigray Defence Forces, on the one hand, and the Ethiopian as well as the Eritrean government, supported by Amhara militias and Afar regional forces, on the other, continued [→ Ethiopia (TPLF / Tigray)]. Particularly in the Afar region, the TPLF attacks at the beginning of the year resulted in over 300,000 IDPs. The war over subnational predominance in the Oromia Region and Amhara Region between the Oromia Liberation Army (OLA) and the federal government saw an increased targeting of civilians [→ Ethiopia (OLF / Oromia)]. Furthermore, the war between various ethnic groups over subnational predominance and agrarian land continued, with violent clashes especially in the Oromia Region and Somali Region [→ Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)].

In the Horn of Africa, the war over national power and the orientation of the political system between the Islamist militant group al-Shabaab, on the one hand, and the Federal Government of Somalia, supported by the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), US Africom, and the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF), on the other hand, continued [→ Somalia, Kenya (al-Shabaab)]. While the violent attacks through al-Shabaab occurred mainly in Somalia, they also gained prominence in Kenya and in Somali Region, Ethiopia.

The war in South Sudan between various local communities such as Dinka, Nuer, and Murle over subnational predominance and resources, especially cattle and land, continued. In total, at least 1,100 people were reportedly killed and more than 70,283 civilians displaced [→ South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)]. In Sudan, the war over autonomy, subnational predominance, and resources of the Darfur region between the opposition alliance Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) and various "Arab" militias, on the one hand, and the government, deploying both the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), on the other, continued. In total, at least 616 conflict-related deaths and 515 injuries were recorded over the course of the year. Across Darfur, at least 470,881 people were internally displaced and at least 37,000 people fled to Chad [→ Sudan (Darfur)].

The Sahel also experienced continuous and increased attacks by IS and al-Qaeda affiliated Islamist militants, resulting in thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of displaced persons [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)].

In the Americas, the violent crisis in Haiti over subnational predominance and resources between approx. 200 rivaling gangs escalated to a war. Haitian gangs allegedly often had connections to political factions and supported them in achieving their goals. A fuel shortage halted any economic activity, triggering a humanitarian crisis, followed by an outbreak of cholera [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)].

LIMITED WARS

The total number of limited wars increased by one from 20 in 2021 to 21 this year. Nine conflicts continued on the same level as in the previous year. Seven violent crises as well as two non-violent conflicts escalated to limited wars while nine limited wars de-escalated to the level of a violent crisis. No limited wars escalated to full-scale wars, while three conflicts de-escalated from war-level to limited war-level. Asia and Oceania was the region with the highest number

of limited wars, totalling eight, five of which escalated from violent crises or non-violent conflicts.

One limited war was observed in Europe. Last year's violent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over contested territories, particularly the Nagorno-Karabakh region, escalated to a limited war, with the heaviest fighting since the 2020 war occurring in September [→ Armenia – Azerbaijan].

In West Asia, North Africa, and Afghanistan, the number of limited wars increased from three to four. In Iran, the limited war over the orientation of the political system and national power between opposition groups and large popular movements, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, garnered widespread international attention following the death of Mahsa Amini and the ensuing country-wide protests [→ Iran (opposition)]. In Türkiye, the limited war over autonomy between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkish government also continued, although most of the military confrontations between the Turkish Armed Forces and PKK took place on the territory of the Kurdistan Region of the Republic of Iraq rather than in Türkiye. In Syria, violent clashes between the government and the opposition groups occurred mainly in opposition-held regions, mostly in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates [→ Syria (opposition)].

In Yemen, the war over national power between Ansar Allah, commonly known as the al-Houthi and the internationally recognized Yemeni government embodied by the newly founded Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) de-escalated to a limited war [→ Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)]. This year, a UN-mediated agreement on a nationwide truce from April 2 to October 2 ended without the parties reaching an agreement on further extensions.

In Asia and Oceania, eight limited wars were observed in 2022, an increase of two compared to the previous year. Three conflicts continued on the same level as in the previous year, while three violent crises and two non-violent conflicts escalated to limited wars. Two limited wars de-escalated to violent crises [→ Philippines (Islamist militant groups); Philippines (BIFF)].

In Central Asia, the limited war over territory and international power in the Fergana Valley border region between Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek border communities, backed by their respective governments, continued, leaving at least 117 people dead and 21,500 displaced. [→ Kyrgyzstan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)]. In Kazakhstan, the non-violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and individual activists, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a limited war [→ Kazakhstan (opposition)]. Protests initially erupted in the oil-producing city of Zhanaozen on January 2 due to a sharp increase in fuel prices and quickly spread to other cities in the country in the following weeks, especially the largest city Almaty, where the protests turned violent, fuelled by rising dissatisfaction with the government and socio-economic issues, such as corruption, unemployment, and low wages.

In Myanmar, HIIK observed three limited wars this year. In Rakhine State, the Arakan Army (AA) continued its fight for autonomy against the Myanmar Army at the level of a limited war, which had been a violent crisis last year. The conflict led to at least tens of thousands of IDPs throughout the year [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)]. Kachin State saw an ongoing limited war between the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIA) and the Myanmar Army [→ Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)]. Lastly, the violent autonomy conflict in Karen and Kayah States between the Karen National Union (KNU), its

armed wing, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) as well as a DKBA splinter group, on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army, on the other, also escalated to a limited war [→ Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et al. / Karen State, Kayah State)].

The limited war between the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), supported by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Clashes between the conflict parties led to at least 191 deaths and left at least 18,683 people internally displaced [→ Philippines (CPP, NPA)]. In Papua New Guinea, clashes between various communal groups over subnational predominance and resources left at least 278 people dead and at least 45,000 displaced, escalating the conflict to a limited war [→ Papua New Guinea (inter-communal rivalry)]. Similarly, tensions regarding the national elections escalated to a limited war due to electoral violence between the opposition and government supporters [→ Papua New Guinea (opposition)].

In Sub-Saharan Africa, five limited wars were observed in 2022, a decrease of one compared to the previous year. One limited war continued at the same intensity as in the previous year, whereas two wars de-escalated to the level of limited wars. Four limited wars de-escalated to the level of violent crises, while two violent crises escalated to limited wars [→ Sudan (inter-communal rivalry); Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)]. No limited war escalated to war level.

In Burkina Faso, the limited war over subnational predominance and resources between various ethnic groups, such as Mossi, Gourmantché and others, on the one hand, the Fulani ethnic group, on the other, and Islamist groups as a third party, continued [→ Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)]. Although total fatalities and injuries continued to decline, at least 20,000 IDPs were reported in 2022.

In the DR Congo, the war over subnational predominance and resources, especially gold, in Ituri province between the militant groups Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO), Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo (FPIC), Zaïre militia, and Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI), on the one hand, and the government, supported by MONUSCO, on the other, de-escalated to a limited war. Large offensives by the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) and attacks by militias on civilians declined over the year, despite the government continuing to declare a of siege for the Ituri province [→ DR Congo (Ituri militias)].

In Mali, jihadist violence moved back to the northern Tuareg

regions this year, with IS Sahel and al-Qaeda-related groups clashing with militant groups of the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement. This increase in violence between the different militant groups left hundreds of civilians dead throughout the region, over 500 in March alone [→ Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)].

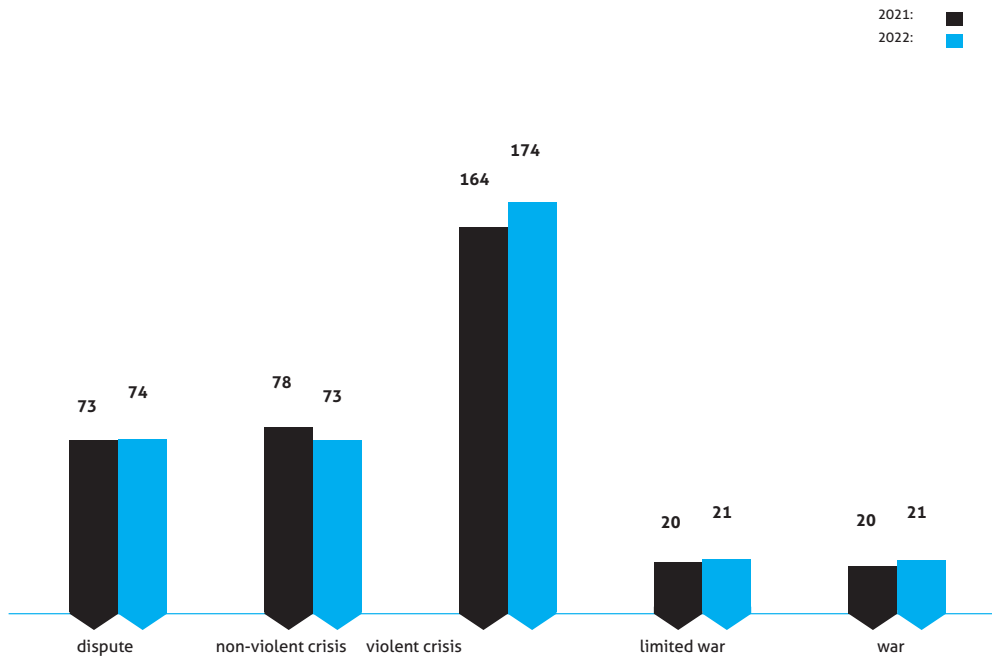
The war in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado between the Islamist militia Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamma (ASWJ) and the government de-escalated to a limited war [→ Mozambique (ASWJ)]. This year, ASWJ primarily engaged in small-scale attacks against civilians and security forces, amidst a continued and growing presence of international and regional supporters of the government, such as the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique and Rwandan Defense Forces. Nevertheless, ASWJ remained active throughout the year and expanded its attacks on civilians and security forces outside Cabo Delgado, in the neighboring provinces of Niassa and Nampula.

In the Americas, the number of limited wars decreased from five to three, all of which continued on the same level as in the previous year. Two limited wars de-escalated to violent crises [→ Venezuela (FARC dissidents); Brazil (drug trafficking organizations)].

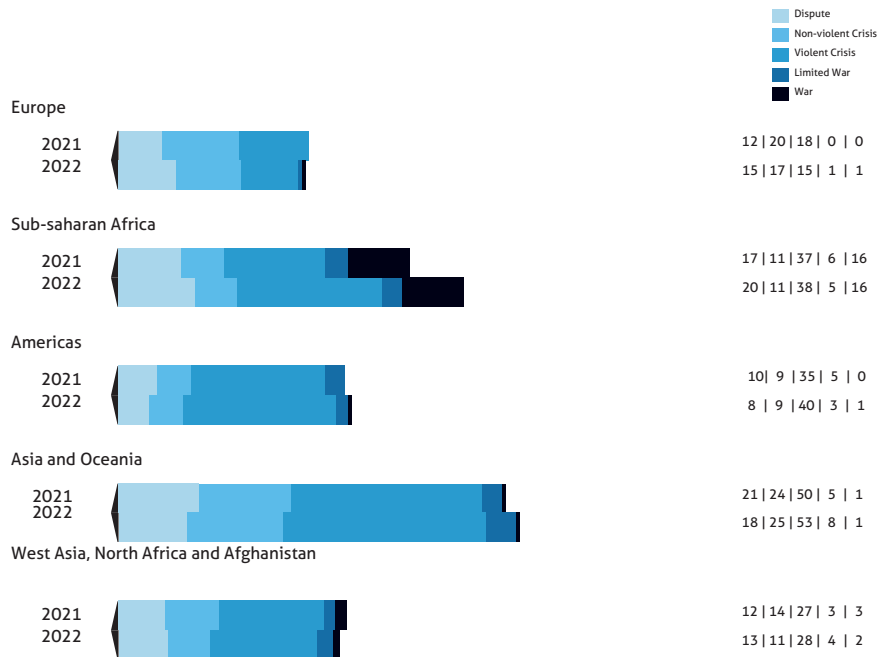
In Mexico, the limited war over subnational predominance and resources among drug cartels continued. Guanajuato and Zacatecas states saw most of the violence. The government estimated that the majority of 30,968 homicides were related to inter-cartel rivalry [→ Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. The capture of drug leaders by state authorities in the context of the limited war between drug cartels and the government fuelled group fragmentation [→ Mexico (drug cartels)]. In Colombia, the limited war over subnational predominance and resources between several neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels, as well as the National Liberation Army (ELN), dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) continued [→ Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)]. The development towards a fragmentation into substructures and small groups trying to manifest their power on the level of departments or municipalities continued. Throughout the year, armed groups clashed, attempting to control profitable regions for illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, resource exploitation, and extortion, as well as reinforcing their power over territories they had previously owned while pushing to take areas which were dominated by the FARC.

GLOBAL CONFLICT PANORAMA

GLOBAL CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021

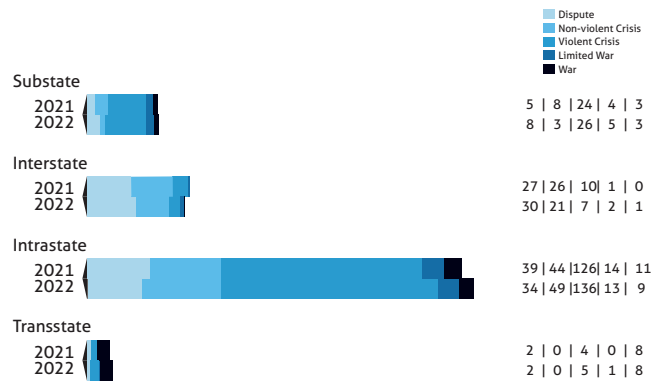


FREQUENCY OF REGIONAL CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN 2022 AND 2021

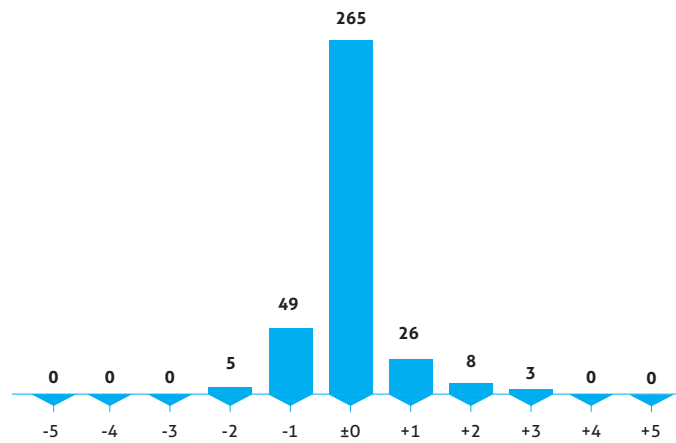


GLOBAL CONFLICT PANORAMA

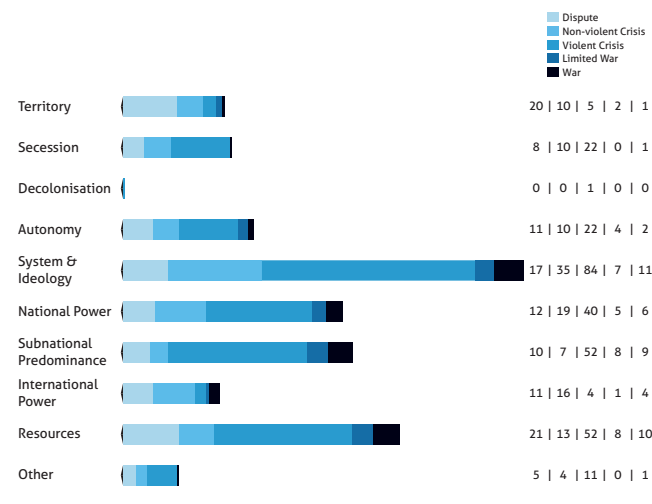
FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN 2022 AND 2021



GLOBAL CONFLICT INTENSITY CHANGES IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN 2022



AUTHORITATIVE DECISIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

This year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ; the Court) had 16 pending cases and issued two merits judgements, one on preliminary objections, and one on reparations. The Court further made decisions on provisional measures in two cases. Provisional measures may be indicated where the Court considers it urgent to safeguard the rights of one party before deciding on the merits judgment. Four new cases were submitted to the Court. On February 27, Ukraine started proceedings against the Russian Federation under the 1948 Genocide Convention. Against the backdrop of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine, international interest in these proceedings was very high. By mid-December, an unprecedented number of 33 states had filed interventions in this case. On April 29, Germany initiated proceedings against Italy for allegedly failing to respect its jurisdictional immunity as a sovereign state. This case concerns the long standing dispute over damages awarded to individuals by Italian courts for the actions of Germany during World War II and the enforcement of these awards against German state property in Italy. Further, Equatorial Guinea submitted a case against France on September 29 for alleged violations of the 2003 UN Convention against corruption. Lastly, on November 16, Belize initiated proceedings against Honduras concerning territorial claims over the Sapodilla Cayes.

Also in November, Mr. Leonardo Nemer Caldeira Brant of Brazil was elected to the Court, following votes in the UN General Assembly and Security Council. He fills the vacancy left by the late Judge Antônio Augusto Cançado Trindade, who passed away in May.

In February, the Court issued a judgment on reparations in the case concerning armed activities between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda. The DRC initially filed the case with the ICJ in 1999, citing acts of armed violence perpetrated by Uganda on its territory. The Court issued a judgment on the merits in 2005, finding a violation of Art. 2 (4) UNCh through Uganda's unlawful military intervention, as well as violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law, and illegal exploitation of Congolese natural resources by Uganda. At the time, the Court reserved a decision on reparations, should the parties be unable to reach an agreement in negotiations. In 2015, the DRC requested the Court to rule on reparations, noting that negotiations with Uganda had failed. The DRC had divided its claims for compensation into four classes of damage: damage to persons, damage to property, damage to natural resources and macroeconomic damage. Regarding macroeconomic damage, the Court rejected all claims, finding that the DRC had failed to prove a connection to the military intervention by Uganda. The Court further opted to break down the compensation, awarding USD 225m for damage to persons, which includes loss of life, rape, recruitment of child soldiers, and displacement of civilians. The DRC will further receive USD 40m for damage to property, and USD 60m for damage to natural resources, including the looting of gold, diamonds and timber. On September 1, Uganda made the first of five payments in full compliance with the conditions set out in the judgment.

In March, the Court ordered provisional measures in the case between Ukraine and Russia concerning allegations of genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention. The Court found that it had provisional jurisdiction over the case, as there existed a dispute between the parties concerning certain allegations of acts amounting to genocide by Ukraine.

Russian officials claimed that its so-called "Special Military Operation" served to prevent a genocide of ethnic Russians in Ukraine. The Court did not find evidence substantiating the Russian allegations and considered it doubtful that the Genocide Convention authorizes a contracting party's unilateral use of force for the purpose of preventing or punishing an alleged genocide. In the Court's assessment, Ukraine therefore had a plausible right not to be subjected to military operations on such grounds. It further found that the scale and scope of the military operations could cause irreparable prejudice to this right. The Court, therefore, ordered Russia to suspend its military operations and to ensure that any military or irregular armed units directed or supported by it would not conduct further military operations.

In April, the Court issued a merits judgment in the case concerning alleged violations of sovereign rights and maritime spaces in the Caribbean Sea. The Court found that Colombia had violated Nicaragua's sovereign rights and jurisdiction in Nicaragua's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) by interfering with fishing and marine scientific missions of Nicaraguan-flagged vessels and with the operations of Nicaraguan naval vessels, as well as by claiming to enforce maritime protection within the Nicaraguan EEZ. Colombia was also found to have violated Nicaragua's rights by authorizing fishing activities in the EEZ. The Court further held that a Colombian maritime "integral contiguous zone" established by a 2013 Presidential Decree did not comply with customary international law reflected in Art. 33 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and ordered Colombia to bring the decree into conformity with customary international law. Lastly, the Court rejected Nicaragua's claim that Colombia had violated its rights by issuing oil exploration licenses in the EEZ. With regard to Colombia's claims, the Court upheld one concerning certain maritime boundaries established by Nicaragua based on maritime features the Court considered insufficient for that purpose, while rejecting a second claim regarding traditional fishing rights of the inhabitants of the San Andres Archipelago.

In July, the Court ruled on the preliminary objections in the case between the Gambia and Myanmar relating to the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This case concerns the ongoing persecution of the Muslim Rohingya minority by the armed forces of Myanmar. The Court rejected Myanmar's objection that the Gambia was not the "real applicant" and that hence, the Court lacked jurisdiction to hear the Gambia's arguments. Myanmar argued that, as the Gambia was not an "injured state", it lacked standing under the Genocide Convention and that, alternatively, that standing would be subsidiary to and dependent on the standing of Bangladesh as a "specially affected" state. In rejecting these arguments, the Court reaffirmed its stance on obligations affecting all parties to a treaty, first outlined in the 1951 Advisory Opinion on Reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

In October, the Court rejected a request by Armenia for changes to a 2021 order on provisional measures in the case against Azerbaijan concerning the application of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. This dispute relates to the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Following another eruption of hostilities in September of this year, Armenia sought to have the 2021 order modified to include any subsequent hostilities following the 2020 conflict. The Court considered the hostilities a renewed flare-up of the 2020 conflict and therefore held that the 2021 order already applies in the same

way to this year's hostilities and any subsequent situations that constitute a renewed flare-up.

In December, the Court rendered its merits judgment in the dispute concerning the waters of the Silala between Chile and Bolivia. The dispute concerns the rights of use of the Silala river system, which originates in Bolivia, traversing the boundary between Chile and Bolivia, and eventually passes into Chile. Chile had maintained that the Silala is an international watercourse under customary international law, while Bolivia claimed that it is a national river, which has been artificially diverted to Chile. In its judgment, the Court did not rule on these questions, as it considered that there was no longer a dispute between the parties on these legal questions. In the view of the Court, while there may have initially been a dispute, the parties had come to an agreement in the course of the written and oral proceedings. The claims found to no longer have an object related to questions of the legal nature of the Silala, rights and obligations following that classification and obligations to cooperate in the prevention of transboundary harm to the water. Most importantly, the Court found that Chile and Bolivia had come to agree that the Silala constitutes an international watercourse. The remaining two claims were rejected by the Court.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

This year, the International Criminal Court (ICC) had 17 pending situations and issued two appeals chamber judgments. Eight defendants were in the ICC's custody awaiting trial, while ten defendants remained at large. The Office of the Prosecutor investigated cases in the DRC, Uganda, Darfur (Sudan), Kenya, Libya, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Burundi, the State of Palestine^o, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Venezuela, and Ukraine. It also conducted preliminary examinations into situations in Nigeria and Venezuela.

For the first time, the prosecutor's office filed a request with a pre-trial chamber to confirm charges against Ugandan warlord and head of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Joseph Kony, in his absence. Should the charges be confirmed, the proceedings may move ahead to the trial chamber. Kony's arrest warrant was issued in 2005.

On December 15, the appeals chamber confirmed the 2021 decision on Dominic Ongwen's guilt and sentence. Ongwen, a former brigade commander in the LRA, was found guilty on 61 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, committed in northern Uganda from 2002 to 2005. Ongwen appealed the 2021 decision on grounds of legal, factual, and procedural errors. The defense further argued that Ongwen, who was abducted by the LRA at nine years old, could not be held accountable for his crimes due to the trauma he suffered as a child soldier. The appeals chamber rejected all grounds of appeal. The conviction and the sentence are now final, while a phase dedicated to reparations for victims is ongoing. Notably, the ICC had to decide for the first

time on the interpretation of the elements of certain sexual and gender-based crimes, in particular forced marriage and forced pregnancy, as well as on the defenses of mental disease and duress.

On September 12, the ICC appeals chamber decided to have the trial chamber reopen the reparations proceedings against Bosco Ntaganda, a former leader in the Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo, revoking an earlier 2021 order on reparations to victims. Mr. Ntaganda had been found guilty in 2019 of 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed in Ituri, DRC in 2002 and 2003, and sentenced to 30 years in prison. The appeals chamber found that the trial chamber did not make appropriate calculations both with regard to the number of potentially eligible victims and for the amount of the monetary award. In the view of the appeals chamber, the trial chamber should have further set out parameters for the eligibility assessment for victims' application for reparations.

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION

In June, an arbitral tribunal issued an award on the preliminary objections of Russia in the dispute concerning the detention of Ukrainian naval vessels and servicemen. The tribunal was constituted in 2019 under the auspices of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), pursuant to Annex VII to UNCLOS. The dispute concerns the boarding, arrest and detention of three Ukrainian naval vessels and the servicemen on board in 2018 near the Strait of Kerch. Ukraine claims that Russia violated the immunity of the vessels in breach of UNCLOS, and that it has further violated UNCLOS by failing to comply with a 2019 provisional measures order in parallel proceedings before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) as well as by continuing to aggravate the dispute between the parties. Russia raised four preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the tribunal. It claimed that the dispute concerns "military activities" excluded under Art. 298 (1) (b) of UNCLOS, that UNCLOS does not provide for an applicable immunity, that the tribunal has no jurisdiction regarding the ITLOS provisional measure order, and that Ukraine has not complied with the obligation to exchange views amongst the parties to a dispute pursuant to Art. 283 of UNCLOS. The tribunal held that it had jurisdiction over the dispute, except for events on 25 November 2018, up until the vessel left anchorage area No. 471, which it considered to be covered by the military activities exception. The tribunal rejected the Russian contentions that it had no jurisdiction over the ITLOS order and that Ukraine had not complied with Art. 283 of UNCLOS. The tribunal therefore held that it had jurisdiction to hear the case, calling upon Russia to submit a counter-memorial as the next step in the merits proceedings.

LUKAS HEMMJE

Spotlights

THREE FUTURES IN THREE YEARS FOR THE COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN BORDER

INTRODUCTION

The 2,200 km-long border between Colombia and Venezuela bears witness to myriad political, economical and security crises in the Americas. On both sides of the border, the Army of National Liberation (ELN), a Colombian leftist insurgency group with binational ties; the FARC dissidents, heirs to the former FARC guerrillas, signatories of a peace agreement with the Colombian government in 2016, and mafia groups profiting exclusively off drug trafficking, exert control over territory and populations. This spotlight has identified four key conflict drivers that will determine the future situation at the border: the negotiations of the Colombian government with criminal actors, illegal economies, economic sanctions on Venezuela, as well as the regional and international context.

Negotiating - once more - with insurgents and drug traffickers

In Colombia, President Gustavo Petro launched the Total Peace security policy, which aims to demobilize the majority of illegal actors in Colombia (García and Posada 2022), many of them operating in Venezuela as well. A successful agreement with these actors means, for instance, the demobilization of what is currently the largest insurgency in the Americas, the ELN, and the incorporation into civilian life of a substantial number of former FARC fighters who rejected the Havana peace agreement of 2016 [→ Colombia (ELN); → Colombia (FARC dissidents, left-wing militants)]. Furthermore, this policy would bring members of mafia organizations, such as Los Pachencas or Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC), heirs to right-wing paramilitary organizations demobilized between 2003 and 2006, to justice [→ Colombia (neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels); → Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)]. Apart from the risk of failure, negotiating under vague ceasefire rules does not guarantee a reduction of violence among the parties. Additionally, violence may erupt if illegal groups outside the process decide to fill a power void once a political or a judicial agreement is set in place.

Cocaine, Gold and Rare Earths

Illegal economies nourish instability on both sides of the border. Insurgencies and mafia groups fight over control of crops and trafficking routes from Colombia through Venezuela to either the USA or Europe. Drugs flow through the Amazon region, the central savannas of Arauca and Apure, or the northern mountainous regions of Catatumbo/Táchira. Moreover, local state actors seek to stop or regulate the trafficking either by disrupting the trafficking routes or establishing informal agreements with criminal groups. But the production and distribution of cocaine does not constitute the only source of income for illegal actors at the border. The increase in unregulated mining of gold and rare earths, especially in Vichada, Guania and Amazonas, fuels environmental damage (Venezuela Investigative Unit 2022).

The Crushing Weight of the Oil Crisis and Sanctions

In Venezuela, gold mining became an alternative source of state income when oil prices plummeted in 2015. The US-imposed sanctions on Venezuelan officials and the oil

sector, such as the state oil company PDVSA, implemented since 2006, were the result of the Venezuelan government's human rights violations and its alleged support of terrorist groups (Ribando 2022) [→ USA – Venezuela]. As a result, to compensate for its deteriorating control of the country, the state has increasingly relied on gangs and insurgents to guard the territory around important mines. These gangs also engage in the cocaine trade and are often taxed for it by local authorities, meaning that Venezuelan state actors indirectly profit from the drug trade. The dramatic decline of state income also means a further dramatic decrease in defense spending and a loss of military and police capabilities. All these factors have significantly contributed to mass migration, with 6.1 million people fleeing the country (UNHCR 2022). A new political agreement between the government and the opposition may lead to a significant lifting of sanctions, even if it does not bring about the immediate political stabilization the country needs.

Regional and international influence

The drop in oil prices and the imposed sanctions on key officials and state companies have politically isolated Venezuela and pushed it to deepen its existing alliances with Russia, Iran and China. However, the need for alternative sources of fossil fuels in the US and, especially, the EU since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine may offer an avenue to engage in further agreements that lead to political recognition in exchange for oil and gas (Mogollón, Wilkinson, McDonell, 2022).

Moreover, after Gustavo Petro's election in Colombia, Gabriel Boric in Chile and Lula da Silva in Brazil, the "new" Pink Tide is a recurring theme among academic discussions. The original Pink Tide referred to the increasing perception of a turn towards left-wing governments in Latin America and was inaugurated by Hugo Chávez and Fidel Castro in 2004. The movement then expanded to Argentina after Kirchner's election, Evo Morales in Bolivia and Lula da Silva's first election in Brazil. However, while the first Pink Tide was characterized by anti-Americanism and the struggle against the economic and political neoliberal system, the "new" Pink Tide leans towards the struggle for green policies, energetic transition and social movements.

Latin America's New Shade of Pink will most likely see Lula da Silva's administration as its leader. Not only is Lula da Silva the president of one of the biggest economies in Latin America, he is one of the few leaders who participated in the original Pink Tide. Lula da Silva, immediately after his election as president of Brazil in 2022, announced Brazil's return to the Latin American forum, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), prioritizing cooperation between countries and international institutions. Regional integration is also particularly valuable for Gustavo Petro, Colombia's president, and his attempt at Total Peace. Taking into account these conflict drivers at the border, what could the Colombian-Venezuelan border look like by 2026?

BEST CASE SCENARIO: A SUNNY PEACE

The peace negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government lead to a successful Total Peace. The negotiations that started in 2022 with the ELN have a successful end. The agreement does not only include the ELN, but more than 25 armed groups, criminals or criminal gangs, that join the Total Peace, including the FARC dissidents, that play an important role at the border (García and Posada 2022). Maduro uses his influence on the ELN to finalize a peace

SPOTLIGHTS

agreement with Bogotá after he wins the 2024 election in Venezuela. This also legitimizes Maduro in the eyes of the international community and the US has another reason to lift the sanctions on Venezuela. Besides, Venezuela is once again supplying Western states with oil after Russia was sanctioned as an energy supplier by Western states due to the Ukraine war. Both factors open a path for Venezuela's regional and international reintegration.

During the negotiation process, ELN's estranged fractions conciliated. As a result of the negotiation, ELN integrates into the Colombian political system. Their organization transforms into a political party and participates in the political system and elections, just as the FARC already does. As a result, drug trafficking and other criminal activities that influence life at the border will decrease. Colombia and ELN sign a peace agreement that gives authorities control over the whole territory of the country and significantly weakens criminal actors.

With ELN handing in their arms and integrating into the political system, the Colombian authorities regain control of the border regions. Since the official authorities control the border regions and the number of criminal actors is reduced because of the agreement, the export of drugs from Colombia to Venezuela declines, thus reducing the importance of Venezuela as a drug trafficking transit country.

Due to domestic peace and stability in Colombia, customs and visa entanglement will likely increase to enable less trade restrictions and to allow for laborers to move more freely between the countries, improving the local economy.

WORST CASE SCENARIO: THE BLEAK HOUSE

In this scenario, due to the transnational nature of criminal groups, the peace process will become an international issue that needs to be dealt with through negotiation, mediation and cooperation between Nicolas Maduro and Gustavo Petro. Furthermore, how Maduro balances Venezuela's relationships with the United States and Russia, as the war with Ukraine develops in Europe, will create openings or constraints to the oil concessions as European partners search for alternative suppliers. These dynamics will determine the opportunity to thaw relations with the United States and lift sanctions on oil, on the one hand. However, on the other hand, Venezuela needs to learn not to antagonize one of its closer allies, Russia.

In 2026, Maduro seeks to delay peace negotiations with the criminal groups, particularly ELN, due to its binational nature. Venezuela, delaying negotiations, serves as a dilatory strategy to consolidate Maduro's regime and to create an optimal domestic environment to decrease the influence of the newly elected interim government and political competition. Closer relations with the US and the lifting of sanctions are a meaningful way to replace the revenue provided through illegal mining and avoid the growth of the opposition in the public's eyes. Thus, Maduro's dilatory strategy is likely to focus on consolidating his regime and seeking domestic conciliation through future presidential elections before attempting peace through international mediation and cooperation. However, this strategy will most likely provoke the strengthening of criminal groups and spoil further negotiations. Even if a fragmented peace is achieved, that is, if only a number of groups disband or cease activity, voids of power are created as other groups are likely to remain active.

The broken possibilities for peace will most likely result in Venezuela's isolation. Enabling peace will result in the rupture of relations with Colombia and, consequently, Brazil

and will further isolate Venezuela from the American international community. An isolated Venezuela is likely to make it harder for the US to see it as a trustworthy partner and result in sanctions remaining the same as in 2022. Isolating Venezuela from achieving economic concessions on oil from American and European partners is likely to result in an increase in criminal activity and illegal mining production.

Finally, the new Pink Tide is left without Venezuela, and the hopes for peace are exhausted. The left leaning movement, born from the hopes of international cooperation to discuss a path for energetic transition, fails its very first mission to create a bond between Colombia and Venezuela in the struggle for peace.

MAINLINE SCENARIO: A FRAGMENTED PEACE

The talks started between the Colombian government of Gustavo Petro and the ELN at the end of 2022, as well as the rapprochement between the Colombian and Venezuelan governments, improve the situation at the border slightly. Petro attempts to create a regional consensus with other left-wing governments of the region and asks for their support to solve the issues at the border. At the same time it encourages Venezuela to help combat criminal actors in the area. Despite this, significant results in the area of regional integration are not achieved. Nonetheless, the war in Ukraine improves Venezuelan economic prospects, due to the European energy markets requiring new sources of crude oil after their ban on Russian exports. Furthermore, OPEC's reluctance to increase production keeps energy prices high. The increase of Venezuelan oil output, and its sale on the global markets, is encouraged to reduce the price and partially fill the gap left by Russian crude. This, in turn, slightly improves the fiscal situation of the Venezuelan government.

Nonetheless, the US still maintains most sanctions in place, specifically the ones concerning government officials and certain state entities related to said officials, making it difficult for the Venezuelan government to improve the economy and pay its security forces. This, in turn, means that the Venezuelan state still relies on the cooperation of the ELN and other groups to pay its security forces with proceeds from illegal economic activities. Still in need of their help, the Maduro government refrains from pressuring the Eastern and North-eastern war fronts of the ELN.

Despite the lack of military pressure from the Venezuelan government, talks proceed between the Colombian government and ELN, achieving limited progress. Regular ceasefires are agreed and a solution involving political participation for the group starts to take shape. The federal, and therefore fragmented, command structure of ELN makes progress very slow, but towards the end of Petro's term, negotiations are at a very advanced stage. Due to the lack of military pressure from the Venezuelan government and despite progress in the talks, both the Eastern and North-eastern War Fronts, the richest and militarily strongest of the ELN, decide to withdraw from the talks.

At the same time, some other criminal groups active at the border, such as AGC and the EPL/Pelusos, remain in talks with the Colombian government as part of Petro's Total Peace policy. Others, such as the FARC dissidents, refrain from doing so and there are no conclusive peace deals with any of the major criminal actors at the border. The improved relations between both governments improve the economic situation of the border region, which makes it easier for the local population to take part in legal economic activities. This also makes it more difficult for the remaining criminal actors to

SPOTLIGHTS

recruit among the locals. Both countries begin cooperating in security matters along the border to stop human trafficking, contraband and capture and prosecute members of criminal structures.

Despite progress and some improvements, the border remains problematic. Illegal economies still remain in the region due to the presence of criminal groups and a growing demand for drugs and precious metals. The difficulty of policing the area and the Venezuelan state's lack of capacity or willingness to effectively attack ELN and tackle structural problems at the border, exacerbate the problem.

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FROM REGIONAL CONFLICT TO GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS: EU, USA ET AL. RUSSIA

INTRODUCTION

The non-violent crisis over ideology and international power between the EU, USA, and several other states, such as NATO allies, on the one hand, and Russia, supported by Belarus, on the other, continued this year [→ EU, USA et al. – Russia]. However, the fronts hardened when Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24 and the EU, USA, and other states subsequently supported Ukraine – despite the country not being a member of either the EU or NATO – against Russia [→ Russia – Ukraine]. This deterioration in relations created at least four interconnected developments that will influence the progression of this conflict in the short- to mid-term. The following developments will be further explored in this spotlight: (I) Russia's attempt to assume the moral high ground in the Ukraine war, (II) rhetoric and strategies of deterrence, (III) the sanctions regime, (IV) the mass movement of people, and the resulting political divide of societies in the EU, the US and Russia over the escalation of the war.

(I) ASSUMING THE MORAL HIGH GROUND IN THE UKRAINE WAR

On February 24, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave an address trying to justify his so-called “special military operation”, announcing it was necessary to protect Russians from an alleged “genocide” in Ukraine. He claimed, Russia was coerced to defend itself and the ethnic Russian population in Ukraine, reiterating the perceived threat from NATO's eastward expansion.

Russia links its claim of self-defense to the Right to Self-determination of Peoples enshrined in the UN Charter as well as the Responsibility to Protect principle. Ukraine had a sizable ethnically Russian population, which was allegedly harassed by Ukrainians. Despite Russia's accusations, OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission did not find evidence of genocide during its mandate from March 2014 to March 2021. Russia still claimed that it acted to protect Russian minorities from alleged atrocities and three days before the outbreak of the war, on February 21, unilaterally recognized Ukrainian separatist oblasts as sovereign People's Republics. After internationally unrecognized referenda were held from September 23 to 27 on the question of integration with Russia, the de facto governments of these self-proclaimed republics announced the result in favor. Russia formally annexed Luhansk and Donetsk, as well as Kherson and Zaporizhzhia on September 30. Ukraine, the EU, the US and the UN said that the referenda had no legal basis, and Ukraine applied to join NATO on an expedited basis in response.

Russia, furthermore, linked its self-defense claim to NATO's alleged expansionism. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, thirteen former Warsaw Pact countries voluntarily joined NATO from 1999 until 2017. At least since the 2007 Munich Security Conference, Putin claimed that the Soviet Union only agreed to the “Two Plus Four Agreement” in 1990 because NATO, US, UK, French and German interlocutors guaranteed to not expand NATO eastwards. According to him, they broke that pledge and created security anxiety for Russia. However, in 2014, the former Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, refuted Putin's claim.

(II) RHETORIC AND STRATEGIES OF DETERRENCE

Both conflicting sides use deterring rhetoric and strategies, so-called “nuclear messaging” of their nuclear capabilities, including demonstrations of military power. The concept of mutually assured destruction proposes that conflicting parties deter each other from using nuclear weapons by threatening mutual annihilation. A potential escalation of the war that could have triggered the use of nuclear weapons was a major concern of some NATO-allies such as Germany and France. It led to a more militarily cautious approach towards Russia, for instance, in regard to directly supplying weapons to Ukraine.

Russia's “nuclear messaging” was based on repeated threats, accusations, and ambiguity (Saradzhyan 2022). For instance, Putin not only hinted at using nuclear weapons when he mentioned “ominous consequences” on February 24, but he also claimed to have put deterrent forces on a “special regime of alert” on February 27. On August 8, Russia suspended nuclear weapons inspections that were set to take place in accordance with the 2010 US-Russian New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). On September 21, Putin repeated threats, claiming Russia would use all means at its disposal in case of direct attack, while accusing the West of “nuclear blackmail.” Nonetheless, on December 7, Putin moderated his messaging, stating that “[w]e have not gone mad. We fully understand what nuclear weapons are.” Shortly before, on November 4, Putin was criticized by his strategic partner, China's President Xi Jinping, who warned him not to use nuclear weapons (Scobell and Swanström 2022).

Meanwhile, the nuclear powers France, the USA and UK took diverging approaches to “nuclear messaging” ranging from tit-for-tat to cautionary approaches. For instance, on October 31, UK Foreign Secretary warned Russia of “severe consequences” in case of a nuclear attack. US President Joseph Biden warned of a possible Armageddon on October 7, whereas on October 12, France's President Emmanuel Macron claimed that national interests “would not be at stake if there was a nuclear ballistic attack in Ukraine or in the region,” leading to backlash in France and among NATO allies. Moreover, both sides continued to conduct nuclear deterrence exercises and military maneuvers throughout the year. For example, from March 14 to 31, NATO held the exercise “Cold Response 2022” in Norway, involving approx. 30,000 military personnel from 27 nations, testing conventional capabilities in arctic regions. NATO held its annual nuclear deterrence exercise “Steadfast Noon 2022,” from October 17 to 30, with training flights of nuclear-warhead capable airplanes over Belgium, the North Sea, and the UK. Russia also conducted two “Grom” nuclear deterrence exercises. For instance, on February 19, only five days before the invasion of Ukraine, Russia tested launching nuclear-warhead capable hypersonic missiles and intercontinental ballistic missiles from an undisclosed site in north-west Russia, and another from a submarine in the Barents Sea.

(III) THE SANCTIONS REGIME

A number of countries, including the USA, the UK, Canada, Japan, those in the EU (G7 countries), Australia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Norway and Switzerland, imposed sanctions against Russia. For instance, this year, the EU adopted nine sanctions packages from February 23 to December 16. These sanctions include targeted sanctions, such as asset freezes and travel bans. Further sanctions were directed against the exports of dual-use goods, the transport sec-

SPOTLIGHTS

tors, export control and financing, banking and finance, and visa policy. The EU furthermore banned the import of coal, crude oil, and petroleum products (phasing it out with limited exceptions), prohibited exports to Russia of goods and technologies in the oil-refining sector, and prohibited new investments in the Russian mining and energy sectors. G7 and the EU further imposed a price cap on Russian crude oil and petroleum products exported to third countries, prohibiting the provision of maritime transport, insurance and other assistance services for the transport of products sold above the cap. Beyond Russia, the EU has also adopted additional sanctions against Belarus, in response to its involvement in the Ukraine war, and Iran, for providing drones to Russia.

The US issued two sanction packages against Russia on March 4 and on September 15. For instance, the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) listed approx. 2,400 individuals and entities, 115 vessels, and 19 aircraft on their sanctions list, including senior Russian government officials, oligarchs whose wealth is tied to the Russian state, leaders in revenue-generating sectors, and supporters of the military-industrial complex. Moreover, over 80 percent of Russia's banking sector, by assets, is under US sanctions.

In turn, Russia imposed retaliatory counter-sanctions or policies that mirrored imposed sanctions in their effect or application throughout the year. The impact of the sanctions on the Russian economy was significant but it was not as severe as some expected. A decline in GDP was cushioned by the high oil and gas prices which brought in windfall profits. The Russian government had been actively preparing for the possibility of further sanctions since the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and had implemented various policies to cushion the economic impact, such as controlling spending, diversifying its economy beyond oil and gas, and reducing its reliance on Western technology and trade. State-owned companies and major banks have also conducted stress tests that simulate scenarios where certain technologies would no longer be supplied by the West or where Russia would be disconnected from SWIFT. Moreover, Russia's key trading partners, such as the BRICS countries Brazil, India, China, South Africa, or Türkiye, have not imposed sanctions, nor have Russia's neighbors, like Armenia or Central Asian countries.

Nonetheless, for both sides the war itself was financially costly. As of November 20, Russia allegedly spent USD 82 billion on the invasion, roughly a quarter of the annual state budget. The 31 supporters of Ukraine collectively spent approx. USD 32.5 billion for financial aid and military support. Coupled with the sanctions regime and the disruption of trade routes, the countries on both sides of the conflict experienced increasing economic pressures the longer the war continued.

(IV) THE MASS MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

The war had a massive impact on the displacement of people, creating a humanitarian crisis. On February 24, Ukraine declared martial law and prohibited men from leaving the country. Nonetheless, approx. eight million Ukrainian refugees fled the war, about a fifth of its entire population, mostly to Central and Western European countries. Another estimated six million people were internally displaced. Russia also reported approx. 2.8 million refugees have crossed its border. Likewise, approx. 900,000 Russian citizens had left Russia following the invasion of Ukraine. After Putin

announced a partial mobilization on September 21, a reported 190,000 to 200,000 men fled Russia predominantly to neighboring countries such as Georgia and Kazakhstan. The influx of refugees caused tensions in the countries that hosted Ukrainians and Russians.

Anti-war protests arose, especially across the EU and in Russia. From February 24 to March 13, mass protests took place in the Russian capital Moscow and in Saint Petersburg city. Over the course of these protests 14,906 people were detained by security forces, according to the Russian human rights organization OVD-Info [→ Russia (opposition)]. In March, Putin accused Russian anti-war protesters of being the "fifth column of the West". Russia also attempted to convince global audiences that international sanctions imposed on Russia were to blame for the surge in global food and fuel prices. Meanwhile, in Europe protests were not always only in support of Ukraine and against the Russian invasion, but also against NATO. For instance, on June 26, 5,000 people demonstrated in the Spanish capital Madrid, carrying hammer and sickle symbols, calling NATO a threat to peace.

CONCLUSION

These factors are interconnected and will influence the future of the conflict. If a country perceives the costs of war to outweigh the benefits, it is more likely to negotiate peace. However, the current cost of the war does not exceed the cost to Putin of walking back on his rhetoric and ideological arguments, which would require him to admit, at least to some extent, a fault in his logic to date. As a result, peace talks seem unlikely at this stage, which presents a cost-benefit dilemma for NATO, the USA, and the EU, who must decide whether to continue supporting Ukraine or not. In this context, Ukraine likely considers for its own decision-making, that all direct and supporting parties to the war continuously undergo these cost-benefit analyses.

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IDENTITY POLITICS REVISITED: DECONSTRUCTING FEMINIST AND ETHNIC NARRATIVES OF THE IRANIAN PROTEST MOVEMENT ON GERMAN MEDIA

The 2022 upheaval in Iran keeps on resonating with the public around the globe. It affects the private lives of a significant part of the Iranian population as well as a huge Iranian diaspora. While the protest movement has made an impact on Germany, especially in the media, two explanations for the protests need to be explored further. Some commentators put the protests into the context of either ethnic, specifically Kurdish, or feminist, identity politics.

This spotlight text seeks to demonstrate how identity politics affect media coverage and public understanding of the conflicts. Although both ethnic and feminist factors may play a role in the current protest movement, a broader, historically informed and context sensitive analysis is necessary to understand the events in Iran. Therefore, we shed light on the problems that mono-dimensional approaches imply for conflict research, using the protests in Iran as an example.

The term "identity politics" is generally used in the context of a struggle for recognition of a certain group which identifies itself by a certain collective identity (e.g. Auernheimer 2020). Actors of identity politics are trying to influence public discourse in order to foster their goals, build alliances and single out adversaries. Consequently, the public arena is where identity politics unfold (Auernheimer 2020: 40ff.). In Germany, feminist and Kurdish identity politics are both particularly strong. This also applies to the German mainstream media. In the media, the prominent slogan in the protests, which translates to English as "woman, life, freedom", has either been interpreted as a sign for a feminist or an ethnic revolution – sometimes even both. The following sections delve deeper into the Kurdish and feminist narratives, discussing how the Iranian protest movement is framed in the media based on identity politics.

FEMINIST NARRATIVES

In the context of the current uprisings in Iran, feminist movements around the world were quick to portray the demonstrations as a textbook example of feminist uprisings, which was echoed by many Western media actors. Following these media views, certain lines of argument, touching on the dynamics, dominant actors and causes of the protest, were repeated over and over again in order to frame the movement as a feminist one. The argument is that the protests we are seeing in Iran are feminist, not only because they are mainly led by women, but also because it is women who are setting the tone and pushing for agency and presence (see for example Amirpur 2022, Wright 2022). It is framed as a unique dynamic compared to other major protest movements, such as the Green Movement in 2009, where women were present but not seen as the driving force behind the demonstrations. The narrative also influences our understanding of the presumed roots of the protests by claiming that they're mainly motivated by the structural oppression of Iranian women, including strict dress and moral codes, as well as political and legal inequality. Especially by focusing on the uniquely feminist symbols that have been employed since the beginning of the protests, for example women cutting their hair in public or the public burning of the hijab, the protest movement was quickly reduced to solely feminist demands. The main argument remains that following the unjust death of the young woman Mahsa Amini, women's organization laid the

groundwork for a much larger uprising which is interpreted as the tipping point that united all Iranian women to fight for women's rights (Marks, Haghghatjoo and Chenoweth 2022). While many analyses focus on the interpretation of the protest movement from a feminist perspective, it is questionable whether one is doing justice to the current uprising by framing it solely as such. Women have always been key social actors in Iran and were visible in all major protest movements and revolutions (1905-11, 1979, 2009). By interpreting this protest movement as a particularly feminist one, feminist narratives disregard the role and influence of Iranian women in past decades (Axworthy 2019). While it is important to acknowledge that women have been key in organizing these protests so far, classic feminist demands quickly became intertwined with socio-political demands, which were already articulated in the 2009 and 2019 demonstrations, like a reform of the theocratic system and better living conditions (Mirzaei and Talebian 2022).

The brutality of the morality police under the new president Raisi, profound mismanagement of the economy and the Covid-19 pandemic, inflation, and sanctions have led to widespread anger that has visibly built up over the past year [Iran (Opposition); 2022]. The reasons for Iranians' desperation are, therefore, numerous and go beyond the compulsory wearing of the hijab and the oppression of women. And while it is certainly right to claim that Amini's death was the tipping point that led to the current protests, it is essential to take into account that not all those who participate in the protests do so due to the worsening living situation of women, but also because of inflation, unemployment, and the lack of freedom and democracy. Today's protests are not only confined to the urban, middle class in Tehran, who are familiar with classic feminist demands such as self-determination of the body, equal participation in all political processes, or legal equality, but also people living in rural areas, oil workers, merchants from Tehran bazaar, and many more. While men support the protest movement and want better living conditions, they do not necessarily share feminist demands such as greater representation of women in the public sphere or equal access to the job market. As a result, classic feminist demands based on a Western theoretical understanding are only partially reflected in the Iranian context and are only supported by some of the protesters. The intersectional nature of the current protest movement needs to be taken into account which is often overlooked by solely focusing on a feminist narrative.

Mainstream western media often fails to distinguish the characteristics of women-led protests in non-western countries and employ dominant frameworks. In particular, they often overlook the specificities of women-led protests in countries outside the West. The feminist narrative that the Western media is pushing does not reflect the fact that not all women in Iran are necessarily supporting the feminist critique that surrounds the compulsory wearing of hijab. They are protesting for choice, an important nuance that takes into account that women across the country have their own dress cultures and do not identify with feminism as understood in the West (Shaban 2022). The demonstrators are united not so much by feminist demands such as "my body, my choice", but rather by the demand for human dignity (Brinkhof 2022, Vohra 2022).

ETHNIC NARRATIVES

Within the debate on multiculturalism and the positioning of ethnic groups in societies of the past decades, the

Kurdish population has gained an important standing. As a strongly politicized ethnic group due to its suppression in areas of its origin, e.g. in Turkey, actors of Kurdish identity are highly organized and vocal within the West, especially in Germany (Baser 2017). This has permeated the mainstream German media and ethnic narratives, with a prominent Kurdish element, have strongly influenced media coverage of recent protests in Iran. An ethnic narrative would see "ethnicity" as explaining the roots and causes of the conflict, as well as its dynamics, and framing the conflict primarily in its terms, i.e. relating grievances to the specific ethnicity of at least one conflict party (Cordell and Wolf 2010). Also seen from the pragmatic and activist perspective of the identity politics movement, the ethnic narrative has a high mobilizing potential. It would depict the best way to transform or resolve the conflict through recognizing the self-determination and autonomy rights for the oppressed ethnic minority to safeguard them against an oppressing majority.

Framing the unprecedented nationwide protests in Iran through the lens of ethnicity and Kurdish identity politics, the narrative emphasizes that Kurdish elements, such as Amini's Kurdish origin, are vital in mobilizing popular protests. Another such reference would be the origin of the slogan "woman, life, freedom" in Kurdish political movements of the late twentieth century, which was revitalized and became one of the major rallying cries of this year's Iranian protests. Going back to the root causes of the conflict, the narrative sees the regime's long-term discrimination against ethnic minorities and the marginalization of them as the main cause of grievances that finally led to their revolt. Here again, the Kurdish minority which has been allegedly subjected to the starkest economic deprivations and brutal political oppressions would be depicted as an outstanding role model in resisting the regime and inspiring other ethnicities to resist and revolt. Accordingly, the protests have been more visible and intense in areas home to ethnic minorities (see for example, Jaff 2022).

Despite such extensive application of ethnic discourse in covering the protests in Iran, the concepts of ethnicity and the narrative line of minority-majority, build upon misleading assumptions and misunderstandings about ethnicity and identity in Iran, what Elling and Harris have called a "discretizing approach" in their recent study (2021). According to this approach, which is widely used and is dominant in Western policy documents and journalistic coverage, all the complexity, multidimensionality, and fluidity of ethno-racial patterns in Iran are reduced to some discreetly bordered and mutually exclusive ethnic groups. As a result, Iran would be depicted as a mosaic of ethnic minorities, sometimes described as "nations", consisting of different ethnic groups with distinct ethnicity, language, and geography from each other that could be neatly mapped across the country's territory.

The ethnic narratives of the protests in Iran seemingly build upon such an oversimplified model at the cost of reducing all the complexities of the case into the single factor of ethnicity which would be inflated at the cost of ignoring or silencing non-ethnic explanations of the grievances. The long-standing problems of the center-periphery gap in terms of economic development, as well as the authoritarian and centralized government structures in modern Iran, are some examples of non-ethnic explanations of inequalities in Iran, which do not support the existence of ethnic patterns in the distribution of inequalities in Iran. The extensive use of majority-minority language is another example of incoherence of the narrative, possibly borrowed from other contexts with a Kurdish popu-

lation, such as Turkey, and generalized to the context of Iran. It implies the existence of an ethnic majority in Iran which controls the government, an assumption simply refutable by recalling that some of the former and current high ranking officials of the current regime, including its current Supreme Leader, belong to different ethnic minorities of Iran.

Monocausal ethnic narratives not only ignore or silence alternative explanations of the conflict and reduce all the complexities to the single factor of ethnicity, they also ignore variations in terms of ethnicity and its relation with national identity in Iran. The social scientific studies on ethno-racial patterns in Iran suggest that the modern concept of ethnic groupness is not either fully recognizable to many individuals or at least not preferred by them in social surveys. This seriously challenges the validity of ethnic narratives that reduce all the existing complexities to a single factor of ethnicity, which lacks scientific clarity in the way it is employed in such narratives. Considering that a sizable population of Iranians, specifically across the major ethno-racial boundaries, identify themselves more with multi-ethnicity rather than belonging to closed and mutually exclusive ethnic groups, there might be room for more nuanced explanations of the conflict and its dynamics. Moreover, despite the fact that Iranian society has witnessed increased self-awareness of ethnicity as one source of identity over the past several decades, this has not come in contradiction to a single national identity. Therefore, national and ethno-racial identities in Iran have been co-constitutive and mutually reinvigorating, not exclusive to each other (Elling and Harris 2021). Various acts of solidarity among the protesters in different regions of the country during the recent protests support this more nuanced depiction of ethnicity and the relationship between ethnic and national identities in Iran, refuting the simplistic charm of a discretizing approach dominant in ethnic narratives.

CONCLUSION

As this spotlight emphasizes, a focus on explaining the protests in Iran along conflict lines concerning ethnicity and gender are very popular in the German mainstream media. Though both feminist and Kurdish mobilization may play a role in the trajectory of the protests and the significance of their roles as the key driving forces seem plausible to a certain degree, focusing on them at the expense of other factors limits analysis and risks fostering explanations that cannot do justice to the more nuanced and complex situation on the ground. In fact, this "strategic essentialism" (Spivak 1988) of narratives in Iranian identity politics conceals the heterogeneity of actors within the realm and, consequently, the actual complexity of the conflict.

It is not only that certain groups taking part in the conflict may receive more attention and power within and through the discourse in the public arena, but also that depicting a conflict along mono-dimensional lines may lead to overly simplified explanations. In the case of Iran, protesters with a wide array of reasons take part in the upheaval, some of them with contradicting ideas and identities. Dissatisfaction with the current regime is the unifying factor for the protesters, a common vision of a future Iran is, at the same time, generally absent.

MOSTAFA BOSTANI, LOUISE LÜDKE, AND HANS STANKA

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2022 BURKINA FASO'S TURMOIL RECAP: COUPS D'ÉTAT AS A TREND FOR SECURITY'S SAKE?

In late September of this year, Burkina Faso experienced its second coup d'état in eight months. In the name of national security, Captain Ibrahim Traoré took control of the country on September 30, deposing Paul Henri-Damiba, who had only come to power in January through his own coup. In late November, the same scenario repeated itself, but Traoré's government was able to foil it.

This spotlight attempts to find an answer to the question of what conditions favoured the occurrence of coups d'état this year. Insecurity and the inability of the political class to resolve the jihadist threat are among the determining factors that have led to two coups in such a short time. Moreover, the coups took place in a context characterized by a multinational competition between the EU (traditionally led by France) and Russia for the establishment of influence in the Sahel.

BURKINA FASO IN TURMOIL: WHICH CONDITIONS FAVORED THE TWO COUPS?

In the past two years, Burkina Faso has seen a sharp deterioration in security across the country due to the presence of armed groups [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, ISGS et al.)]. Violence has caused the death of about 2,000 civilians and led to the displacement of over 1.8 million people (France 24, 2022). The current inflation, which is around 18 percent, and the pressing food crisis - exacerbated by the impact of climate change and the grain shortage due to the Ukraine war - have resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis (Trading Economist, 2022a).

Furthermore, Burkina Faso is among the countries of the Sahel that has suffered most from the secondary implications of the war in Ukraine [→ Russia - Ukraine]. The economic crisis was exacerbated by an increase in prices on all basic commodities with the evident risk of consequences in terms of social tensions, political instability and increment of internally displaced people (Trading Economist, 2022b).

In a context of deep malaise on the part of the Burkinabé population, the power has a new guarantor: the military. Besides the previous Damiba government's inability to create an effective change of direction, the growing public frustration, the division into fractions of the national army and the lasting anti-colonial French resentment, both within the civilian population and the army, are three additional relevant factors that have allowed for the déjà vu of the coups to occur (Mwakideu, 2022).

Moreover, Traoré's new push for pan-Africanism and his strong initial pro-Russian inclination allowed him to gain the support of Burkinabé to quickly overthrow the previous government. Traoré's charismatic personal history and his assertion of being the leader of the whole of Burkina Faso may have played a significant role in convincing the civilian and military components to support him. Traoré, who is only 34, is originally from Bondokuy city located in the Boucle du Mouhoun Region, which is the epicenter of IDP flows due to an escalation of extremely violent events (Rakotomalala and Chothia, 2022). Growing up in the political era of the leader Blaise Compaoré, Traoré joined the army, tying up with a special unit committed to fight IS and al-Qaeda rebels. Therefore, throughout his life, he has been able to observe effectively the dynamics of violence in which civilians, and especially children, became victims. His military career directly fighting jihadist groups allowed him to create confidence in the Burk-

inabé population that he is capable of leading the country pragmatically and resolutely (Roger, 2022).

Traoré is trying to gather resources, in every way possible, to implement the promised security reform. Nevertheless, the severity of the violence and concurrent lack of arms and financial resources, has forced Traoré to resort to launching a campaign aimed at recruiting more than 90,000 volunteers for the armed service (Ouest-France, 2022).

However, while Traoré promises radical changes and highlights security as the first objective of his government's agenda, he had claimed that his government also needs international financial aid and possible external military assistance to successfully address the existing threats (Gbadamosi, 2022).

THE CURRENT ROLE OF THE EU AND RUSSIA IN THE REGION

The Sahel is a region with a large multinational military presence, including from the European Union, mainly driven by French political interests. Since 2011, France has considered the area to be of strategic importance, especially due to concerns regarding migration flows. However, the EU is currently on the brink of losing its position as the most influential external actor. It used to be common to see French flags welcoming French troops in countries such as Burkina Faso and Niger, but the latest coup saw the French flag exchanged for the Russian one (Wilkins, 2022). This is a clear sign that Russia intends to establish its influence in Burkina Faso and the surrounding countries (Roger and Moulioukova, 2022). Burkina Faso, like other Sahelian countries, seems to welcome it.

Although Traoré's government had not yet officially declared a new alliance with Russia, Burkina Faso was looking for alternatives to France to establish a new bilateral partnership. Russia is viewed more favourably than France because it does not have a past as a colonising power and is willing to respond to local needs in a more efficient and timely manner. Russia is trying to establish a win-win situation for the two countries: by offering Burkina Faso military assistance, via the Wagner Group, to fight the jihadist threat, Russia is likely looking to assert its influence in resource-rich countries and gain additional support from countries surrounding Europe and the Mediterranean basin (Atwood and Jezequel, 2022).

Undeniably, Russian intentions are illustrated by two noteworthy events in December of this year. The first one relates to the permit granted to the Russian gold mining company "Nordgold group" to exploit a gold site in Yimiougou, North Central region, for four years (Courrier International, 2022). The second one is about the discreet and unofficially scheduled trip of Burkina Faso's prime minister to the Russian capital Moscow for possible deals on military equipment and meetings with representatives of the paramilitary company, Wagner Group (Africa News and Jeune Afrique, 2022).

Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic and the Ukraine war shifted the EU's priorities, leading to a considerable decrease of financial support as well as humanitarian and military aid in tackling contemporary crises in the Sahel (Venturi, 2022). For West African governments it was a clear sign that they were less of a priority than Ukraine. As a result, resentment towards the EU was increasingly evident. The Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) had criticised the EU for not investing enough resources for the stabilisation of Africa and, above all, of not meeting the real needs of the countries. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Burkina Faso was seeking help elsewhere (Lenzi, 2022).

FUTURE TRAJECTORIES: OUTLINING A NEW EUROPEANIZATION COOPERATION STRATEGY

In the year of polycrisis, a mix of transnational factors set the conditions for the frequency of coups in Burkina Faso. Focusing on the political and security instability in the country provides a magnifying glass for better understanding the broader dynamics in the wider Sahel. In this respect, the question remains which new course of action the EU should take in light of the new political and security dynamics arising from the new Burkina Faso government. Firstly, taking into consideration the EU's 2021 Integrated Strategy in the Sahel, the EU needs to cease adopting ad hoc emergency intervention and sporadic governance policy without implementing the locally-requested actions (Council of the European Union 2021).

A strategy of sporadic governance generates more problems and setbacks than solutions. Since the Sahel is the footbridge between Sub-Saharan Africa and the EU, it is imperative that European stakeholders effectively address regional stability in the long term. Secondly, the EU has an even more unavoidable personal mission to implement: outlining a new Europeanization of its strategy in the Sahel. In other words, European action must be based on an EU-wide common strategy in order to implement the contribution of all EU stakeholders active in the Sahel and not only on the rejected French leadership. This means that a diversification of policies more accepted by Sahel states could be successful.

The two coups d'état in Burkina Faso and the swelling of Russian influence highlighted how the EU cannot afford to lose the trust of the Sahelian countries if it wants to continue strengthening its influence in the region. One thing, after all, is undeniable: the EU must review its active engagement role in the Sahel in order to establish a rewarding cooperation approach to deal with the ongoing regional insecurity pressures which are affecting not only Burkina Faso but the whole north african region.

FRANCESCA LENZI

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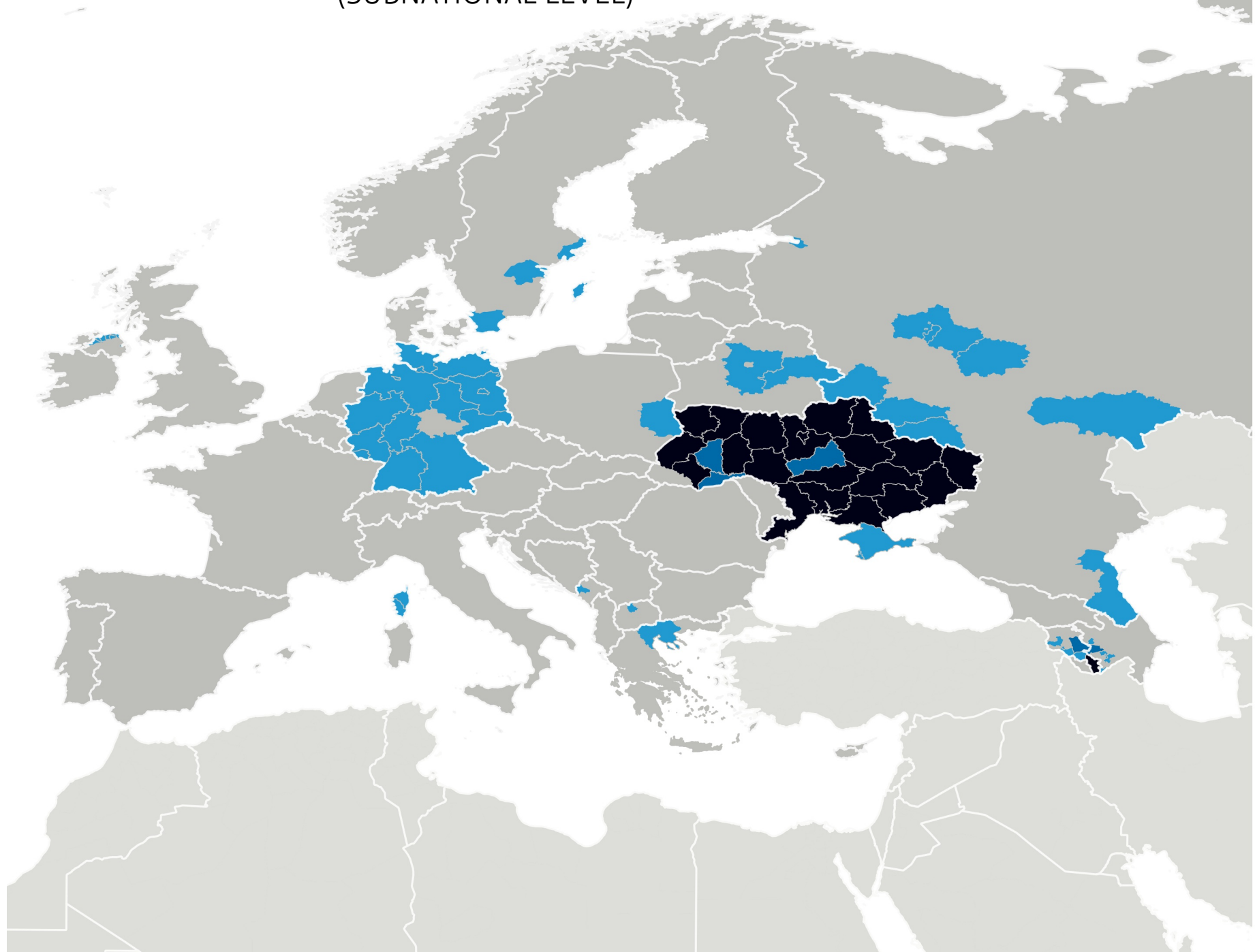
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EUROPE

VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN EUROPE IN 2022 (SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

INTENSITY

- 5 WAR
- 4 LIMITED WAR
- 3 VIOLENT CRISIS



EUROPE

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year, HIIK observed 49 active conflicts in Europe. This is a decrease of one compared to the previous year. 17 conflicts were at a violent level, with one each at the intensity of a war and a limited war.

The interrelated conflicts over international power, and in part territory, resources, and ideology between Russia on the one hand, and the EU, especially Estonia and Latvia, the USA and other Arctic states continued [→ Estonia – Russia; Latvia – Russia; Norway et al. – Russia (Arctic); EU, USA, et al. – Russia]. These conflicts became more tense since February 24, with the start of the Russian war in Ukraine, as well its consequences on the global security order, European energy supply, global supply chains and global food market.

The non-violent crisis over territory, international power, and resources between Russia and Ukraine escalated to a war [→ Russia – Ukraine]. On February 24, Russia invaded Ukraine's territory with the alleged aim of supporting the independence of the self-proclaimed Donetsk (DPR) and Luhansk (LPR) People's Republics in eastern Ukraine. Consequently, the violent intrastate crisis over secession and the orientation of the political system between DPR and LPR and the Ukrainian government that started in 2014 became part of the interstate war between Russia and Ukraine.

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and parties, on the one hand, and the Russian government under President Vladimir Putin, on the other, continued [→ Russia – Opposition]. Following the Russian attack on Ukraine on February 24, protests and anti-war demonstrations took place and continued until the end of March. By then, 13,000 arrests had been made, and the intensity of the protests had dropped significantly. The number of arrests rose to 19,000 by the end of the year. By signing a corresponding decree, President Putin declared a partial mobilization on September 21, which again led to protests, in the wake of which 2,000 arrests were made. Furthermore, there have been at least 48 attacks on military recruitment offices, mostly using improvised incendiary devices, such as Molotov cocktails. In two instances, firearms have been used to attack Russian armed forces personnel or volunteers. Over the course of the whole year, an estimated 900,000 people left the country.

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition parties and movements, on the one hand, and the government under President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, backed by Russia, on the other, continued. On February 27, a constitutional referendum was held, allowing President Lukashenka to remain in office until 2035 and revoking the status of Belarus as a nuclear-free zone, which it held since signing the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. As Belarus is providing logistical support to the Russian armed forces [→ Russia – Ukraine], there have been reported cases of sabotage against the Belarusian railway network [→ Russia – Ukraine].

The violent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over contested territories, particularly the Nagorno-Karabakh region, escalated to a limited war, with the heaviest fighting since the 2020 war occurring in September [→ Armenia - Azerbaijan]. The Azerbaijani government was able to take advantage of Armenia's weakened position, as its strongest ally, Russia, focused its resources on the war in Ukraine [→ Russia - Ukraine]. The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is closely related to the violent conflict over secession between the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh and the government of Azerbaijan [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)].

While the violent crisis between the Armenian government and the opposition over national power and the orientation of the political system continued, the violent crisis between the Azerbaijani government and its opposition de-escalated to a non-violent crisis [→ Armenia (opposition); Azerbaijan (opposition)].

The war in Ukraine also had an effect on the conflicts in Georgia, as both the EU and US signaled their demands for a reversal of Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent territories, while the pro-Russian de-facto authorities in these regions doubled down on their goal of official recognition as independent states [→ Georgia (South Ossetia^o), → Georgia (Abkhazia^o)]. Furthermore, with many Abkhazians and South Ossetians having obtained a Russian passport, Russia's mobilization impacted these regions as well.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the dispute over the secession of the Bosnia-Serb entity Republika Srpska (RS) continued. On February 10, RS adopted a draft law to create a separate judicial authority, criticized by the head of the UN Office of the High Representative [→ Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska)]. In North Macedonia, tensions between the Albanian minority and ethnic Macedonians continued [→ North Macedonia (Albanian minority – ethnic Macedonians)]. In July, North Macedonia's Assembly voted in favor of the French proposal, whereby North Macedonia would change its constitution to acknowledge a Bulgarian minority in the country, protect its minority rights and introduce hate speech laws into the criminal code, thus paving the way for EU accession talks. This decision led to the escalation of the dispute between opposition groups and the government to a violent crisis, with protesters throwing Molotov cocktails and stones at the parliament building in the capital Skopje [→ North Macedonia (opposition)]. In Montenegro, the violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition parties and the government continued [→ Montenegro (opposition)]. On February 4, the government was toppled by a vote of no-confidence, triggering massive protests and leading to the formation of a new minority government in April. Additionally, a law restricting presidential powers led to protests in the capital Podgorica, where protesters clashed with police on December 12.

In Greece, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between left-wing and social groups, workers' unions, and the government continued [→ Greece (social protests, left-wing militants)]. Union protests against rising costs of living and a new labor law were held, and clashes between anti-authoritarians and police occurred in Athens and Thessaloniki. In Hungary, the non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and subnational predominance between activists, minority groups, and refugees, on the one hand, and right-wing parties and groups, on the other, de-escalated to a dispute [→ Hungary (minorities – right-wings)]. The conflict was predominantly fought over the passing of an anti-LGBTQI+ law.

The non-violent crisis between the UK and France [→ France – United Kingdom (fishery)] de-escalated to a dispute. On April 10, the EU and France successfully concluded their quarrel with the UK about fishing rights in the channel. Yet a raw sewage spill from the UK in the channel led to outrage in the French parliament in August. In France, the non-violent crisis over autonomy or secession of Corsica escalated to a violent crisis [→ France (Corsican nationalists / Corsica)]. Protests with thousands of demonstrators took place between March 2 and April 3 across Corsica, leaving over 25 protesters and 77 police personnel injured.

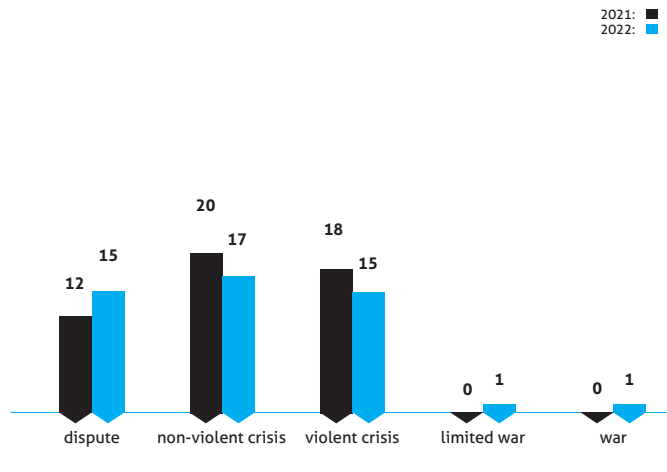
EUROPE

Moreover, two secession conflicts continued in the UK [→ United Kingdom (Scottish nationalists / Scotland); United Kingdom (nationalists / Northern Ireland)]. Both conflicts were rich in political symbolism in connection with violent measures, such as around Easter. For instance, on April 18, several dissident republican youths threw petrol bombs on Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) vehicles in Derry/Londonderry city, Derry City and Strabane District. PSNI arrested five suspects later that day. Likewise, in Spain, two conflicts over autonomy or secession continued [→ Spain (Catalan nationalists / Catalonia); Spain (Basque provinces)]. On September 11, at least 150,000 people demonstrated in the provincial capital Barcelona, Catalonia autonomous community, for independence.

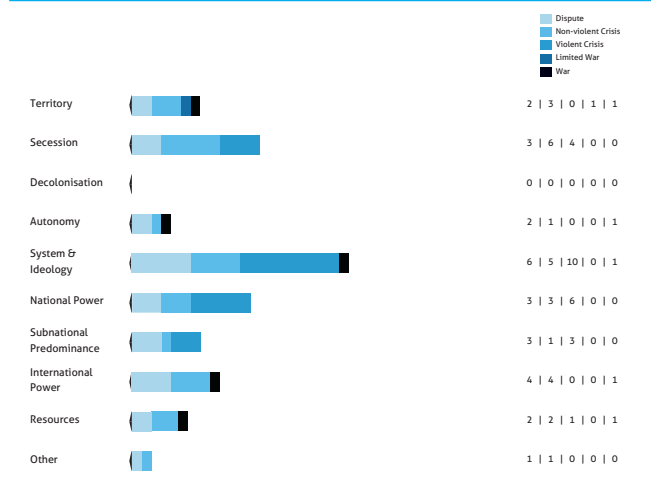
Xenophobia as well as right-wing activism and extremism remained an issue throughout Europe. The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, specifically regarding the refugee and migration policies of the federal government of Germany continued [→ Germany (xenophobes)]. Notably, on December 7, 25 people of the self-called Patriotische Union, a part of the broader Reichsbürger movement, were arrested on charges of planning a coup d'état. The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system in Sweden continued as well [→ Sweden (xenophobes)]. Another violent crisis in Sweden drew attention [→ Sweden (organized crime)]. At least nine people died in direct connection to gang-organized crime. Equally in Ukraine, the violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between right-wing groups, opposition parties, alongside minorities and civil rights groups, and the government continued [→ Ukraine (right-wing / opposition)]. The oppositional conflict in the country remained an issue due to crackdowns of the government on parties and the media legitimizing these actions through the ongoing war with Russia.

EUROPE

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN EUROPE IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN EUROPE IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN EUROPE IN 2022



Overview: Conflicts in Europe in 2022

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Albania (opposition)*	opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2017	↘	2
Armenia (opposition)*	government vs. opposition groups	system/ideology, national power	2003	•	3
Armenia – Azerbaijan*	Armenia vs. Azerbaijan	territory	1987	↗	4
Armenia – Türkiye*	Armenia vs. Türkiye	international power, other	1991	•	1
Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)*	Republic of Artsakh vs. government	secession	1988	•	3
Azerbaijan (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2003	↘	2
Belarus (opposition)*	civil society activists, opposition movement, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1994	•	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Sprska)*	government of Republika Srpska vs. government, government of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	secession	1995	•	1
Croatia (Serb minority – ethnic Croats)*	ethnic Croats vs. Serb minority	subnational predominance	1991	↘	1
Croatia – Slovenia (border)*	Croatia vs. Slovenia	territory	1991	•	1
Cyprus (Northern Cyprus ^o)*	TNRC ^o vs. government	secession, resources	1963	•	2
Cyprus, Greece et al. – Türkiye, Libya (Eastern Mediterranean)*	Cyprus, Egypt, EU, France, Greece, Israel, UAE vs. Libya (GNA), Türkiye	system/ideology, international power, resources	2002	•	2
Estonia – Russia*	Estonia vs. Russia	territory, international power	1991	•	2
EU, USA, et al. – Russia*	Canada, Denmark, Estonia, EU, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA et al. vs. Belarus, Russia	system/ideology, international power	2007	•	2
France (Corsican nationalists / Corsica)*	Corsican regional government, FC, FLNC, nationalist activist groups vs. government	secession, autonomy	1975	↗	3
France – United Kingdom (fishery)*	France, United Kingdom	resources	2021	↘	1
Georgia (Abkhazia ^o)*	Republic of Abkhazia ^o vs. government	secession	1989	•	2
Georgia (opposition)*	ENM, various opposition groups vs. government	national power	2007	↘	2
Georgia (South Ossetia ^o)*	Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania ^o vs. government	secession, subnational predominance	1989	•	2
Georgia – Russia*	Georgia vs. Russia	international power	1992	•	2
Germany (xenophobes)*	various right-wing groups, xenophobes et al. vs. government	system/ideology	2014	•	3
Greece (left-wing militants – right-wing militants)*	left-wing militants vs. right-wing militants	system/ideology	1976	↘	2
Greece (right-wing militants)*	right-wing militants vs. government	system/ideology	1985	•	1
Greece (social protests, left-wing militants)*	left-wing militants, social groups, workers' union vs. government	system/ideology	2010	•	3
Greece - Türkiye (Aegean Sea)*	Greece vs. Türkiye	territory, other	1973	•	2
Hungary (minorities – right-wings)*	right-wing groups vs. civil society groups	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2008	↘	1
Hungary – Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine (Hungarian minorities)*	Hungarian minorities (Transylvania / southern Slovakia / Transcarpathia), Hungary vs. Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine	system/ideology, international power	1989	•	1
Kosovo ^o (opposition)*	opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power, subnational predominance	2015	•	1
Kosovo ^o – Serbia*	Kosovar government vs. Serbian government, Serbian minority (in Kosovo ^o)	secession	1989	•	2
Latvia – Russia*	Latvia vs. Russia	international power	1991	•	1
Moldova (opposition)*	opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2009	•	1
Moldova (Transnistria)*	Transnistrian regional government vs. government	secession	1989	•	2

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Montenegro (opposition)*	opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2015	•	3
North Macedonia (Albanian minority – ethnic Macedonians)*	Albanian minority vs. ethnic Macedonians	subnational predominance	1991	•	3
North Macedonia (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2014	↑	3
Norway et al. – Russia (Arctic)*	Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, USA vs. Russia	territory, international power, resources	2001	↘	1
Russia (Islamist militants / Northern Caucasus)*	IS Caucasus Province, other Islamist militants vs. government	secession, system/ideology	1991	•	3
Russia (opposition)*	opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2001	•	3
Russia – Ukraine*	Russian Federation vs. Ukraine	territory, system/ideology, international power, resources	2003	↑	5
Serbia (opposition)*	Alliance for Serbia et al., opposition movement vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2018	•	1
Spain (Basque provinces)*	EH-Bildu vs. government	secession, autonomy	1959	•	1
Spain (Catalan nationalists / Catalonia)*	Catalan civil society groups, Catalan regional government vs. government, Spanish civil society groups	secession, autonomy	1979	•	1
Spain – United Kingdom (Gibraltar)*	Spain vs. United Kingdom	territory	1954	•	2
Sweden (organized crime)*	Bandidos vs. Black Cobra vs. Dödspatrullen vs. Hells Angels vs. Östberganätverket vs. Södertäljenätverket vs. Satudarah MC vs. 14K, various criminal organisations	subnational predominance, resources	2002	•	3
Sweden (xenophobes)*	various right-wing groups, xenophobes vs. government	system/ideology	2015	•	3
Ukraine (Crimean Tatars)*	Crimean Tatars vs. Crimean regional government, pro-Russian activists, Russia	autonomy	1988	•	2
Ukraine (right-wing / opposition)*	right-wing groups vs. civil-rights groups, minorities, oppositional parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2013	•	3
United Kingdom (nationalists / Northern Ireland)*	DUP, Red Hand Commando, UDA, UVF vs. Army of the Republik, Óglaigh na hÉireann, Continuity IRA, nationalist youth, NIRA, Sinn Féin vs. government	secession, subnational predominance	1968	•	3
United Kingdom (Scottish nationalists / Scotland)*	AUOB et al., SNP vs. government	secession	2007	•	2

¹ Conflicts marked with * are without description

² Mentioned are only those conflict parties relevant for the period under review

³ Change in intensity compared to the previous year: ↑ or ↗ escalation by one or more than one level of intensity; ↓ or ↘ deescalation by one or more than one level of intensity; • no change

⁴ Levels of intensity: 5 = war; 4 = limited war; 3 = violent crisis; 2 = non-violent crisis; 1 = dispute

⁵ HIIK considers statehood to be non-contested if the state is an official UN members state.

Disputed statehood is marked with a ° if a territory is recognized by at least one other official UN member state ("limited recognition")

ARMENIA (OPPOSITION).

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2003**Conflict parties: government vs. opposition groups
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and the government of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan continued. The opposition continued to blame Pashinyan for ceding control over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan in the 2020 peace treaty between the two countries, accusing the government of endangering the life of Armenians in the region [→ Armenia – Azerbaijan; Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)].

On April 5, more than thousand protested in the capital Yerevan after the announcement of a meeting between Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev to discuss conditions for a potential treaty, including the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. During the protests between April 25 and April 27, with thousands of opposition supporters in Yerevan, police detained more than 20 protesters, reportedly with the use of excessive force. Relatives of deceased soldiers from the war rallied in Yerevan on May 26, demanding a trial against Pashinyan.

The opposition sought legal measures against Pashinyan, initiating a mistrust vote on May 3, and a non-confidence vote on September 15, both failing due to the parliamentary majority of the ruling Civil Contract party (KP). In July, KP unsuccessfully attempted to remove 33 of 35 opposition mandates from parliament.

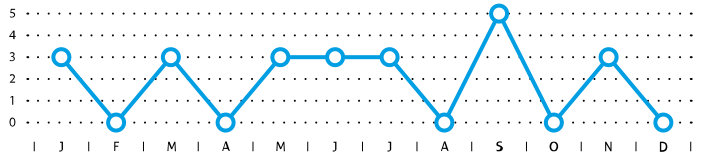
From the beginning of April, protests continued for more than two months with several clashes between the police and protesters. Notably, on May 11, protesters tried to storm the mayor's office and besieged Yerevan's town hall during rallies. On May 27, two policemen and two protesters were hospitalized. On June 3, street fights between several thousand protesters and more than 100 police officers left more than 50 people injured. Protesters threw rocks and other objects, whereas the police fired stun grenades and used shields and batons. On June 15, the opposition called to continue the protests non-violently.

On June 19, one civilian was shot and five were wounded in Nigavan village, Aragatsothn province, after a dispute over an alleged road incident. The opposition claimed that the dispute was caused by negative comments about Pashinyan, overheard by relatives of KP members, one of whom started shooting.

The leaders of the parties I Have Honor Alliance and Armenian Alliance resigned from parliament on June 21 and on July 7, respectively, to continue opposition work from outside the parliament.

The Armenian-Azerbaijani violent conflict escalated on September 13, followed by a ceasefire two days later. During the night of September 14 and 15, more than 1,000 protesters demanded Pashinyan's resignation. tkr

ARMENIA – AZERBAIJAN

Intensity: **4** | Change: ↗ | Start: **1987**Conflict parties: Armenia vs. Azerbaijan
Conflict items: territory

The violent crisis between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh escalated to a limited war. The dynamic of the conflict is closely related to the secessionist conflict between the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh and Azerbaijan [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)]. Throughout the year, Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other of breaking the ceasefire that followed the 2020 war. These accusations increased particularly after Russia's attack on Ukraine on February 24 [→ Russia – Ukraine]. Despite the war in Ukraine, Russia remained Armenia's closest ally, with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan meeting several times, such as on October 31 in the Russian city of Sochi, and on December 9 in the Kyrgyzstani capital of Bishkek. In September, the deadliest fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan since 2020 took place.

On January 11, Armenia and Azerbaijan engaged in a skirmish in Armenia's Gegharkunik province and Azerbaijan's Kalbajar district, leaving two Armenian and one Azerbaijani soldiers dead, as well as two Armenian soldiers injured.

On March 7, an incident in the Ararat province left one Armenian soldier dead and one injured. On March 8, a gas pipeline from Armenia to Karabakh was damaged near Shusha/Shushi and the gas supply temporarily stopped.

Mutual accusations increased in May due to shootings that primarily affected the border between Kalbajar and Gegharkunik. On May 7, one Armenian worker at Sotk gold mine between Kalbajar and Gegharkunik was injured by Azerbaijani firearms. On May 21, an Armenian soldier was wounded in gunfire between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces. In another gunfight on May 28 at the South-Eastern part of the border with Azerbaijan, one Armenian soldier was killed.

On June 18, an Armenian soldier died under unclear circumstances near the border in Gegharkunik. In July, more mutual accusations of fires and shootings arose in the border area of Kalbajar and Lachin districts, Azerbaijan, and Gegharkunik. On August 6, one Armenian soldier was injured in one of these border skirmishes at the eastern part of the border with Azerbaijan.

In early September, daily mutual accusations of gunfire along the border occurred. On September 5, an Armenian soldier was killed in gunfire along the eastern border. On September 13 and 14, fighting escalated when Azerbaijan, using artillery, mortars, and drones, attacked several locations along the border to the Gegharkunik, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor provinces, Armenia, leaving at least 207 Armenian soldiers and about 80 Azerbaijani soldiers dead. Moreover, 293 Armenian soldiers were injured according to the Armenian Security Council, and the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed at least

282 wounded Azerbaijani soldiers. About 7,600 Armenians were displaced due to the fighting and 192 homes were damaged according to the Armenian Red Cross Society.

On September 23 and 28, Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other of attacks using mortars and large-caliber arms, which left four Azerbaijani soldiers wounded and three Armenian soldiers dead.

In October and November, mutual accusations of shootings at the border continued. On November 10, 17, and 23, Azerbaijani forces wounded three Armenian soldiers in skirmishes along the eastern border with Armenia.

There were no casualties reported along the border in December. However, on December 12, Azerbaijanis belonging to pro-governmental environmental organizations blocked the Lachin Corridor, the only road connecting the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh to Armenia [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)]. ndo

AZERBAIJAN (NAGORNO-KARABAKH)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1988**

Conflict parties: Republic of Artsakh vs. government
Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over secession of the Nagorno-Karabakh region between the self-declared Republic of Artsakh, more commonly known as the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), and the government continued. The Nagorno-Karabakh region is supported by Armenia and the Russian Federation but is internationally recognized as a territory of Azerbaijan. The conflict's dynamic is closely related to the conflict over territory between Armenia and Azerbaijan [→ Armenia – Azerbaijan].

Throughout the year, the de facto authorities of NKR and the Azerbaijani government mutually accused each other of violating the 2020 ceasefire agreement. For instance, on February 5, NKR reported Azerbaijan Armed Forces (AAF) opened fire with large-caliber machine guns on local citizens in Khramort village, Khojaly district, close to the Line of Contact (LoC). A day later, the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported fire by NKR armed forces at military positions near Ghapanli village, Tartar district.

The tension between NKR and authorities increased after the start of the Russian attack on Ukraine [→ Russia – Ukraine]. On March 5, the Azerbaijani MoD reported that NKR armed forces fired in the direction of Gulustan settlement, Goranboy region. NKR authorities reported AAF firing at Norshen village, Khojavend district, and using force against civilians. Ceasefire breaches and mutual recriminations continued over the next few days in Khojaly, Aghdam, Goranboy, Tartar, and Fuzuli districts. On March 9, NKR defense authorities reported the disruption of the main natural gas pipeline from Armenia, near Shusha city, eponymous district, which then came under Azerbaijani control. The latter refused maintenance workers to investigate the cause, leaving parts of the region without gas. After eleven days without gas supply in Shusha, the pipeline was repaired.

At the end of March, many reported clashes occurred in Khojaly. On March 25, NKR authorities reported AAF used a Bayraktar TB2 UAV during attacks near Farukh village which left five Azerbaijani and two NKR soldiers dead and 14 NKR soldiers wounded. The MoD stated in response, that the country did not violate the ceasefire agreement, and that Farukh village was part of its sovereign territory. On March 28, NKR

authorities reported that Farukh village was again under the control of Russian peacekeepers, but the surrounding hills remained under Azerbaijani control. In total, approx. 200 civilians were displaced from Khramort and Farukh villages in March.

In early August, several reported clashes and drone attacks between NKR armed forces and AAF along the northwestern segments of the LoC left two NKR soldiers and one Azerbaijani soldier dead and eight injured. The attempt by Armenian armed forces to capture a hill in Lachin district led to the declaration of partial mobilization of NKR armed forces by NKR President Arayik Harutyunyan. Further ceasefire breaches were reported in the mountain regions of Yeghtsahog in Shushi, of Buzdukh in Kalbajar, as well as in the districts of Aghdam, Khojavend, Kalbajar, Goranboy, Fuzuli, and Khojaly. On August 6, AAF and NKR forces clashed, resulting in the AAF taking over Mount Budzdukh, Kalbajar.

In November, Azerbaijan accused NKR armed forces of opening fire in Khojavend, Khojaly, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Shusha, and Tartar on 14 days of the month, which NKR authorities denied.

Besides a few incidents in December, from December 12, government-affiliated environmental activists from Azerbaijan blocked the Lachin corridor, a strategic road connecting Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, leading to a temporary cut-off of gas supply for NKR civilians and limitations on food, petrol, and diesel. nie

BELARUS (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1994**

Conflict parties: civil society activists, opposition movement, opposition parties vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition parties and movements, on the one hand, and the government under President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, backed by Russia, on the other, continued.

This year, arrests of peaceful protesters continued, together with arbitrary detentions for displaying white-red-white flags and anti-war symbols. On January 5, political prisoner Dmitry Dudoit committed suicide after he was convicted for an anti-governmental comment on a social network. Later that month, on January 16, reportedly 1,000 activists were taken as political prisoners. Throughout the year, the government launched repeated crackdowns against civil society activists. According to the independent human rights organization Viasna, 478 individuals had been jailed for political reasons. On February 2, Alyaksandr Lukashenka instructed to arm employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, which is usually entrusted to protect the country's population from the effects of natural disasters, ahead of the constitutional referendum held on February 27. The European Union and several other countries declared their non-recognition of the results of the referendum, which allows Lukashenka to remain in office until 2035. It also revoked the country's status as a nuclear-free zone, thus permitting the deployment of nuclear weapons for the first time since Belarus signed the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Opposition figures, such as Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, called on citizens to invalidate their ballots. The referendum was accompanied by protests throughout the country.

On March 4, activists sabotaged several railway sections near Svetlogorsk, Homelskaja oblast.

Throughout the year, state agencies in Belarus continued to classify several opposition groups as terrorist organizations. For instance, on August 31, the group BYPOL, which unites former law enforcement officers who support opposition parties, was classified as a terrorist organization. On May 25, 15 individuals were added to a KGB list of terrorists, including imprisoned opposition activists Maxim Znak and Maria Kalesnikava. On June 28, opposition activists Siarhei Tsikhanouski and Ihar Losik also were added to the list, alongside 21 other individuals.

On October 7, Ales Bialiatski, a jailed Belarusian activist and chairman of the human rights organization Viasna, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for championing human rights and democracy.

The health situation of political prisoners continued to decline. For instance, on November 28, Kalesnikova was transferred to the intensive care unit of a hospital. After a week in the hospital, she was transferred back to the penal colony.

The Belarusian government is providing logistical support to the Russian armed forces in their war against Ukraine [→ Russia – Ukraine]. On September 16, a court in Vitebsk sentenced a man to 15 years in prison on charges of damaging railways to disrupt the supply of Russian arms and troops. nbu

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (REPUBLIKA SPRSKA) •

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **1995**

Conflict parties: government of Republika Srpska vs. government, government of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Conflict items: secession

The dispute over secession between the Bosnia-Serb entity, Republika Srpska (RS), on the one hand, and the central government as well as the government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the other, continued.

This year was characterized by continued disputes over the legitimacy of political institutions established by the 1995 Dayton Accords.

On February 10, RS MPs adopted a draft law with the aim of creating a separate judicial authority in the Serbian entity. The Head of the UN Office of the High Representative criticized this law as threatening “the influence of judiciary and the primacy of the rule of law”. On October 2, he exercised his executive powers to reform the electoral system on the same day as the elections took place, adding seven more seats to the parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to represent citizens not belonging to any of the three constituent peoples of the country. Opposition parties in the RS doubted the validity of the election results, citing multiple instances of manipulation. The Central Election Commission ultimately declared that Milorad Dodik was re-elected as president on October 27, after a recount of the ballots. jhb

CROATIA (SERB MINORITY – ETHNIC CROATS)

Intensity: **1** | Change: ↘ | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: ethnic Croats vs. Serb minority

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The non-violent crisis over subnational predominance between the Serb minority and ethnic Croats continued.

Discriminatory rhetoric and hate speech online and offline towards ethnic Serbs in Croatia continued throughout the year. For instance, on May 3, anti-Serb graffiti appeared at a Serbian Orthodox church in Petrinja, Sisak-Mosliva county. On November 18, anti-Serb graffiti inciting crime and hatred appeared in the Ostrovo village, Vukovar-Syrmia county. Moreover, a viral Facebook video from 2021, allegedly originating in Knin city, Sibenik-Knin county, became highly controversial this year for depicting ethnic Serbs as rats. It triggered a public discussion and was taken down on June 17. ysa

ESTONIA – RUSSIA •

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: Estonia vs. Russia

Conflict items: territory, international power

The non-violent crisis between Russia and Estonia over territory and international power continued.

Tensions continued due to the Russian attack on Ukraine and the Estonian government’s support of Ukraine [→ EU, USA et al. – Russia].

For example, on April 12, unknown persons damaged a Soviet World War II memorial at a military cemetery in the capital Tallinn. On August 16, Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas announced the removal of Soviet monuments as symbols of repression and occupation from public spaces. According to Kallas, the government’s aim was securing public order in the face of increasing social tensions.

The following day, the Russian hacker group “Killnet” conducted the most extensive cyber attacks against public institutions and the private sector since 2007. It was largely thwarted by the authorities.

Throughout the year, Russian aircraft repeatedly violated Estonian airspace. For instance, on January 29, a Russian Air Force plane flew over the island of Vaindloo in the Gulf of Finland, Lääne-Viru County. On August 9, a helicopter again violated Estonian airspace over Koidula village, Setomaa Parish, Voru County.

On October 18, Estonian parliament declared Russia a terrorist regime due to the Russian war against Ukraine. sik

FRANCE (CORSIKAN NATIONALISTS / CORSICA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: ↗ | Start: **1975**

Conflict parties: Corsican regional government, FC, FLNC, nationalist activist groups vs. government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The non-violent crisis over autonomy and secession between


the Corsican regional government, formed by the nationalist pro-independence alliance Free Corsica (FC), the paramilitary organization National Liberation Front of Corsica (FLNC), and nationalist activist groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

On March 2, an imprisoned Corsican nationalist was attacked by another inmate, resulting in his death on March 21. Subsequently, violent protests erupted all over Corsica. Protesters linked the Corsican nationalist's death to their struggle for secession or autonomy. Between March 2 and April 3, several thousand protested in the cities of Ajaccio, Corse-du-Sud department, as well as Bastia and Calvi, both Haute-Corse department.

Violent clashes between the protesters and the police occurred repeatedly during these protests. While protesters threw Molotov cocktails and vandalized public buildings, the police responded with water cannons and tear gas. For instance, on March 13, approx. 7,000 protesters gathered in Bastia, holding signs stating "French government murderers". The same day, hooded protesters clashed with the police, leaving 77 police personnel and 25 protesters injured. In March, FLNC expressed support for the protests and announced that they may resume their activities, meanwhile, the government announced a resumption of autonomy negotiations.

In the second half of the year, violent clashes were not reported. mal

FRANCE – UNITED KINGDOM (FISHERY)

Intensity: **1** | Change:  | Start: **2021**

Conflict parties: France, United Kingdom

Conflict items: resources

The non-violent crisis over resources, in particular fishing rights in the English Channel, between France, supported by French fisherfolk, on the one hand, and the UK, supported by British fisherfolk, on the other, de-escalated to a dispute.

On April 10, the EU and France successfully concluded their quarrel with the UK about fishing rights in the channel, with French fisherfolk being issued new licenses. On May 9, French and British fisherfolk protested together to ban super trawlers from the channel. Moreover, a raw sewage spill from the UK in the channel sparked outrage in the French parliament over the course of August, claiming the action had a negative impact on the environment, human health and the fishing grounds. tcr

GERMANY (XENOPHOBES)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: various right-wing groups, xenophobes et al. vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, in particular asylum and immigration policies, between right-wing groups, as well as xenophobic individuals, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Until November, federal criminal statistics counted 20,108 politically motivated criminal offenses with a right-wing back-

ground in Germany, including 997 acts of violence of which 401 had a xenophobic, and 32 had an anti-semitic background. In total, 286 people were injured and 31 people were temporarily detained in connection with right-wing extremism.

On December 7, police arrested 25 members of the so-called Patriotic Union, part of the right-wing extremist Reichsbürger movement, who were allegedly planning an attack on the parliament building and attempted a coup d'état. The police raid involved approx. 5,000 police personnel, who searched 130 locations all over Germany. The Patriotic Union members allegedly planned to set up 280 armed groups. Some of the suspects had at some point been in state service or right-wing political parties, such as the Alternative for Germany (AfD).

Over the course of the year, xenophobes attacked and threatened people with apparent migration backgrounds. For instance, on February 1, a man made racist insults toward and attacked a Syrian family in Munich city, Bavaria state, leaving one person injured. On August 5, in Gräfeling municipality, Bavaria, an alleged xenophobe insulted and injured an Afghan-born person.

Additionally, xenophobes conducted attacks on infrastructure for refugees and asylum seekers. For example, on August 30, in the memorial week of the 1992 Rostock-Lichtenhagen xenophobic riots, unknown perpetrators threw several incendiary devices at a refugee shelter in Leipzig city, Saxony state. On another occasion, on September 28, unknown perpetrators conducted an arson attack against unopened refugee accommodation, leaving it completely destroyed. Three days prior, AfD protested against the intended use of the building.

This year, authorities found various connections to right-wing extremism within state police forces and the German Federal Armed Forces, as well as other federal and state security authorities. For instance, in a video published on September 14, a police officer was seen making xenophobic insults at a Syrian person in the capital Berlin. On May 13, the federal interior minister commented on a total of 327 suspected cases of right-wing extremism within state services, pledging to 'remove enemies of the constitution from the public service'.

tcr

GREECE (SOCIAL PROTESTS, LEFT-WING MILITANTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2010**

Conflict parties: left-wing militants, social groups, workers' union vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various left-wing and social groups as well as different workers' unions, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, university students and anarchist groups protested in the capital Athens and Thessaloniki city, Central Macedonia region, against the eviction of a man for illegally occupying property of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. For instance, on January 15, thousands of university students and several anarchist groups protested in Thessaloniki. Protesters threw Molotov cocktails, stones, and trash cans at police forces while the latter used stun grenades and tear gas. Police arrested one protester.

The protests continued on May 26, when protesters clashed with police, throwing stones and Molotov cocktails, leav-

ing one police officer injured and nine protesters arrested in Thessaloniki. Similarly, on June 2, students and anti-authoritarians attacked police forces with stones and sticks in Thessaloniki. Police threw stun grenades and tear gas. Two policemen were injured and two journalists arrested. On November 17, celebrations for the anniversary of the 1973 Polytechnic Uprising in Thessaloniki escalated. Groups of students clashed with police in front of the university. Police arrested five people who threw Molotov cocktails and stun grenades that left two police officers injured.

Throughout the year, farmers staged various protests all over the country. On February 7, approx. 150 farmers protested against the non-payment of compensations for frost damage to their crops in the region of Western Macedonia. On the same day, farmers protested in the south of the Peloponnese region against an alleged lack of government support. Protests continued in the following days, with farmers blocking streets with cars and tractors.


On February 26, thousands joined union protests in several cities against the rising cost of living. For instance, police reported that approx. 10,000 protesters in Athens, led by the communist-affiliated union All-Workers Militant Front, gathered outside the parliament to protest against spiking inflation and a new labor law increasing working hours.

On November 4, anti-authoritarians and police officers clashed in the center of Athens. A group of 300 people blocked a road, protesting against the construction of the metro in the Exarchia community in northern Athens. When police demanded the end of the road blockade, protesters attacked them with paint and objects and moved towards Exarchia. There they started attacks with Molotov cocktails and stones, while the police used tear gas, flash bang grenades, and arrested 16 people.

On December 6, left-wing protesters clashed with police in Athens and Thessaloniki over a police incident which occurred on 12/06/08. Protesters threw Molotov cocktails, leaving two police officers injured. Police forces responded with tear gas and stun grenades, arresting 19 protesters in Athens and another 16 in Thessaloniki.

gap

HUNGARY (MINORITIES – RIGHT-WINGS)

Intensity: **1** | Change:  | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: right-wing groups vs. civil society groups

Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and subnational predominance between activists, minority groups such as Romani, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQI+ communities, and refugees, on the one hand, and right-wing parties and groups, consisting of Fidesz, Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom, Mi Hazánk Mozgalom, Arrow Cross Party – Hungarian Movement, Légió Hungária and the Carpathian Brigade, on the other, de-escalated to a dispute.

On April 3, after the victory of the coalition of the right-wing party Fidesz and Christian Democratic People's Party in the parliamentary elections, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made antisemitic statements. The far-right party Mi Hazánk Mozgalom also won six parliamentary seats in the elections. On the same day, a national referendum about LGBTQI+ rights took place. The political opposition and LGBTQI+ groups had

called to cast invalid votes. As a result, the National Election Committee declared the referendum as non-binding and fined the groups for abuse of law. The fines were revoked by the Hungarian Supreme Court, Kuria, on April 8. mzs

MONTENEGRO (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition parties as well as various other opposition groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

On February 4, the government was toppled by a vote of no-confidence, triggering massive protests both in support of the previous government and demanding early elections. On April 28, a new minority government was formed under the United Reform Action party led by Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic, while the pro-Serbian former ruling parties moved to the opposition.

Another no-confidence motion was passed by the parliament on August 20, following a rift over a long-disputed deal regulating ties with the powerful Serbian Orthodox Church, but Abazovic remained acting prime minister as the president blocked parliament's candidate over a disagreement.

On December 12, thousands protested against a new law restricting presidential powers in the capital Podgorica and clashed with police. Protesters threw rocks, bottles and other objects while police dispersed the crowd using tear gas. No injuries were reported.

On July 13, during the celebration of the Statehood Day in Niksic city, eponymous municipality, two demonstrations clashed. One was organized by the pro-European Forum of Free Citizens "Luca", the other by Serbian-Orthodox youth organizations. Reportedly, police used tear gas and batons against the pro-European groups, leaving at least one person injured.

ysa

NORTH MACEDONIA (ALBANIAN MINORITY – ETHNIC MACEDONIANS).

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: Albanian minority vs. ethnic Macedonians

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between the Albanian minority and ethnic Macedonians continued.

While ethnic tensions remained low throughout most of the year, on July 2, thousands protested against North Macedonia's EU accession process in the capital Skopje [→ North Macedonia (opposition)]. To unblock the Bulgarian veto, the French EU Council Presidency proposed a compromise in July that entailed concessions on North Macedonia's culture, language, and identity, which were deemed unacceptable by many ethnic Macedonians. In contrast, political representatives of the Albanian minority prioritized a rapid accession

process and favored the so-called French proposal, whereby North Macedonia would change its constitution to acknowledge a Bulgarian minority in the country, protect its minority rights and introduce hate speech laws into the criminal code, thus paving the way for EU accession talks.

On July 6, during a protest against the French proposal, groups of ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians violently clashed in the center of the capital Skopje, attacking each other with stones and bottles. At least two individuals of ethnic Albanian origin reportedly carried guns, with one of them pointing it at some of the protesters. Police forces separated the two groups and arrested those who carried the guns. Consequently, at least some protesters were injured.

On July 16, the protests dissolved after the majority of North Macedonia's Assembly voted in favor of the so-called French proposal, paving the way for EU accession talks. abu

NORTH MACEDONIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The dispute over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, led by the opposition party Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization - Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE), on the one hand, and the government, led by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia party, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

On January 16, the parliament elected a new cabinet under Social Democratic leader Dimitar Kovacevski. In April and May, the Skopje Criminal Court convicted North Macedonia's fugitive former prime minister, Nikola Gruevski, of VMRO-DPMNE, on embezzlement charges.

On July 6, VMRO-DPMNE organized a protest against the so-called French proposal for a compromise between North Macedonia and Bulgaria [→ North Macedonia (Albanian minority – ethnic Macedonians)]. Protesters threw Molotov cocktails, stones, metal bars, and eggs at the parliament building in the capital of Skopje. They clashed with police trying to dissolve the protests, resulting in 47 injured police personnel. Eleven protesters were arrested, and the government condemned the attacks.

Additionally, on October 25, two masked men attacked a journalist reporting on corruption and political scandals. Several political parties and unions claimed that VMRO-DPMNE was behind the attack. dkl

NORWAY ET AL. – RUSSIA (ARCTIC)

Intensity: **1** | Change: **↘** | Start: **2001**

Conflict parties: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, USA vs. Russia

Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over economic and military activities in the Arctic region between Russia, on the one hand, and Norway and its NATO allies, on the other, de-escalated to a dispute.

Several military exercises occurred in the first half of the year. For instance, the Russian Navy conducted exercises in January and the NATO Military Exercise called Cold Response 2022 was held between March 14 and April 11. It was allegedly NATO's largest military exercise in the Arctic in the last 30 years whereby approx. 30,000 troops participated [→ EU, USA et al. – Russia].

The Russian attack on Ukraine in February increased tensions between NATO member states and Russia in the region [→ Russia – Ukraine]. For instance, the Joint Barents Exercise with the participation of the Norwegian and Russian navies scheduled for the summer was canceled. On June 29, Russia accused Norway of blocking the transit of goods to Russians living in the Norwegian Arctic archipelago of Svalbard and threatened the Norwegian government. dkl

RUSSIA (ISLAMIST MILITANTS / NORTHERN CAUCASUS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: IS Caucasus Province, other Islamist militants vs. government

Conflict items: secession, system/ideology

The violent crisis over ideology and secession between militant groups, most of them fighting under the umbrella of the so-called Islamic State Caucasus Province (IS Caucasus Province), on the one hand, and the central and regional governments, on the other, continued.

IS Caucasus Province aims to establish an independent Islamic Emirate in the North Caucasus Federal District, comprising the republics of Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, and North Ossetia-Alania, as well as the region Stavropol Krai.

While no activities of the IS Caucasus Province were reported throughout the year, Russian security personnel continued their operations against Islamist militants all over the Northern Caucasus region, arresting 33 suspects.

On May 18, Russian security personnel killed two Islamist militants during an attempted arrest in Leninsky District, Makhachkala city.

bba

RUSSIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2001**

Conflict parties: opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and parties, on the one hand, and the government under President Vladimir Putin, on the other, continued.

Following the Russian attack on Ukraine on February 24, protests and anti-war demonstrations took place the same day in at least 50 cities across the country, with the largest being held in the capital Moscow with approx. 2,000 protesters and St. Petersburg city, Leningrad oblast [→ Russia – Ukraine]. Around 1,820 arrests were made that day.

The protests continued throughout March, but declined by

the end of the month due to increasing repressive measures by the authorities. As of March 6, the number of arrests had reached 13,000, while the figure for the whole year amounts to 19,000. The interior ministry justified the majority of the arrests, claiming breaches of the existing Covid-19 rules.

On March 4 and 25, the government signed two laws amending the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, often referred to as "fake news laws". The laws criminalized the dissemination of false information about Russian Armed Forces (RUAF) operations, as well as the discretization of the RUAF or other institutions. In addition, calling for sanctions against the Russian Federation was criminalized.

On March 22, opposition leader Alexey Navalny was sentenced to nine years in maximum security prison for corruption and insulting a judge.

The Russian Ministry of Justice banned 15 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and revoked their registrations on April 8, because of alleged violations of laws. Among others, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Carnegie International, and all German political foundations left the country as a result.

Similarly, on April 26, the government escalated the 2012 Foreign Agents Act, whereby all Russian citizens can now be classified so-called foreign agents for disseminating allegedly false information about crimes, corruption, or problems in the armed forces, space program, or security forces.

On September 21, Putin declared a partial mobilization of the population for the RUAF [→ Russia – Ukraine]. Following the corresponding decree, at least 48 attacks on military recruitment offices took place all over the country, mostly using improvised incendiary devices, such as Molotov cocktails. Protests against the mobilization led to at least 2,000 arrests. Furthermore, long queues of people leaving the country were observed at border checkpoints. Over the course of the year, an estimated 900,000 people left the country.

On October 21, a man shot and wounded a RUAF officer in a military recruitment office in Ust-Ilimsk city, Irkutsk oblast. According to witnesses, the man yelled "no one will go to fight" before opening fire.

On October 15, two individuals opened fire at a training session for volunteers in Belgorod oblast, leaving nine people dead, killing themselves, and wounding 15 more. tla

ernment that started in 2014 became part of the interstate war between Russia and Ukraine. The dynamic of the conflict is closely related to the non-violent conflict over international power and ideology between the EU, USA and their allies, on the one hand, and Russia, supported by Belarus, on the other [→ EU, USA, et al. – Russia].

Since the outbreak of the war, according to the UN, at least 6,913 civilians were killed and at least 11,044 injured, although the actual numbers are most likely much higher. Moreover, at least 18,000 Armed Forces of Ukraine personnel were killed and 54,000 injured, with the actual death toll estimated to be about 46,500. At the same time at least 30,000 Armed Forces of Russia personnel, militants from DPR and LPR, and military contractors (such as Wagner PMC) were killed and 75,000 injured, the actual death toll for the Russian troops alone estimated to be about 60,000. The war led to the largest refugee movement in Europe since World War II. Approx. 7.9 million Ukrainians fled the country and approx. 5.9 million became internally displaced.

At the beginning of the year, the tensions between Russia and NATO remained high and the military build-up of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border continued. On February 10, Russia and Belarus launched a ten-day joint military exercise, which was later extended. On February 18, DPR and LPR announced the evacuation of civilians and declared a general mobilization on the next day. By February 20, Russia had amassed approx. 150,000 troops along the Ukrainian border and in Crimea.

In late February, the conflict escalated. Following the recognition of independence of DPR and LPR on February 21 and their subsequent request for military assistance, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the beginning of a so-called "special military operation" on February 24. Russian forces entered Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, and Mykolaiv oblasts, partially advancing from Belarussian territory and Crimea, accompanied by airstrikes targeting military objectives with over 100 missiles and approx. 75 bombers. On the same day, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy declared martial law and a general mobilization.

Russia's attack on the Ukrainian capital Kyiv lasted about five weeks. After a rapid takeover of the Hostomel airport, Kyiv oblast, on February 24–25 had failed, reportedly a 64-km-long Russian military convoy headed from Belarus towards Kyiv on February 28. However, due to various reasons, including supply issues and Ukrainian attacks, it began to stall by March. On March 29, Russia announced the withdrawal of its forces from central Ukraine. Between April 3 and April 7, Ukrainian officials stated they had retaken Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Sumy oblasts.

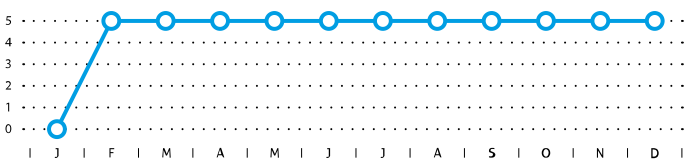
Russian troops targeted Kharkiv city, eponymous oblast, but failed to occupy it. However, they captured other places in the oblast such as Kupiansk on February 27, Balakliya on March 3, and Izium on April 1.

Advancing from Crimea, Russian troops attacked and captured cities in Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, and Mykolaiv oblasts. From February 25 on, Ukrainian forces fought off Russian advances towards Mykolaiv city, eponymous oblast, pushing the Russian troops back towards Kherson oblast by mid-March. On February 26, Russian troops destroyed the dam between the Dnipro river and the North Crimean Canal by Tavriisk city, Kherson, which had cut off the water supply to Crimea since 2014. They occupied Kherson city, eponymous oblast, on March 2. On March 3, they reached Enerhodar city, Zaporizhzhia, and attacked the nearby Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

RUSSIA – UKRAINE

Intensity: **5** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: Russian Federation vs. Ukraine
 Conflict items: territory, system/ideology, international power, resources



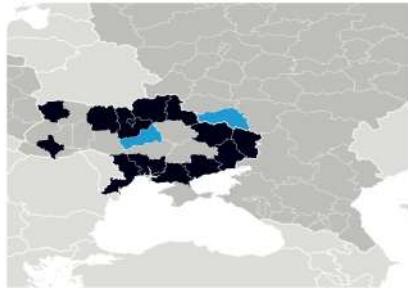
The non-violent crisis over territory, international power, and resources between Russia and Ukraine escalated to a war. On February 24, Russia invaded Ukraine's territory with the alleged aim of supporting the independence of the self-proclaimed Donetsk (DPR) and Luhansk (LPR) People's Republics in eastern Ukraine. Consequently, the violent intrastate crisis over secession and the orientation of the political system between DPR and LPR and the Ukrainian gov-

GLOBAL CONFLICT PANORAMA

RUSSIA – UKRAINE



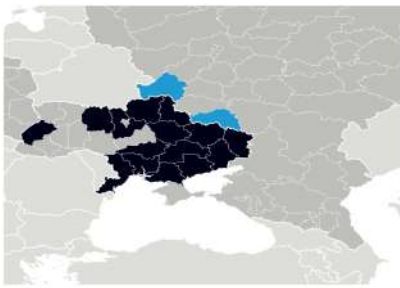
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February



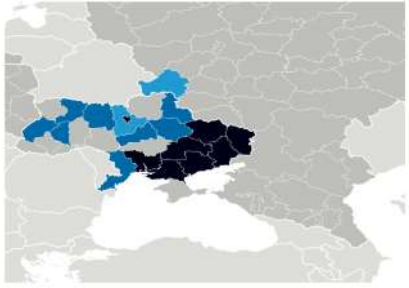
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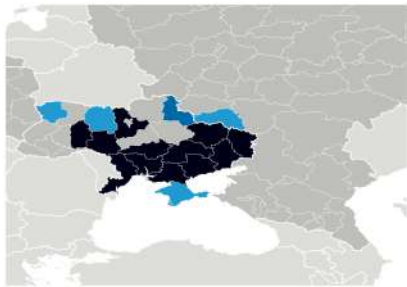
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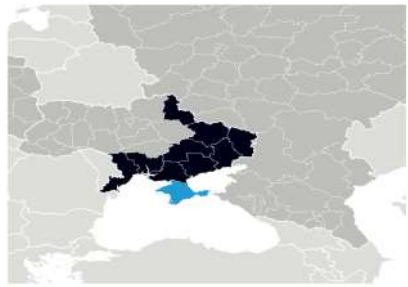
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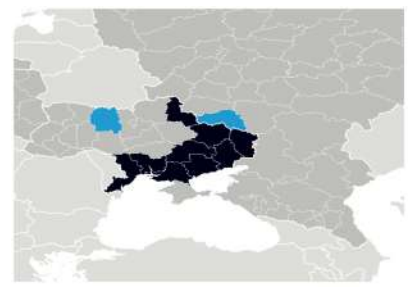
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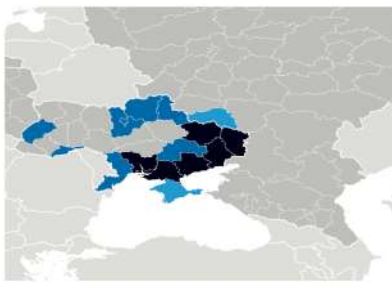
July



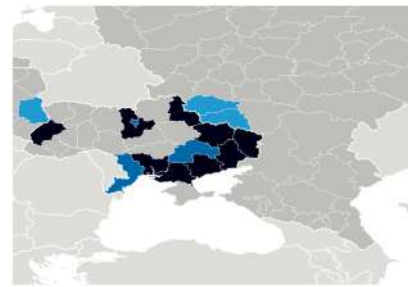
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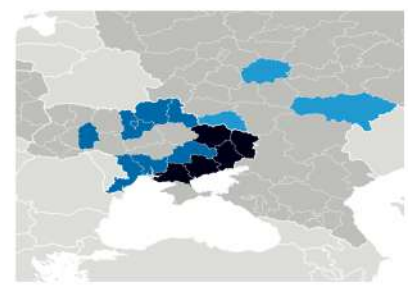
September



October



November



December



Fighting in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts accounted for more than half of the year's total civilian casualties in Ukraine. On March 11, for instance, Russian troops allegedly shelled a care home in Kreminna, Luhansk, killing 56 civilians. On April 8, a Russian missile strike at a railway station in Kramatorsk, Donetsk, left 60 civilians dead and 111 injured. Following their withdrawal from the north, Russian troops relocated to the Donbas by mid-April. After capturing cities such as Sievierodonetsk, Luhansk, by June 25, and Lysychansk, Luhansk, by July 3, they gained full control of Luhansk and partial control of Donetsk by the beginning of July.

The fight for Mariupol city, Donetsk, lasted for almost three months. The fighting left most of the city destroyed and at least 1,348 civilians dead, although the OHCHR estimated the actual number of deaths to be thousands higher. Russian forces launched several airstrikes against civilian infrastructure. For instance, a Russian attack on a maternity hospital on March 9 left at least three dead and at least 17 injured. On March 16, another attack on a drama theater left up to 600 dead. By April 30, Russian forces gained full control of the city, except for the Azovstal steel plant, which they captured on May 20 after a two-week-long siege.

After the Russian offensive mostly stalling by July and August, and despite officially declaring a counteroffensive in Kherson, Ukrainian forces launched an unexpected counteroffensive in Kharkiv oblast on September 6. The Ukrainian forces regained control of over 500 settlements and 12,000 square kilometers, including Balakliya, Kupiansk, and Izium. By September 13, Ukrainian troops had crossed Oksil river, Kharkiv oblast, advancing further towards Donetsk.

Pro-Russian de facto authorities in the partly occupied oblasts Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia announced on September 20 that they would hold referendums on joining Russia. The referendums were held from September 23 to 27, with results allegedly ranging from 87 to 99 percent in favor. On October 5, Putin signed the ratification of the accession of the four oblasts to Russia. On September 21, Putin ordered a partial mobilization of the troops, announcing the draft of 300,000 reservists (→ Russia (opposition)).

In October, Ukraine intensified its counteroffensive in Kherson oblast. Ukrainian forces moved south, recapturing several settlements in northern Kherson oblast. Those advances were accompanied by continuous attacks on the bridges and railway bridges crossing the Dnipro, ultimately hindering the Russian forces to resupply their troops. On October 13, Russia announced the evacuation of residents from Kherson city and later abandoned the city. By November 11, Ukrainian troops regained control over Mykolaiv and parts of Kherson oblasts, including Kherson city.

On October 10, Russia began airstrikes targeting Ukrainian energy infrastructure, firing about 84 cruise missiles and 24 drones against at least 14 oblasts, partly destroying electricity and water supply infrastructure, killing at least 19 and injuring almost 100. The strikes carried on into November and intensified in December.

Throughout the war, Ukrainian forces most likely targeted Russian military assets inside Russia and international waters. For instance, on April 14, the Ukrainians sank the Russian flagship "Moskva" in the Black Sea. On October 8, an explosion damaged parts of Kerch Bridge connecting Russia with Crimea, killing four. After the annexation of Crimea, this was the only land connection to Russia. Russia accused Ukraine of the attack, which denied responsibility. Starting on December 5, military bases in Ryazan, Saratov, and Kursk oblasts in Russia were attacked with allegedly Ukrainian drones, killing at least six military personnel. Ukraine denied

its involvement.

Since the outbreak of the war, the Russian Armed Forces and their auxiliary troops committed numerous confirmed war crimes. The heavy use of artillery, rockets, bombs, and cluster munitions against densely populated areas alone is responsible for about 90 percent of civilian deaths. The extensive shelling led to 400 reported cases of attacks against medical and educational facilities, and left at least 200 sites of cultural importance destroyed. Russian forces repeatedly attacked civilians. For example, after their withdrawal from Kyiv oblast in April, 458 civilians have been found dead in Bucha city, showing signs of torture. Similar cases have been reported in Hostomel and Motyschin, Kyiv oblast, and in Andriivka, Kharkiv oblast, leaving 900 dead in those three locations. After the Ukrainian forces regained full control over Kharkiv oblast, 414 civilians have been found dead, most of them with tied hands, broken limbs, and with reported cases of genital amputation. Russian officials stated that over one million Ukrainians voluntarily settled in Russia, while Ukrainian officials claim these are deportations in violation of international law.

The war was accompanied by various diplomatic initiatives. Russian and Ukrainian representatives started peace talks four days into the invasion. However, both sides confirmed the end of negotiations on May 17. On July 22, Russia and Ukraine reached an agreement brokered by the UN and Türkiye for Ukraine to export grain through Ukrainian Black Sea harbors previously blocked by Russian forces. Additionally, both sides also regularly negotiated on humanitarian issues and carried out at least 33 exchanges of POWs and/or civilians. nbr

SPAIN (CATALAN NATIONALISTS / CATALONIA)

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **1979**

Conflict parties: Catalan civil society groups, Catalan regional government vs. government, Spanish civil society groups

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The dispute over secession or further autonomy of the autonomous community of Catalonia between the Catalan regional government and various civil society groups, on the one hand, and the central government as well as regional political parties, on the other, continued

The year was dominated by the attempt of the regional government coalition, led by the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC), and the central government coalition, led by the Spanish Socialist Workers' party (PSOE), to work on political solutions for the conflict. While ERC favors joint negotiations with the central government to reach a mutual consensus, Together for Catalonia (JxCat) and other groups, such as the Catalan National Assembly (ANC), urge for a more confrontational approach.

On September 11, the Catalan national day, at least 150,000 people protested in the provincial capital Barcelona for Catalonia's independence. ANC even claimed several hundred thousand participants

On October 7, JxCat left the regional government coalition, resulting in ERC ruling in a minority government.

In December, ERC announced new plans for a legally binding referendum in 2023, despite the central government not acknowledging this motion. som

SPAIN – UNITED KINGDOM (GIBRALTAR)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1954**

Conflict parties: Spain vs. United Kingdom
 Conflict items: territory

The non-violent crisis over territory of the British overseas territory Gibraltar between the UK and Spain continued. In early January, Spain reiterated its criticism of the UK's Cape Vantage land-building project that would enlarge Gibraltar's shoreline as well as the contested waters around the peninsula.

In the contested waters, incidents between navy vessels occurred. For instance, on February 2, British military boats (RHIB) conducted a maneuver toward a Spanish vessel of the Customs Surveillance Service, while they were trying to board and search an unidentified yacht. The UK government later commented that Spain had no authority to conduct these searches in British waters. On July 21, a Spanish warship allegedly breached British waters coming close to the nuclear-powered submarine "HMS Talent". The UK navy's RHIBs subsequently fired a warning flare and escorted the Spanish warship out of the area.

Nonetheless, on November 25, the Spanish government proposed to remove the border fence between Spain and Gibraltar, with negotiations set to continue next year. Gibraltar's chief minister refused this proposal.

tcr

SWEDEN (ORGANIZED CRIME)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2002**

Conflict parties: Bandidos vs. Black Cobra vs. Dödspatrullen vs. Hells Angels vs. Östberganätverket vs. Södertäljenätverket vs. Satudarah MC vs. 14K, various criminal organisations
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources and subnational predominance between several rival gangs and clans, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The new coalition government, including the conservative Moderate Party and the right-wing Sweden Democrats (SD), identified immigration-linked gang violence as a key security issue in the country [→ Sweden (xenophobes)]. Police also suggest that most of the 8,200 known gang members come from migratory backgrounds, with 1,230 gang members being underage.

Gangs regularly commit acts of extortion as well as drug and arms trafficking. Police suggested smuggling was taking place through ports in Skane County. For instance, on September 28, police seized three tons of cocaine from Ecuador in a port in Skane.

Intergang rival killings occurred throughout the year. Throughout the year at least nine people died in direct connection to organized crime and gang violence. For instance, on February 22, police found a high-ranking gang member of the so-called Södertäljenätverket, shot dead in the burnt-out car of a local SD politician in Sodertälje city,

Stockholm County. Consequently, the SD politician resigned from office and, on February 24, police arrested two suspects. On March 20, unknown perpetrators shot dead a former-Hells Angels member, in Lindköping city, Östergötland county, who allegedly wanted to join Satudarah MC, a Dutch-Maluku-Surinamese criminal organization. Similarly, on August 8, unknown perpetrators shot and killed an allegedly former high-ranking gang member in Häselby-Vällingby borough, in the capital Stockholm. On August 10 a gang member was shot multiple times and died in Varberg borough, Stockholm. Nine days later, on August 19, a Satudarah MC member was shot dead in a shopping mall in Malmö city, Skane, while on August 25, a high-ranking gang member of the so-called Östberganätverket was allegedly killed in Haningen borough, Stockholm. On September 4, after a chase, Police stopped a car north of Stockholm, finding an injured man who was shot several times. Police seized rifles and a shotgun. On September 22, a gang member was shot dead in Kristianstad city, Skane. On October 20, another gang member was shot dead in his car, in a Stockholm highway tunnel. On December 25, unknown perpetrators shot a Dödspatrullen gang member in Rinkeby-Kista borough, Stockholm.

Police claimed various coordinated actions by gangs that targeted buildings and cars. In the course of the year, at least 16 IEDs exploded causing damage to buildings. For instance, on June 2, unknown perpetrators set approx. 30 cars on fire in Tröllhätten Municipality, Vstra Götaland County, and on September 23, an IED exploded in Solna town in Stockholm. No deaths or injuries were reported.

tcr

SWEDEN (XENOPHOBES)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: various right-wing groups, xenophobes vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, in particular asylum and immigration policies, between various xenophobic actors as well as several far-right political organizations, on the one hand, and the government, supported by social activists, on the other, continued.

While far-right activity has reached a new low since 2008, there have nevertheless been isolated acts of violence by individuals and small groups who continue to radicalize themselves online. On January 21, the security service warned that the protests against Covid-19 measures were increasingly infiltrated by far-right extremists.

On February 14, a defense ministry official was fired for having links to a far-right network.

On February 16, a former member of the neo-Nazi group Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM) warned that the NRM had equipped itself with automatic weapons over the past two years.

Between April 14 and 17, violent riots erupted in Linköping and Nörköping municipalities, Östergötland county, and Malmö city, Skane county, as well as the capital Stockholm, after a far-right politician burned copies of the Quran in several cities. The rioters used rocks and Molotov cocktails, leaving 104 police officers and 14 rioters injured.

On May 31, parliament published a new anti-terror law that significantly increased penalties for terrorist offenses and criminalized terrorist financing [→ Sweden (organized crime)].

On July 6, a former NRM member with mental health issues stabbed and killed a woman in Visby city, Gotland county. The man also tried to stab a party chairman but was stopped by police.

During the parliamentary elections, on September 11, two NRM municipal council candidates in Örkelljunga municipality, Skane county, attacked two civilians whom they suspected of destroying NRM election posters. dko

UKRAINE (CRIMEAN TATARS)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1988**

Conflict parties: Crimean Tatars vs. Crimean regional government, pro-Russian activists, Russia

Conflict items: autonomy

The non-violent crisis over autonomy between Crimean Tatars, supported by the central government, on the one hand, and the Crimean regional government, pro-Russian activists, and the Russian government, on the other, continued. This year, Russian courts convicted 21 Muslim Crimean Tatars to prison sentences of between eleven and 19 years on the grounds of allegedly being part of the Islamist movement Hizb ut-Tahrir, which has been outlawed in Russia. Russian police and the Federal Security Service (FSB) arrested at least six Crimean Tatars during home searches, on charges of being Hizb ut-Tahrir members.

Russian authorities and courts also took action against Crimean Tatar activists and protesters. For instance, on February 18, the Bakhchysarai district court, Autonomous Crimean Republic/Republic Crimea, sentenced a Crimean Tatar journalist and leader to ten days in prison on charges of inciting hatred on the internet. On April 6, Russian police officers searched the home of a Crimean Tatar activist and arrested him without official charges. On September 21, the High Court of Crimea convicted the deputy of the banned Crimean Tatar self-governing body 'Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People', and two other activists to sentences between 13 and 17 years in prison on the charges of sabotaging a gas pipeline. On the same day, a group of Crimean Tatar protesters demonstrated against the conviction of the three activists outside FSB offices in the regional capital Simferopol. FSB arrested more than 50 protesters. hle

UKRAINE (RIGHT-WING / OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: right-wing groups vs. civil-rights groups, minorities, oppositional parties vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between right-wing groups, opposition parties, alongside minorities and civil-rights groups, and the government continued.

Throughout the year, right-wing groups were engaged in racist and antisemitic activities. For example, on March 22, a local right-wing group called 'the Hunters' accused Roma refugees of pickpocketing, tying them to lampposts and publicly hu-

miliating them in Lviv city, eponymous oblast. Furthermore, on March 9, a neonazi group kidnapped, tortured, and allegedly executed a Jewish athlete at an unknown location. On March 20, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced the suspension of eleven opposition parties for the period of martial law due to their alleged ties to Russia. Among the suspended parties was the Opposition Platform - For Life (OPZZ), which was the largest opposition party with 37 seats in the parliament. A month later, 25 of the former MPs formed a new parliamentary group called 'Platform for Life and Peace', which was later banned by the supreme court on September 15 also for alleged links to Russia. On June 14, the party Derzhava was also banned. Throughout the year, the government restricted freedom of the press and the work of activists. For instance, on March 6, members of the Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine were arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in the capital Kyiv, but later released. The opposition criticized restrictions of opposition parties, journalists, and activists, calling the policies illegal. jdo

UNITED KINGDOM (NATIONALISTS / NORTHERN IRELAND)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1968**

Conflict parties: DUP, Red Hand Commando, UDA, UVF vs. Army of the Republik, Óglaigh na hÉireann, Continuity IRA, nationalist youth, NIRA, Sinn Féin vs. government

Conflict items: secession, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over secession between dissident republican groups and the government, as well as over subnational predominance between dissident republican groups on the one hand and loyalist and nationalist groups, on the other, continued. On March 22, the UK government lowered the so-called terrorism threat-level from 'severe' to 'substantial' for the first time since 2010.

The debate about the post-Brexit Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland led to a stalemate in the regional Irish parliament, which created tensions in Northern Ireland throughout the year. On April 17, masked and armed men of the dissident Irish republican paramilitary group Óglaigh na hÉireann (ONH) threatened loyalists and nationalist groups. On April 18, following the Easter parade that was organized by the Saoradh political party with alleged ties to the New Irish Republican Army, dissident republican youth threw petrol bombs against a patrol vehicle of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in Derry/Londonderry city, eponymous county. PSNI arrested five suspects the same day.

On March 25, a bomb threat interrupted the speech of the Irish foreign minister in Belfast, PSNI suspected loyalists of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) because of their opposition to the protocol and death threats they made against him the previous year

On November 17, NIRA exploded an IED near a PSNI patrol vehicle in Strabane city, County Tyrone. PSNI claimed the bombing was an attempted murder of two police officers, arresting three alleged NIRA members two days later in Strabane. On November 20, dissident republicans of Arm na Poblachta placed a bomb in a hijacked car outside a PSNI

EUROPE

station in Derry/Londonderry. Although it did not explode, residents were evacuated.

At least 33 people were injured this year, eight in shootings, and 25 in physical assaults with baseball bats or iron bars in paramilitary-style punishments against their own group members. Furthermore, PSNI arrested a total of 123 people.
tcr

UNITED KINGDOM (SCOTTISH NATIONALISTS / SCOTLAND) •

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2007**

Conflict parties: AUOB et al., SNP vs. government

Conflict items: secession

The non-violent crisis over secession between the Scottish regional government of the Scottish National Party (SNP) under First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, supported by nationalist civic organizations such as All Under One Banner (AUOB)

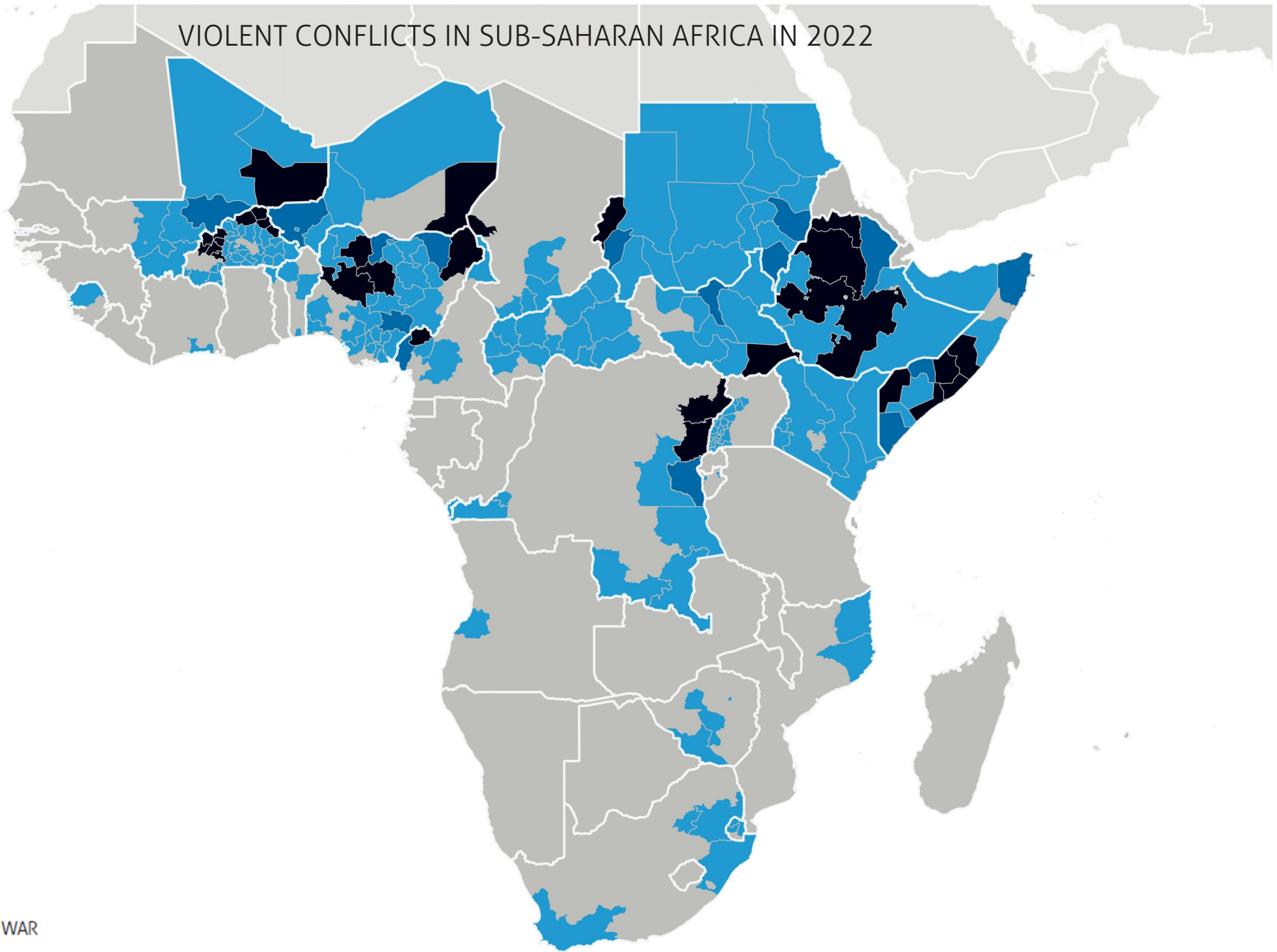
and pro-independence supporters, on the one hand, and the British government supported by pro-unionists, on the other, continued.

On November 23, the legal standoff concerning a second referendum on Scottish independence ended, with the UK supreme court ruling that the Scottish parliament cannot constitutionally hold a referendum without the consent of the British government. The ruling subsequently sparked 14 protests all over Scotland the same day. Smaller counter protests by pro-unionists took place simultaneously, accusing the leaders of the independence movement of treason. Approx. 1,000 people gathered in the regional capital Edinburgh, and approx. 2,000 more in Glasgow city, eponymous council area, waving Scottish flags.

Further protests took place throughout the year. For instance, on June 28, the nationalist-separatist group Now Scotland posted a video on social media in which they burned a Union Jack and called for disobedience and threatened with actions. On August 17, protesters shouted "Tory scum" at two leading conservative politicians in Perth city, Perth and Kinross council area.
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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2022



INTENSITY

- 5 WAR
- 4 LIMITED WAR
- 3 VIOLENT CRISIS

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2022, HIIK observed 90 active conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa, an increase of three compared to the previous year. Overall, 59 conflicts were on a violent level, the same total as last year. 15 wars continued, while two wars de-escalated to the level of limited war. As in the previous year, Sub-Saharan Africa was the region with the most observed conflicts at war level. Moreover, five limited wars were observed in 2022, a decrease of one compared to the previous year. One limited war was fought on the same level as in 2021, while two violent crises escalated to the level of a limited war, and four limited wars de-escalated to violent crises. In total, HIIK observed 21 highly violent conflicts in the region in 2022.

This year, the security situation in Nigeria continued to be volatile with the number of observed wars remaining at three. In the northeast of Nigeria, the war between the Boko Haram affiliated factions, Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS) and its splinter Islamic State's West African Province (ISWAP), on the one hand, and the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, on the other, continued for a twelfth consecutive year [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram); Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. This year also saw unprecedented attacks by ISWAP outside of Nigeria's northeast targeting Taraba State, Kogi State, Edo State, Ondo State, Niger State and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja, indicating an increase in its logistical and operational capabilities. Attacks by JAS on the other hand continued to decline while a presence of JAS fighters was reported in the country's northwestern Niger State and Kaduna State. The violent crisis between ISWAP and JAS continued as clashes in contested areas, mainly Sambisa forest, Borno State and the Lake Chad area, resulted in the death of at least 250 fighters [→ Nigeria (ISWAP – JAS)]. However, the war over subnational predominance between so-called bandits and the government that emerged as a consequence of the violent conflict between the mainly Christian farmers and the predominantly Fulani pastoralists accounted for most of the violence [→ Nigeria (farmers – pastoralists)]. Frequent clashes between bandit groups and security forces and violent attacks by bandits on civilians resulted in the highest death toll with approx. 3,736 fatalities and at least 1,064 abductions in the northwest and part of north central states of the country. Moreover, bandits have become increasingly sophisticated in their operations with reports suggesting the bandit groups to occasionally receive operational help from Islamist militant cells in the region [→ Nigeria (bandits)]. Additionally, the Boko Haram splinter Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan, also known as Ansaru, has reiterated its allegiance to al-Qaeda and increased its influence in the northwest, particularly Kaduna State. While instances of clashes between Ansaru and bandit groups took place, reports also alleged operational cooperation between Ansaru and bandits as well as Ansaru and ISWAP [→ Nigeria (Ansaru)]. In the southeast, the violent secession crisis between pro-Biafra groups and the government continued with a total of at least 316 deaths, an increase compared to last year [→ Nigeria (pro-Biafra groups / Biafra)].

The security situation in DR Congo, especially in its conflict-ridden eastern provinces, remained fragile. Conflicts resulted in the displacement of at least 2 million people, bringing the total number of displaced persons to at least 5.77 million. In the first half of the year, Bantu and Batwa militant groups continued to operate in Tanganyika province, while the Kata Katanga militia maintained its secessionist demands in Haut-Katanga province [→ DR Congo (Bantu – Batwa); DR Congo (Kata Katanga)]. In Kasai Central province, Kananga garrison military court convicted at least 59 Kamuina Nsapu members of crimes committed since 2016 [→ DR Congo (KN)]. In South Kivu province, various Raia Mutomboki factions and Mayi-Mayi groups continued to attack civilians and clash with government forces, resulting in at least 360 deaths [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)].

The state of siege in North Kivu and Ituri provinces was repeatedly extended due to the prevailing security risks in the region. In North Kivu province, Mayi-Mayi and Nyatura groups remained active in Masisi, Walikale, Lubero, and Rutshuru territories, while the majority of Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO) and Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo (FPIC) operations took place in Djugu, Mahagi, and northern Irumu territories of Ituri province [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.); DR Congo (Ituri militias)]. Due to the commitment of Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri, FPIC, and CODECO to the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program, the security situation in these territories improved. Nevertheless, the Islamist group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continued its attacks on the local population in Beni territory, North Kivu province, and Irumu territory, Ituri province, prompting the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) and Ugandan Armed Forces to carry out large scale attacks against its bases throughout the year [→ DR Congo, Uganda (ADF)]. However, attacks by militant groups in the eastern provinces increased in the second half of the year, as many FARDC and MONUSCO troops were recalled to Rutshuru territory, North Kivu province, where the M23 group had significantly increased its activity. Due to M23's advance to the provincial capital Goma, President Félix Tshisekedi allowed the deployment of 750 Sudanese and 900 Kenyan troops to assist Congolese forces in combating M23 [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)]. This decision led to widespread discontent among the population and opposition parties, who criticized the growing interference of foreign actors on Congolese territory [→ DR Congo (opposition)]. The new offensive of M23 furthermore prompted tensions between the DR Congo and Rwanda, as Rwanda was accused of supporting the group. The Rwandan government denied the allegations, denouncing the collaboration of Congolese forces with ethnic militant groups in the area. In addition to diplomatic efforts, regional intergovernmental organizations investigated instances of cross border shelling by both sides [→ DR Congo – Rwanda].

The war in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado, between the Islamist militia Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamma (ASWJ) and the government de-escalated to a limited war [→ Mozambique (ASWJ)]. This year, ASWJ primarily engaged in small-scale attacks against civilians and security forces, amidst a continued and growing presence of international and regional supporters of the government, such as the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique and Rwandan Defense Forces. Nevertheless, ASWJ remained active throughout the year and expanded its attacks on civilians and security forces outside Cabo Delgado, in the neighboring provinces of Niassa and Nampula. The violent crisis in the border region between Burundi and the DR Congo between various Burundian opposition groups and the governments of both countries continued unabated with several clashes over the course of the year [→ Burundi, DR Congo (FNL, RED-Tabara, Forebu)]. In the Angolan province of Cabinda, the violent crisis between the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), their armed wing Armed Forces of Cabinda, and the government continued with multiple clashes during the year [→ Angola (FLEC et al. / Cabinda)].

In South Africa, the violent crisis between groups of immigrants and xenophobic South African nationals continued, with

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

several suspected foreigners being injured and killed by xenophobic South African nationals [→ South Africa (xenophobes)]. Meanwhile, the violent crisis between the residents of the informal settlements and the government continued, mainly through spontaneous road blockades and clashes with the police [→ South Africa (socioeconomic protests)]. In addition, various opposition parties in the country continued to challenge the ruling African National Congress by disrupting parliamentary meetings while the violent crisis between them and the government continued [→ South Africa (opposition)]. In Zimbabwe, the newly founded opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change, formerly Movement for Democratic Change Alliance, continued to protest the government, which was occasionally met with violence by suspected supporters of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front [→ Zimbabwe (opposition)]. In eSwatini, the violent crisis between various opposition groups and the government continued, with several protests across the country's major cities, which occasionally turned violent [→ eSwatini (opposition)].

In Burkina Faso, the violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties and the government, which was led by then-President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, continued, and saw the new involvement of the military this year, leading to two coups d'état and the establishment of a transitional government. Anti-government protests calling for Kaboré's resignation led to the first coup and the creation of a military junta between January 23 and 24, and a second one on September 30, when Captain Ibrahim Traoré took control of the junta. While the new transition charter promised regular elections by July 2024, civil society groups continued to protest for Russian military influence and more security in the country throughout the year [→ Burkina Faso (opposition); Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]

In Guinea, the violent crisis over national power between various opposition groups and the ruling military junta of interim President Mamady Doumbouya continued. After last year's military coup d'état, the opposition denounced several transition plans proposed by the junta, which incited violent protests throughout the year. Opposition activists continued to clash with the police, leading to several deaths and dozens of injuries on both sides. Meanwhile, on October 21, ECOWAS and the government agreed on a 24-month transition plan to elections starting in January 2023 [→ Guinea (opposition)].

While the opposition conflicts in Niger and Mali saw no violence this year, last year's non-violent crisis in Côte d'Ivoire over national power between the government led by President Alassane Ouattara and various opposition parties escalated to a violent crisis [→ Niger (opposition); Mali (opposition)]. Ahead of the 2023 regional elections, opposition activists throughout the country staged protests over ballot manipulation and debates around unfair voting that turned violent between December 9 and 10. Clashes between opposition activists and police forces left dozens injured [→ Côte d'Ivoire (opposition)].

Similar protests occurred in this year's violent crisis over national power between the leading All People's Congress opposition party and the government in Sierra Leone. Between August 10 and 11, in the context of nationwide opposition protests against President Julius Maada Bio, clashes in the capital of Freetown between protesters and police forces left dozens killed [→ Sierra Leone (opposition)]. Deadly protests also erupted between the government and opposition activists in Guinea-Bissau [→ Guinea-Bissau (opposition)]. Just like last year, the oppositional conflict in Togo remained relatively peaceful [→ Togo (opposition)].

In Senegal, the secession conflict over the Casamance region between government military forces and the Movement of Democratic Forces in Casamance (MFDC) continued with two deadly operations by the Senegalese army in January and March this year. The operations targeted MFDC bases along the border with the Gambia, which led to several thousand Gambian civilians fleeing their towns in March. On August 4, the Senegalese government and an MFDC unit signed an agreement for the return of peace in the region [→ Senegal (MFDC / Casamance)].

The Sahel experienced continuous and increased attacks by IS and al-Qaeda affiliated Islamist militants, resulting in thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of displaced persons [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. Several international forces ended their counterinsurgency involvement in the region by the second half of this year, most notably French Barkhane and European Takuba forces. Meanwhile, Russian Wagner Group mercenary troops increased their presence in the region. Although officially only deployed in Mali, Wagner-related violence was also reported in Burkina Faso. While especially al-Qaeda-related attacks remained high in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, jihadist violence also expanded to Benin and Togo this year. Meanwhile, the countries' political and security-related instability spurred discontent among the population, increasing demands for better living conditions and reforms. Local communities and their self-defense militias, some of them supported by the respective governments, continued to carry out a high number of attacks against rivaling groups and fought against Islamist militants throughout the region [→ Mali (inter-communal rivalry / central Mali); Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)].

In Mali, jihadist violence moved back to the northern Tuareg regions this year, with IS Sahel and al-Qaeda-related groups clashing with militant groups of the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement. This increase to a limited war situation between the different militant groups left hundreds of civilians dead throughout the region, over 500 in March alone. In December, several 2015 signatory groups suspended their partnership agreement with the Malian government [→ Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)].

In the Horn of Africa, the war over national power and the orientation of the political system between the Islamist militant group al-Shabaab, on the one hand, and the Federal Government of Somalia, supported by the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), US Africom, and the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF), on the other hand, continued [→ Somalia, Kenya (al-Shabaab)]. The AU and Somali government announced in the beginning of the year that ATMIS troops would replace the AMISOM troops. While the violent attacks through al-Shabaab occurred mainly in Somalia, they also gained prominence in Kenya and in Somali Region, Ethiopia. In Somalia, the violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between the so-called Islamic State in Somalia (ISS), the rivaling Islamist militant groups al-Shabaab as well as the Federal Government of Somalia, supported by the Puntland Security Forces continued [→ Somalia (ISS)]. The violent clashes were mainly confined to Puntland.

Further, the conflict over subnational predominance between the self-declared state of Somaliland and the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, supported by the Federal Government of Somalia, escalated to a violent crisis [→ Somalia (Somaliland – Puntland)], while the violent clashes between various subclans in Somalia over subnational predominance and resources,

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

especially water and grazing land, continued [→ Somalia (subclan rivalry)].

The dispute over secession between the regional government of Somaliland and the Somali government [→ Somalia (Somaliland)], as well as the dispute over territory concerning maritime spaces in the Indian Ocean between the Kenyan government and the Federal Government of Somalia [→ Kenya – Somalia], continued.

The presidential and parliamentary elections in Kenya led to intense competition in the run-up to the elections on August 9 between two newly formed political coalitions, the Azimio la Umajio One-Kenya Coalition (Azimio), on the one hand, and the Kenya Kwanza Alliance (KKA). During the year, despite peaceful protests against alleged allocation election fraud, violent clashes between rival supporters and violent protests occurred all over the country, escalating the conflict over national power to a violent crisis [→ Kenya (opposition)].

The violent crisis over resources, such as grazing land and water, and subnational predominance between various ethnic groups and communal groups in Kenya continued [→ Kenya (inter-communal rivalry)]. Further, the dispute over national power between the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) and the Kenyan government, continued [→ Kenya (MRC / Coast)].

The security situation in Ethiopia remained complex and fragile at a high level of conflict intensity. The war between the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) with its armed wing, the Tigray Defence Forces, on the one hand, and the Ethiopian as well as the Eritrean government, supported by Amhara militias and Afar regional forces, on the other, continued [→ Ethiopia (TPLF / Tigray)]. Particularly in the Afar region, the TPLF attacks at the beginning of the year resulted in over 300,000 IDPs. Humanitarian aid was able to flow into Tigray for the first time since December 2021, after the Ethiopian federal government declared a humanitarian truce and the TPLF agreed to this process. While the truce between the TPLF and Ethiopian National Defense Forces remained intact, Eritrean Defense Forces attacked the TPLF with heavy artillery in Tigray region, resulting in counter offensives by TPLF. After alternating periods of violent clashes and without violent clashes throughout the year, representatives of the Ethiopian government and the TPLF agreed to end hostilities, mediated by the AU. However, developments and peace processes remained tense.

The war over subnational predominance between the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) with its armed wing, the Oromia Liberation Army (OLA), and the federal government continued [→ Ethiopia (OLF / Oromia)]. The conflict expanded over the Oromia Region and Amhara Region with increasing targeting of civilians. OLA proposed a humanitarian truce in August, which was rejected by the Ethiopian government. Furthermore, the war between various ethnic groups over subnational predominance and agrarian land continued, with violent clashes especially in the Oromia region and Somali Region [→ Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)].

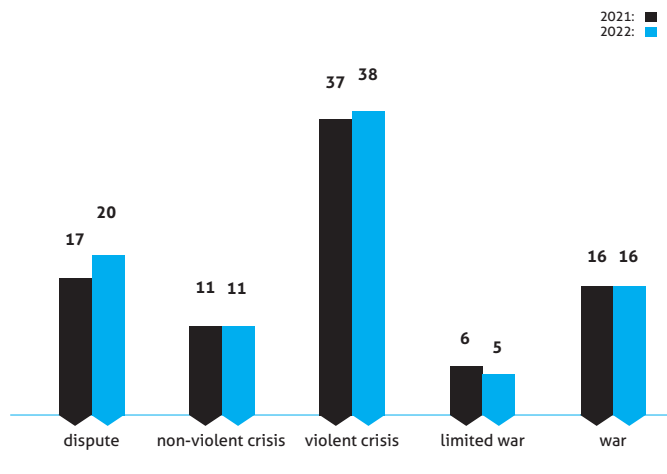
In contrast to previous years, violence between various Ethiopian opposition groups, such as the Kimant Democratic Party and Gumuz People's Democratic Movement, on the one hand, and the government headed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, on the other hand, remained at a lower level throughout the year, de-escalating the conflict over national power and the orientation of the political system to a violent crisis [→ Ethiopia (opposition)]. While national talks were held in January after 14 months of civil war and turmoil, and several opposition politicians were released, mass arrests resumed in May, including reporters and government critics.

The violent crisis over resources and territory in the fertile al-Fashqa triangle between the government of Ethiopia, supported by Ethiopian militias, and the government of Sudan continued [→ Ethiopia – Sudan]. In July, bilateral talks took place between Ethiopian Prime Minister Ahmed and Sudanese military chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, which led to an agreement to form a joint committee to resolve the border conflict. The reconciliation process continued in December.

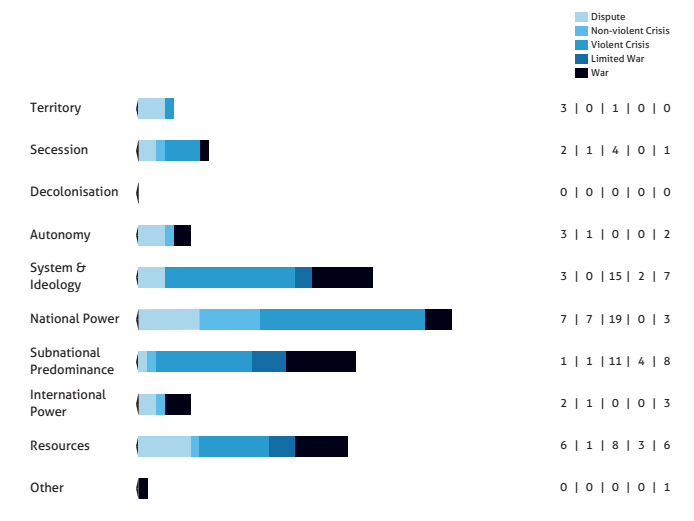
In the conflict over the construction and control of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) between Egypt, on the one hand, and Ethiopia and Sudan, on the other, demands for a binding legal agreement continued [→ Egypt – Ethiopia, Sudan (GERD)].

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2022



SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Overview: Conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa in 2022

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Angola (FLEC et al. / Cabinda)*	FLEC, MIC vs. government	secession	1975	•	3
Angola (opposition)*	UNITA vs. MPLA	national power	1975	NEW	3
Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)*	Gourmantché, Koglweogo et al., Mossi vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups	subnational predominance, resources	2016	•	4
Burkina Faso (opposition)*	opposition vs. government vs. military	national power	2014	•	3
Burundi (opposition)*	ADC-Ikibiri, CNL, RED-Tabara, UPRONA vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	3
Burundi – Rwanda*	Burundi vs. Rwanda	international power	2015	•	1
Burundi, DR Congo (FNL, RED-Tabara, Forebu)*	Burundi, DR Congo vs. FNL, Forebu, RED-Tabara	national power	2005	•	3
Cameroon (English-speaking minority)*	English-speaking minority vs. government	secession, autonomy	2016	•	5
Central African Republic (militant groups)*	militant groups vs. government	national power, resources	2012	•	5
Central African Republic, DR Congo (LRA)*	LAR vs. CAR, DR Congo	resources	1987	↓	1
Chad (inter-communal rivalry)*	pastoralists vs. farmers	subnational predominance	1947	•	3
Chad (militant groups)*	CCSMR, CSD, FACT, UFR vs. government	national power	2005	↓	2
Chad (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	1990	•	3
Côte d'Ivoire (militant groups)*	militant groups vs. government	national power	2012	•	2
Côte d'Ivoire (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	1999	↗	3
Djibouti (FRUD)*	FRUD vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1991	•	1
Djibouti (opposition)*	Lamuka vs. FCC vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	↓	1
Djibouti – Eritrea*	Djibouti vs. Eritrea	territory	2008	•	1
DR Congo (Bantu – Batwa)*	Bantu militias vs. Twa militias	subnational predominance	2013	↘	3
DR Congo (Ituri militias)*	CODECO, FPIC, FRPI, Zaire militia vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	1999	↘	4
DR Congo (Kata Katanga)*	Kata Katanga vs. government	secession, subnational predominance, resources	2011	•	3
DR Congo (KN)*	KN vs. government	subnational predominance	2016	•	2
DR Congo (M23 factions)*	M23 factions vs. government, other militias	national power, subnational predominance	2004	↑	5
DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)*	NDC-R vs. APCLS vs. Mayi-Mayi groups vs. Nyatura groups vs. FPP/AP vs. Banyamulenge militias vs. Bafuliro militias vs. Babembe militias vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2003	•	5
DR Congo (opposition)*	church groups, civil society groups, opposition parties vs. government	national power	1997	•	3
DR Congo - Rwanda*	DR Congo vs. Rwanda	international power	1998	NEW	2
DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR, CNRD)*	FDLR vs. CNRD vs. DR Congo, Rwanda	subnational predominance, resources	1994	•	3
DR Congo, Uganda (ADF)*	ADF vs. DR Congo, Uganda	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	1995	•	5
Egypt – Ethiopia, Sudan (GERD)*	Egypt vs. Ethiopia vs. Sudan	resources	2011	↘	1
Eritrea (RSADO)*	RSADO vs. government	autonomy	1999	•	1
eSwatini (opposition)*	COSATU, PUDEMO, SUDF vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1998	•	3
Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)*	Oromo vs. Amhara vs. Konso vs. Ale vs. Issa vs. Afar vs. other ethnic groups	subnational predominance, resources	2017	•	5
Ethiopia (OLF / Oromia)*	OLF vs. government	subnational predominance	1992	•	5
Ethiopia (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2005	↘	3
Ethiopia – Sudan*	Ethiopia vs. Sudan	territory, resources	1902	•	3
Ethiopia, Eritrea (TPLF / Tigray)*	Eritrea, Ethiopia vs. TPLF	system/ideology	2020	•	5
Gabon (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2009	•	1
Gambia (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2016	↘	2

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Ghana (HSGF et al. / Western Togoland)*	HSGF et al. vs. government	secession	2017	•	2
Guinea (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2006	•	3
Guinea-Bissau (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1998	↗	3
Kenya (inter-communal rivalry)*	Borana vs. Cattle rustlers vs. Degodia vs. Kamba vs. Marakwet vs. Pokot, Somali vs. Turkana	subnational predominance, resources	1963	•	3
Kenya (MRC / Coast)*	MRC vs. government	secession	2008	•	1
Kenya (opposition)*	Azimio la Umajo One-Kenya Coalition vs. government	national power	1999	↑	3
Kenya – Somalia*	Kenya vs. Somalia	territory, resources	2015	•	1
Mali (CMA et al. / Azawad)*	CMA et al. vs. government	autonomy	1989	•	1
Mali (inter-communal rivalry / central Mali)*	Bambara, Dogon, Dozo vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups	subnational predominance, resources	2012	↘	3
Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)*	CMA vs. Platform vs. Islamist Groups	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2012	↗	4
Mali (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2012	↘	2
Mali et al. (IS-Sahel)*	IS-Sahel vs. Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger	system/ideology, international power	2016	•	5
Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)*	Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, Ansaroul Islam, AQIM, JNIM, Macina Liberation Front vs. Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, France, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Togo, USA	system/ideology, international power	1998	•	5
Mozambique (ASWJ)*	ASWJ vs. government	system/ideology	2017	↘	4
Mozambique (RENAMO)*	RENAMO, RENAMO Military Junta vs. government	national power	2012	↓	1
Niger (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2009	↘	2
Nigeria (Ansaru)*	Ansaru vs. government	system/ideology	2012	↗	3
Nigeria (APC supporters – PDP supporters)*	APC supporters vs. PDP supporters	system/ideology, national power	1960	•	3
Nigeria (bandits)*	bandits vs. government	subnational predominance, other	2016	•	5
Nigeria (farmers – pastoralists)*	farmers vs. pastoralists	subnational predominance, resources	1960	•	3
Nigeria (Ijaw groups / Niger Delta)*	CNDA, Ijaw groups, NCNDE-A, NDA, SELF vs. government, International oil companies	autonomy, resources	1997	↘	2
Nigeria (Islamic Movement)*	IMN vs. government	system/ideology	1991	•	3
Nigeria (ISWAP – JAS)*	ISWAP vs. JAS	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2016	•	3
Nigeria (pro-Biafra groups / Biafra)*	pro-Biafra groups vs. government	secession	1967	•	3
Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)*	ISWAP vs. Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	system/ideology, international power	2015	•	5
Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)*	Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria vs. JAS	system/ideology	2003	•	5
Republic of Congo (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2015	•	1
Rwanda (opposition)*	FDU-Inkingi vs. government	national power	2003	•	1
Rwanda – Uganda*	Rwanda vs. Uganda	international power	2018	•	1
Senegal (MFDC / Casamance)*	MFDC vs. government	secession	1982	•	3
Sierra Leone (opposition)*	APC vs. government	national power	2007	•	3
Somalia (ISS)*	ISS vs. al-Shabaab vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2015	•	3
Somalia (Puntland – Somaliland)*	regional government of Puntland vs. regional government of Somaliland	subnational predominance	1998	↗	3
Somalia (Somaliland)*	regional government of Somaliland vs. government	secession	1991	•	1
Somalia (subclan rivalry)*	Gaalje'el subclans vs. Habar-Gidir-Ayr subclans vs. Hawadle subclans vs. Merehan subclans	subnational predominance, resources	1991	•	3
Somalia, Kenya (al-Shabaab)*	al-Shabaab vs. Kenya, Somalia	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	5

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
South Africa (opposition)*	civil rights groups, DA, EFF, IFP vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2015	↘	3
South Africa (socioeconomic protests)*	residents of informal settlements vs. government	system/ideology	2018	•	3
South Africa (xenophobes)*	immigrants vs. xenophobes	system/ideology	1994	•	3
South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)*	Murle vs. Dinka vs. Nuer vs. Azande vs. Balanda	subnational predominance, resources	2011	•	5
South Sudan (opposition)*	NAS, SPLM/A-IO-Kitwang vs. government, SPLM/A-IO-RM	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
South Sudan – Sudan*	South Sudan vs. Sudan	territory, resources	2011	•	1
Sudan (Darfur)*	SRF vs. government, RSF vs. 'Arab' militias	autonomy, subnational predominance, resources	2003	•	5
Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)*	Fulani et al., Fur, Masalit vs. Hawazma et al., Misseriya, Taisha	subnational predominance, resources	2007	↗	4
Sudan (opposition)*	FFC vs. resistance committees vs. government, RSF	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
Sudan (SPLM/A-North / South Kordofan, Blue Nile)*	SPLM/A-North vs. government	autonomy, resources	2011	•	1
Sudan, South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry / Abyei)*	Ngok Dinka vs. Misseriya	subnational predominance, resources	2011	•	3
Tanzania (opposition)*	ACT-Wazalendo, CHADEMA, CUF vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1993	•	1
Togo (opposition)*	ANC, MPDD vs. government	national power	1963	•	2
Uganda (inter-communal rivalry / Rwenzururu)*	Bakonzo vs. Bamba et al.	subnational predominance, resources	2012	•	1
Uganda (opposition)*	DP, FDC, Jeema, NEED, NUP, PFT, UPC vs. government	national power	2001	↘	2
Zimbabwe (opposition)*	CCC vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2000	•	3

¹ Conflicts marked with * are without description

² Mentioned are only those conflict parties relevant for the period under review

³ Change in intensity compared to the previous year: ↑ or ↗ escalation by one or more than one level of intensity; ↓ or ↘ deescalation by one or more than one level of intensity; • no change

⁴ Levels of intensity: 5 = war; 4 = limited war; 3 = violent crisis; 2 = non-violent crisis; 1 = dispute

⁵ HIIK considers statehood to be non-contested if the state is an official UN members state.

Disputed statehood is marked with a ° if a territory is recognized by at least one other official UN member state ("limited recognition")

ANGOLA (FLEC ET AL. / GABINDA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1975**

Conflict parties: FLEC, MIC vs. government
 Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over the secession of Cabinda between the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), their armed wing Armed Forces of Cabinda (FAC) and the Movement for Independence of Cabinda (MIC), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, FLEC-FAC and the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) clashed continuously. However, detailed information about the clashes remained scarce, and the fatalities reported by FLEC-FAC have often not been confirmed by third parties. As in previous years, the government did not recognize or confirm any actions or events by FLEC-FAC, except for a single statement by Angola’s interior minister on February 19, in which he acknowledged the existence of FLEC-FAC and its armed struggle in Cabinda.

Allegedly, on April 11, FLEC-FAC clashed with FAA in the villages of Kisungo and Tando Masele, killing twelve Angolan soldiers and four civilians and injuring another eight. On June 1, FAA members attacked FLEC-FAC in an unspecified area in Cabinda, leaving two civilians dead. Similarly, on June 22, during another FAA attack on a FLEC-FAC military post near the village Sanda Massala, reportedly two civilians died and another was injured. In another clash on September 3 in the Micuma area, FLEC-FAC members killed four FAA soldiers. Two days later, on September 5, FLEC-FAC again clashed with the FAA in the same area, killing four soldiers.

On August 24, general elections were held resulting in the re-election of current President João Lourenço and his ruling party People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola. Ahead of and after the election, FLEC-FAC and FAA clashed multiple times. For example, between August 9 and 10, FLEC-FAC claimed to have killed twelve FAA soldiers and wounded several others in the villages of Buco-Zau and Dinge. Also, on August 10, in the village of Chimbanza, FLEC-FAC allegedly attacked an FAA patrol, killing seven soldiers, while one FLEC-FAC member died. On August 24, FLEC-FAC claimed to have killed eleven FAA soldiers near the Cabindan border with the DR Congo. Between August 29 and 30, FLEC-FAC claimed to have killed 18 FAA soldiers in the Necuto area and Dinge area.

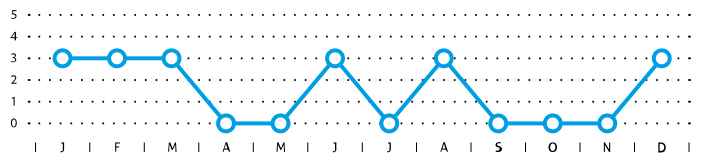
The FAA also attacked FLEC-FAC and its alleged supporters in the neighbouring DR Congo. For example, on May 31, in the village of Mbaka-Nkosi, Kongo Central, DR Congo, the FAA attacked FLEC-FAC, leaving six civilians dead. Similarly, on June 11, FLEC-FAC and FAA clashed, killing three civilians in the village of Mpata, Kongo Central.

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BURKINA FASO (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: Gourmantché, Koglweogo et al., Mossi vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources



The limited war over subnational predominance and re-sources between various ethnic groups, such as Mossi, Gourmantche, Dogon, with their Koglweogo self-defense militias, and Volunteers for the Defence of the Fatherland (VDP), on the one hand, the Fulani ethnic group, on the other, and Islamist groups as a third party, continued.

Since 2016, inter-communal rivalry between the Fulani ethnic group – accused of cooperating with Islamist groups – and agrarian communities, particularly the Mossi, Dogon, and Gourmantché, had been observed. The latter have been the targets of armed Islamist attacks and are perceived to be pro-government, making up the majority of VDP militia members. Throughout the years, a large number of Fulani and suspected Islamist militants were allegedly kidnapped and killed by self-defense militias involved in counterterrorism operations, specifically VDP, allegedly supported by the government. Although total fatalities and injuries continued to decline, at least 20,000 IDPs were reported this year.

During the first eight months, several attacks, especially by VDP militias within the context of major anti-terrorism operations and specifically targeted towards Fulani communities, left at least 73 dead. For example, on January 8, the VDP held a Fulani hostage for three days in the Centre Nord region, accusing him of spying. On January 11, VDP killed the hostage and three other Fulani associated with him. On February 17, in the city of Fada N’Gourma, Est region, VDP militias killed eight Fulani and kidnapped another four. Ten days later, in the Sud-Ouest region, VDP militias killed a Fulani community leader in a coordinated attack together with government security forces. On March 15, near Fada N’Gourma, members of the ethnic Dogon self-defense militia Dozo kidnapped and killed three Fulani and accused them of being terrorists. Later, on March 28, two VDP members kidnapped and killed another Fulani in the same region. On June 9, in the Centre Sud region, the Burkinabé army together with VDP militias killed several civilians near a village inhabited by a majority of Fulani. Similar incidents occurred on August 4 in the village of Guilyende, Est, and on August 8 in the locality of Tougouri, Centre-Nord region, when the army and VDP militias in total executed at least 54 Fulani.

Violence increased again towards the end of the year. For instance, on December 15, Dozo militias abducted and killed five Fulani in the town of Loropeni, Sud-Ouest. Seven VDP militia members kidnapped a father and son from their shop in the town of Kongoussi, Centre Nord, on the night of December 18. The men were found dead two days later. On December 22, in the village of Marmisga, Nord region,

VDP militias allegedly looted property and abducted and executed several civilians, including the customary chief of the Fulani community. On the night between December 30 and 31, VDP militias killed 28 Fulani community members in the town of Nouna, Boucle du Mouhoun region, after Islamist groups attacked the VDP headquarters of the same region the night before [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. brb

BURKINA FASO (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government vs. military

Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties and the overthrown government led by then-President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and his People's Movement for Progress Party (MPP) continued. This year, two coups d'état with the new involvement of the military occurred.

On January 22, anti-government protesters calling for Kaboré's resignation due to deteriorating security in the country clashed with security forces in the capital Ouagadougou, in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso, Hauts Bassins region, and in the city of Kaya, Centre-Nord region. Two days later, on the night between January 23 and 24, the government led by Kaboré and MPP was overthrown in the first coup d'état by military Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba and the self-proclaimed military junta Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration, after soldiers staged mutinies in army barracks throughout the country and attacked Kaboré's Ouagadougou residence. During the coup, two people were killed and at least a dozen injured, while Kaboré was detained by the armed military forces. Upon taking power, the military junta announced the suspension of the constitution and the national assembly and on March 2, a transitional government was set up while Damiba was sworn in as president for a period of three years. However, on March 25, ECOWAS pressured the Burkinabé transition government with targeted sanctions and set an ultimatum to free Kaboré. Consequently, on April 6, Kaboré was released.

On April 23, in Ouagadougou, the Burkina-Russia Movement, a new coalition of several civil society organizations, protested against Damiba's incapacity to effectively fight the growing Islamist terrorism in the region and asked the transitional government to forge a new partnership with Russia in order to effectively deal with the insecurity and number of IDPs [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. On September 30, Burkina Faso experienced its second coup d'état. After heavy gunfire broke out in the capital, where opposition supporters seen waving Russian flags blocked main roads, military Captain Ibrahim Traoré took control of the military junta deposing Damiba, and claiming to act in the name of national security. A new transition charter, released mid-October, maintained Damiba's commitment to hold elections by July 2024 and prohibited transitional leadership from running in polls. On October 28, Traoré took office as transitional president. One month later, on November 28, hundreds of Traoré supporters gathered in the capital to denounce another attempted coup, which allegedly took place between November 26 and 27. Traoré confirmed the failed coup on December 1. Although claiming that he knew the identity of the person behind the foiled coup attempt, he

confirmed his intent not to arrest anyone in order to establish a dialogue with the opposition parties. frl

BURUNDI, DR CONGO (FNL, RED-TABARA, FOREBU)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2005**

Conflict parties: Burundi, DR Congo vs. FNL, Forebu, RED-Tabara

Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power in Burundi between the Resistance for Rule of Law in Burundi (RED-Tabara), the Popular Forces of Burundi (Forebu/FPB), and a militant faction of the National Forces of Liberation (FNL), on the one hand, and the governments of Burundi and the DR Congo (DRC), on the other, continued. Violent clashes primarily affected South Kivu Province, DRC, particularly Uvira and Mwenga territory. Over the course of the year, at least 3,000 civilians fled the area.

Throughout the year, the Armed Defense Forces of Burundi (FDNB) repeatedly clashed with RED-Tabara in South Kivu. For instance, on January 15, FDNB attacked RED-Tabara and Mayi-Mayi Ilunga at Kitembe and Kitoga villages [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)]. The clash left twelve FDNB soldiers and seven civilians dead, three Mayi-Mayi Ilunga fighters wounded, and 30 houses burnt, as well as displaced civilians from seven villages.

On February 2, the Burundian pro-government youth militia Imbonerakure, Gumino and the Twigwaneho-Makanika clashed with Red-Tabara and the FNL in Maheta Village, South Kivu, with no fatalities reported. Similarly, on April 23, after looting 102 cows in Kiziba village, Red-Tabara and Mayi-Mayi Mupekenya clashed with FDNB, the Imbonerakure, Twigwaneho-Makanika and Gumino, killing five members of the Mayi-Mayi Mupekenya while another was captured. In addition, houses of civilians were burned, one civilian was killed and another wounded.

On May 27, FDNB, Imbonerakure, and Gumino clashed with RED-Tabara and Mayi-Mayi Ilunga in Lubumba, Kitoga, and Rubuga villages, killing twelve RED-Tabara and 42 FDNB and allied fighters. On August 3, Imbonerakure clashed with RED-Tabara again, in the area around Birimba locality of Rumonge city, eponymous province, as well as in Itombwe forest, leaving RED-Tabara fighters dead and 24 wounded. Imbonerakure gained control of the area.

Furthermore, the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) together with the FDNB frequently clashed with FNL in South Kivu. For example, on September 20, FARDC and FDNB started a joint operation on an FNL position in the Namaramara area. According to the FNL, they successfully repelled the attack, killing 20 soldiers of both FARDC and FDNB and capturing one FDNB member, as well as injuring three FNL fighters.

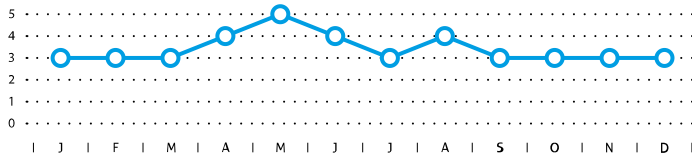
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CAMEROON (ENGLISH-SPEAKING MINORITY)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: English-speaking minority vs. gov-
ernment

Conflict items: secession, autonomy



The war over autonomy or secession of the Southern Cameroons region between various groups of the English-speaking minorities, such as the Ambazonia Defense Forces (ADF), the Ambazonia Self-Defense Council (ASC), and the Southern Cameroons Defense Forces, on the one hand, and the French-speaking Cameroonian government, on the other, continued.

The ASC and ADF were important institutions of the main decision-making and executive bodies of the self-declared Federal Republic of Ambazonia, the Interim Government of the Federal Republic of Ambazonia, and the Ambazonia Governing Council, respectively.

Throughout the year, violent clashes between government forces and separatists resulted in at least 507 deaths and 597,000 IDPs. May was the deadliest month, with 120 people killed in 26 attacks.

Most of the fighting occurred in the anglophone Northwest region (NW) and the Southwest region (SW), the conflict only occasionally spread to neighboring francophone regions in the country. For instance, on July 2 and July 12, separatists launched IED attacks on the Mokolo market in Yaoundé, Centre region, killing one and injuring three. It was the first time since 2020 that separatist groups targeted the francophone capital. On June 7, at least 100 separatists ambushed a military checkpoint in Njitapon, West region, killing at least five security personnel.

As in previous years, the separatists repeatedly ambushed government forces in NW and SW. For instance, on August 28, separatists of the Bafut 7 Karta group launched an IED attack on an armored military car convoy in Bafut, NW, killing at least three soldiers and injuring an unspecified number. The attack was part of a series of at least three separatist attacks on government forces in NW that day. Separatists also made use of RPGs. For example, on September 9, separatist fighters used an RPG in Manyemen, SW, killing two soldiers in a military convoy.

The Cameroon Armed Forces (CAF) conducted several military operations against separatist groups. For example, on March 18, CAF claimed to have killed 20 separatists during a military offensive of the year, which took place in five NW towns and continued for several weeks. This led to hundreds of separatists withdrawing to the Nigerian border region. Between July 28 and 31, CAF carried out a military offensive in Batibo, NW, resulting in the death of 17 ADF separatists.

Both sides continued to target civilians. For instance, on May 29, separatists raided Obonyi and Kajifu village, SW, abducted civilians and forced them to join their fight against the government. As a consequence, clashes broke out between the separatists and civilians. Subsequently, an unknown number of civilians fled to the neighboring Nigerian

villages of Bashu and Danare, where they were pursued by the separatists, leaving at least 19 dead and 70 injured. On July 18, government forces killed three civilians for allegedly violating a curfew in Guneku, NW. The curfew had been imposed by government forces a few days prior. On September 6, separatists fired on a bus traveling to Kumba, SW, killing at least five and injuring eight civilians. Later that month, on September 18, government forces killed two civilians, accusing them of being accomplices of separatists.

Starting in August, several separatist groups announced plans to disrupt the new school year, leading to additional troop deployment in NW and SW regions by the government. As in previous years, anglophone separatists had repeatedly tried to hinder students from going to school, as they rejected francophone education. For instance, on September 6, separatists imposed a ten-day lockdown targeting schools in NW and SW regions.

As in 2021, the violence led to protests by the population. For instance, on February 11, separatists of the Ambazonia Restoration Forces (ARF) set a school dormitory on fire in Mamfe, SW, in an attempt to disrupt Youth Day, a national day commemorating the UN referendum in British Cameroon in 1961. On June 8, the hospital in Mamfe was set on fire, but no injuries were reported. While the government held ARF separatists responsible, the group denied their involvement. As a consequence, on June 13, several hundred people allegedly protested in Mamfe against separatist attacks in SW.

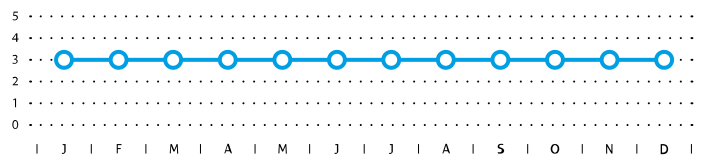
On September 14, mediators announced the end of the Swiss-led dialogue initiative launched in 2019 between the government and anglophone groups at President Paul Biya's request without an agreement. However, on October 10, government officials and representatives of several anglophone separatist groups met in Canada as part of a new initiative to negotiate the peace process. ast

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: militant groups vs. government

Conflict items: national power, resources



The war over national power and resources between militant groups, such as the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) and anti-Balaka militias, on the one hand, and the government, supported by the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and MINUSCA, as well as Russian private military contractors (PMCs), on the other, continued.

The security situation remained volatile, especially in western and central parts of the country. In 2020, the Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC), Patriotic Front for the Renaissance in the Central African Republic (FPRC), Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation (3R), as well as Patriotic Movement for the Central African Republic (MPC) and

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Mokom and Ndomaté anti-Balaka wings had formed the CPC with the aim of disrupting national security and capturing the capital of Bangui.

At the beginning of the year, militants from an anti-Balaka faction loyal to President Faustin Archange Touadera clashed with UPC rebels on multiple occasions. For instance, on January 14, at least ten civilians were killed and several others injured during a violent clash in Yagoundaba village, Ouaka prefecture. On February 2, twelve people were killed in clashes in Komayo and Boyo villages in the Ouaka prefecture, and residents fled the villages.

On February 9, Russian PMCs allegedly killed more than 90 civilians in various locations in Bria, Haute-Kotto prefecture, all of which have gold and diamond mining sites. The most violent attack took place in the village of Yangoudroudja, leaving 60 people dead and around 200 houses destroyed. In June and July, FACA clashed with CPC when they attempted to capture various towns in the Basse-Kotto prefecture. On June 13, FACA, supported by Russian PMCs, took control of the town of Dimbi, Basse-Kotto prefecture, from CPC. On July 3, violent clashes broke out again, when UPC rebels attacked Dimbi and the national army. FACA received support from MINUSCA and Russian PMCs in the UPC attack, killing twelve rebels and wounding five others. On July 15, CPC unsuccessfully attempted to capture the town of Kembe, no fatalities were reported. By August, CPC took control of several regions of the country, including Mbomou and Haute-Kotto prefectures.

In the second half of the year, the number of violent attacks decreased. Reorganizing itself in the north of the country, CPC established itself in the Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture. Several new CPC military leaders were appointed in Ndélé on July 20.

Since April 2021, there has been a rise in landmine explosions in the northwest. By March, over 30 people had been killed by landmines, particularly in Lim-Pende, Mambere-Kadei, Ouham-Pende, and Nana-Mambere prefectures. MINUSCA started demining operations in Bambari, Ouaka. Similar operations started in February in the prefectures of Nana-Mambere, Mambere-Kadei, Ouham-Pende, and Lim-Pende. On October 3, a landmine detonated, killing three MINUSCA soldiers in Ouham-Pende.

The security situation for humanitarian workers remained highly critical. The UN condemned two attacks against humanitarian IOs which took place on April 7 and 9. During the attacks, CPC rebels wounded six humanitarian workers of the NGO Action Against Hunger and one staff member of a health center. As a consequence, Action Against Hunger announced that it was suspending parts of its activities in Basse-Kotto.

At the end of December, 740,833 civilians were seeking asylum, over 346,689 of them in Cameroon. In November 2022, there was a total of 518,116 IDPs. From May to August, most IDPs were located in Ouham-Pendé prefecture in the northwestern part of the Central African Republic, near the border with Cameroon and Chad. ^{jug}

CHAD (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1947**

Conflict parties: pastoralists vs. farmers

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between farmers and pastoralists continued. Natural disasters, the

drying up of Lake Chad, increased desertification, and soil degradation exacerbated inter-communal tensions over the control of dwindling resources such as grazing land and water. Conflict often stemmed from pastoralists' animals encroaching onto farmers' agricultural land. In 2022, at least 66 people were killed and 22 people injured. The regions of Moyen-Chari Region, Logone Oriental Region, and Guéra Region were particularly affected by the conflict.

Throughout the year, farmers and pastoralists continued to clash on multiple occasions. For instance, on February 9, pastoralists attacked farmers with guns as retaliation for the death of one pastoralist, leaving 13 dead in Sandana village, Moyen-Chari Province. Subsequently, between February 12 and 25, hundreds of people protested against the pastoralist attack in Sandana and the town of Sarh, Moyen-Chari Region, as well as in the town of Koumra, Madoul Region.

Violence peaked in August and September. For instance, on August 19, at least nine people were killed in clashes near Mengalang, Logone Oriental Region. Defense and security forces were deployed to the scene. Between September 13 and 15, Sara-Kaba ethnic farmers clashed with pastoralists from Roro for three consecutive days, leaving at least 19 people dead and at least 20 injured. The clashes started in Marabe village, Moyen-Chari Region, when farmers allegedly accused pastoralists of destroying their crops and fighting subsequently spilled over to four neighboring villages. Parts of the villages and fields were set on fire. Security forces eventually broke up the clashing parties. On September 30, in clashes in Kouka Margni, Guéra Region, eleven people were killed, when farmers allegedly ambushed the herders as they crossed transhumance corridors. ^{two}

CHAD (MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: **2** | Change: **↓** | Start: **2005**

Conflict parties: CCSMR, CSD, FACT, UFR vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The limited war over national power between various militant groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. The militant groups were mainly organized in the Front for Change and Concord in Chad (FACT), Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic (CCSMR), and the Union of Resistance Forces (UFR).

Since the death of the president on 04/20/21, the constitution remained suspended by the military and the government dissolved. A transitional military council (CMT) was implemented, headed by Mahamat Idriss Déby, son of the former president, who promised to lead the country towards elections after a maximum of 18 months. He proposed a national dialogue between militant groups, unions, the ruling party and civil society representatives to work out a constitutional framework that would enable upcoming elections.

Peace talks between the CMT and representatives of armed groups started in March. On August 8, a peace deal was signed by various actors, including over 40 rebel groups and the CMT in Doha, Qatar. The rebel groups agreed to a ceasefire while the CMT agreed to not launch military or policy operations against groups who had signed the deal and guaranteed the security of all participants in the peace talks. As part of the peace deal, the CMT and representatives of various opposition and rebel groups agreed to launch a

national peace dialogue in the capital N'Djamena, on August 20, which was attended by over 1,400 delegates. However, eight rebel groups, including the largest group FACT, did not sign the deal. They criticized the CMT for not meeting their demands, such as the release of over 300 of their fighters from governmental prisons, and urged Déby to not participate in future elections. The CMT refused their demands and Déby urged the rebel group to participate in the national peace dialogue, which FACT boycotted. However, the national elections that Déby promised to hold in October did not take place despite pressure from the international community. On October 20, Déby announced an extension of the transition period for another 24 months and his candidacy in the elections. This statement was met by demonstrations in several towns [→ Chad (opposition)]. FACT and international actors such as France, the AU, and the EU also urged Déby to step down. mbu

CHAD (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1990**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between opposition groups and the government continued. After the death of former president Idriss Déby on 04/20/21 and the dissolution of the government, a Transitional Military Council (CMT) was formed, headed by Déby's son Mahamat Idriss Déby [→ Chad (militant groups)]. The transition period to democratic elections was extended several times causing protests among the opposition groups, such as the Transformateur Party and the Wakit Tamma Platform, consisting of opposition parties, students, and civil society. It is noteworthy that during the transition period, the conflict became significantly more violent as compared to previous years.

On February 15, protests led by the Wakit Tamma Platform, contesting national power, resulted in clashes with police forces in the capital of N'Djamena. The police used tear gas to disperse protesters, leaving at least ten injured. On March 13, the Wakit Tamma Platform joined the peace talks held between the CMT and various opposition and rebel groups in Doha, Qatar, in which the parties aimed to plan Chad's transition to democracy. On April 7, the Wakit Tamma Platform left the negotiations, claiming CMT was not committed to a democratic transition.

On May 14, clashes broke out in N'Djamena between security forces and protesters opposing France's support for CMT and alleged influence on domestic affairs. Security forces used water cannons and tear gas to disperse protesters. Seven petrol stations belonging to French oil company Total were damaged and at least twelve police personnel injured. On May 16, five opposition leaders were arrested in N'Djamena for their alleged involvement in the protests. On June 6, six opposition leaders were arrested and sentenced to a one-year suspension of political activities for partaking in the protest.

In September and October, supporters of the Transformateurs party and police forces clashed on multiple occasions. For instance, on September 1, police forces arrested several members of the Transformateurs party near the party's headquarters in N'Djamena, for allegedly organizing an anti-government demonstration. On September 2, military police surrounded the headquarters and locked up the premises.

One day later, security forces used tear gas against people gathered for the party leader's speech. On September 9, when a demonstration in N'Djamena erupted into clashes, police forces used tear gas and live ammunition, injuring at least 80 people. On October 20, clashes erupted during protests against the two-year extension of the transition period initiated by the CMT, in the cities of N'Djamena, Moundou, Logone Occidental Region, and Koumra, Mandoul Region. Security forces used tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition to disperse protesters, leaving at least 50 dead, including at least twelve members of the security forces, and injuring over 300 more. After the incident, a temporary curfew was announced and seven political opposition parties were suspended for three months. The targeted parties were Les Transformateurs, Front Populaire pour la Fédération (FPF), Parti Socialiste sans Frontière (PSF), Les Patriotes (LP), l'Al Takhadoum, Rassemblement pour la Justice et l'Égalité des Tchadiens (RAJET) and Parti des Démocrates pour le Nouveau (PDR), the Ministry of Territorial Administration said in a decree. Over 1,300 people were arrested, 500 of whom were detained at Koro Toro maximum security prison, and at least 500 people were internally displaced. In November and December, over 220 protesters were sentenced to up to three years in prison for their involvement in the protest on October 20. dak

CÔTE D'IVOIRE (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **1999**


Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: national power

The non-violent crisis over national power between the ruling party Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP), led by President Alassane Ouattara, on the one hand, and various opposition parties, especially the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast – African Democratic Rally, and the African People's Party – Cote d'Ivoire (PPA-CI), led by former president Laurent Gbagbo, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

On March 4 and July 14, leading political figures from the government and opposition met in the capital Yamoussoukro and in Abidjan city, eponymous region, to negotiate reconciliation measures. The rare political dialogue resulted in an agreement signed by all parties and included the almost unanimous election of a new president for the national assembly. On August 6, the government issued a pardon for Gbagbo's 20 year prison sentence, and on November 26, Charles Blé Goudé, former extreme-right opposition leader and so-called "general of the streets" under Gbagbo was allowed back into the country after his acquittal by the ICC. In the context of preparations for the 2023 regional elections, fears of ballot manipulation and debates around unfair voting rights emerged in civil society in December. On the night between December 9 and 10, civil society activist groups allegedly associated with Prime Minister Patrick Achi threatened to block the visit of Gbagbo to the La Mé department, Lagunes region, and set fire to a bus during his speech in the city of Adzopé, Lagunes. The protests turned violent when police forces stepped in and left dozens injured. Gbagbo's PPA-CI called for a national investigation into the incident. Ahead of regional elections in 2023, the RHDP held elections of departmental secretaries from among its members on July 23. Allegations of fraud against RHDP members led to vio-

lent clashes between the supporters of local fractions within the ruling party at the polling stations in the departments of Toubia and Kounahiri, Woroba region, Sabdégoué, Zanzan region, and Gohitafla, Sassandra-Marahoué region. In several towns of the Woroba and Savanes regions, the elections had to be postponed due to threats of violence. On the day of the election, supporters of the inter-party candidates clashed violently using clubs and stones in the town of Kouto, Savanes region, which left at least seven injured. mti

DR CONGO (BANTU – BATWA)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: Bantu militias vs. Twa militias

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The limited war over subnational predominance between the Bantu and Batwa people in the Tanganyika and North Kivu provinces de-escalated to a violent crisis. However, violence persisted throughout the year.

On January 3, Batwa militia raided the village of Lumumba, Tanganyika, injuring at least one civilian and abducting three. After several hours the Twa militia released the abductees. Similarly, on February 8, the Twa militia attacked Butondo village, Tanganyika, injuring nine people, killing five, and abducting 27. One of the hostages was killed during the kidnapping while the others were set free three days later.

On March 4, the Twa militia attacked the village of Mumbuli, Tanganyika, burned several houses, and killed the village chief. Approx. 12,000 people were internally displaced and sought refuge in Kasanga Nyemba and Nyemba villages, Tanganyika. On March 29, leaders of the Hunde, Hutu, Kumu, Batwa, Mbuti, Tembo, and Tutsi communities from Masisi territory, North Kivu, signed an agreement, brokered by MONUSCO, stating an end to armed fighting and the decision to work together in the respective areas. The provincial government of North Kivu announced it would aid in the agreement's implementation.


On May 12, the Twa militia allegedly attacked and occupied Katolo, Katibili, and Mala villages, Tanganyika, resulting in eight people injured and twelve killed in Katibili and Mala. An unknown number of IDPs from Katolo, Katibili, and Mala fled to the Kamkolobondo district, Kalemie city, Tanganyika. On May 30 and 31, the Armed Forces of the DR Congo dislodged the Twa militia from Katibili, Katonge, Mala, and Musebe villages, Tanganyika, and freed 38 hostages.

In the second half of the year, no fatalities were recorded. On August 10, Twa and Bantu communities from Nyunzu territory, Tanganyika, reconciled at a meeting with delegations of both groups. On August 15, the East African Community deployed troops in eastern DR Congo to fight local armed groups, including the Twa militia.

On 04/07/21, the Congolese parliament had passed a bill on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Indigenous Pygmy Peoples, including the Batwa people. On November 16, President Félix Tshisekedi signed the bill, which was the country's first law officially acknowledging and protecting indigenous peoples' rights. It recognized the Twa's traditions and their marginalization, and granted them better access to social services as well as justice and rights to their lands and resources.

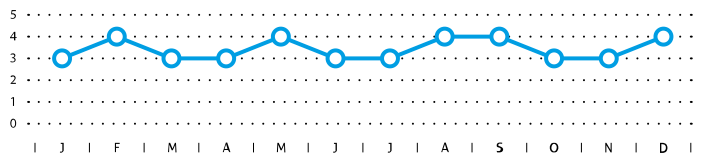
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DR CONGO (ITURI MILITIAS)

Intensity: **4** | Change:  | Start: **1999**

Conflict parties: CODECO, FPIC, FRPI, Zaïre militia vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources



The war over subnational predominance and resources, especially gold, in Ituri province between the militant groups Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO), Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo (FPIC), Zaïre militia, and Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI), on the one hand, and the government, supported by MONUSCO, on the other, de-escalated to a limited war.

Throughout the year, the security situation in the Djugu and Mahagi territories, as well as in the north of the Irumu territory improved and many IDPs were able to return to their deserted villages. Although the government continued to declare the a of siege for the Ituri province, large offensives by the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) and attacks by militias on civilians declined over the year, mainly due to FARDC's focus on the M23 conflict and due to the commitment of FRPI, FPIC, and CODECO to the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS) peace process [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)].

However, clashes between different militias as well as between militias and FARDC and MONUSCO continued. Furthermore, various Ituri militias armed with rifles and machetes attacked and abducted civilians, looted livestock, burned down houses, and fought over the control of goldmines throughout the year, leading to at least 600 deaths.

In the beginning of the year, FARDC continued large scale attacks on CODECO. For instance, on January 14, FARDC attacked the village of Petsi, Djugu territory, killing one, injuring at least ten others, and destroying several buildings. February and May showed peaks of violence. On February 1, CODECO attacked the IDP site Camp Plaine in Djugu territory, killing 62 people. As a result, at least 13,000 people were internally displaced. On May 9, CODECO attacked the mining site Camp Blanquette, in Djugu territory, killing at least 35 people, burning down the village, and looting gold. On July 22, FRPI and FPIC fought over control of the Tulabo mining site, Irumu territory. On September 8, FRPI and FPIC clashed close to the village of Kombokabo in the Irumu territory, resulting in the death of seven militants and two civilians. On August 5, Zaïre militia attacked a mourning ceremony in the village of Damas in the Djugu territory, killing at least 20 civilians.

On June 5 and 6, all CODECO factions committed to the P-DDRCS peace process and declared a ceasefire with FARDC and civilians. Additionally, CODECO agreed to stop attacks on Zaïre militia, but reserved the right for counterattacks. Despite CODECO's commitment to the P-DDRCS, attacks on civilians by the militia continued throughout June and July on a smaller scale. For instance, on June 6, CODECO attacked Rho village in the Djugu territory, killing at least ten civilians.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

In August and September, following attacks by Zaïre militia on civilians and CODECO, fighting between CODECO and Zaïre militia resumed. On August 11, CODECO clashed with Zaïre militia at the mining site close to Mandombo village, Djugu, killing at least seven people. On September 9, CODECO attacked Mbidjo village, Djugu, killing at least 17 people and burning down 300 to 400 houses.

Violence increased again in December and activities shifted to the Mahagi territory, leading to around 107,000 IDPs since mid-November. In the P-DDRCS peace talks between CODECO, FRPI, FPIC, and the government, all parties committed to a ceasefire on December 6. However, the Zaïre militia, which refused to participate in the peace process, intensified attacks on CODECO and civilians. For instance, on December 15, Zaïre militia attacked Aleza village, Mahagi territory, killing twelve people, abducting seven, and burning down several dozens of houses. Several clashes and attacks of CODECO and Zaïre militia against each other and against civilians, mainly in the Mahagi territory, followed throughout December. For instance, on December 28, CODECO attacked Usigo village in the Mahagi territory and killed twelve civilians. Iha

DR CONGO (KATA KATANGA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: Kata Katanga vs. government
Conflict items: secession, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and secession in the territories of Haut-Katanga and Lualaba between the Kata Katanga militia and the government continued. Throughout the year, the Kata Katanga were mainly active in Haut-Katanga. For instance, on January 29, Kata Katanga emphasised its secessionist demands by entering Mitwaba with approx. 100 militants armed with guns and machetes. The group aimed to establish Mitwaba as their headquarters for the capture of further cities in the former Katanga region. No fatalities were reported, however, at least 3,000 people were internally displaced. On March 10, members of Kata Katanga armed with guns, machetes, and bows raided Kisele village, injuring one. On May 16, fighting between Kata Katanga and the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) reignited in the Haut-Katanga province, resulting in the displacement of an unspecified number of civilians.

In Lualaba province, FARDC killed several Kata Katanga fighters in Sandoa on February 4.

ssc

DR CONGO (KN)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: KN vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The non-violent crisis over subnational predominance between the Kamuina Nsapu and the government of Kasai Central and Kasai Oriental provinces continued. Throughout the year, the Congolese courts dealt with the crimes allegedly committed by Kamuina Nsapu members since 2016. In January, 51 former Kamuina Nsapu mem-

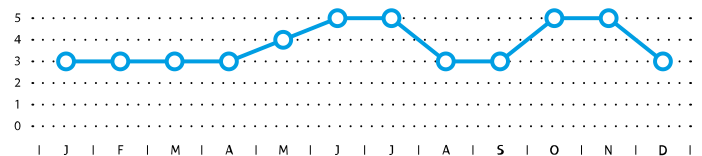
bers were convicted for the murder of two UN experts on 03/12/2017 and sentenced to death. Reacting to the verdicts, the UN addressed the DR Congo government, reiterating that the moratorium on death penalties should be upheld. Similarly, in April, a further eight Kamuina Nsapu members were sentenced to death on account of committing war crimes in the past. On the same day, the military garrison court of Kananga compensated the victims. On January 16, former chief of the Kamuina Nsapu, David Ndaye Nsabanga, was captured by the Armed Forces of DR Congo.

ssc

DR CONGO (M23 FACTIONS)

Intensity: **5** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2004**

Conflict parties: M23 factions vs. government, other militias
Conflict items: national power, subnational predominance



The non-violent crisis over national power and subnational predominance in North Kivu province between the militant group M23, allegedly supported by Rwanda, and the government, supported by MONUSCO and sometimes by local militias, escalated to a war. M23 originated from the National Congress for the Defense of the People, a former rebel group mainly composed of ethnic Tutsi. In October 2021, the conflict resurfaced after M23 accused the government of not fulfilling the 2013 peace accord.

This year, the conflict turned violent with at least 409 deaths as well as 390,000 refugees and IDPs. For instance, on January 24, M23 attacked Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) positions in Nyesesi village, leaving at least 26 soldiers dead. Subsequent clashes on January 28 and 29 left approx. eleven M23 members and one FARDC soldier dead, while displacing at least 2,000 civilians.

On March 27, M23 seized Nyesesi village after heavy fighting with FARDC, resulting in the death of at least 14 M23 members, 22 FARDC soldiers, and four civilians. On March 29, a UN surveillance helicopter was allegedly shot down near Tshanzu, killing eight UN peacekeepers. FARDC and M23 blamed each other for the incident. Later that day, a firefight between M23 and FARDC, supported by 100 Ugandan soldiers, in Bunagana town left at least 31 dead.

On April 1, M23 declared a unilateral ceasefire to allow for negotiations with Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi. However, clashes continued in April, with M23 taking control of the towns of Gasiza, Bugusa, Bikende-Bugusa, Kinyamahura, Rwambeho, Chengerero, Rubavu, and Basare. On April 6, however, FARDC carried out airstrikes on the M23-controlled Musongati, Tshanzu, and Runyonyi.

In May and June, fighting intensified, resulting in the use of heavy weapons through bombardments by both sides. Moreover, MONUSCO joined the conflict. For instance, on May 22, M23 reportedly targeted MONUSCO troops in Shangi village, which responded with a joint operation alongside FARDC on the same day, employing helicopters. On June 6, M23 attacked FARDC in Runyonyi, Tshanzu, Bugusa, and Muhati with long-range artillery and ambushed MONUSCO

in Shangi one day later, injuring three. On June 12 and 13, M23 captured the strategically important Bunagana with 30,000 civilians and 137 FARDC soldiers fleeing into bordering Uganda. On June 21, following fighting around Ruvumu village, M23 killed at least 17 civilians, whom they accused of informing FARDC of their positions and hideouts. On June 17, M23 regained control of Chengengerero after an attack of FARDC on the same day.

Rwanda's alleged support for M23 also prompted anti-Rwandan protests and violence. For instance, on June 15, demonstrations took place in Goma, resulting in the looting of businesses suspected of aiding Rwandans. On August 4, a UN report showed evidence that the Rwandan government had been aiding M23, which further worsened relations between the two countries. Rwanda continued to deny the accusations [→ DR Congo – Rwanda]. On October 20, fighting resumed when gunfights and bombardments between M23 and FARDC took place in Rangira and Rwanguba villages. M23 captured Ntamugenga village on October 23, leaving at least four civilians dead. Four days later, M23 controlled Rubare, Kalengera, and Kako villages around a strategic highway, prompting clashes with FARDC. On October 29, M23 captured Kiwanju town and the center of Rutshuru town, close to the provincial capital Goma, cutting the city off from the northern part of the province. At least four MONUSCO soldiers were injured. On the same day, FARDC left their positions in Rumangabo area, their largest base in Rutshuru territory, claiming it to be a strategic withdrawal.

Heavy and frequent clashes continued throughout November. For example, on November 8, at least two FARDC jets bombarded M23 positions in Tshanzu and Musungati. Similarly, clashes on November 10 left at least 20 civilians dead and at least 50 civilians and six MONUSCO peacekeepers injured. As part of an East African Community (EAC) military operation agreed upon at the EAC summit on June 20, 1,000 Kenyan troops were deployed to eastern DR Congo on November 12. Renewed clashes between FARDC and M23 took place on November 13 in Mwaro, killing 15 civilians. More FARDC aerial and tank attacks were conducted on M23 positions in Kibumba on November 17. On November 23, Tshisekedi and the Rwandan foreign minister met in Angola's capital Luanda, agreeing on mediation efforts. On November 29, M23 looted, burned property, and killed civilians in Kishishe and Bambo villages. According to the UN, M23 killed 131 civilians, raped 27, injured eight, and kidnapped 60 that day.

After unsuccessful peace talks in April, M23 agreed to withdraw from the strategically important town of Kibumba at a conference on December 22 between M23, EAC officials, and members of the Joint Verification Mechanism of the Great Lakes Region, a military cooperation body headed by an Angolan general. Nevertheless, between December 26 and 28, FARDC and M23 clashed in Bishusha, Tongo, Karenga, and Karuli areas, where the FARDC, aided by ethnic Hutu militias, engaged in firefights with M23.

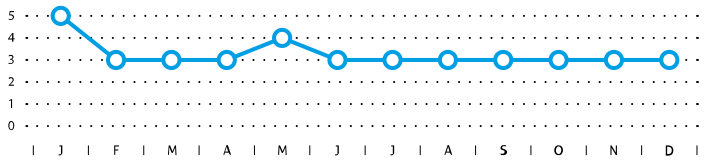
Throughout the year, several ethnic militias in North Kivu worked together with FARDC to combat the M23 resurgence. For instance, on February 11, FARDC and approx. 1,000 members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) launched a joint operation against M23 in Virunga National Park. Similarly, on April 27, FDLR, the Collective Movement for Change, and the Rally for Unity and Democracy allegedly supported FARDC in an attack against M23 in Bugusa [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.); DR Congo, Rwanda (CNRD, FDLR)]. jof

DR CONGO (MAYI-MAYI ET AL.)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: NDC-R vs. APCLS vs. Mayi-Mayi groups vs. Nyatura groups vs. FPP/AP vs. Banyamulenge militias vs. Bafuliro militias vs. Babembe militias vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The war over subnational predominance and resources in the eastern provinces of North Kivu (NK) and South Kivu (SK), Maniema, and Tanganyika between various local armed groups, as well as the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC), supported by MONUSCO, continued. Between 1998 and 2003, various militias had formed in the context of the Second Congo War, opposing Rwandan and Ugandan-backed armed groups. Since the end of the war, local militias continued to emerge and many existing groups fragmented further. The militias varied in size and strength, often consisting of fewer than 100 fighters and recruiting from local communities. Most of them were named after their commanders and relied on the taxation of individuals and goods in areas under their control.

The most active groups in NK were the Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (APCLS), the Guidon and Bwira factions of the Nduma Defense of Congo-Renovated (NDC-R), the Patriotic Front for Peace-People's Army (FPP/AP), as well as the Collective Movement for Change (CMC), comprising a number of Nyatura groups.

APCLS, predominantly recruiting among Hunde communities, remained active in the Masisi and Walikale territories. The group continued to cooperate with various Nyatura groups and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) [→ DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR, CNRD)]. APCLS engaged in frequent clashes with FARDC and the Bwira wing of NDC-R, often resulting in civilian fatalities and displacement. For instance, APCLS attacked FARDC in Kashofu village on January 13, leading to the death of three soldiers. On April 5, fights between FARDC and APCLS in Kasopo town, NK, left two soldiers dead and two civilians injured. In June, the militant group launched a series of attacks against NDC-R/Bwira that caused the displacement of the inhabitants of at least five villages in the Masisi territory.

Since NDC-R's split on 07/08/2020, the factions led by Guidon Shimiray Mwissa on the one hand and Gilbert Bwira Shuo on the other, continued to work separately. While NDC-R/Bwira activities concentrated on the Masisi territory, NDC-R/Guidon remained in control of large parts of the Walikale, Lubero, Masisi, and Rutshuru territories. Despite the continuous surrender of fighters throughout the year, Guidon's group remained one of the strongest in Eastern Congo, comprising an estimated 2,000 fighters. The rivaling factions engaged in a series of fights throughout January. For instance, between January 3 and 10, NDC-R/Bwira and NDC-R/Guidon clashed in multiple villages in the Walikale

territory, leading to the destruction of three mining sites, the burning of houses, and the displacement of the local population.

FARDC frequently supported NDC-R/Bwira in its activities against NDC-R/Guidon and other armed groups, such as APCLS and Nyatura CMC. For instance, FARDC and NDC-R/Bwira attacked NDC-R/Guidon at the Mironge mining site, in Walikale territory, on January 7, killing three. Additionally, NDC-R/Bwira collaborated with the splinter group Nyatura CMC/FAPC. On January 6, Nyatura CMC and FDLR attacked the two allies in Nyarubande, Harama, and Busesa villages, killing twelve militants [→ DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR, CNRD)]. NDC-R/Guidon, on the other hand, predominantly cooperated with APCLS. Besides its frequent clashes with NDC-R/Bwira, it mainly targeted FPP/AP, present in the Walikale, Rutshuru, and Masisi territories. FPP/AP and NDC-R/Guidon were involved in particularly heavy fighting throughout January. For example, NDC-R/Guidon attacked FPP/AP in Bukumbirwa, Himbi, and Kishanja villages in NK on January 3, resulting in nine dead and seven injured. A few days later, on January 6, FPP/AP launched a counterattack in Bukumbirwa, NK, leading to nine deaths, seven injured, and an FPP/AP member captured. The clashes continued throughout the first half of the year.

Similarly, Nyatura CMC and its splinter group Nyatura CMC/FAPC were particularly active throughout January in the Rutshuru and Masisi territories, NK. As a result, FARDC attempted to intervene. On January 12, FARDC bombarded Nyatura CMC and FDLR in Mwaro, NK [→ DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR, CNRD)]. On January 28, FARDC deflected an attack by Nyatura CMC in Ngoroba. The fight resulted in seven deaths and three people injured. Nonetheless, Nyatura CMC and Nyatura CMC/FAPC also clashed with each other. For instance, on January 23, Nyatura CMC ambushed Nyatura CMC/FAPC in Kinyatsi, killing two militants and a civilian. After a peak in fighting intensity in April, the two groups' activities decreased.

In the second half of the year, many of the Mayi-Mayi groups operating in NK, particularly in the Rutshuru and Masisi territories, shifted the focus of their activities to combat the resurgence of M23 [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)].

In SK, the most active groups were Raia Mutomboki (RM) factions and armed groups associated with the Banyamulenge community, on the one hand, and Bafuliuro, Babembe, and Banyindi communities, on the other.

The main militias associated with the Banyamulenge community included Twigwaneho and Ngumino. They frequently formed coalitions with National Forces of Liberation (FNL), Android, and Imbonerakure, operating in the territories of Fizi, Mwenga, and Uvira [→ Burundi, DR Congo (FNL, RED-Tabara)]. Among others, these groups targeted FARDC and civilians with attacks, abductions, and raids. On January 4, for example, Twigwaneho ambushed FARDC in Kagogo and Ishenge, SK, killing 13 fighters. On May 27, Ngumino allied with FDNB and Imbonerakure in an attack against RED-Tabara in Lubumba, Kitoga, and Rubuga, resulting in the death of 54 fighters. Twigwaneho targeted civilians in a series of attacks that took place in Irumba, Ngandura, and Musika, as well as the Tulendo mining site, on August 17 and 20. In total, the militants burned 260 houses, killed ten civilians, and wounded five others.

The militant groups of the Banyamulenge community also clashed with the groups associated with the Bafuliuro, Babembe, and Banyindi communities. The main Bafuliuro militia, Mayi-Mayi Biloze Bishambuke, and the main Babembe militant groups, Mayi-Mayi Réunion and Mayi-Mayi Ebu Ela, were

supported by factions organized within the National Coalition of the People for the Sovereignty of Congo (CNPSC), such as Mayi-Mayi Yakutumba, and continued their cooperation with RED-Tabara. For instance, a coalition of Twigwaneho, Ngumino, and Android fought against Biloze Bishambuke in Minembwe and its surrounding areas between May 7 and 22, employing bombs, burning houses, killing approx. eleven civilians and leading to the displacement of the inhabitants of at least three villages.

In the Kalehe, Shabunda, and Kabare territories, various RM factions continued to target civilians through abductions, extortions, and rape. Between April 18 and May 15, civil society organizations recorded approx. 20 rape cases, carried out by a RM group in Bunyakiri. In another incident on May 3, RM Blaise made a foray into Misungubila, setting fire to twelve houses and stealing money, cattle, and property. The militants kidnapped 20 people, forced them to carry the stolen goods, and raped ten women among those abducted. RM factions also targeted more prominent societal actors. On May 10, for example, RM Lance kidnapped the chief of Chifunzi village, SK. ttu

DR CONGO (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1997**

Conflict parties: church groups, civil society groups, opposition parties vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between opposition parties, civil society groups, and Catholic groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The disagreement over the politicization of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) regarding the 2023 elections continued to divide the conflict parties. Furthermore, President Félix Tshisekedi increased his influence over key electoral institutions. For instance, on January 6, the CENI announced a former advisor of Tshisekedi as next chief executive secretary. Similarly, on June 21, a trustee of Tshisekedi was elected as new head of the Constitutional Court. Moreover, on November 12, the National Assembly, dominated by Tshisekedi's so-called Sacred Union, adopted a new electoral law, rejecting multiple reforms against vote-buying and nepotism.

Both the government and opposition faced internal divisions. On May 17, Adolphe Muzito, president of the oppositional Lamuka coalition, decided to leave the Patriotic Bloc, an alliance of opposition parties including Lamuka. Muzito accused the Patriotic Bloc of being composed of people responsible for the irregular elections in 2018. Similarly, on December 16, Moïse Katumbi left the Sacred Union and announced his candidacy for the 2023 election. On January 14, Jean-Marc Kabund, vice president of the parliament, resigned, claiming humiliations and bullying from party colleagues. Following his subsequent exclusion from the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party on January 29, Kabund formed the Alliance for Change party on July 18. Over the course of the year, many of Tshisekedi's political opponents were arrested. For instance, on August 9, Kabund was detained for allegedly insulting the head of state and defamation. Following his incarceration, the police dispersed a protest demanding the release of Kabund in the capital Kinshasa, on August 29, beating at least three civilians. Similarly, a UDPS member was arrested and accused of spreading false

rumors on November 21 in Kinshasa. He was released shortly after, however, stripped of all party functions and expelled from the UDPS.

Moreover, the growing violence in the eastern regions increasingly became a point of contention between the opposition, often joined by Catholic groups, and the government. The state of siege in Ituri and North Kivu provinces, initially proclaimed for one month by the government on 05/03/21, continued, limiting human rights, such as the freedom of assembly, for local populations. On January 22, the police dispersed a protest organized by Lutte pour le Changement (LUCHA) in Goma, North Kivu, using rubber bullets and tear gas and arresting four protestors. Two days later, police shot dead a LUCHA activist in Beni, North Kivu, while dispersing a protest against the insecurity and state of siege. day

DR CONGO, RWANDA (FDLR, CNRD)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1994**

Conflict parties: FDLR vs. CNRD vs. DR Congo, Rwanda
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over national power, subnational predominance, and resources between the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the National Council for Renewal and Democracy (CNRD), on the one hand, and the governments of the DR Congo, supported by MONUSCO, and Rwanda, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, FDLR mainly conducted abductions, killings, and illegal taxations in North Kivu province. For instance, FDLR attacked the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo in the village of Nyamitwitwi, North Kivu, on February 9, which led to the displacement of the local population.

On February 21, FDLR attacked a group of Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and environmentalists on patrol between Mabenga and Kasali in Virunga National Park in North Kivu. During the ensuing gunfire, FDLR injured one FARDC soldier, while two FDLR militants were killed and one was arrested. On May 28, FDLR abducted two Rwandan soldiers during a patrol along the Rwanda-DR Congo border in North Kivu. After diplomatic interventions mediated by Angolan President João Lourenco, President Félix Tshisekedi agreed to release the soldiers on May 31.

FDLR attacks against civilians and FARDC declined after the government and the otherwise feuding militias in the region of North Kivu negotiated a non-aggression pact on May 9 to focus on fighting M23 [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.); DR Congo (M23 factions)]. However, violence continued in July, when FDLR killed a civilian in Rugari village, North Kivu, on July 7, after accusing him of fighting for M23. Similarly, on September 10, fighting broke out between two CNRD factions, displacing approx. 500 households in Lugene, South Kivu province. On November 25, FDLR killed a Tutsi girl in North Kivu. sga

EGYPT – ETHIOPIA, SUDAN (GERD)

Intensity: **1** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: Egypt vs. Ethiopia vs. Sudan
 Conflict items: resources

The non-violent crisis over the construction and control of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan de-escalated to a dispute.

Egypt was worried the dam would impact their livelihoods as they largely depend on the Nile for their water supply, whereas Ethiopia has seen it as an opportunity for economic growth. Sudan shared both concerns. This year, no new negotiations took place. As a result of growing diplomatic tension between Sudan and Ethiopia, on May 28, Sudan denounced Ethiopia's statement to continue filling the dam and demanded a binding legal agreement that takes into account the interests of all three countries. On June 20, the EU and Egypt released a joint statement highlighting the importance of a binding agreement on the issue.

Similarly, on July 29, Egypt protested against the third filling of the GERD in a letter to the UNSC. On August 12 and November 17, respectively, Ethiopia announced that it had completed the filling and that it had started to export electricity to Kenya. jde

ESWATINI (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1998**

Conflict parties: COSATU, PUDEMO, SUDF vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between various opposition groups, including political parties, trade unions, and other opposition movements, on the one hand, and the government of King Mswati III, on the other, continued.

While the pro-democracy protests that started in 2021 decreased in frequency, occasional protests continued to take place, especially by youth organizations. On January 31, the arrest of a student leader resulted in the protest of at least 200 people in the cities of Manzini, eponymous region, and Mbabane, Hhohho region. Similar small protests were held in these cities on February 8, April 20, October 11, and November 15. On September 29, police opened fire with live ammunition on demonstrators during a march for the peaceful resolution of political tensions in the country. The march was organized by the Swaziland United Democratic Front, a broad coalition of political parties and non-profit organizations. No fatalities were reported.

Throughout the year, government forces cracked down on opposition and youth organizations. On several occasions, their members were abducted, arrested, and injured. For instance, on February 1, police forces abducted, electrocuted, and severely injured a student union leader in Manzini. Also in Manzini, police forces seriously injured an activist from the Communist Party of Swaziland on March 24, with no charges being filed. On June 22, seven members of the Swaziland Youth Congress were abducted by police forces in

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

the Lubombo region.

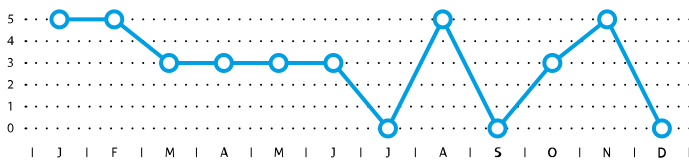
Unlike the previous year, the Swaziland International Solidarity Forces (SISF), the armed wing of the pro-democracy group, engaged in violent attacks. On June 26, SISF claimed responsibility for a petrol bomb attack on a government helicopter. Between November 4 and 5, SISF allegedly killed a traditional chief as a representative of the monarchy in Manzini. On November 29, suspected SISF members raided an army camp in Zibonele, Hhohho, killing and injuring several people, as well as damaging military equipment. vho

ETHIOPIA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2017**

Conflict parties: Oromo vs. Amhara vs. Konso vs. Ale vs. Issa vs. Afar vs. other ethnic groups

Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources



The war between various ethnic groups over subnational predominance and agrarian land continued.

The Oromia region witnessed increased tensions at the beginning of the year with an attack from ethnic Amhara targeting civilians in Limmu woreda, East Wollega zone, on January 24, killing 50. On January 31, ethnic Amhara conducted an attack on ethnic Oromo as revenge for a previous attack on 12/31/21, killing 13 people and destroying 97 houses in Dano town, Nono woreda, West Shewa zone, Oromia.

In February, ethnic Amhara continued attacks in Oromia. For instance, on February 12 in Abe Dengoro woreda, Horo Guduru Wollega zone, 29 civilians, mostly ethnic Oromo, were killed and 64 houses were destroyed. Further 31 civilians were killed in multiple attacks in Abe Dengoro woreda, East Wollega, between February 12 and 25.

On March 31, an attack by suspected ethnic Amhara Fano militia on an Oromia government vehicle in Korke town, left 26 dead and 15 more injured. Attacks by ethnic Fano on Kiram town in East Wollega zone on November 25 and 29 left 350 people dead and resulted in approx. 400,000 IDPs.

An attack on April 26 by unidentified armed individuals, which local Muslim leaders described as "extremist Christians", on Muslim worshippers in Gondar city, Amhara Region, killed 21 and injured at least 150 people. Subsequently, three mosques were burned down. On June 4, a mob stoned nine Oromo civilians to death in Burji town, eponymous special woreda, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples region, after a rumor about them killing ethnic Burji had surfaced. Additionally, 21 people were injured in the unrest. In the Somali region, violent clashes occurred between Afar militia and Somali militia. For instance, on August 11, Afar militia attacked Somali militia, resulting in the killing of at least 20 civilians in Sitti zone.

On August 29, fighters of the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) attacked in the woredas Obora, Amru, and Bure, Amhara Region, in an attempt to capture the towns, killing three Amhara people [→ Ethiopia (OLF / Oromia)]. In the three following days, Amhara militias retaliated, destroying properties and

looting cattle, while displacing at least 20,000 people. The violent clashes left 60 dead and 70 injured. In October, violent clashes were reported in the Oromia region, mostly in East Wollega zone and Horo Guduru Wollega zone. Fano militia repeatedly targeted towns, killing 43 civilians in five attacks and burning 50 houses.

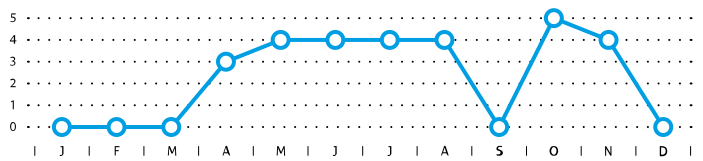
In the Somali Region, clashes between ethnic Somali and ethnic Afar in the Dheymeed woreda, Sitti zone, killed 18 people and injured 28 on November 9. noh

ETHIOPIA (OLF / OROMIA)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **1992**

Conflict parties: OLF vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance



The war over subnational predominance between the Oromia Liberation Army (OLA) and the government continued.

Throughout the year, the conflict expanded over multiple parts of the Oromia region and Amhara Region with an increasing occurrence of violent clashes including the targeting of civilians. Starting in January, fighting intensified after Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) and regional security forces started an offensive against OLA, especially in the West Guji zone, Oromia.

On April 18 and 19, violent clashes erupted between OLA, the Fano militia, and regional security forces in Efrata Gidim woreda, Amhara Region, after the re-intensification of the government offensive, killing 20, injuring 50, and displacing approx. 5,000 people.

On May 18, OLA killed 16 soldiers in an attack on a military camp of regional security forces in Sululta town, eponymous woreda, Oromia Special Zone Surrounding Addis Ababa, Oromia. Three days later, on May 21, an attack by federal and regional security forces on OLA in Worejarso woreda, North Shewa zone, Oromia, left 44 people dead. On June 14, violence spread to the neighboring Gambella region as OLA and Gambella Liberation Front (GLF) militants clashed with regional security forces, killing 40 and injuring 39 in the regional capital Gambella. The attack constituted the first joint attack of OLA and GLF, whose aim is to fight against the national government, especially against the Prosperity Party. The targeting of civilians increased in June and July. For instance, on June 18, OLA killed 338 civilians in Gimbi town, eponymous woreda, West Wollega zone, Oromia. Furthermore, on July 4, OLA killed 150 civilians and injured 25 during an attack on ethnic Amhara villages, Kellem Wollega zone, Oromia.


In the Amhara Region, fighting between OLA and regional security forces killed 25 people between July 10 and 12.

OLA proposed a humanitarian truce on August 17 to allow humanitarian aid to Oromia, which the federal government rejected on August 20. On August 29, OLA forces attacked Obora town in the East Haraghe zone, killing three ethnic Amhara civilians. Subsequently, ethnic Amhara militias attacked Oromo civilians in the Amru and Bure woredas, Amhara Region, in the following days [→ Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)].

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

On October 23, ENDF launched an airstrike targeting an OLA graduation ceremony in Ofu Beke village, Chobi woreda, West Shewa zone, Oromia, killing 60 and injuring 100 people. Airstrikes by ENDF forces with UAVs continued in early November, killing 55 people overall in Mendi and Bila towns, Mana Sibbu woreda, West Wollega, Oromia. Throughout November, OLA forces expanded territorial control in East and West Wollega, including an attack on Nekemte city, eponymous woreda, on November 6, killing two security forces personnel while OLA fighters looted banks and released over 120 prisoners. noh

ETHIOPIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2005**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The limited war over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, such as Kimant Democratic Party and Gumuz People's Democratic Movement, on the one hand, and the government headed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.

In contrast to previous years, violence remained at a lower level throughout the year, and, in the second half of the year, no cases of conflict were even observed.


On January 7, the government announced the start of a national dialogue between the government and opposition parties from multiple communities after 14 months of civil war and political turmoil. Additionally, the government released opposition politicians from prison, who had been detained on terrorism charges in September 2022, including one of the leaders of the Oromo Federalist Congress Party as well as the founder of the Oromiya Media Network.

Nevertheless, violent clashes continued intermittently. On April 14, federal security forces clashed with local militias and members of the Kimant Democratic Party in Chilga woreda, Gondar zone, Amhara Region, leaving 32 people dead, 38 injured, and 25 houses burnt. On May 23, in a wave of mass imprisonment, the federal government and the regional government of Amhara Region imprisoned 4,500 individuals including reporters accused of links to militia activities as well as political and public criticism of the government.

On June 1, forces of the Gumuz People's Democratic Movement clashed with regional forces in the Kamashi zone, Benishangul-Gumuz region, killing 19 civilians.

noh

ETHIOPIA – SUDAN

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **1902**

Conflict parties: Ethiopia vs. Sudan

Conflict items: territory, resources

The violent crisis over resources and territory in the fertile al-Fashqa triangle between the Ethiopian government, supported by Ethiopian militias, and the Sudanese government continued.

Although the 1902 Anglo-Ethiopian-Treaty granted Sudan possession of the al-Fashqa triangle, Al Qadarif state, both Sudan and Ethiopia have since claimed the territory. In 2008,


a compromise was reached, allowing Ethiopian farmers to continue cultivating the land while Sudan retained administrative control of it. In 2020, Sudan seized control of the disputed territory by military force and evicted Ethiopian farmers, leading to renewed clashes.

Violent clashes occurred mostly in the first half of the year. On May 16, armed Ethiopians crossed the border and killed two Sudanese civilians and injured another near Galabat village, Al Qadarif. Similarly, on May 28, armed Ethiopians killed one civilian and seized farm equipment near Galabat.

On June 22, unknown perpetrators abducted and killed seven Sudanese soldiers and one civilian. The Sudanese government claimed that Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) personnel abducted the soldiers and one civilian in Sudanese territory in Al Qadarif to execute them in neighboring Ethiopia, whereas the Ethiopian government claimed that Ethiopian militias killed these Sudanese soldiers and civilian after they had infringed on Ethiopian territory. Subsequently, on June 28, the Sudanese army fired heavy artillery in the Jabal Kala al-Laban area, Al Qadarif, but no fatalities were reported. Following the attack, the Sudanese army gained control over Jabal Kala al-Laban town and destroyed one Ethiopian military base near the border.

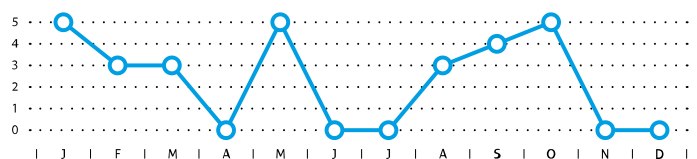
On July 5, bilateral talks took place between Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the commander-in-chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, resulting in an agreement to form a joint committee to resolve the border conflict. The reconciliation process continued when on December 18, the Sudanese and Ethiopian governments exchanged 62 prisoners at the border on the Al Qalabat Pass between Al Qadarif and Ethiopia's Amhara Region. jfg

ETHIOPIA, ERITREA (TPLF / TIGRAY)

Intensity: **5** | Change:  | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: Eritrea, Ethiopia vs. TPLF

Conflict items: system/ideology



The war over the orientation of the political system in Ethiopia between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) with its armed wing, the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF), on the one hand, and the Ethiopian as well as the Eritrean government, supported by Amhara militias and Afar regional forces, on the other, continued.

Throughout January, airstrikes by the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) killed 108 people and injured at least 75 in the Tigray region, according to UN reports. Through the use of UAVs with precision-guided bombs, multiple sites in Tigray were attacked on January 7, 10, and 11, resulting in the death of several civilians and the destruction of infrastructure such as a refugee camp, a flour mill, or an education institute. Additionally, according to Afar regional forces, clashes with TPLF in the Afar Region displaced at least 300,000 people in January.

Similarly, on February 3, fights broke out between TPFL and Afar regional forces in Afar Region. An attack by TPLF forces on the Barahe refugee camp killed five people and resulted in 34,000 IDPs. On March 4, ENDF attacked the Bahre-Negash

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

resort and an airport in Shire city, Tahtay Koraro woreda, North Western zone, Tigray, with airstrikes, killing two people in a refugee camp.

At the end of March, the Ethiopian government declared a humanitarian truce to facilitate the free and improved flow of humanitarian aid into Tigray, which TPLF accepted on March 25. After humanitarian aid started to flow into Tigray for the first time since December 2021, TPLF forces declared their withdrawal from Afar Region on April 25 to allow more humanitarian aid to be delivered to Tigray. Soon after, the Ethiopian government denied this development. Although supplies reached Tigray throughout the month, WHO declared that only four percent of the necessary aid was being supplied.

While the truce between the TPLF and ENDF remained intact, Eritrean Defense Forces (EDF) attacked TPLF with heavy artillery in the border region in Tigray between the Eritrean town of Badme and the Ethiopian town of Rama on May 8. While Eritrean forces shelled TPLF positions from May 28 to 29, killing one civilian and injuring 18 in Shiraro town, Tahtay Adiyabo woreda, North Western zone, Tigray, TPLF announced its counteroffensive. In fights from May 24 to 30, TPLF claimed to have killed at least 300 Eritrean soldiers. In June and July, no violent clashes were observed and both sides engaged in the formation of delegations for peace talks, while arguing over possible circumstances including mediating actors and status of territories.

On August 24, new fighting erupted near Kobo town, North Wollo zone, Amhara Region, for which both sides blamed each other. On the same day, ENDF shot down a plane from Sudan which was allegedly transporting weapons for TPLF.

On August 25, shelling by TPLF caused three deaths and ten injured civilians in the Yalo woreda, Fanti Rasu zone, in Afar Region. On August 27, an ENDF airstrike on the regional capital Mekelle, Tigray, left seven civilians dead and nine injured.

On September 1, EDF re-entered the conflict on the side of ENDF by conducting a joint offensive in Tigray and Amhara Region against TPLF. In Sheraro town, North Western zone, Tigray, the EDF killed 40 civilians between September 6 and 12. While TPLF reannounced its willingness for peace talks under certain conditions on September 11, fighting continued throughout the Amhara Region and Tigray. Between September 13 and 15, TPLF killed 17 civilians in Kobo town after their suspected assistance to ENDF forces.

On September 21, ENDF and EDF started a full-scale invasion of Tigray, internally displacing approx. 18,000 people. Due to airstrikes by EDF and ENDF between September 13 and 23, eleven people were killed in the regional capital Mekelle. Similarly, in an attack on September 25, five people were killed and 16 injured in Adi Daero town, Laelay Adiyabo woreda, North Western zone.

ENDF airstrikes continued in October. For instance, on October 4, 50 people were killed in Adi Daero and multiple houses, school buildings, and a refugee camp were destroyed. Additionally, on October 14, three people were killed and four injured in Shire, from where the TPLF withdrew on October 17 after heavy fighting, leading to 5,000 reported fatalities. On 2 November, representatives of the Ethiopian government and TPLF agreed to end hostilities. The agreement, which was mediated by the AU in the South African capital Pretoria, included the termination of military offensives, disarmament of TPLF forces, dissolution of Tigray regional administration, and the restoration of federal authority. After follow-up negotiations on November 12, TPLF agreed to hand over heavy weapons in exchange for the withdrawal of ENDF as

well as Eritrean forces from Tigrayan territory, leaving the status of occupied territories under debate.

A designated deadline for the disarmament of TPLF was missed on December 3 as TPLF announced security concerns due to continued military presence of ENDF and EDF in Tigray. The visit of an official delegation of the federal government in Mekelle on December 26 was followed by the launch of the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission in Mekelle on December 29. noh

GUINEA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2006**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between various opposition groups, particularly the National Front for the Defence of the Constitution (FNDC), and the ruling military junta of interim President Mamady Doumbouya continued.

After last year's coup d'état on 09/05/21, Doumbouya proposed a 36-month timeline to general elections, which was approved on May 11 by the interim legislative body, the National Transitional Council (CNT). As a response, G58 umbrella group of opposition parties and FNDC denounced CNT's decision and threatened street protests. On May 13, the ruling junta banned demonstrations. FNDC then sent a complaint to OHCHR, which unsuccessfully urged the transitional authorities to revoke the ban on May 30. Despite the protest ban, on June 1, violent protests over fuel prices broke out in the capital Conakry. The police violently cracked down on protesters, leaving one dead.

On July 5, authorities arrested three FNDC leaders over alleged contempt of court in Conakry. Subsequent violent protests between opposition supporters and the police in Conakry lasted until July 6, injuring at least 17 police officers. Similar protests in the capital on July 28 and 29 by FNDC, and joined by last year's deposed president, Alpha Condé, left at least two civilians dead and dozens injured. The police reported that it detained 85 opposition activists during the clashes on July 28. Then, on August 6, the interim government dissolved FNDC, citing a threat to national unity. This led to several opposition protests in Conakry that became violent on August 17, when the police clashed with youths, leaving two dead and several dozen injured. Similar protests erupted on September 5, one year after the military coup d'état, in Conakry, leaving ten police officers and one civilian injured, according to the interim government. On October 20, FNDC held nationwide protests, demanding a quicker return to a civilian-led government and the release of all detained politicians. Later that day, clashes between the police and opposition activists left at least three protesters dead in Conakry. The police shot into the crowd of protesters and injured at least 20.

Throughout the year, ECOWAS criticized the 36-month transition plan, demanded a shorter timeline from the military junta, and pressured the transition government with sanctions. After negotiations between Doumbouya and ECOWAS mediators in October, they announced a final 24-month transition plan to elections starting in January 2023 on October 21. pad

KENYA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

 Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1963**

Conflict parties: Borana vs. Cattle rustlers vs. Degodia vs. Kamba vs. Marakwet vs. Pokot, Somali vs. Turkana

 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources and subnational predominance between various ethnic and communal groups continued. The groups involved in the conflict predominantly fought over access to resources, such as grazing land and water, and opposing territorial claims. Over the course of the year, at least 26 people were killed.

On February 20, members of the Pokot tribe shot a man from the Marakwet tribe after attempting to steal his goats around Kabasaran village, in Kipyebbo, Kerio Valley. Violence continued on February 27, when members from the Marakwet community attacked people of the Pokot tribe, resulting in eight dead and several injured.

On March 4, gunfights between Degodia and Borana communities in Degogicha town, Isiolo County, left five people dead. According to the Governor of Wajir county, the victims were searching for water and pasture for their animals at the border area. In April, fighting in Isiolo continued. For instance, on April 4, unidentified armed individuals, presumably from the neighboring county of Samburu, killed nine people, injured four others, and stole livestock in Burat city, Isiolo. The victims were of Somali and Turkana origin. Subsequently, the majority of the residents of the area reportedly fled to safety. On October 31, Somali herders and Kamba farmers fought over grazing land for their livestock in Mutha village, Kitui, leaving three people dead and two injured. Additionally, livestock was mutilated during the incident.

 lav

KENYA (OPPOSITION)

 Intensity: **3** | Change: **↑** | Start: **1999**

Conflict parties: Azimio la Umajo One-Kenya Coalition vs. government

 Conflict items: national power

The dispute over national power between the political coalition Azimio la Umajo One-Kenya Coalition (Azimio), on the one hand, and the newly-formed government of the Kenya Kwanza Alliance (KKA), on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

The presidential and parliamentary elections on August 9 led to intense competition between two major political coalitions: Azimio, led by the presidential candidate Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), and KKA, led by then-deputy president William Ruto of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA). While Ruto and Odinga pledged peaceful elections on July 9, they continued to accuse the electoral commission of bias.

Despite mostly peaceful protests ahead of the nationwide primary elections, violent clashes and protests occurred between rival supporters and candidates. For instance, on April 1, protests broke out during ODM primary elections, whereby

party supporters demonstrated against alleged election fraud in the Mombasa district, resulting in the postponement of the elections in the Kilifi and Mombasa counties. On April 9, supporters of rivaling ODM candidates clashed at a polling station. Subsequently, security forces suppressed the clashes. Tensions arose in UDA primaries with protesters setting fire to ballot boxes and looting election materials in Kangaru city, Bomet county, prompting candidates to suspend voting. Fatalities in connection with the elections were reported. For instance, on April 4, an ODM candidate for the position as a Member of County Assembly in Kiisi county was shot dead in his home, three days before the primaries. On June 19, violent clashes between police forces and protesters occurred during Ruto's rally in the capital Nairobi, leaving at least two people injured. On election day, a Kimilili minister shot a rival candidate dead at a polling station in Bungoma county. On August 15, Ruto won the presidential election with 50.5 percent of the vote against 48.8 percent for Odinga. Protests subsequently broke out in several parts of the country. Supporters of Azimio condemned the election results and Odinga challenged the presidential election results for alleged fraud. On September 5, the Supreme Court rejected the allegations of irregularities by Odinga and unanimously upheld Ruto's win. On September 13, Ruto was sworn in as the new president. On December 2, Ruto ordered the suspension and investigation of four commissioners of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission who did not endorse his win, accusing them of trying to subvert election results in favor of Odinga. lob

MALI (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY / CENTRAL MALI)

 Intensity: **3** | Change: **↘** | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: Bambara, Dogon, Dozo vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups

 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The limited war over subnational predominance and resources between the Dogon and Bambara ethnic communities and their Dozo and Donso self-defense militias, the Fulani ethnic community, and Islamist groups de-escalated to a violent crisis.

Since the 2012 Tuareg rebellion in Mali and the subsequent expansion of various Islamist groups, the deteriorating security situation, especially in the country's central regions, has further exacerbated rivalries between Bambara and Dogon farmers, on the one hand, and mostly Muslim Fulani herders, on the other [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. Furthermore, weak government presence and recurrent Islamist attacks in the area incentivized ethnic groups to form self-defense militias, such as Dozo, Dan Na Ambassagou, and Donso. Moreover, Islamist groups allegedly recruited mostly members of the Fulani and supported the Fulani ethnic community through their attacks. After several internationally acclaimed peace agreements between the Fulani and Dogon communities were signed last year, fighting between the two communities largely stopped. However, over the course of this year, inter-communal fighting between Dogon, Fulani, and allegedly supporting Islamist groups still continued, although with the lowest reported death toll since 2017, as Islamist violence against communal

groups moved towards the north-eastern regions [→ Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)].

Still, throughout the year, several extrajudicial killings, often carried out by Malian Armed Forces (MAFa) with the support of Dozo, Donso, and Dan Na Ambassagou militias, occurred against Fulani. As a novelty, this year, the Russian paramilitary Wagner Group allegedly was involved in several MAFa operations. International sources claimed that these measures largely remained unreported. However, on January 1, MAFa killed two Fulani in the village of Guiré, Koulikoro region, in a joint operation. On March 3, MAFa allegedly killed at least 35 Fulani civilians near the town of Diabaly, Ségou region. UN officials and Human Rights Watch confirmed the killings and described the attack as a serious violation of international human rights law on March 15. In an internationally reported operation between March 23 and 31, MAFa and Wagner Group troops killed between 200 and 300 people in the town of Moura, Mopti region. While the government officially stated that exclusively al-Qaeda-related jihadists were killed, local sources described the killing as an operation against ethnic Fulanis. On September 4, a large group of MAFa, Dozo hunters, and Wagner Group hired fighters entered the village of Nia-Ouro, Mopti, and raped dozens of Fulani women. Later, MINUSMA announced that they opened an investigation into MAFa's involvement in inter-communal sexual violence cases. Again, on October 30, MAFa, Dozo hunters, and Wagner Group fighters killed at least 13 alleged Fulani civilians in the village of Guelledjé, Mopti. Similar groups, with the additional help of Dan Na Ambassagou militias, reportedly killed in total up to eight Fulani civilians in operations on November 12 and 14 in the villages of Birga-Peulh and Derou, Mopti. pad

In reaction, the Imghad Tuareg Self-Defense Group and Allies (GATIA) and other government-loyal armed groups founded the MAA. Violence between different signatory groups of the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement decreased significantly in the past years, especially after a new peace agreement between CMA and MAA was signed in 2020, and remained low throughout the year.

Meanwhile, the number of deaths in clashes between Islamist groups, mainly IS Sahel and JNIM, and other militant groups, such as GATIA, MSA, and CMA, increased to an all-time high this year. In March, IS Sahel and JNIM started operations in the north-eastern Gao and Ménaka regions to take control over the predominantly ethnic Tuareg region. As a response, CMA, GATIA, and MSA organized counter-operations to defend the various communities in the region. This sparked retaliatory violence, with IS Sahel and JNIM members raiding hundreds of villages in search of the 2015 signatory groups. The fighting killed at least 834 people and displaced more than 30,000 throughout the year.

Violence peaked in March, when predominantly IS Sahel fighters attacked villages in Ménaka and Gao, some of them several times within one month. For instance, violence escalated when MSA militants killed an IS Sahel fighter in Tamalate, Ménaka, on March 8. On the same day, at least 100 IS Sahel members on motorcycles and equipped with Kalashnikovs attacked Inchinane, Ménaka, killing at least 100 civilians in search of MSA members responsible for the previous attack. On March 17, a group of similarly armed Islamists raided Oudeini, Gao, and shot dead at least 92 civilians. On March 28, IS Sahel fighters simultaneously attacked Tingorof, Intagoiyat, Ingarzabane, Inkalafane, and Intakoreit, Ménaka, and killed a total of 238 community members while burning parts of the villages and killing livestock. IS Sahel claimed to have only killed people with relationships to MSA and GATIA militias.

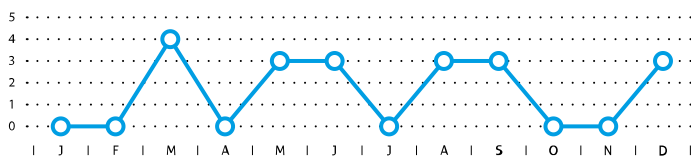
Violence continued between May and September, for instance on June 4 and 5, when several 2015 signatory groups tried to recapture the village of Andéramboukane, Ménaka, from IS Sahel and killed 90 people. Between August 7 and 8, IS Sahel killed 20 civilians in the village of Tahabanat, Ménaka, and on August 12 another 20 in the village of Assaylal, Ménaka. On September 6, MSA and JNIM fought side by side against IS Sahel members that had seized the town of Talataye, Gao, which reportedly left 17 JNIM, three MSA fighters and 42 civilians dead and displaced at least 13,000 people.

On July 17, MSA leaders and other 2015 signatory groups expressed discontent with the "abandonment" of the accord by the Malian transitional government and cited a lack of security partnership with security forces in the north-east regions. Although negotiations between the government and several signatory groups' leaders led to a new agreement on August 5, CMA and several other groups suspended their participation in monitoring and implementation mechanisms of the 2015 Algiers peace accords, on December 22. Algerian-led international mediation between the parties had already failed in early December. pad

MALI (INTER-MILITANT RIVALRY / NORTHERN MALI)

Intensity: **4** | Change: **↗** | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: CMA vs. Platform vs. Islamist Groups
 Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational pre-dominance



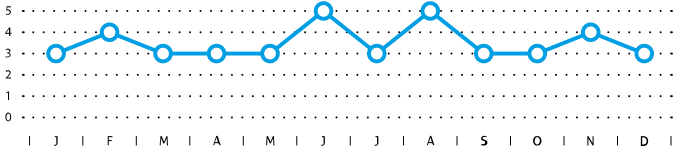
The violent crisis over subnational predominance and the orientation of the political system between various militant groups, primarily the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), the so-called Platform (MAA), the Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA), on the one hand, and the Islamist groups so-called Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) and Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM) in northern Mali, on the other, escalated to a limited war.

In 2012, aspirations to create an independent state of Azawad in the northern regions culminated in the so-called Tuareg rebellion. While the militant groups Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the High Council for Unity of Azawad (HCUA) initially cooperated with various Islamist groups in their fight against the government, disagreements over the political and ideological orientation of Azawad split this coalition into various factions. In 2013, CMA was formed by, among others, the pro-Azawad Ifoghas Tuareg groups from MNLA and HCUA.

MALI ET AL. (IS-SAHEL) .

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: IS-Sahel vs. Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger
 Conflict items: system/ideology, international power



The war over international power and the orientation of the political system between the so-called Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel), formerly known as Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), and the governments of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso continued.

ISGS emerged from a split of the Jihadist group al-Mourabitoun in 2015. The following year, the group pledged allegiance to the Islamic State [→ Syria, Iraq (IS)]. In 2019, the group became a subordinate of Islamic State West Africa Province [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. This was reversed, when in March this year, IS declared the group as an independent province, the Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel). After a French military operation killed the previous leader, since October 2021, the new IS Sahel head is Abdul Bara al-Sahraoui.

To fight IS Sahel, amongst other Islamist groups in the region, the G5 Sahel countries, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad, formed a multilateral alliance [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)]. These countries were supported by international initiatives, including the French-led Operation Barkhane between 2014 and 2021, the special forces deployment Task Force Tabuka from 2021 to 2022, and MINUSMA, which began in 2013. A coup d'état in Mali in 2021 led to political tensions between Mali and France. This, as well as the deployment of Wagner Group fighters by the Malian government in December 2021, reportedly led to the withdrawal of French troops from Mali in August this year and the official end of Operation Barkhane in November. Over the course of the year, other states, like Germany and the UK, also announced the withdrawal of their troops from Mali, with some forces being redeployed to Niger.

French forces regularly targeted IS Sahel. For instance, on March 8, a French drone strike killed up to 15 IS Sahel militants in Ménaka region, Mali. In order to restrict the movement of IS Sahel members, French forces conducted joint operations with troops from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger in the tri-border region of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. For instance, on June 11, French forces conducted an operation in Mali's border region with Niger, capturing a senior member of IS Sahel.

This year, the armed forces of the affected countries continued to conduct operations against IS Sahel. For instance, on October 24, the Malian Air Force conducted attacks against IS Sahel militants in Tadjalalt al-Waqa'a village, Gao region.

On September 1, Malian and Wagner Group forces attacked IS Sahel in Asongo village, Ménaka region, allegedly leading to the death of 15 Wagner Group fighters.

This year, IS Sahel conducted most attacks in the tri-border area, namely the Ménaka and Gao regions of Mali, Tillabéri Department and Tahoua Department of Niger, and Sahel region of Burkina Faso. The group regularly clashed with

security forces, ambushing patrols or attacking outposts. While clashes with security forces accounted for approx. 400 deaths, most fatalities were civilians, killed during raids on villages. Especially in Ménaka, IS Sahel killed hundreds of civilians, claiming them to be fighters of Tuareg militias, with which the group has been clashing for years [→ Mali (Inter-Militant Rivalry/Northern Mali)]. While these attacks were framed by IS Sahel as reprisal attacks, attacks in other regions were often not claimed by the group.

Frequently, IS Sahel militants raided villages, artisanal gold mines, or civilian travellers in order to loot supplies. Furthermore, IS Sahel used violence against civilians to force them into compliance and extort money, including through kidnappings for ransom. In other cases, violence against civilians occurred amid the ongoing conflict between IS Sahel and the al-Qaeda affiliate Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM), in which both groups fought for influence in the region [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)].

The second half of the year saw increased activity by IS Sahel in Mali. This coincided with the withdrawal of French troops and aerial support from Mali. For instance, on August 7, IS Sahel militants attacked Tessit town, Gao region. After scouting the area with drones, the militants used an SVBIED and mortars, overwhelming the Malian army. 42 soldiers and 37 militants were killed in the fight. In the following month, the group was able to increase its influence in the region, showing their presence openly in villages and handing out medicine as well as destroying drugs in Ménaka region.

In Burkina Faso, IS Sahel concentrated its attacks in the northern part of the Sahel region. On June 12, IS Sahel attacked Seytenga town, Séno Province, near the border with Niger. Militants systematically looted the town and shot civilians, killing up to 89 people and displacing 30,000.

As in Mali and Burkina Faso, IS Sahel attacks in Niger were concentrated in the tri-border area. For instance, on March 16, IS Sahel attacked travellers on a highway in Tillabéri Department, 10 km away from the Petelkole border crossing to Burkina Faso. In the attack, 21 people were killed.

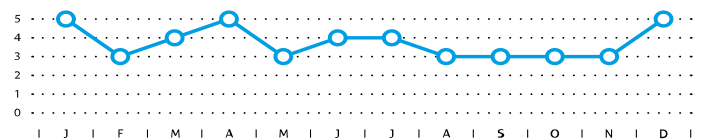
On July 1 and 2, IS Sahel carried out its first two attacks in Benin, in Alibori Department, leading to the death of at least two soldiers. Later, on September 15, the group claimed responsibility for the attacks. nre

MALI, BURKINA FASO ET AL. (JNIM, AQIM ET AL.)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **1998**

Conflict parties: Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, Ansaroul Islam, AQIM, JNIM, Macina Liberation Front vs. Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, France, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Togo, USA

Conflict items: system/ideology, international power



The war over international power and the orientation of the political system between the Islamist group Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM), comprised of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, Macina Liberation Front, and its regional affiliates Ansaroul Islam, and various other Islamist militant groups, on the one hand, and Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger (G5

Sahel), Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, and France, as well as other international government alliances, on the other, continued. International, regional, and national efforts to combat Islamist militants in the Sahel zone continued. Among international efforts to intervene in the region, only MINUSMA stayed regularly active. French forces under Operation Barkhane, and European partnership involvement under the Takuba Task Force, as well as US military contingents, announced their withdrawal on various occasions throughout this year, which led to an overall decrease in international involvement in the region. The G5 Sahel Force, pooling military, financial and logistical resources of their members to combat jihadist militant groups, was accompanied by national and cross-border interventions. In addition, communal defense groups, organized by affected communities and often supported by respective governments in the fight against Islamist militants, continued to grow in size and strength this year.

After France and allied countries announced on February 17 their full withdrawal of Operation Barkhane and European Takuba forces from strategically important Mali within six months, and officially ended their operations on June 30 (Takuba) and November 9 (Barkhane), individual agreements between some of the countries in the region and international partners continued, for example between France and Niger. Between November 14 and 22, the UK, Côte d'Ivoire and Germany withdrew from MINUSMA, leaving the future of the long-standing UN-mission in the region uncertain. However, continued international, particularly French, presence brought civilians to the streets, especially in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, demanding the end of the allegedly failed European involvement in the region and partly proposing security partnerships with Russia.

While paramilitary troops of the Wagner Group already fought together with the Malian Armed Forces (MAFa) in January this year, Burkina Faso and Niger allegedly started official negotiations for future cooperation with the Wagner Group. Throughout the year, several reports by international NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch, criticized Wagner Group's human rights abuses and violence against civilians in Mali, leading to the Malian transitional government banning a large number of French-funded peace groups on November 21. Additionally, some West African governments, e.g. Ghana on December 14, expressed their discontent with the group's presence in the region.

Throughout the affected countries, JNIM continued to be the Islamist group involved in the most violent attacks. While the so-called Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) and its factions had operated individually and as a rival to JNIM since 2019, the two Islamist groups continued to clash this year [→ Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. For instance, on November 3, IS Sahel fighters killed at least 40 JNIM members in the Malian Ménaka region. As a response, JNIM announced increased attacks against IS Sahel for the next year.

This year, fighting continued to target large numbers of civilians, ethnic self-defense militias, and government security forces, particularly in Mali's Mopti region, Burkina Faso's Sahel region, and in Niger's Tillabéri Department. While violence remained low in Algeria, the jihadist presence increased in Togo and Benin. Over the course of the year, at least 2,713 deaths and at least 400,000 IDPs were reported for the whole conflict.

MALI

While international forces were little involved in counterinsurgency missions throughout the year, MAFa continued

to operate against jihadist violence with the help of Wagner Group fighters. For instance, between March 23 and 31, MAFa and Wagner Group reported having killed at least 200 JNIM members in a major operation in Moura town, Mopti, while Human Rights Watch claimed that instead, at least 300 civilians, mostly ethnic Fulani, had been killed [→ Mali (inter-communal rivalry / central Mali)]. On May 9, MAFa killed a total of 56 JNIM fighters in large-scale operations in the Mopti, Koulikoro, Ségou, and Sikasso regions, and several dozens more later that month. Between October 3 and 6, MAFa destroyed strategically important JNIM bases in Niono district, Mopti, killed 31 militants and arrested 50 JNIM members in Sofara town, Mopti. Amid ongoing operations against JNIM in Mopti, government forces, along with Dan Na Ambassagou ethnic self-defense militias, and Wagner Group fighters, were accused of sexual violence and arbitrary killings against civilians [→ Mali (inter-communal rivalry / central Mali)]. Notably, on December 6, MAFa and Wagner Group members conducted air and ground operations in Kita town, Keyes Region, leaving dozens of civilians killed or detained.

Furthermore, MAFa and the French military were, throughout the year, involved in several targeted operations against al-Qaeda related leaders in the region. Most notably, between February 25 and 26, French forces killed an influential Algerian AQIM leader north of Timbuktu city, eponymous region.

JNIM attacks remained high this year, with at least 70 large-scale killings having been reported throughout the country. The deadliest attack occurred between June 18 and 19, when JNIM-linked Katiba Macina killed at least 132 civilians in multiple attacks during one night in Bankass district, Mopti.

BURKINA FASO

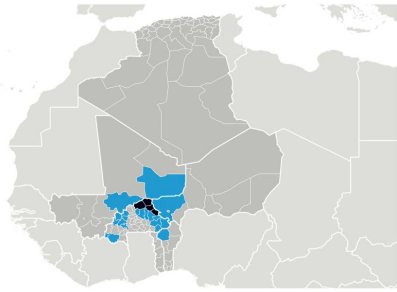
Jihadist presence increased in Burkina Faso this year. Although several military counterinsurgency missions were reported as successful, security forces, ethnic communities, and especially the Volunteers of the Defense of the Homeland (VDP) were the target of Islamist violence, with over 1,300 killings in total, the highest in the conflict. Most notably, on May 25, JNIM fighters attacked the village of Madjoari, Est region, and killed at least 50 civilians.

As a response to JNIM's growing influence in the country's north-eastern regions, military forces together with the French army reacted with several airstrikes and ground operations throughout the year. For instance, between January 15 and 24, when predominantly French forces killed at least 60 JNIM members near the town of Gorom-Gorom, Sahel. Throughout April, the Burkinabe military killed at least 130 JNIM members in airstrikes in the county's Sahel region. VDP militias thwarted several jihadist attacks on civilians, for example on August 4, after a large number of JNIM fighters had attacked several villages in Bam province, Centre Nord region. VDP militias killed 34 JNIM fighters in the attack.

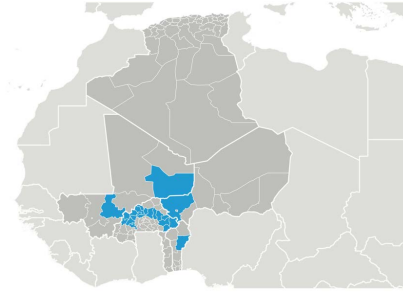
While the country experienced two coup d'états this year, the interim government announced on April 1 it would seek to start a dialogue with al-Qaeda-related groups and created a special commission on April 13 [→ Burkina Faso (opposition)]. Several times throughout the year, authorities announced large military recruitment efforts, for instance on October 24, when the army laid out plans to recruit 50,000 civilians as auxiliaries to help battle jihadists.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

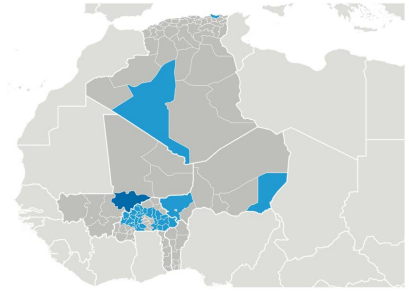
MALI, BURKINA FASO ET AL. (JNIM, AQIM ET AL.)



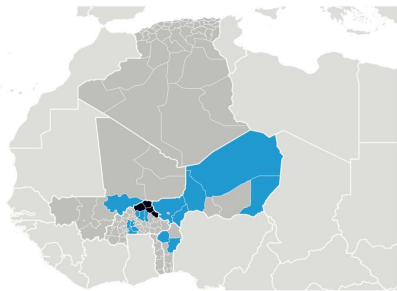
January



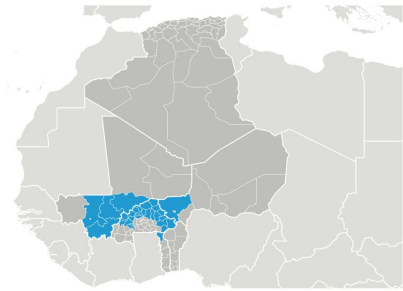
February



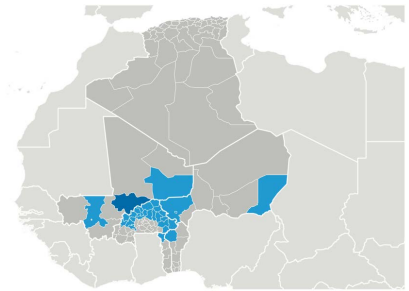
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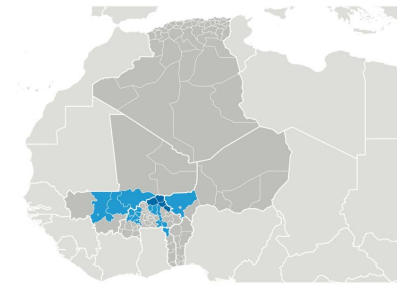
April



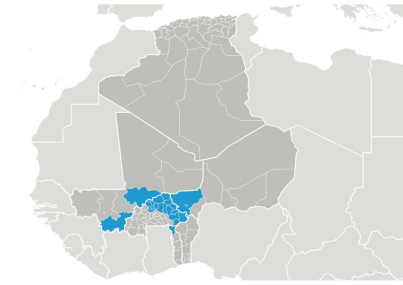
May



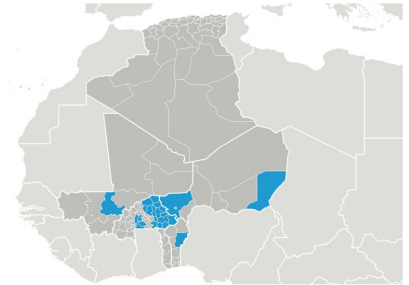
June



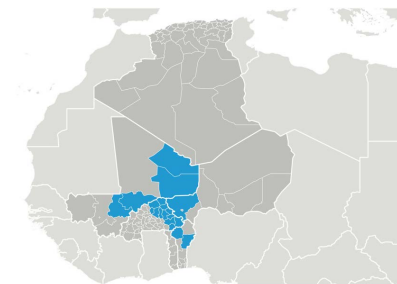
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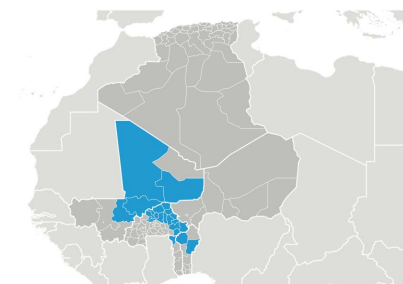
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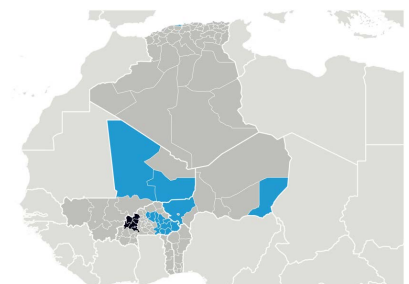
September



October



November



December



NIGER

Although total jihadist violence decreased significantly this year, JNIM fighters were still responsible for at least 366 deaths, predominantly in the Tillabéry Department. For instance, on March 16, JNIM attacked a civilian transport vehicle near the city of Téra, Tillabéry, and killed at least 21. On June 14, JNIM killed at least eight soldiers and wounded 33 in an attack on the town of Waraou, Tillabéry. Throughout the year, Nigerien and French military forces responded with airstrikes, for example in a nationwide operation between March 26 and April 5 that killed a total of 91 JNIM members. Around May 24, Nigerien forces reportedly killed 65 JNIM members near the cities of Torodi and Gotheye, Tillabéry. Still, on September 18, protests erupted in the capital Niamey, demanding the end of Nigerien-French ties and calling for a security partnership with Russia [→ Niger (opposition)]. In an effort to seek peace, President Mohamed Bazoum allegedly opened dialogue with JNIM leaders in early March, and released several jihadist militants from prison throughout the year.

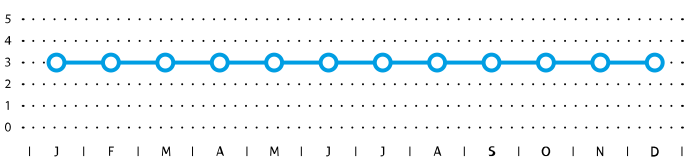
TOGO AND BENIN

Both countries experienced a sudden rise in jihadist violence this year. In Togo, JNIM-related killings, in total 78, were recorded for the first time in its conflict history. For instance, on May 11, when JNIM members attacked an army post in the village of Kpikankandi, Savanes region, killed eight soldiers and injured at least twelve more. The Togolese army responded with several airstrikes against JNIM bases throughout the year. After JNIM attacks had already been reported in Benin in November last year, at least 40 al-Qaeda-related killings occurred this year, predominantly in the Atakora and Borgou Provinces. For instance, on February 8, when JNIM members launched attacks with explosive devices in W National Park, near the town of Kandi, Borgou. pad, jak

MOZAMBIQUE (ASWJ)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2017**

Conflict parties: ASWJ vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology



The war over the orientation of the political system between the Islamist militia Ahlu Sunna Wal Jammaa (ASWJ), locally referred to as "al-Shabaab", and the government, de-escalated to a limited war. In 2019, alleged ASWJ members pledged their support to IS - West Africa Province. In May, the Islamic State central command declared its affiliates in Mozambique autonomous and referred to them as the Islamic State in Mozambique (ISM). However, the relationship between ASWJ and ISM remained contentious. Most of the recorded incidents occurred in the northern

province of Cabo Delgado, though ASWJ also clashed with security forces or attacked civilians in the neighboring provinces of Niassa and Nampula. Additionally, ASWJ carried out several attacks on civilians in districts of Cabo Delgado that had previously been largely spared from attacks. During the year, at least 336 people were killed, at least 200 houses burned and at least 38,000 people were internally displaced. As in the previous year, the government was supported by various international actors, including the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF), the Southern Africa Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), the EU and local self-defense militias. SAMIM's mandate was renewed and changed three times during the year, in January, April, and August. In accordance with the AU Standby Force Policy Framework, SAMIM's mandate was changed from a rapid intervention force to a peacekeeping force including military, police and civilian components.

Throughout the year, ASWJ attacked civilians in various districts across Cabo Delgado. For example, on January 3, ASWJ attacked the village of Nova Zambezia, Macomia district, killing at least five people and burning down eleven houses. On February 7, ASWJ and a local militia clashed in the village of Namuembe, Nangade district, leaving at least twelve people dead. In another attack, on March 24, ASWJ shot dead at least two civilians in the village of Nachipande, Mueda district. On July 17, members of ASWJ beheaded three miners in Nacara artisanal mine, Montepuez district. On October 9, ASWJ members killed at least five people in Mandava village, Muidimbe district. Between December 10 and 11, ASWJ beheaded at least five members of a local militia in Montepuez.

In addition, several clashes occurred between ASWJ and RDF, SAMIM, and Mozambican Armed Defense Forces (FADM). For example, between February 7 and 8, during a joint operation, RDF and FADM attacked ASWJ in the villages of Nhica de Rovuma and Pundanhar, Palma district. Security forces killed at least two ASWJ members, and freed 17 previously abducted civilians. Similarly, on April 22, during another clash, RDF and FADM killed at least 14 ASWJ members in Chipingo village, Mueda district. On June 9, SAMIM and ASWJ clashed near the village of Quinto Congresso, Macomia district, leaving at least one SAMIM member dead and six others injured. On June 28, ASWJ attacked an FADM garrison in Mandimba village, Nangade district, killing one and leaving five people injured. On September 7, FADM attacked ASWJ at Nkoa village, Macomia district, allegedly killing four leaders of ASWJ. In a counter attack, on September 15, ASWJ clashed again with FADM at Nkoa village, killing up to 16 FADM soldiers. According to SAMIM, on November 29, SAMIM forces clashed with ASWJ at Nkonga village, Nangade. SAMIM claimed to have killed 30 ASWJ members while two of its own soldiers died.

On September 8, ASWJ beheaded three civilians in Naheco village, Memba district, Nampula. ebe

NIGER (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2009**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties, on the one hand, and the government of President Mohamed Bazoum and his Nigerien Party for Democracy

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

and Socialism (PNDS-Tarayya), on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.

On February 13, Tahirou Saidou from the Moden-FA Lumana party was appointed as leader of the opposition. On May 12, the government strengthened opposition rights in an amendment bill to a 2010 ordinance. In a rare political move, on August 5, Bazoum met with opposition leader Saidou. The National Council for Political Dialogue, consisting of the opposition, the majority party and unaffiliated people, met on September 9 for the first time in almost two years.

On February 18, one day after the withdrawal announcement of French Barkhane and European Takuba forces from Mali, Bazoum once again expressed his support for the deployment of French and European special forces from Mali to Niger to fight Islamist groups in the region [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)]. Opposition parties and civil society movements continued to oppose this plan due to a loss of credibility of French military involvement in its former colonies, framing it as a threat for national sovereignty. On August 3, 15 civil society organisations formed a new coalition named M62 in reference to Niger's 62 independence day. M62 organised peaceful demonstrations with several hundred people chanting pro-Russian slogans against French military presence and high costs of living associated with rising food and fuel prices in the capital Niamey, and in Dosso city, eponymous department, on September 18, and in the city of Tillabéri, eponymous department, on October 8. Demonstrations planned in Niamey for August 17 and October 9 were banned by authorities due to security reasons. lie

NIGERIA (ANSARU)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: Ansaru vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis Sudan, also known as Ansaru, and the government escalated to a violent crisis. This year, Ansaru was increasingly involved in clashes with bandit groups in areas controlled by Ansaru [→ Nigeria (bandits)].

In 2012, following internal disagreements, a faction of Boko Haram (JAS) had formed Ansaru [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)]. In the following years, Ansaru did not claim any attacks and its leader Khalid al-Barnawi had been captured in 2016. In 2019, an al-Qaeda media outlet published a picture of Ansaru members, announcing the return of the group.

In an online statement released in January this year, Ansaru reconfirmed its allegiance to al-Qaeda [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)].

Throughout the year, the group strengthened its presence in Kaduna State, particularly Birnin Gwari and Chikun Local Government Areas (LGA), where they recruited local civilians. For instance, on June 6, Ansaru abducted an aid worker in Birnin Gwari, demanding security forces to leave the area. According to local sources, the group had also banned western education and political activities in towns under its control in the eastern part of Birnin Gwari.

Moreover, members of Ansaru defended villages and confronted groups of bandits who intervened in Ansaru-controlled territory. For instance, on September 29, after bandits had repeatedly attacked and kidnapped civilians

from Damari village, Kaduna State, Ansaru members fought them off, killing at least a dozen and freeing some abductees. On March 28, bandits attacked a passenger train headed to the city of Kaduna from the capital Abuja, killing at least eight civilians. Although Ansaru denied responsibility for the attack, their role in the event remains contested with several media outlets claiming the group cooperated with the bandits.

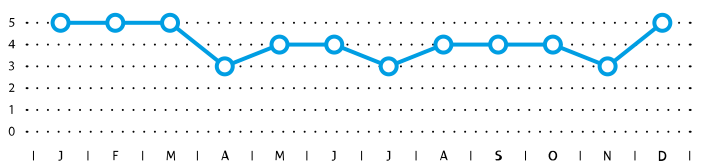
Similarly, on July 5, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) attacked Kuje prison in the capital of Abuja, helping 879 detainees escape [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. Several media outlets claimed Ansaru might have cooperated with ISWAP on the attack as they speculated that the arrested Ansaru leader al-Barnawi was amongst the escaped. However, details on the incident remained unclear.

sag

NIGERIA (BANDITS)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: bandits vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance, other



The war over subnational predominance between so-called bandits and the government continued.

The numerous criminal gangs, predominantly consisting of ethnic Fulani pastoralists and referred to as bandits, had emerged as a consequence of the conflict between the mainly Christian farmers and the predominantly Muslim Fulani pastoralists [→ Nigeria (farmers – pastoralists)]. While the majority of bandit groups operated autonomously, with violent clashes sometimes arising between the different bandit groups, they also occasionally collaborated. Bandit groups were also suspected to receive operational help from Islamist militant groups such as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS) [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)].

The bandits were primarily economically motivated and became increasingly professionalized in their operations. Their activities throughout the year included raids on villages, cattle rustling, and kidnapping for ransom. Moreover, local predominance was increasingly challenged by bandits, resulting in frequent violent clashes between bandit groups and security forces.

Approx. 3,736 fatalities and at least 1,064 abductions were reported this year. The most affected states were Kaduna State, Katsina State, Niger State, and Zamfara State. For instance, on January 4 and 5, over 300 bandits killed approx. 200 people and set houses on fire during raids in Anka and Bukkuyum Local Government Areas (LGA), and Zamfara State. Violence continued in February when Niger State witnessed nine incidents, leaving 140 dead. For example, in a series of bandit attacks in Lavun and Wushishi LGA on February 26, 17 people were killed, several houses looted, and livestock rustled. On March 28, suspected bandits attacked a train on the Abuja-Kaduna railway using IEDs, killing eight and abducting at least 60 civilians. Given the sophistication of the attack, various reports suggested that the bandits received

operational help from an Islamist militant group, allegeding it to be either Ansaru, JAS or Islamic State West Africa Province. In several bandit attacks on communities and villages in Kanam LGA, on April 10, at least 70 people were killed while approx. 70 were abducted and at least 100 houses burned. On May 10, bandits on motorcycles attacked Tati village, Taraba State. In the subsequent firefight between the bandits and security forces, 40 people were killed. Similarly, on May 14, bandits attacked a village in Chikun LGA, Kaduna State, killing one person and kidnapping 20. On May 31, a clash occurred between two rival bandit groups near Maniya village, Zamfara State, leaving 44 bandits dead. On June 7, bandits attacked Magazu village, Zamfara State, violating a ceasefire previously negotiated with the village. Consequently, five residents were killed and 15 injured.

According to media outlets, bandits specifically targeted community leaders in several attacks throughout the year. For instance, on July 3, bandits killed the community leader of Washna village, Plateau State, and his son. On July 10, bandits attacked two villages in Maru LGA, Zamfara State, killing 18 people. The attack followed a demand to pay protection fees.

On October 18, bandits attacked a hospital in Gulu district, Niger State, killing two people and abducting 20, including health workers. On November 2, bandits attacked the Gidan Goga market in Maradun LGA, Zamfara State, burning down the market stalls and killing two, while several others were abducted. Later that month, on November 20, bandits attacked four villages in Zurmi and Maradun LGA, Zamfara State, kidnapping at least 100 people. Similarly, in an alleged reprisal attack, on December 16, bandits stormed a community in Maru LGA, after two rifles went missing. The bandits abducted the community's entire male population and killed 28 people.

In response to increasing violence by bandit groups against civilians, state security forces increased counter-operations, often conducted by the Nigerian Air Force.

For instance, attacks on several villages by bandits in Shiroro and Munya LGA, Niger State, on February 5, that killed 44 people, were followed by a counter-operation of the Nigerian Air Force four days later, killing 37 bandits. On February 10, bandits attempted to attack the Nigeria Defence Academy in Birnin Gwari LGA, Kaduna State. However, the attack was fought off by Nigerian soldiers, resulting in the death of approx. 20 bandits.

In response to the Abuja-Kaduna train attack, two days later, on March 30, the security forces launched large-scale military operations against the bandits in Zamfara State and Kaduna State. As a result, 85 bandits were killed.

On April 4, bandits armed with heavy weapons, including RPGs, attacked a military base in Birnin Gwari LGA, killing 20 people and injuring 40. Following a bandits' attack on a mining site in Niger State on June 29, a firefight between bandits and security forces left a total of 45 people dead. On August 7, the Nigerian Air Force killed 28 bandits and injured approx. 50 in an airstrike conducted in Safana LGA, Katsina State. On August 31, bandits ambushed a military vehicle escorting residents in Jibia LGA, Katsina State. 12 people were killed in the ensuing firefight. On October 21, the Nigerian Air Force carried out an airstrike against a bandit group after receiving intelligence from residents about the bandits' whereabouts. Approx. 30 bandits were killed. On November 7, a firefight broke out between bandits and police after the latter came to the help of herders who had been attacked by bandits in Shiroro LGA, Niger State. The clash left 52 people dead. On December 18, 228 people were

killed in a violent clash between security forces, vigilantes, and bandits. The firefight followed an attempted attack by bandits on three villages in Maru LGA. frs

NIGERIA (FARMERS – PASTORALISTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1960**

Conflict parties: farmers vs. pastoralists
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and re-sources between farmers and pastoralists continued. The conflict was closely interlinked with the conflict between so-called bandits and the government as part of inter-communal rivalry [→ Nigeria (bandits)]. Initially, the control over arable land and cattle were the main points of contention, later political, environmental, ethnic, and religious issues between the predominantly Christian farmers of the Berom and Tiv peoples, on the one hand, and the mainly Muslim Fulani pastoralists, on the other, continued to overlay the conflict dynamics.

Over the course of the year, the conflict accounted for at least 339 deaths. For instance, on January 4, about 50 Fulani pastoralists attacked five village farm settlements in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area (LGA), Enugu State, killing five, looting houses and displacing approx. 50 residents. On January 6 and 11, Fulani pastoralists carried out attacks on Molege and Arimogija communities, Ondo State, killing eight residents in total. The attacks came after farmers in Molege denied the Fulani pastoralists' cattle to graze on their farmland. On January 25, a farmer killed a Fulani pastoralist in Kaduna State, leading to inter-community violence that resulted in one death. On February 19, a group of Fulani pastoralists blocked a road in Guma LGA, Benue State, killing three kinsmen of the Benue State governor.

Moreover, on March 24, Fulani pastoralists attacked Mgbuji and Ebo communities in Enugu State, killing six farmers. The attack came after the farmers had chased away Fulani pastoralists' cattle grazing on their crops. On March 29, Fulani pastoralists attacked the headquarters of Gwer West LGA, located in Naka town, Benue State, killing three residents and injuring five.

On April 2, Fulani pastoralists attacked two villages in Bassa LGA, Plateau State, claiming that local farmers had poisoned their cattle. As a result, twelve people were killed and 28 injured. On April 28, suspected Fulani pastoralists killed three farm workers and two members of the security forces deployed to enforce the anti-open grazing law in Logo LGA, Benue State. On May 5, Fulani pastoralists attacked Cinke and Zarama villages in Bassa LGA killing eight residents while injuring two and looting houses.

On June 14, Fulani pastoralists attacked Ogbede-Mgbuji Eha-Amufu village in Isi-Uzo LGA, Enugu State, killing five while many other residents were reported missing and 14 farm settlements were raided. On June 20, in Udei and Yelwata communities, Guma LGA, Fulani pastoralists killed 16 timber dealers, kinsmen of the Benue State governor. On July 11, Fulani pastoralists carried out an attack in Makurdi LGA, Benue State, burning down houses and killing at least two farmers. On September 21, Fulani pastoralists attacked two communities in Logo LGA shooting 14 people dead and injuring 30. On October 10, a Fulani pastoralist stabbed a farmer to death and injured five others in Riyom LGA, Plateau State. The

incident occurred after the farmer had forbidden the Fulani pastoralist to graze his cattle on the farmland. The following day, farmers killed four Fulani pastoralists in Taraba State. In a reprisal attack eight days later, on October 19, Fulani pastoralists stormed Gbeji community, Benue State, killing 18 people. On November 3, Fulani pastoralists attacked a market in Guma LGA, killing 18 people. On December 17, three farmers were killed by Fulani pastoralists in Makurdi, Benue State, after arguing over farmland that the Fulani pastoralists were using as grazing land for their cattle. frs

NIGERIA (ISWAP – JAS) .

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2016**

Conflict parties: ISWAP vs. JAS
 Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational pre-dominance

The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predominance between the two Islamist militant groups Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS), also known as Boko Haram, continued.

Both factions originate from the same group JAS. In May 2015, JAS' leader Abubaker Shekau officially pledged allegiance to the so-called Islamic State (IS) [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. In 2016, JAS became a province of IS and was renamed Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). The same year, internal disagreements over Shekau's leadership style led to a split of the group into two factions. Following the split, IS designated Abu Musab al-Barnawi as the new leader of ISWAP and recognized it as an official affiliate [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. Nevertheless, Shekau renewed his pledge of allegiance to IS, rejecting al-Barnawi's leadership. Shekau reverted to calling his faction JAS, without maintaining any links to IS. In 2020, sporadic clashes between ISWAP and JAS increased. In May 2021, ISWAP militants invaded JAS' stronghold in Sambisa Forest, leading to Shekau's death on May 19. This year, on May 2, Abu Umaimata was declared the new leader of JAS [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)]. Reportedly, Abu Umaimata is a pseudonym for Bakura Modu, the leader of a JAS faction operating in the northwest of Lake Chad, who was declared the leader of JAS in 2021. However, some uncertainty remained.

ISWAP operated mostly on the shores of Lake Chad and near the border to Niger and Chad as well as in parts of Adamawa State. Moreover, following Shekau's death, it expanded its area of operation into a large part of the northeast of Nigeria's Borno State. JAS operated mainly in the southeast of Borno State, in the area of the Sambisa Forest, which continued to be disputed between JAS and ISWAP, as well as in the Mandara Mountains on the border of Nigeria and Cameroon. The Bakura-led faction was based on the islands in northwestern Lake Chad. Overall, clashes throughout the year accounted for at least 250 deaths.

Militants from ISWAP and the Bakura faction clashed several times throughout the year. For instance, on February 9, they reportedly clashed on Toumboun Bazarkowo Island in Lake Chad, with ISWAP prevailing. On March 5, the two groups clashed again in Dikwa Local Government Area, Borno State, leaving at least 17 fighters dead. Similarly, on March 8, an ambush by ISWAP in Yauma Wango village, Borno State triggered a firefight with JAS that left nine JAS fighters dead. On April 4, JAS militants reportedly killed several ISWAP fighters

near Lake Chad, Niger and later executed ten captured ISWAP militants. On December 30 and 31, JAS militants attacked two ISWAP camps near Abadam municipality, Borno State, killing at least 30.

ISWAP and JAS also clashed in and around Sambisa Forest. For instance, on April 23, a clash between the two groups in Sambisa Forest left at least 34 militants dead. On September 16, ISWAP attacked a JAS Gaizuwa camp in Bama LGA, Borno State, leaving 29 fighters dead. On October 24, JAS attacked two ISWAP camps in Konduga LGA, Borno State, resulting in scores of militants dead. On November 21, ISWAP fighters ambushed a JAS convoy in Sambisa Forest, leaving approx. 50 JAS militants dead. Around December 3, in a series of three attacks and counterattacks in Sambisa Forest, about 50 militants from both sides, including a JAS commander, were killed. Later, JAS militants killed at least 33 ISWAP members in a reprisal attack. mbr

NIGERIA (PRO-BIAFRA GROUPS / BIAFRA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1967**

Conflict parties: pro-Biafra groups vs. government
 Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over the secession of southeastern parts of the country between pro-Biafra groups such as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) including its military arm Eastern Security Network (ESN), Biafra Nations League (BNL), and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Across southeast Nigeria, members of pro-Biafra groups reiterated their demand for an independent Biafra state especially in the context of the upcoming presidential elections.

Throughout the year, at least 316 people were killed in clashes between pro-Biafra groups and security forces or during attacks on civilians by pro-Biafra groups. Moreover, internal disagreements led to the emergence of rival factions within the separatist movement IPOB. On March 20, police forces shot dead four suspected separatists that were attacking a police station in Oru-East Local Government Area (LGA), Imo State. An attack on the residence of a traditional ruler in Orlu LGA, Imo State, resulted in the death of six suspected IPOB/ESN members on May 16.

This year, the continued imprisonment of IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu as well as the associated sit-at-home orders remained a source of contention. On October 18, all charges against Kanu including terrorism and treason were dropped by the court of appeals, however, he was not released. As a consequence, IPOB appointed Chika Edoziem as its new leader. IPOB-issued sit-at-home orders associated with Kanu's trial days often resulted in violence. The situation was further aggravated by polarization within IPOB/ESN as parts of the group officially suspended the Monday sit-at-home orders, while others were still enforcing them. During the imposition of a two-day sit-at-home order, four suspected IPOB members were shot dead by the Nigerian military on May 4, in Aba city, Abia State. Further, on December 9, four people were killed by gunmen enforcing the stay-at-home order in Onuimo LGA and Isiala Mbanu LGA, both Imo State, as well as two more during an attack on a convoy in Mbaitoli LGA, Imo State, the same day.

Moreover, several violent attacks by suspected IPOB/ESN militants on people of northern descent took place. On April

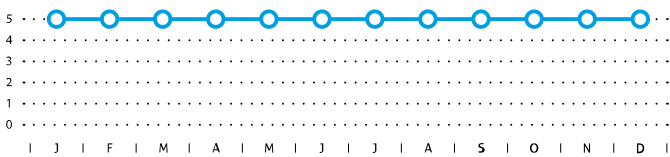
30, for instance, the Nigerian army accused IPOB/ESN members of having beheaded two Nigerian soldiers from northern Nigeria in Orlu LGA, Imo State. However, IPOB has denied responsibility for the killings. On May 22, a northern civilian and four children were killed in Orumba North LGA, whilst six other civilians originating from the north were shot at Onocha LGA, Anambra State, the same day. At least seven people were killed during an attack on a migrant center in Owerri West LGA, Imo State, on August 1.

BNL and its associated militia Black Marine continued cross-border operations in the Bakassi area of Cameroon. For instance, on April 15, members of the Cameroonian Bataillon d'intervention rapide (BIR) clashed with separatists at Atabong, Bakassi Peninsula, killing their commander. On June 16, BNL targeted a speedboat carrying foreign oil workers in the Isangele division of Bakassi Peninsula, killing one. Suspected members of Black Marine killed two BIR soldiers in the same area of Cameroon on July 8. yme

NIGERIA, CHAD ET AL. (ISWAP)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: ISWAP vs. Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria
 Conflict items: system/ideology, international power



The war over international power and the orientation of the political system between the so-called Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger continued for the seventh consecutive year.

The group's main area of operations was the Lake Chad Basin, comprising parts of northeast Nigeria, namely Borno State, Yobe State and Adamawa State, as well as Cameroon's Far-North Region, Niger's Diffa Department and Chad's Lac Region.

In 2019, the group known as Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) was subordinated to ISWAP by the so-called Islamic State (IS) [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. In March this year, IS promoted ISGS to Islamic State Sahel Province [→ Mali et al. (IS Sahel)], subsequently making a distinction between the groups in publications.

The group, which was previously called Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS), also known as Boko Haram, pledged allegiance to IS in 2015 [→ Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger (JAS-Boko Haram)]. After the pledge, the group was acknowledged as ISWAP by IS. Due to internal disputes over the strategy and leadership style of its leader Abubakar Shekau, the group split. Following the divide, ISWAP remained the sole affiliate of IS in the Lake Chad Basin.

ISWAP and JAS avoided clashes up until 2020, when the ceasefire, allegedly brokered by IS, broke down [→ Nigeria (ISWAP – JAS)]. Following intensified fighting in late 2020 and early 2021, an ISWAP operation in one of JAS' former strongholds, the Sambisa Forest, Borno State, led to the death of Shekau. While some JAS cells stayed vigilant and continued fighting ISWAP, ISWAP was able to consolidate its

influence in former JAS strongholds, like the Sambisa Forest, and incorporated members of JAS into its ranks. According to some estimates, ISWAP had up to 9,000 members, making it the second largest IS affiliate. Throughout the year, IS media publications highlighted the group's activities. On June 16, the IS' weekly Al-Naba publication stated the importance of African IS affiliates for the organization and urged members to relocate to Africa.

ISWAP has a diversified command structure with various regional operationally independent subgroups. The regional subgroups are headed by a Shura council, which is led by Abu Musab al-Barnawi. Some reports suggest that he is also the overall leader of IS affiliates in the Sahel and Libya.

The takeover of former JAS territories by ISWAP reinforced an ongoing trend, when in 2019 constant attacks by ISWAP led to a withdrawal of Nigerian security forces as well as humanitarian actors from rural parts of Borno State. The group now controls large areas of northern Borno State as well as the shoreline and islands of Lake Chad. ISWAP also has significant influence over the border region in Yobe State, the border region with Niger and parts of Adamawa State.

This enabled ISWAP to extort taxes on various economic activities, like trading and fishing. According to reports, control of fishing activities on Lake Chad generated up to USD 43 million annually. When the Nigerian government announced the change of currency notes in October, ISWAP forced the population to pay in CFA Franc, the currency of the neighboring countries.

Furthermore, ISWAP imposed laws based on Sharia, introduced a new school curriculum, based on the group's values, and provided basic healthcare. To generate support from the local Muslim population, ISWAP's approach towards civilians was perceived as less violent, compared to JAS.

This year, the conflict accounted for at least 2,000 deaths. As a consequence of the ongoing violence in the Lake Chad Basin, approx. 2.5 million people were displaced.

Over the course of the year, ISWAP claimed approx. 517 attacks in Nigeria, surpassing any other IS affiliate worldwide. While ISWAP increased the frequency of attacks, they became less deadly than in previous years. In contrast to preceding years, where the group mounted large scale attacks on military bases, this year ISWAP often targeted military patrols with IEDs, small-scale ambushes and fired mortars on military installations, continuously striking throughout large parts of northeast Nigeria. While most attacks targeted security forces, ISWAP also used roadblocks on highways to extort money from civilians and raided towns and villages for medical and other supplies. Furthermore, ISWAP increased attacks on the Christian population.

While in previous years an ISWAP presence was reported in other Nigerian states, this year saw the first ISWAP attacks outside northeastern Nigeria since the group split from JAS.

On April 20 and 23, ISWAP detonated bombs in bars in Iware and Jalingo, Taraba State, killing at least 15 people. The next day, ISWAP attacked a police station in Kogi State, killing three police officers. In the following months, ISWAP conducted at least five more attacks in Kogi State, targeting bars, a church, and a festival. Overall, the attacks accounted for at least twelve fatalities. On December 29, ISWAP planted a car bomb in the state capital Okene, targeting President Buhari. The bomb killed at least three people but detonated 30 minutes before Buhari arrived.

On July 5, ISWAP conducted one of its largest operations this year, attacking the Kuje Prison in the outskirts of Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory of Abuja with approx. 100 militants.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Allegedly, ISWAP cooperated with the Islamist militant group Ansaru, to conduct the attack [→ Nigeria (Ansaru)]. During the attack, 879 prison inmates, amongst them approx. 70 jihadists, were freed and four prison guards killed. In the following days around half of the inmates were recaptured by security forces while over 400 remained at large. During the attack, Khalid al-Barnawi, the former leader of Ansaru, arrested in 2016, was allegedly freed.

Later that month, on July 29, ISWAP conducted an attack on a military checkpoint in Abuja, killing two soldiers.

On September 22, ISWAP claimed responsibility for an attack on a police patrol in Ondo State, which was followed by another attack on a police patrol in neighboring Edo State the same day.

Later that year, on October 29, approx. 50 ISWAP fighters attacked a military camp near New Bussa village, Niger State. In the camp, up to 1,700 suspected jihadists were held. Reportedly, no jihadists were freed and the attack was quashed, leading to the death of seven militants. The attack was preceded by two attacks on police forces in Niger State, on May 12 and July 3, leading to the death of three policemen in May and one in July.

On June 9, unknown gunmen attacked a church in Owo, Ondo State, killing 40 people. The government accused ISWAP of conducting the attack. However, the group's involvement could not be verified.

The attacks far away from ISWAP's main area of operations and in regions where ISWAP has no established support from the local population demonstrated the group's logistical and operational capabilities. In December, ISWAP released pictures of its subgroups, pledging allegiance to the new IS leader. In addition to several subgroups in Borno State and Yobe State, one cell was allegedly based in central Nigeria.

In contrast, attacks outside Nigeria remained relatively low. ISWAP claimed responsibility for up to ten attacks in Chad, up to seven attacks in Cameroon and up to eleven in Niger. The attacks took place in the border regions in the Lake Chad basin.

For instance, on November 22, ISWAP attacked a military outpost on the island Bouka-Toullorom, Lac Province, Chad, killing up to 40 soldiers and destroying the outpost. Earlier in the year, on June 3, ISWAP attacked an outpost of Niger's national guard. Repelling the attack, security forces killed up to eleven militants while one soldier died.

To combat ISWAP, the governments of the affected countries launched multilateral security initiatives. The countries in the Lake Chad Basin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger as well as Benin, had expanded the mandate of the existing Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in 2012 in order to fight Boko Haram. Nigeria received intelligence, material support, and military training from the USA, Russia, China, France, and Germany, among others.

MNJTF troops were deployed in its member states and are mandated to fight ISWAP in cross border operations. For instance, on March 9, Cameroonian soldiers engaged ISWAP militants near the Cameroonian-Nigerian bordertown in Amchide, Far North region, Cameroon, killing 20 militants and destroying pickup trucks armed with heavy machine guns.

To counter ISWAP, the Nigerian military continued its strategy of previous years and relied heavily on the use of attack aircraft and helicopter gunships. Throughout the year, the Nigerian government purchased new aircraft to increase its capabilities. Airstrikes on ISWAP camps throughout Borno State were frequently reported, allegedly leading to the death of various ISWAP commanders in the Lake Chad area. Operations by the air force prevented ISWAP from gathering

fighters in preparation for large scale attacks on military installations. For instance, on November 5, when airstrikes targeted ISWAP camps on Lake Chad islands in Abadam LGA, Borno State, killing two commanders and several ISWAP fighters.

Moreover, the military conducted clearance operations, attacking ISWAP strongholds throughout Borno State. For example, on March 24, Nigerian security forces conducted an operation in Sambisa Forest, storming an ISWAP stronghold named Camp Zairo and forcing ISWAP to retreat. Following the operation, the military seized large amounts of weapons and various vehicles.

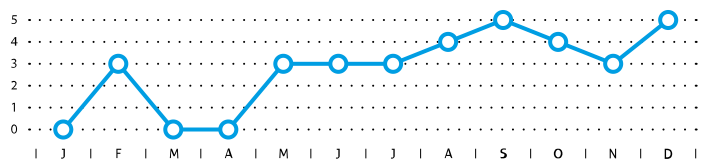
On December 12, Reuters published investigations that the Nigerian government ran a forced abortion program from 2013 onwards. Women who became pregnant by Boko Haram members through rape or during captivity were, if unwilling, forced to take medicine to end the pregnancy. According to the report, more than 10,000 forced abortions took place. The government denied the report. nre

NIGERIA, CHAD ET AL. (JAS-BOKO HARAM)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria vs. JAS

Conflict items: system/ideology



The war over the orientation of the political system between Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS), also known as Boko Haram, and the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger continued for the twelfth consecutive year. The group was opposed to secular and liberal values, in particular Western education and democratic systems, seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate in the region. In May 2015, Boko Haram officially pledged allegiance to the so-called Islamic State (IS) [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. Internal disagreements led to a split of Boko Haram into two factions, JAS led by Abubakar Shekau, and the other by Abu Musab al-Barnawi, in 2016. In May 2021, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) militants invaded JAS' stronghold in Sambisa Forest, Borno State, Nigeria, leading to Shekau's death on 05/19/21 [→ Nigeria (ISWAP – JAS)]. In June 2021, Bakura Modu was declared the new leader of JAS. This year, on May 2, Abu Umaimata was declared the leader of JAS. Reportedly, Abu Umaimata is a pseudonym for Bakura Modu, however, some uncertainty remained.

This year, the conflict accounted for at least 800 deaths. As a consequence of the ongoing violence, approx. 2.5 million people were displaced in the northeast of Nigeria and the adjacent states of the Lake Chad basin.

JAS operated mainly in the southeast of Borno State, in the area of the Sambisa Forest, which continued to be disputed between JAS and ISWAP, as well as in the Mandara Mountains in the border area of Nigeria and Cameroon. In Cameroon, JAS operated in the Far North Region. The faction led by Bakura was based on the islands of Lake Chad.

Moreover, reports surfaced about JAS members being active in Nigeria's western Niger State and Kaduna State, reportedly

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

alongside Ansaru [→ Nigeria (Ansaru)]. Overall, JAS continued to be weakened after Shekau's death and under pressure from both ISWAP and the region's governments. Alongside troops of the affected countries in the Lake Chad Basin, comprising Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, forces from Benin contributed to the African Union-mandated Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). In 2013, to fight Boko Haram locally the Nigerian government had authorized a Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), comprising 26,000 local vigilantes. Following Shekau's death, JAS fighters and commanders continued to surrender to the Nigerian Army or pledge allegiance to ISWAP. The Nigerian Army claimed on May 9 that up to 51,000 JAS members including fighters and their families had surrendered in the first three months of the year in Nigeria's northeast. Similarly, on November 20, two commanders and 47 fighters surrendered in Sambisa Forest.

The group's activities decreased drastically compared to previous years, with most incidents reported in the second half of the year. On several occasions, JAS attacked civilians. On September 2, JAS attacked Ngulde village, Borno State, killing four and looting livestock. On November 10, JAS militants reportedly killed at least 14 women in Gwoza Local Government Area (LGA), Borno State, accusing them of witchcraft. On December 24, JAS militants killed 17 herders in Airamne village, Borno State, and stole cattle.

Throughout the year, the Nigerian Army continued to conduct airstrikes against Islamist militant hideouts. For instance, on August 30 and 31, in several airstrikes in Kaduna State and Borno State, at least 53 militants were killed. On September 3 and 4, air force and special forces killed up to 200 JAS militants, including five commanders, in Sambisa Forest. On October 28, multiple airstrikes on JAS hideouts in Bama LGA, Borno State, killed dozens of militants. On December 21 and 27, multiple airstrikes on Mantari camp in Sambisa Forest killed approx. 200 suspected JAS militants.

Nigerian security forces and JAS militants clashed frequently throughout the year. For instance, on June 12, the Nigerian Army and CJTF members stormed a JAS camp near Gazuwa village, Bama LGA, and killed 47 JAS members, while two CJTF members were killed. On October 10, JAS militants ambushed a military patrol on the Bama-Banki road in Borno State. In the subsequent shootout, several militants were killed.

JAS militants also clashed with the MNJTF. On February 28, MNJTF soldiers killed several JAS militants in Kirawa village, Borno State. On May 25, Nigerian troops reported to have clashed with about 100 JAS militants on an island in Lake Chad, killing approx. 40, while seven soldiers were injured. On October 22, JAS militants reportedly took control over a Cameroon Armed Forces outpost near Djibrilli village, Far North Region. No deaths or injuries were reported. lel, mbr

RWANDA – UGANDA

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **2018**

Conflict parties: Rwanda vs. Uganda
Conflict items: international power

The dispute over international power between Rwanda and Uganda continued.

However, the year was marked by diplomatic dialogue by government representatives from both countries. For example, on January 17, the Ugandan UN representative held talks with Rwandan President Paul Kagame in the Rwandan capi-

tal Kigali. Similarly, on January 22, a high-ranking Ugandan general met Kagame in Kigali, discussing ways to improve bilateral relations. At the end of the month, on January 31, Rwanda announced the reopening of its border with Uganda after three years. On March 7, Rwanda reopened its Gatuna Border Post, Northern Province, one of the key trade routes in eastern Africa. On April 24, Kagame held talks with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in the Ugandan capital Kampala. In May, both countries signed a memorandum of understanding of military intelligence sharing.

For the first time in five years, Museveni visited Kigali on the occasion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting between June 20 and 25.

On September 1, Rwandan officials from the foreign ministry and their Ugandan counterparts held diplomatic talks in Kigali. In a joint statement they reiterated their commitment to improve bilateral relations.

Nevertheless, grievances between the two governments remained. For instance, on January 31, a Rwandan government spokesman claimed that Rwandan nationals were being arbitrarily beaten, tortured, and deported on Ugandan territory. ebe

SENEGAL (MFDC / CASAMANCE)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1982**

Conflict parties: MFDC vs. government
Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over secession of the religiously and ethnically distinct Casamance area between the government and the Movement of Democratic Forces in Casamance (MFDC) continued. Casamance is the area south of the Gambia, consisting of the Ziguinchor Region (Lower Casamance) and the Kolda and Sédhiou Regions (Upper Casamance). This year was marked by two government military operations against alleged MFDC camps in Ziguinchor Region, near the Gambia's West Coast Division. The first operation started on January 24 to fight alleged MFDC members that tried to build up a new base by the border to the Gambia, when Senegalese soldiers killed one MFDC member and captured another three in Ziguinchor Region, near the Gambian Bwiam town, West Coast Division. As a response, suspected MFDC members shot four Senegalese soldiers that were affiliated with an Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peace mission on the same day.

On March 13, Senegalese authorities launched a second military operation against MFDC in Ziguinchor Region to dismantle MFDC bases with the stated goal of preserving territorial integrity. According to the Gambian government on March 22, over 6,000 Gambian civilians were internally displaced since the March operation started, after Senegalese bullets landed on the Gambian villages bordering Casamance. On March 23, the government confirmed that it had destroyed eight MFDC bases across Casamance in March, which left several MFDC members and one Senegalese soldier dead.

On August 4, ECOWAS representatives, the government, and the mediator Guinea-Bissau met in the capital Bissau, Guinea-Bissau, to discuss peace efforts between the government and an influential MFDC unit. One day later, on August 5, Senegal's President Macky Sall and the head of the negotiating MFDC unit announced a new peace agreement between the government and MFDC. While most of the content of the agreement remains unknown, some MFDC leaders reportedly

pledged to lay down all arms and work for the return of peace in the region. pad

SIERRA LEONE (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2007**

Conflict parties: APC vs. government
Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between the opposition party All People’s Congress (APC) and the ruling Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) continued. This year, violent clashes only occurred in August in the context of nationwide opposition protests against President Julius Maada Bio over increasing fuel prices and rising inflation. For instance, on August 10, protesters clashed with security forces in the capital Freetown, Western Area, reportedly leaving six police officers and at least 21 civilians dead. Similar violent incidents occurred in Kamakwie town and Makeni city, both in Northern Province. In response, the government announced a nationwide curfew on the same day, and cut off all internet access until August 11. After protesters demanded Bio’s resignation during the demonstrations and on social media, Bio accused the APC-led opposition of inciting violent protests in the country and for attempting to overthrow the SLPP-led government. Although the government and local media accused APC of orchestrating the violent protests, APC leaders issued a statement on the night of the protests condemning the violence. pad

SOMALIA (PUNTLAND – SOMALILAND)

Intensity: **3** | Change: ↗ | Start: **1998**

Conflict parties: regional government of Puntland vs. regional government of Somaliland
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The non-violent crisis over subnational predominance between the self-declared state of Somaliland and the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, supported by the Federal Government of Somalia, escalated to a violent crisis. The border region between Somaliland and Puntland, comprising the regions Sool, Sanaag, and Cayn, had been subject to recurring and opposing territorial claims by Somaliland and Puntland as well as by various ethnic groups inhabiting the region. Throughout the year, the clashes left at least twelve people dead and at least 26 people injured. For instance, on January 2, clashes between Somaliland forces and Puntland forces erupted in Boocame town, Sool region, and Birta Dheer, Nugal region, killing ten people and injuring another 20. On November 22, a clash between Somaliland forces and Puntland forces occurred in Qararo town, Togdheer region, resulting in two deaths and injuring six. Moreover, Somaliland attempted to seize control over Boocame. For instance, militias loyal to Somaliland captured Boocame, previously held by Puntland, to celebrate the de facto secession day on May 18. No casualties were reported. On October 31, Somaliland forces established a military outpost in Boocame, further fortifying the town with additional military vehicles and weapons. mmp

SOMALIA (SUBCLAN RIVALRY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1991**

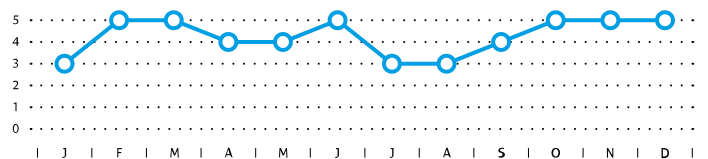
Conflict parties: Gaalje’el subclans vs. Habar-Gidir-Ayr subclans vs. Hawadle subclans vs. Merehan subclans
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various subclans continued. Somali society is structured into various clans, with various militias fighting each other over local influence. This year, violent and non-violent clashes centered around resources, as previous year’s droughts made water and grazing land scarce. On February 1, fighting over resources erupted between the Habar-Gidir-Ayr subclan and the Merehan subclan near Bal-anbal district, Galgaduud region. The clash left at least six people dead, eight injured, approx. 15 houses destroyed, and about 14,100 people internally displaced. On March 7, the Hawadle subclan and the Gaalje’el subclan attacked each other over open seats for the election committee of the Somali president in Beledweyne town, Hiiraan region. The incident left two people dead. On August 18, two unidentified clans fought over a water borehole near Abudwak, Galgaduud, killing 20 people before federal government forces intervened, disarming the two militias. jfg

SOMALIA, KENYA (AL-SHABAAB)

Intensity: **5** | Change: • | Start: **2006**

Conflict parties: al-Shabaab vs. Kenya, Somalia
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The war over national power and the orientation of the political system between the Islamist militant group al-Shabaab and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) continued. The FGS was supported by local security forces, the AU Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forces that changed their name to African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) in March, US Africom, and the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF). In the beginning of the year, the national and international pressure on then-President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo to hold elections increased over election delays. Parliamentary elections were completed on April 13 and the presidential elections were held on May 15, electing Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as the new Somali president. The number of al-Shabaab members was estimated to be between 6,000 and 12,000 active members in Somalia and Kenya. Over the course of the year, between 5,060 and 5,496

people were killed.

Al-Shabaab targeted the police and the military while there was an increase in the number of civilian casualties throughout the year. According to UN reports, the year accounted for the highest level of civilian casualties in the last five years with at least 613 civilians killed and 948 injured. Most attacks centered around the capital Mogadishu, as well as the federal member states of Middle Shabelle, Lower Shabelle, Hiiraan and other southern States. In Kenya, attacks concentrated in the counties of Lamu, Wajir, and Mandera close to the Somali border.


On March 7, AU and FGS announced that AMISOM troops would be replaced by ATMIS troops in Somalia. AU and FGS stated that the goal of the mandate is the transferral of all security related responsibilities back to FGS to allow for a coordinated withdrawal of AU troops. The ATMIS operation started on April 1.

Throughout the year, al-Shabaab targeted airports at least five times. On March 23, a small group of al-Shabaab fighters opened fire at the Aden Adde Airport in Mogadishu killing at least two civilians and injuring five others, while other al-Shabaab members attacked the diplomatic enclave Halane base camp with guns and grenades, killing at least 27 people. On May 5, US-President Joe Biden authorised a new US mission in Somalia, allowing for the redeployment of up to 500 troops. The US conducted airstrikes in Somalia from February 22, leaving at least 391 dead over the course of the year.

The situation in Mogadishu remained tense throughout the year. In the run up to the parliamentary elections, the number of attacks in Mogadishu peaked between February and April causing at least 151 casualties. At least half of these attacks employed IEDs and other explosive devices. Additionally, al-Shabaab attacked election-related events outside of Mogadishu. During an explosion in the Lama-Galaay election camp in Baladweyne city, eponymous district, Hiiraan region, on March 23, at least 48 people were killed and 108 injured. Attacks also gained prominence outside of Somalia. On July 1, ten al-Shabaab militants were killed in a confrontation with KDFs in Boni Forest, Garissa county, Kenya. At the end of July, Ethiopian Federal Police and Ethiopian National Defense Forces killed at least 165 militants in Somali Region, Ethiopia, when al-Shabaab tried to cross the border from Somalia. In the border region of Bakool, at least 50 people were killed in early October in clashes between al-Shabaab and Ethiopian police forces.

Throughout the year, several actors gained prominence in the combating of al-Shabaab, for instance, the Macawiisley clan militia grew into a strong opponent to al-Shabaab, being involved in 21 percent of all the conflicts reported in September. A Turkish Armed Forces air strike resulted in the deaths of 110 people on October 22 and 24, in hideouts in the Middle Shabelle region. mib, duw

SOUTH AFRICA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: civil rights groups, DA, EFF, IFP vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The limited war over national power and the orientation of the political and social system between antagonistic factions within the African National Congress (ANC), political opposi-

tion parties such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the Democratic Alliance (DA) and civil rights groups, on the one hand, and the ruling faction of the ANC under President Cyril Ramaphosa, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.

EFF continued its policy of disrupting council and parliamentary meetings. For example, on January 18, EFF members in Johannesburg city, Gauteng province, chained their hands together and pulled out of a council meeting to protest against the ANC. Similarly, on May 19, EFF members impeded a council meeting in the administrative capital city Pretoria, Gauteng. EFF members blocked the entrance and kept people from entering the council chamber. Police forces used tear gas and stun grenades to disperse EFF members. During the meeting, EFF members threw furniture and used tables and chairs as a blockade. One EFF member was injured during the incident.

On June 1, Ramaphosa was accused of money laundering, bribery, and kidnapping of alleged burglars following the 02/09/2020 robbery at his private farm near the town of Bela-Bela, Limpopo province. These allegations resulted in nationwide protests from opposition parties and ANC factions, demanding his resignation. For example, on June 9 in the legislative capital of Cape Town, Western Cape, EFF members were forcibly removed from parliament after interrupting Ramaphosa's speech and demanding answers regarding the allegations. On July 15, 300 people from ANC factions and opposition parties protested in Johannesburg, demanding Ramaphosa's immediate removal. Similarly, on September 9, ANC and EFF members marched in Pretoria, against the government. On December 16, Ramaphosa's speech at the ANC Congressional meeting in Johannesburg was disrupted by protesters, ahead of the ANC party leader elections. Despite the allegations against Ramaphosa, impeachment proceedings in parliament were decided in favour of the president in the beginning of December. Ramaphosa was re-elected as ANC party leader on December 19. zza

SOUTH AFRICA (SOCIOECONOMIC PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2018**

Conflict parties: residents of informal settlements vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political and economic systems between residents of informal settlements and the government continued.

As in previous years, the crisis was marked by decentralised and spontaneous protests for the provision of basic public services such as housing, electricity, water, sewage and infrastructure, taking place in most regions of the country.

Throughout the year, protesters blocked major roads to obstruct traffic and increase their visibility. For example, on January 27, protesters blocked roads next to the N3 national highway in the provincial capital Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal province, with objects and burning tires, causing traffic delays. Between June 6 and 15, inhabitants of Mpumalanga province and KwaZulu-Natal protested against increasing fuel prices and unemployment. On June 22, residents of the Makause informal settlement in Germiston town, Gauteng province, protested against the lack of basic service provision by blocking roads and burning garbage and tires. On August 1, another service delivery protest was held by residents of the Tembisa township, Gauteng. Protesters blocked

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

roads with rocks and burning tyres and set a municipal building on fire. Four people were killed during the protests, two of which were allegedly shot dead by police as they blew open an ATM.

On September 26, residents at Ventersburg city, Free State province, blocked the N1 national highway, protesting the water shortages. On November 8, residents of the Vosman community, Mpumalanga, protested against constant power outages. They blocked the N4 national highway, as well as looted, torched and burned down a shopping centre. Police allegedly shot dead one woman, while two police officers were left injured during this incident. Between December 13 and 14, residents of informal settlements protested against electricity shortages with burned tires and blocked roads in the cities Kempton Park and Roodepoort, Gauteng, as well as in Chesterville town, KwaZulu-Natal. *ssc*

SOUTH AFRICA (XENOPHOBES)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1994**

Conflict parties: immigrants vs. xenophobes
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over labor market shares, cultural hegemony, and access to the social security system between xenophobic South African nationals and groups of immigrants continued. As in previous years, xenophobic South Africans accused immigrants of taking jobs away from locals and being involved in criminal activity.

Johannesburg city, Gauteng province, was especially affected by anti-foreign protests led by the movement "Operation Dudula". For example, on February 19, in the neighborhood of Hillbrow, members of the movement organised a march to express their grievances over suspected illegal immigrants and their employment. The police used rubber bullets, stun grenades and tear gas to disperse the protesters.

On March 7, Operation Dudula members protested in Alexandra township, Eastern Cape province, demanding illegal immigrants leave the country. Similarly, on June 21, Operation Dudula members allegedly set fire to at least 15 foreign-owned shops in the Yeoville neighborhood of Johannesburg. On April 5, after civil society pressure, President Cyril Ramaphosa denounced Operation Dudula as illegal vigilantism.

Throughout the year, individual foreign nationals were the target of xenophobic violence and killings. For example, between February 11 and 12, xenophobic community members in Vereeniging town, Gauteng, beat and killed three Nigerian citizens for allegedly dealing drugs and buying stolen goods. Furthermore, on April 6, a xenophobic mob beat, stoned to death and burned a Zimbabwean national in the township of Diepsloot, Gauteng. On September 17, xenophobes burned three Zimbabweans alive in Chavani village, Limpopo province. On December 12, a group of xenophobic men attacked two civilians at a swimming pool in the Maselspoort resort, Free State Province, citing the apartheid for their violence.

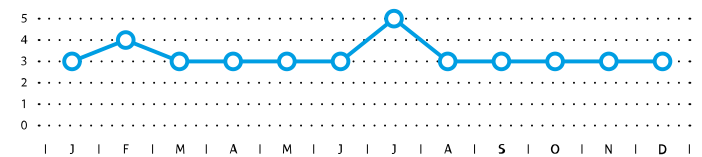
On August 4, residents of Kagiso township, armed with sticks and axes, protested against suspected illegal miners near Krugersdorp city, Gauteng, after residents accused suspected illegal miners of raping eight women. Residents blocked roads with burning tires and rocks, clashing with police forces, who used rubber bullets against the protesters. Similarly, on August 8, around 300 people protested at Mohlakeng mining

town, Gauteng, against illegal immigrants employed in the mining sector and in solidarity with the Kagiso township communities. Some of the protesters were armed with machetes and hammers, but no injuries were reported. *ssc*

SOUTH SUDAN (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **5** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: Murle vs. Dinka vs. Nuer vs. Azande vs. Balanda
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The war between various local communities over subnational predominance and resources, especially cattle and land, continued. Overall, violent confrontations between and within local communities such as Dinka, Nuer, and Murle, as well as their various sections, decreased in number. In total, at least 1,100 people were reportedly killed and more than 70,283 civilians displaced.

Jonglei state had the highest fatality record, mainly resulting from violent tensions between Murle communities, on the one hand, and Gawaar Nuer and Lou Nuer communities as well as various Dinka sections, on the other. Over the course of the year, at least 283 people were killed, 37 people abducted, and more than 39,300 displaced in Jonglei. For instance, on January 23, armed youths from the Murle community attacked Dungrut and Machined villages, Baidit county. They shot dead at least 32 members of the Dinka Bor community and injured 26 more, while six attackers from the Murle community were killed. Several houses were destroyed and 2,500 cattle stolen.

Inter-communal tensions between January and March resulted in at least 137 deaths and 87 injured people. On May 8, members of the Anyuak community from Pochalla county, Greater Pibor Administrative Area, reiterated their demand to divide the area into two separate administrative units because of child abductions and general insecurity. However, on May 18, the chief administrator of the area announced having successfully returned 140 abducted women and children to Jonglei over the past four months. Violence erupted again in the end of December, when armed Lou Nuer and the Dinka Bor armed youth attacked the Murle community in Gumuruk and Likuangole towns, Greater Pibor Administrative Area. The attack lasted four days, resulting in 56 deaths and around 30,000 displaced civilians.

In Eastern Equatoria state at least 197 people were reportedly killed this year. Violence increased in February, when pastoralists belonging to the Bor Dinka community moved southwards as floods submerged grazing lands. On February 27, an unspecified group clashed with pastoralists from the Bor Dinka community in the counties of Torit and Magwi, resulting in 27 deaths and 17 injured people. Three days later, the pastoralists attacked Abara village, Magwi county, in retaliation, leaving at least five people killed, 82 houses torched, cattle stolen, and hundreds of civilians displaced. According to UNOCHA, in March, clashes between pastoralists and other local communities displaced 19,350 people in

Magwi.

On May 12, Madi youths attacked a cattle camp belonging to the Bor Dinka community in Mugaly Payam, Magwi, killing at least 25 Bor Dinka people and injuring 19 more, while 3,450 cattle were stolen. In response, host communities, pastoralists belonging to the Bor Dinka community, and several high-ranking officials met on May 15 and 16. Bor Dinka members agreed to move their cattle back to Jonglei, while government security personnel would protect the pastoralists in the future. However, violence reached its peak on July 6 and 7, when members of Murle, Tenet, and Boya communities conducted a joint raid on Toposa pastoralists in Kapoeta North county. The fighting left 60 dead and 55 more injured, as well as 15,000 cattle stolen.

In Warrap state, 188 people were reportedly killed, predominantly in fighting between different Dinka groups. On April 14, armed youth from the Apuk Paduk subsection of Rek Dinka clashed with flood-displaced cattle traders from Mayom county, Unity state. This was the most fatal clash in Warrap over the course of the year, leaving 26 dead and twelve more injured. On October 10, Twic Dinka militias clashed with Ngok Dinka militias over a disputed border separating their areas in Abyei Area. Consequently, 25 people were killed and 22 injured.

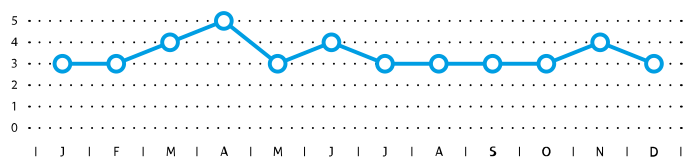
Upper Nile state saw fighting between Shilluk armed youth and Nuer, known as the White Army, beginning in July and escalating in mid-August. Between October 7 and 9, Nuer militias repeatedly attacked Shilluk civilians in Malakal county, killing at least 17 people and abducting an unspecified number of women. Over 6,000 people fled to Kodok city, Upper Nile, and Malakal city, Central Upper Nile state. The fighting between the militias was linked to the split in the SPLM-IO Kitgweng faction [→ South Sudan (opposition)]. In the second week of November, militias from Melut and Maban counties repeatedly clashed over the disputed Kilo Ashara area in Melut county, Upper Nile. On November 15, Vice President James Wani Igga held a meeting with the governor of Upper Nile and the commissioners of Maban and Melut counties, resulting in an agreement on the demilitarisation of the disputed area. oye, fli, ero

SUDAN (DARFUR)

Intensity: 5 | Change: | Start: 2003

Conflict parties: SRF vs. government, RSF vs. 'Arab' militias

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The war over autonomy, subnational predominance, and resources of the Darfur region between the opposition alliance Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) and various 'Arab' militias, on the one hand, and the government, deploying both the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), on the other, continued. In total, at least 616 conflict-related deaths and 515 injuries were recorded over the course of the year. Across Darfur, at least 470,881 people were internally displaced and at

least 37,000 people were displaced to Chad. Furthermore, at least 57 villages and one city were fully or partially burned. UNITAMS was extended until 06/03/23. After UNITAMS had succeeded the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in 2021, groups consisting of members of SAF and RSF looted the remaining UNAMID assets in two separate incidents in January and April.

Attacks by RSF on civilians continued this year, including increasing gender-based violence, reports of torture and arbitrary detentions.

On January 23, RSF attacked Aidekong village, West Darfur state, leaving eight people dead. From July 25 to 30, RSF detained 177 people in West Darfur and at least another 174 people on August 5. Subsequently, approx. 42 native administration leaders announced their withdrawal from West Darfur Peace and Tribal Reconciliation Committee. Moreover, RSF members killed at least nine people, and injured at least nine others, in an attack on seven villages in Kutum locality, North Darfur state, on August 15. The Darfur Bar Association reported on October 31 that RSF had raped more than 165 women throughout the year.

The Sudan Liberation Movement Abdelwahid Al Nur (SLM-AW) accused RSF and SAF of launching an armed attack in Jebel Marra district, Central Darfur state, on November 17, leaving 13 people dead and 5,600 people displaced.

Attacks of the 'Arab' Janjaweed militias on civilians and displaced persons were reported on several occasions. For example, on August 1, Janjaweed militias carried out an armed attack on a group of internally displaced persons in Tawila locality, North Darfur state, killing four and injuring at least four others. Several attacks occurred between March 5 and 14 in the area of Selea valley and Jebel Moon, West Darfur state. Large crowds of Reizgat Arabs allegedly affiliated with the RSF attacked members of the Messeria tribe, burning at least eight villages, killing at least 67 people and injuring 45 others. The attacks displaced 100,000 people, partially also to neighboring Chad.

From March 29 to 31, clashes between the 'Arab' Rizeigat and Fallata communities in Graida and Tulus, South Darfur state, resulted in approx. 97 people killed and 87 injured. In two attacks on April 22 and 24, 'Arab' militias allegedly affiliated with Janjaweed and backed by RSF forces attacked members of the Massalit tribe in Kereinik village, West Darfur state. About 150 pickup trucks of the RSF carrying hundreds of militants entered the town and burnt down 90 percent of it, including schools and clinics. The attacks resulted in at least 209 deaths and at least 152 injured, as well as nearly 125,000 IDPs.

On April 24, RSF attacked Geneina city, leaving at least ten people dead.

Rizeigat and Abbala militias which were associated with Janjaweed attacked 25 villages belonging to the Gimir tribe in West Darfur state. Over 125 people were killed and an estimated 50,000 people displaced.

From December 21 to 23, 'Arab' militias wearing RSF uniforms and driving RSF vehicles attacked the Daju tribe near Nyala city, South Darfur state, leaving at least seven people dead and at least 20 people injured. More than 16,000 people were displaced and at least three villages were torched.

Furthermore, several clashes between government forces and former rebels occurred. For instance, three people associated with the Sudan Liberation Movement-Minni Minnawi faction were killed on March 15 in clashes with the RSF. Following a six-month period with no reported incidents between SAF and the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdel Wahid, an armed clash occurred on March 17 in Jebel Marra, injuring

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

five military personnel. In April, clashes erupted between RSF militias and the Sudanese Alliance in West Darfur state. Fighting mainly around Adikong village and in Geneina resulted in over 200 deaths and approx. 37,000 Adikong residents displaced towards the Chadian border. fw

SUDAN (OPPOSITION) .

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: FFC vs. resistance committees vs. government, RSF

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis between the civilian-military government and different opposition groups, mostly organized in the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), continued. Since General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan had taken executive power in a military coup on 10/25/21, a military junta under his command supported by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia, controlled the government.

On January 2, Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok resigned. Subsequently, on January 4, protests took place throughout the country, demanding a fully civilian government. Security forces injured 70 people in the capital Khartoum, using tear gas and stun grenades.

Violent clashes between police forces and protesters continued in the following months. On June 30, military police and SAF killed ten people during pro-democracy demonstrations in Khartoum, Omdurman city, and Bahri city, all in al-Chartum state.

Throughout the year, the opposition became increasingly divided regarding their approach to the civilian-military government. On December 5, 40 civilian groups and parties headed by the FCC Central Council signed a framework agreement with the government that stipulates full civilian authority at all levels. Other activists and resistance committees refused to sign the agreement, rejecting any form of collaboration with the military junta. Furthermore, on December 5, military forces violently suppressed pro-democracy demonstrations in Khartoum, injuring 43 protesters.

The coup further influenced the general security situation in the country. For instance, on October 23, protesters burned the building of the secretariat of the state government in El Damazin, Blue Nile state, demanding the governor's dismissal, whom they held responsible for the security breakdown and increased tribal violence in the state [→ Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)].

RSF further used violence against civilians. For instance, on July 12, RSF forces shot and killed two men at a market in Sirba village, West Darfur.

The junta government also carried out mass detention campaigns. For instance, on June 30, authorities arrested 228 people in the cities of Port Sudan, Red Nile state, Hasaheisa, El Gazeera state, and Khartoum.

Protesters also accused government forces of sexual violence. For instance, on March 14, during a protest in Khartoum against the alleged rape of a woman by military personnel the previous day, security forces injured 27 people.

The coup further led to the withdrawal of international support for Sudan and the economy consequently deteriorated. On March 20 and 21, students protested in Al-Fashir city, North Darfur state, Port Sudan, and Khartoum against worsened living conditions due to rising food insecurity. Security

forces injured 173 demonstrators and killed one on March 21 in Omdurman. The economic situation also led to food shortages and malnutrition in IDP camps in South and West Darfur [→ Sudan (Darfur)]. ims

UGANDA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2001**

Conflict parties: DP, FDC, Jeema, NEED, NUP, PFT, UPC vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties and the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. Different opposition parties, such as the National Unity Platform (NUP), the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), the People's Front for Transition (PFT), the National Economic Empowerment Dialogue (NEED), and the Justice Forum Party (Jeema) collaborated to disempower the NRM government and President Yoweri Museveni.

Throughout the year, security forces arrested opposition figures on multiple occasions. For instance, security forces arrested the PFT leader on May 12 and 23, as well as on June 16, preventing him from leading a protest against rising commodity prices. He was charged with allegedly inciting violence.

In March, Muhoozi Kainerugaba, Museveni's son, announced his retirement from the military, sparking widespread rumours of his intentions to run for president in the next election in 2026. On October 14, Kainerugaba claimed he would become the next president-designate. sag

ZIMBABWE (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2000**

Conflict parties: CCC vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between the main opposition party, Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC), formerly Movement for Democratic Change Alliance (MDC-A), and the ruling party Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) continued.

Throughout the year, police arrested several CCC members and members of their youth organization. For example, on February 6, police arrested at least twelve CCC supporters in Gweru city, Midlands province. Similarly, on February 20, authorities arrested twelve CCC members in Chinhoyi city, Mashonaland West province, for allegedly violating Covid-19 restrictions. On June 14, two CCC members of parliament were arrested for allegedly inciting violence, after having attended the funeral of a Zimbabwean political activist.

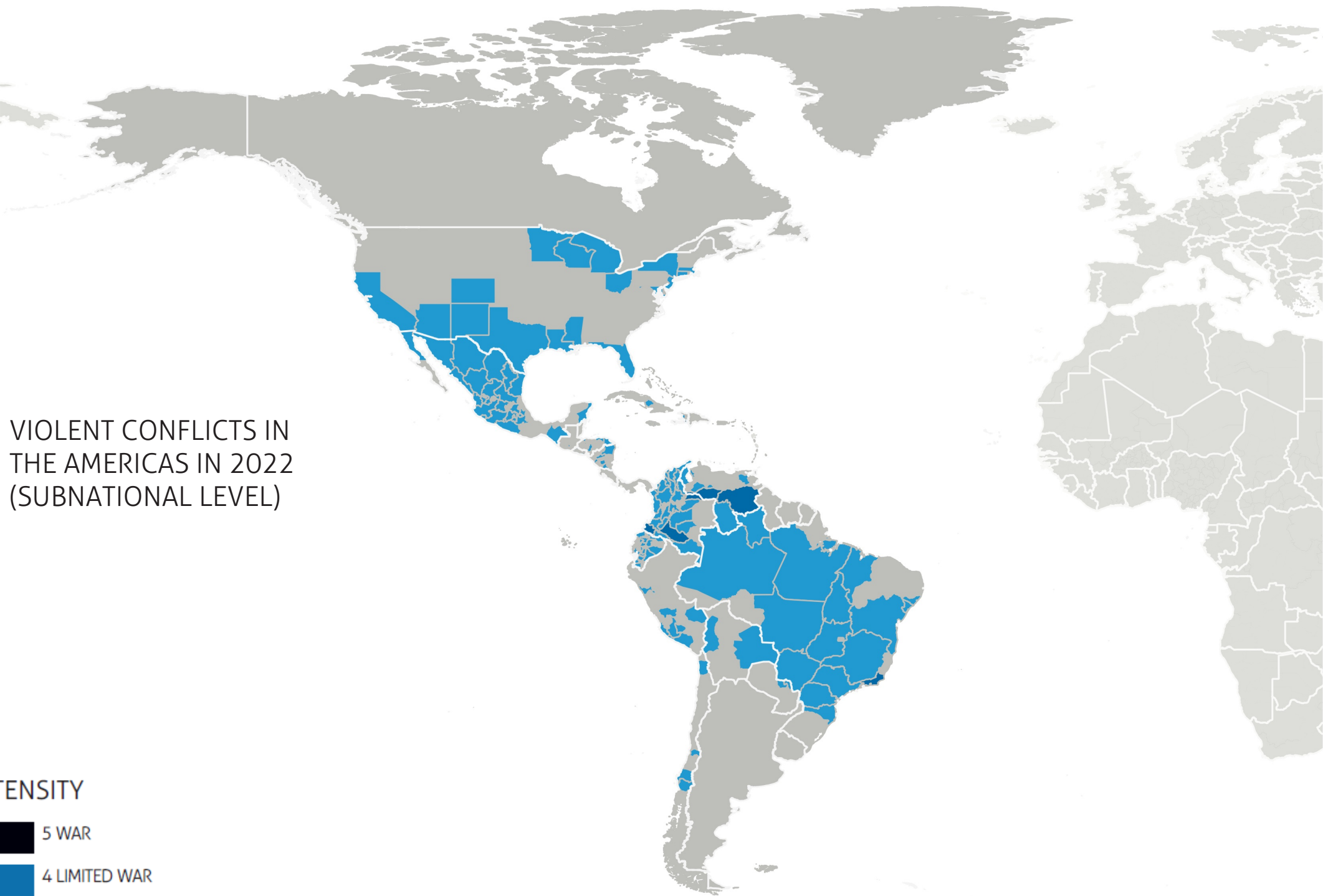
On some occasions, ZANU-PF supporters allegedly attacked CCC members. For example, on February 27, CCC held a rally in Kwekwe city, Midlands, when a suspected group of ZANU-PF supporters armed with machetes attacked them, leaving one person dead and at least 17 injured. On August 25, suspected ZANU-PF supporters attacked CCC supporters with

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

machetes, stones and whips at a rally of the CCC chairperson in Gokwe Centre, Midlands. On September 11, suspected ZANU-PF supporters attempted to kill the CCC chairperson with a petrol bomb in Chinhoyi city, Mashonaland West. On October 16, suspected ZANU-PF supporters attacked CCC

members in Matobo district, Matabeleland South province, leaving several CCC members injured. Two days later, on October 18, suspected ZANU-PF supporters injured several CCC members in Insiza district, Matabeleland South. vsc

THE AMERICAS



VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN THE AMERICAS IN 2022 (SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

INTENSITY

- 5 WAR
- 4 LIMITED WAR
- 3 VIOLENT CRISIS

THE AMERICAS

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Numbering 61, the active conflicts observed by HIIK in the Americas region increased by two in comparison to last year. This year, 44 conflicts were fought violently, which represents an increase of four compared to 2021. On the one hand, one violent crisis escalated to a war, and two disputes and three non-violent crises to violent crises. On the other hand, two limited wars de-escalated to violent crises and four violent crises to non-violent crises. Overall, one war and three limited wars were observed.

In Haiti, the violent crisis over sub-national predominance and resources between rivaling gangs escalated to a war. The clashes between G9 Family and Allies (G9) and the GPèp la (Gpèp) led to the death of at least 1,576 people and the displacement of at least 150,000 IDPs. In the context of opposition protests, G9, led by Jimmy "Barbecue" Cherizier, took control of Varreux fuel terminal [→ Haiti (opposition)]. The subsequent fuel shortages halted any economic activity, triggered a humanitarian crisis, followed by an outbreak of cholera [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)]. Prime minister Henry Pérez pledged, unsuccessfully, for a humanitarian intervention. The increase in the migratory flow escalated diplomatic tensions on Hispaniola Island [→ Dominican Republic – Haiti].

In Mexico, the limited war over subnational predominance and resources among drug cartels continued. Guanajuato and Zacatecas states saw most of the violence due to the rivalry between Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Santa Rosade Lima Cartel (CSRL), Sinaloa Cartel (CDS), and groups formerly associated with CJNG. Additionally, the control over CDS operations between Los Chapitos gang and the gang led by Ismael Zambada García, alias El Mayo, continued. The government estimated that the majority of 30,968 homicides were related to inter-cartel rivalry [→ Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. The capture of drug leaders by state authorities in the context of the limited war between drug cartels and the government fueled group fragmentation [→ Mexico (drug cartels)]. Moreover, cartels attacked civil and military authorities. On October 5, one mayor in Guerrero state and one local state councilwoman were killed in Cuernavaca by suspected cartel members. On November 24, CJNG killed a brigadier general in Zacatecas state and CDS murdered the deputy director of the police in Sinaloa state on August 8. Furthermore, the conflict between various social movements and the so-called normalistas on the one hand, and the government on the other, escalated to a violent crisis [→ Mexico (public security)]. Tensions increased, especially around the Ayotzinapa students' demand for justice regarding the abduction and disappearance of 43 normalistas in 2014. In the context of new evidence suggesting Mexican Marines tampering with the supposed crime scene, normalistas attacked military facilities demanding access to military archives on September 23. Additionally, the takeovers of toll booths on the Federal Highway 95D in Guerrero state in the end of January led to a violent clash of at least 400 law enforcement officers and 400 normalistas and left 37 people injured. Feminist and indigenous groups continued their demands for women's rights and the judicial handling of femicides. The Mexican government reported at least 858 cases of femicide throughout 2022 [→ Mexico (women's protests)].

In Brazil, the limited war between drug trafficking organizations and the government de-escalated to a violent crisis, resulting in at least 75 people killed and 23 injured in clashes. The violent crises between indigenous groups and leftist landless organizations continued and were heavily marked by the electoral campaign [→ Brazil (social protests)]; Brazil (indigenous groups); Brazil (MST, MTST)].

In Colombia, former FARC dissident groups and the government continued their dispute of territory and drug trafficking routes continued, especially in the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, Meta and Valle del Cauca [→ Colombia (FARC dissidents)]. According to humanitarian observers in Colombia, FARC dissidents, neo-paramilitary, drug cartels and other illegal armed groups killed 189 leaders throughout the year [→ Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)]. Despite the targeting of leaders and networks and finances by the government throughout the year, the AGC forced the confinement of communities in the departments of Antioquia, Córdoba, Chocó, Bolívar, Sucre, and La Guajira. Violence spiked between May 5 and 10 with AGC killing at least 26 police personnel and civilians, and injuring another 37. Additionally, AGC retaliated the capture and extradition of drug baron alias Otoniel on 10/23/21 on at least two occasions throughout the year. [→ Colombia (neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels)]. Despite the decrease of fatalities compared to 2021 and the resumption of peace talks, the violent crisis between ELN and the government continued. From February 23 to February 26, ELN staged a so-called armed strike in Cesar, Santander, Norte de Santander and Chocó. On June 19, President Gustavo Petro announced the start of peace negotiations on October 4 in Caracas, Venezuela. Additional rounds are expected to take place in Mexico, Chile and Cuba. Norway, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain act as mediators [→ Colombia (ELN)].

In parallel to these negotiations, the Colombian and Venezuelan governments resumed bilateral relations in the second half of the year and projected the opening of the common border by 01/01/23 [→ Colombia – Venezuela]. During the first half of the year, tensions increased at the border as ELN attacked on January 1 FARC dissident groups in both Apure state and Arauca department, Colombia. Venezuelan security forces deployed Operation Bolivarian Shield 2022 and targeted dissidents along the border. Although the limited war de-escalated to a violent crisis at the Venezuelan side of the border, ELN targeted FARC dissidents in the department of Arauca as well. The hostilities forced at least 5,900 people to migrate to neighboring departments of Arauca and Vichada [→ Venezuela (FARC dissidents)].

In Venezuela, ELN also attacked a local gang in Monagas state from January 1 onwards. Gangs continued clashing, especially in Bolívar state, over control of gold mine sites and territory. By the end of October, the security forces raided mining infrastructure and targeted the so-called 3R-gang in Tumeremo, Sifontes municipality [→ Venezuela (mining)]. Unregulated mining and gang violence in southern states of the country affected indigenous groups, especially territorial guards entitled to protect aboriginal territory. Unknown gunmen killed the coordinator of Uwotújja's territorial guards in Amazonas state, El Juancho gang injured the leader of a territorial guard reclaiming control of a communal shed located near a mining site under de-facto gang's ownership, FARC dissidents injured three natives impeding the access of mining machinery into Yacapana national park and Brazilian miners continued to set ablaze mining camps in Venezuelan indigenous territory [→ Venezuela (indigenous groups)]. Despite bilateral relations with the USA continuing as a non-violent crisis, diplomatic consultations took place for the first time since 2019 and led to a conditional easing of sanctions which allowed a US oil company to negotiate with a public Venezuelan company and resume oil exports from Venezuela to the EU [→ USA – Venezuela]. The change in the orientation of bilateral relations correlated to the resumption of talks in Mexico, stalled since the end of 2021, between

THE AMERICAS

opposition parties and the government of President Nicolás Maduro. On December 30, the opposition leaders voted out the so-called interim president of Venezuela, Juan Guaidó [→ Venezuela (opposition)].

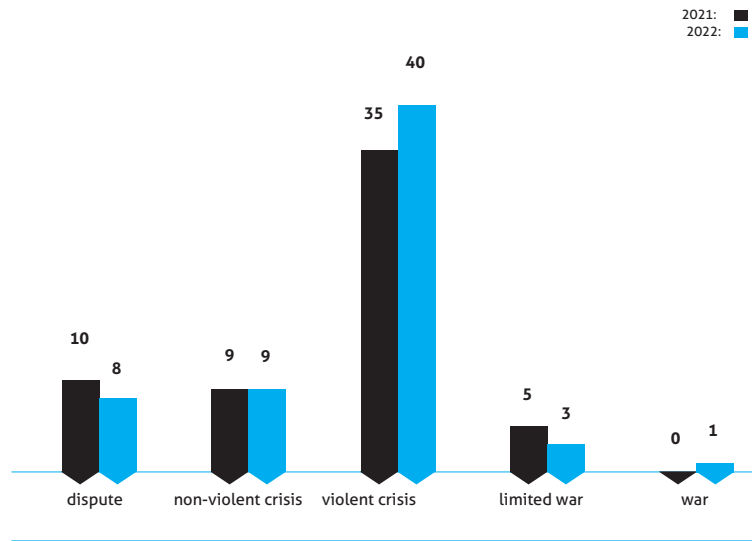
Opposition conflicts continued to have a stronghold on the region. Peru's non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system escalated to a violent crisis after the opposition-led congress impeached Pedro Castillo as president, followed by his arrest the next day [→ Peru (opposition)]. Violent protests, especially in southern Peru, led to a 30-day national state of emergency declared by vice-president Dina Boluarte on December 14. An attempt to set earlier elections was rejected by the congress. In Ecuador, the conflicts over fuel and the orientation of the political system between workers, teachers unions, indigenous peoples, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued [→ Ecuador (opposition)]. In El Salvador, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between opposition parties and civil society groups and President Nayib Bukele de-escalated to a non-violent crisis [→ El Salvador (opposition)]. Despite this development, citizens opposed the expansion of executive powers, the emergency regime imposed by the administration on behalf of the fight against gang violence [→ El Salvador (Maras)]. Ultimately, they rejected the anti-constitutional attempt to seek a presidential re-election in 2024. In neighboring Guatemala, university students, feminist organizations, unions and indigenous people maintained their opposition against the government. Violence erupted between citizens and the police during country-wide protests to oppose the rising living costs, public education policies, issues on land distribution, gender violence and wide-spread corruption [→ Guatemala (opposition)]. Not far away, in Nicaragua, anti-government protesters challenged President Daniel Ortega's Sandinista National Liberation Front and its increasing law reforms to expand executive power [→ Nicaragua (opposition)]. Ortega's administration restricted the work of approx. 3,100 non-profit organizations, the Catholic church, and restricted press freedom, environmental, women's and indigenous rights. In Venezuela, opposition movements and the government resumed talks in Mexico in context of the gradual resuming of bilateral negotiations with Colombia and a partial lifting of sanctions by the USA [→ Colombia – Venezuela (border security), USA – Venezuela]]. In Chile, the new government of Gabriel Boric faced increasing protests and dissatisfaction with his government, after the next constitution drafted by the constitutional assembly was rejected in September [→ Chile (Social Protests)]. At the same time, the conflict between the Chilean government, logging firms and the Mapuche remained violent and was characterized by arson attacks against machinery in the southern regions of the country [→ Chile (Mapuche / Araucania)].

Gang and cartel violence continued in the region. El Salvador saw a significant increase in measures against gang violence, as the government of President Nayib Bukele imposed an emergency regime in March, in order to combat the previous spike in homicides by gang members. The state of emergency, prolonged a total number of nine times, enabled the government to conduct arrests with few restrictions. Subsequently, throughout the year approx. 60,450 alleged gang members were arrested, a development that local and international human rights organizations criticized along with government human rights violations such as arbitrary arrests and crucial abuses of authority [→ El Salvador (Maras)]. In Guatemala, Mexican cartels such as CJNG expanded into the country and deepened their ties to local gangs. The national government joined with El Salvador to counter drug trafficking organizations, increasing the number of captures [→ Guatemala (drug cartels)]. In Honduras, the government expanded its efforts to fight drug trafficking and drug extraction activities by gangs and criminal organizations. Between January and November, the government destroyed approx. 3.2 million coca plants nationwide, a significant increase compared to the previous year. Numerous convicted criminals with ties to organized crime were released from prison as a consequence of an alteration to the penal code in 2021. However, simultaneously, the government considerably expanded police presence, especially in the border regions to El Salvador, as the fight against gangs led to numerous Salvadoran gang members seeking refuge in Honduras. In November, President Xiomara Castro announced a state of emergency and deployed approx. 20,000 national police officers to combat the rising gang violence [→ Honduras (drug-trafficking organizations)]. In Jamaica, gang violence increased since August in Saint Catherine [→ Jamaica (drug gangs)]. In Ecuador, a spike in violence was documented after numerous prison riots between Ecuador's main gangs, as well as a new smaller prison gang, led to more than 100 deaths. In light of this development, the government significantly increased police presence in and around the prisons, aiming at the prevention of further gang violence, and the protection of police officials.[→ Ecuador (inter-gang rivalry)].

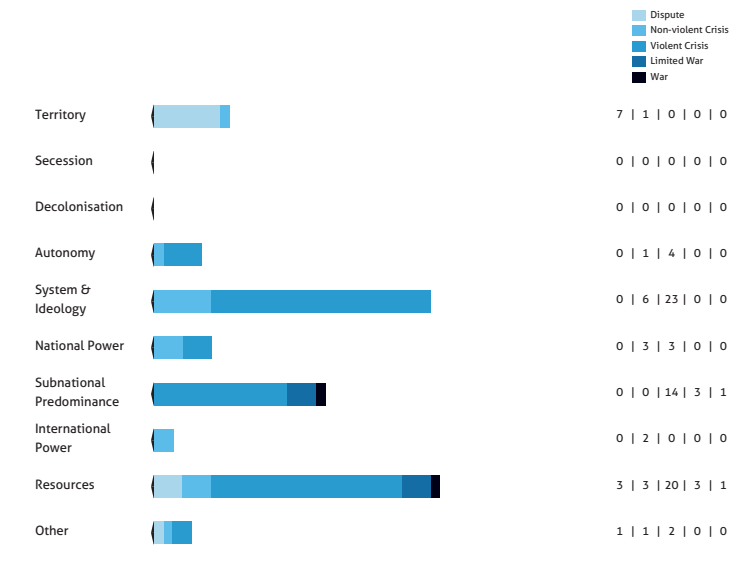
In the USA, police officers shot Black people while on duty, triggering mass protests, for instance, in Akron city, Ohio state. Xenophobic civilians threatened or assaulted members of Asian and Black communities; 29 historically Black colleges and universities received bomb threats. [→ USA (racial tensions)]. Furthermore, right-wing white supremacists, misogynists, anti-LGBTIQ+, and Christian nationalists attacked minorities and political opponents throughout the year. On October 28, a right-wing activist attacked the then-House Speaker of the Democratic Party Nancy Pelosi's husband with a hammer [→ USA (right-wing extremists)].

THE AMERICAS

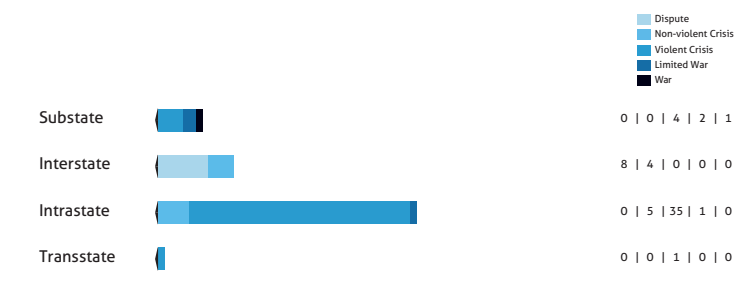
CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN THE AMERICAS IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN THE AMERICAS IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN THE AMERICAS IN 2022



THE AMERICAS

Overview: Conflicts in the Americas in 2022

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Argentina – United Kingdom (Falkland Islands / Islas Malvinas)*	Argentina vs. United Kingdom	territory, resources	1833	•	1
Belize – Guatemala*	Belize vs. Guatemala	territory	1981	↘	2
Bolivia (opposition)*	opposition parties and groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2017	•	3
Bolivia (socioeconomic protests)*	various social groups vs. government	system/ideology, resources	1983	•	3
Bolivia – Chile (access to sea)*	Bolivia vs. Chile	territory, resources	1883	•	1
Brazil (drug trafficking organizations)*	drug trafficking organizations, militias vs. government	subnational predominance	2008	↘	3
Brazil (indigenous groups)*	Indigenous groups vs. government, miners	autonomy, resources	1985	•	3
Brazil (MST, MTST)*	MST, MTST vs. government	resources	1996	•	2
Brazil (social protests)*	political party supporters vs. government	system/ideology	2014	•	3
Chile (anarchist groups)*	anarchist groups vs. government	system/ideology	2014	•	3
Chile (Mapuche / Araucania)*	government vs. CAM, Mapuche, RML, WAM	autonomy, resources	2008	•	3
Chile (social protests)*	government vs. social movements	system/ideology	2006	•	3
Chile – United Kingdom (Antarctica)*	Chile vs. United Kingdom	territory	2007	•	1
Colombia (ASCAMCAT / Catatumbo)*	ASCAMCAT vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	2013	↘	2
Colombia (ELN)*	ELN vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	1964	•	3
Colombia (FARC dissidents)*	FARC dissidents vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	2017	•	3
Colombia (indigenous groups)*	indigenous groups vs. government	resources	2005	•	3
Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)*	AGC vs. CDF, Los Caparros vs. ELN vs. FARC dissidents vs. EPL vs. Los Rastrojos vs. ASCN	subnational predominance, resources	2013	•	4
Colombia (neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels)*	drug cartels, neo-paramilitary groups vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	1983	•	3
Colombia (social protests)*	Comité Nacional de Paro, Primera Linea vs. government	system/ideology	2019	•	3
Colombia – Nicaragua (sea border)*	Colombia vs. Nicaragua	territory, resources	1825	•	1
Colombia – Venezuela (border security)*	Colombia vs. Venezuela	other	2015	↘	1
Cuba (social protests)*	civil society groups, pro-democracy groups, social protesters vs. government	system/ideology	2021	•	3
Cuba – USA (Guantanamo)*	Cuba vs. United States	territory	1959	•	1
Cuba – USA (system)*	Cuba vs. United States	system/ideology, international power	1960	•	2
Dominican Republic – Haiti*	Dominican Republic vs. Haiti	other	2009	↗	2
Ecuador (inter-gang rivalry)*	Choneros et al. vs. Lobos et al. vs. R7	subnational predominance, resources	2021	•	3
Ecuador (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, resources	1980	•	3
El Salvador (inter-gang rivalry)*	Barrio 18 vs. MS-13 vs. MS-503	subnational predominance	2003	•	3
El Salvador (Maras)*	Barrio 18, MS-13 vs. government	subnational predominance	2003	•	3
El Salvador (opposition)*	civil society groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2020	↘	2
El Salvador – Honduras (Isla Conejo)*	Honduras vs. El Salvador	territory	2013	•	1
Guatemala (drug cartels)*	drug cartels vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2009	•	3
Guatemala (opposition)*	Government vs. Opposition groups	system/ideology	1985	•	3
Guyana – Venezuela*	Guyana vs. Venezuela	territory	2015	↘	1
Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)*	G9 Alliance vs. Gpèp	subnational predominance, resources	2020	↗	5

THE AMERICAS

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Haiti (opposition)*	anti-government protesters, Fanmi Lavalas, Petit Dessalines vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1986	•	3
Honduras (Bajo Aguán)*	peasants, peasant unions vs. government, land-owning companies	resources	2009	•	3
Honduras (drug trafficking organizations, organized crime)*	criminal organizations, drug trafficking organizations vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2012	•	3
Honduras (opposition)*	opposition movement vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2009	↘	2
Jamaica (drug gangs)*	Drug gangs vs. Government	subnational predominance	2010	•	3
Mexico (CNTE)*	government vs. CNTE	system/ideology	2006	•	3
Mexico (drug cartels)*	drug cartels vs. vigilante groups vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2006	•	4
Mexico (EZLN / Chiapas)*	EZLN vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources, other	1994	↑	3
Mexico (Inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)*	CJNG et al. vs. CU et al. vs. CSRL et al. vs. CDS et al. vs. CDN et al. vs. CDG et al.	subnational predominance, resources	2005	•	4
Mexico (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2006	↑	3
Mexico (public security)*	normalistas, social movements vs. government	system/ideology	2014	↗	3
Mexico (women's protests)*	feminist groups, human rights activists, women's rights groups vs. government	system/ideology	2020	•	3
Mexico, USA (border security)*	Mexico, USA vs. illegal immigrants, refugees, smugglers	other	2005	•	3
Nicaragua (indigenous groups)*	Mayangna, Miskito groups, Rama, YATAMA vs. government, non-indigenous settlers	autonomy, resources	2015	•	3
Nicaragua (opposition)*	anti-government protesters, opposition groups vs. government, paramilitary groups	system/ideology, national power	2008	•	3
Paraguay (EPP, agrarian movements)*	agrarian movements, EPP vs. government	system/ideology, resources	1989	•	3
Peru (opposition)*	opposition movements vs. government	system/ideology, resources	2008	↗	3
Peru (Shining Path)*	SL vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	1980	•	3
USA (racial tensions)*	anti-discrimination protestors vs. right-wing extremist groups vs. government	system/ideology	2014	•	3
USA (right-wing extremists)*	right-wing extremists vs. government	system/ideology	1990	•	3
USA – Venezuela*	United States vs. Venezuela	system/ideology, international power	2001	•	2
Venezuela (FARC dissidents)*	ELN, government, Segunda Marquetalia vs. FARC dissidents	subnational predominance, resources	2020	↘	3
Venezuela (indigenous groups)*	indigenous groups vs. miners	subnational predominance, resources	1988	•	3
Venezuela (mining)*	El Perú vs. 3R vs. Tren de Guyana vs. El Talao vs. Sindicato de Barrancas vs. various gangs, ELN, government	subnational predominance, resources	2006	•	3
Venezuela (opposition)*	opposition parties vs. government, pro-government militias	system/ideology, national power	1992	•	2

¹ Conflicts marked with * are without description

² Mentioned are only those conflict parties relevant for the period under review

³ Change in intensity compared to the previous year: ↑ or ↗ escalation by one or more than one level of intensity; ↓ or ↘ deescalation by one or more than one level of intensity; • no change

⁴ Levels of intensity: 5 = war; 4 = limited war; 3 = violent crisis; 2 = non-violent crisis; 1 = dispute

⁵ HIIK considers statehood to be non-contested if the state is an official UN members state.

Disputed statehood is marked with a ° if a territory is recognized by at least one other official UN member state ("limited recognition")

BOLIVIA (OPPOSITION) .

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2017**

Conflict parties: opposition parties and groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between opposition parties and groups, on the one hand, and the government under President Luis Arce and his Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, on the other, continued.

On January 12, former interim president Jeanine Añez was accused of pursuing a coup d'état against former president and MAS leader, Evo Morales. Añez was on trial for conspiracy, sedition, and terrorism charges. On June 10, the First Anti-Corruption Sentencing Court in the capital La Paz sentenced her to ten years in prison. Following this, on June 14 and July 21, Añez' supporters led a protest march through the streets of the capital La Paz, objecting to the court's judgment and demanding her immediate release. The court trial also triggered further protests throughout the year, for instance on April 5, when pro-government protesters and relatives of the victims of the so-called Sacaba and Senkata massacres in 2019 protested against Añez. Several Latin American heads of state requested the UN to evaluate the impartiality of Bolivian courts, and the EU criticized the infringement of Añez's right to due process as well as the misuse of preventive detention.

Starting in October, violent protests over the postponement of a national census that would redistribute public funds and parliamentary seats, took place mainly in Santa Cruz city, Santa Cruz de la Sierra department, and lasted throughout November and December. The protesters, mainly supporters of the regionalist government of Santa Cruz department, denounced the postponement of the national census to 2024, and demanded it to be held by 2023. Violent confrontations took place between the protesters, authorities and MAS supporters, leading to the death of at least one person. In December, Arce announced that the census was to be anticipated by March 2024.

On December 29 and 30, violent protests took place following the arrest of Santa Cruz's governor and opposition leader, Luis Fernando Camacho, for alleged terrorism in connection with the political crisis of 2019. In clashes between Camacho and MAS supporters, police used tear gas, while protesters set up roadblocks and set fire to the Public Prosecutor's Office of Santa Cruz.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the UN expressed concern about the developments in Bolivia and called on all actors to respect the rule of law. The UN also called for an investigation of alleged human rights violations during the protests.

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fbm

BOLIVIA (SOCIOECONOMIC PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1983**

Conflict parties: various social groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over the orientation of the socio-economic system and resources, such as coca or the health sector, between various social groups and the government, supported by the Central Bolivian Union, continued. Throughout the year, protests and clashes mainly revolved around competing groups of the coca growing sector, reforms and working conditions in the healthcare system as well as demands for the improvement of basic infrastructure such as schools and roads.


Tensions among coca growers continued, following last year's division of the coca producers' association (Adepcoca) into two competing strands and the opening of a second, allegedly illegal, coca market in Villa El Carmen neighborhood in La Paz. Starting on August 1, Adepcoca affiliates of the more traditional Yungas faction led by Freddy Machicado convened in La Paz for several weeks, pressuring the government to close the so-called parallel market. This resulted in several clashes with coca growers affiliated with the parallel market, supported by the governing Movement Toward Socialism party, as well as in clashes with police forces guarding this new market. For instance, on August 2, members of the Yungas faction used stones and explosives against police forces. Police deployed tear gas and rubber bullets. Several people were injured and at least one was arrested. On September 8, hundreds of affiliates of the Yungas faction clashed with affiliates of the parallel market at the market site in Villa El Carmen, and set its building on fire. Violent confrontations also took place with police officials, who were trying to prevent the Yungas affiliates from entering the building. At least two people were injured.

Following the arrest of the leader of the Yungas faction on September 14, supporters organized several protests and erected roadblocks in La Paz, calling for his release and the closure of the El Carmen market. The protests turned partially violent when police used tear gas to prevent the protesters from reaching government buildings.

Throughout the year, healthcare workers, supported by the Bolivian Medical Association, the National Health Council and the Confederation of Public Health Workers, staged several protests and strikes, demanding better working conditions and the repeal of the Covid-19-related Health Emergency Law. They also opposed the government's planned creation of a new vice ministry which would disempower medical associations. For instance, on April 7, health workers blocked a highway between La Paz and El Alto, La Paz department, in an effort to call for the improvement of working conditions. Demands concerning the educational system were addressed on several occasions. For instance, on March 18, teachers staged a nationwide strike and protests in different cities, demanding improved salaries. On August 22, activists, parents, and students staged protests and erected roadblocks in Sacaba, Cochabamba department, demanding improved education conditions in schools.

fgo

BRAZIL (DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS)

 Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: drug trafficking organizations, militias vs. government

 Conflict items: subnational predominance

The limited war over subnational predominance between the main drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) Comando Vermelho (CV), Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), Família do Norte (FDN), and various militias, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis. Throughout the year, at least 75 people were killed and 23 injured during clashes between security forces and DTO members. Brazil saw a three percent reduction in homicides this year. Hotspots of DTO activity such as the northeastern state of Bahia reported eleven percent less homicides compared to the previous year.

On February 10, five people were killed during a shootout with military police in Ipiaú city, Bahia state. Military police checked alleged drug trafficking in Comets Square, Ipiaú, which subsequently led to the shootout. On May 11, at least 650 police officers carried out an operation to break up the so-called ‘Cracolândia’, a block of buildings housing the largest community of drug users in Sao Paulo city, eponymous state.

On May 24, security forces entered the Favela Vila Cruzeiro, Rio de Janeiro city, eponymous state, using armored vehicles and one helicopter, suspecting leading CV members of having taken shelter there. The shootout that followed took longer than twelve hours. At least 22 people were killed and five injured.

On July 22, 400 police officers with four helicopters and ten armored vehicles carried out an operation in Favela Complexo do Alemão, Rio de Janeiro city. The operation lasted twelve hours and led to the death of 19 people. Police used tear gas grenades to prevent motorcyclists from passing through the streets and blocked the main access road to the favela for eight hours preventing the population from leaving.

The Federation of Associations of the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro criticized the operation. A spokesperson called the governor of Rio de Janeiro a “governor of the massacre” and claimed that international law was being violated, because the police fired from helicopters into the favelas. In response, the governor defended the police operation.

Moreover, on November 25, three police operations took place in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The first two took place in Maré and Juramento favelas, Rio de Janeiro city, the third one in the city of Niterói, killing 15 and injuring four. Rio de Janeiro’s law enforcement authorities claimed that the operation in Maré contained criminal activities related to cargo, vehicle theft, and drug trafficking. [sia](#)

BRAZIL (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

 Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1985**

Conflict parties: Indigenous groups vs. government, miners

 Conflict items: autonomy, resources

The violent crisis over the demarcation of indigenous territories, autonomy, and resources between various indigenous groups, on the one hand, and the government as well as miners, on the other, continued. Several indigenous communities urged the government to delimitate indigenous lands, ensure their rights, and stop illegal mining, logging, and farming. The most prominent groups were the Guarani-Kaiowá, Guajajara, Pataxó, Yanomami, Munduruku, Kayapo, Kraho, and Tabajara. Throughout the year, indigenous people staged protests all over the country against policies of the government led by then-President Jair Bolsonaro. For instance, from April 6 to 15, over 6,000 indigenous people from all regions came together in the capital Brasília to denounce the ongoing violations of their rights. They demanded the immediate demarcation of indigenous territories and the discussion of issues such as indigenous health and education, also condemning the vote by the National Congress and the government on projects that would violate their rights. On October 30, former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva won the presidential election. During the electoral campaign, indigenous peoples were exposed to misinformation, threats, and defamation.

Furthermore, violence between state authorities and indigenous people continued. For instance, on June 23 and 24, military forces attacked a Guarani-Kaiowá group in Amambai municipality, Mato Grosso do Sul state, trying to take back Guapoy territory, which is a part of their ancestral land. This resulted in one Guarani-Kaiowá killed and at least ten injured. In September, the number of homicides of indigenous people significantly increased. For example, on September 3, unknown perpetrators ran over a Guajajara with a vehicle in Arame municipality, Maranhao state. On the same day, unknown assailants shot a member of the so-called Guardians of the Forest group of the Guajajara and injured a Guajajara who was with him, in Amarante municipality, Maranhão. The day after, military police shot dead one Pataxó and wounded another, while a group of Pataxó tried to seize an illegally established farm in the Comexatibá Indigenous Territory, Prado municipality, Bahia state.

Finally, illegal miners continued to attack indigenous peoples. For instance, on October 2, miners killed a Yanomami leader and injured one in the Napolepi community, Alto Alegre municipality, Roraima. On December 17, miners shot and killed the relative of a Yanomami leader in the Tirei community in the same municipality. On April 25, the president of the District Indigenous Health Council of Yanomami and Ye’kwana denounced the miners’ rape and killing of a Yanomami child from the Aracaçá community at the Brazilian-Venezuelan border along the shores of the river Uraricoera, Roraima. In the incident, another child allegedly disappeared. [mvo](#)

BRAZIL (MST, MTST)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1996**

Conflict parties: MST, MTST vs. government
 Conflict items: resources

The non-violent crisis over land and housing between several leftist landless organizations, most notably the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) and the Homeless Workers' Movement (MTST), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. MST and MTST continued to occupy and settle in allegedly unused land in 24 out of 26 states, leading to non-violent skirmishes with landowners and agribusinesses. Ahead of the general election on October 2, MST organized protests in favor of then-President Jair Bolsonaro's contender Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

Several threats of violence against MST and MTST members occurred throughout the year. On three occasions, twice on April 10 and once on August 17, unidentified perpetrators shot at the entrance of the Marielle Vive MST-settlement, Valinhos municipality, São Paulo state. On May 14, inhabitants of an MTST settlement in Montes Claros municipality, Minas Gerais state, called the military police after a landowner had blocked the entrance to the settlement with the help of armed bodyguards and threatened to set the houses on fire. According to MTST activists, police did not intervene. On July 18, Bolsonaro reiterated his demand that MST should be declared a "terrorist group" during a press conference. *cs*

BRAZIL (SOCIAL PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: political party supporters vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between political party supporters and the government continued. In view of the general election in October, protests and incidents linked to supporters of former president Jair Bolsonaro and supporters of newly elected President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and local authorities intensified.

Throughout the year, the electoral campaign was marked by verbal aggression and violent incidents between supporters of both candidates and security forces. For instance, on July 9, a municipal guard killed a leader of the ruling Workers' Party, in Foz de Iguacu city, Paraná state. On October 30, unidentified attackers associated with Bolsonaro supporters killed three people and injured another three in two separate incidents in Padre Bernardo municipality, Goiás state, and Belo Horizonte municipality, Minas Gerais state.

On October 30, during the second round of presidential elections, police authorities set up roadblocks hindering citizens from reaching the polling stations in various places in the North and Northeast regions of the country.

After the election, from October 30 to November 2, pro-Bolsonaro supporters, mainly truckers, blocked highways all over the country in order to protest against the election outcome leading to day-long traffic jams. On November 2, Bolsonaro called for a termination of the roadblocks and asked protesters to respect the constitution. Police forces

started to clear the remaining protests. In a further incident on November 7, a pro-Bolsonaro protester injured two police officers during an operation to unblock the highway by throwing objects at them close to Rio do Sul city, Santa Catarina state.

On December 24, one week before Lula da Silva's inauguration, an anti-Lula protester placed a bomb on a road tanker close to the airport of the capital Brasília with the proclaimed goal "to impede the instauration of communism in the country". The bomb did not detonate. *cs*

CHILE (MAPUCHE / ARAUCANIA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: government vs. CAM, Mapuche, RML, WAM
 Conflict items: autonomy, resources

The violent crisis over ancestral territory and autonomy of the Araucanía region between the Mapuche indigenous people, mainly represented by the organizations Weichan Auka Mapu (WAM), Resistencia Mapuche Lavkenche (RML), and the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco (CAM), on the one hand, and forestry companies as well as the government, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, the Mapuche continued to claim ancestral land owned by forestry companies. This resulted in several clashes with forestry and agricultural companies as well as with Chilean security forces.

For instance, in the first two months, several attacks by Mapuche organizations took place in the Araucanía and Biobío regions, resulting in the death of eight people. The government of then-President Sebastian Piñera subsequently extended the state of emergency until the assumption of duties of President-elect Gabriel Boric on March 11.

Boric's government decided to end the state of emergency in Araucanía and Biobío regions on March 26 and to opt for dialogue between the government and the indigenous populations. However, a report released by the Federation of La Araucanía Guilds at the end of April claimed a 169 percent increase in attacks since the end of the state of emergency in the so-called Southern Macrozone, comprising the regions of La Araucanía, Los Ríos, Los Lagos, and Biobío.

For instance, on April 23, CAM took responsibility for an arson attack against four vehicles near Collipulli town, Araucanía, which injured three people.

On April 20, in Los Alamos, Biobío, RML set fire to 33 trucks and machinery of a firm providing services to the forestry industry. Similarly, on April 28, the firm was again attacked by unidentified individuals who set fire to approx. 24 trucks and machinery.


Following these events, the government intensified controls in the Southern Macrozone including the announcement of a new state of emergency on May 17 and the subsequent restationing of military forces in the zone.

The draft of the new constitution, which defined Chile as a plurinational state and contained provisions on indigenous consultation, autonomous territories for indigenous groups and recognition of indigenous rights, was rejected by 62 percent of voters on September 4.

Following the continuation of attacks by Mapuch-affiliated groups, on November 10, the government extended the state of emergency in Araucanía and Biobío through November. On November 11, during the president's visit to the region, CAM

torched a school in Curacautín town, Araucanía.
alh

COLOMBIA (ASCAMCAT / CATATUMBO)

Intensity: **2** | Change:  | Start: **2013**


Conflict parties: ASCAMCAT vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over autonomy, the orientation of the political system, and resources in the area of Catatumbo between the Peasant Guard of Catatumbo (ASCAMCAT) and the government de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. ASCAMCAT, together with other civil society organizations and coca leaf farmers' families, continued to fight for the implementation of the peace agreement signed between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the area and at the same time to promote rural development and the gradual replacement of coca cultivation with other viable solutions.

On February 9, the constitutional court announced that the government could not carry out aerial spraying with herbicide for the eradication of coca crops, as it had not consulted local communities. On May 12, coca growers in Tibu municipality, Norte de Santander department, encircled 120 army soldiers without weapons, later releasing them.

Following the election of President Gustavo Petro on June 19, more than 100 social leaders from civil and peasant organizations from 13 regions, among them ASCAMCAT representatives, met with Petro on July 17 in the capital Bogotá to present a humanitarian agenda for the conflict-ridden areas in the country [→ Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants); Colombia (neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels); Colombia (ELN); Colombia (FARC dissidents)]. On August 24, the government announced the suspension of the forced eradication of illicit coca crops. Two months later, after a meeting with the US Secretary of State, Petro announced on October 4 that the forced eradication of illicit crops would not be suspended for the crops that did not belong to peasants' families. alh

COLOMBIA (ELN)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **1964**

Conflict parties: ELN vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, subnational predominance and resources between the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the government continued. Especially during the first half of the year, ELN repeatedly attacked government forces and civilians, while the rest of the year was marked by a decrease in violence following the resumption of peace talks. Clashes between ELN and government forces as well as attacks against civilians left at least 23 people dead and at least four injured, a decrease compared to last year.


On February 20, for example, ELN announced an armed strike from February 23 to February 26 to protest against the

government's economic and social policies. The strike was marked by roadblocks, bombings, vehicle arson attacks in the departments of Cesar, Santander, Norte de Santander, and Chocó, and the blowing up of a bridge in the department of Cesar. Five workers from the National Road Institute were injured and a police dog was killed. On April 17, ELN killed four civilians in the department of Arauca. Later, ELN's Eastern War Front apologized and called the attack a mistake as they had assumed the civilians were members of another criminal group.

On June 19, Gustavo Petro, a leftist candidate and former guerrilla member of the Movimiento 19 de Abril group, won the presidential election. Before the election, Petro had announced a change of course and a departure from the aggressive policy of his predecessor, Iván Duque, towards militant groups. Additionally, he announced the resumption of peace talks with ELN. The last peace talks had failed in 2018 after ELN killed 22 police cadets in a bomb attack in the capital Bogotá. After the election, the government laid the groundwork for peace negotiations. For example, on August 20, it suspended several arrest warrants against ELN members, as well as extradition requests against high-ranking ELN members who had been in Cuba since the failed peace negotiations. Airstrikes against ELN were also suspended.

Several countries declared their willingness to assist in the peace talks in advance. Negotiations were planned to take place in Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, Cuba and Norway, with Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain also acting as mediators. In September and October, preliminary negotiations were held in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, and Havana, the capital of Cuba, among other places, regarding the framework for peace negotiations. Both parties agreed on October 4 to begin negotiations in Caracas in November, which came to an end on December 12. The second round of negotiations was set to start in Mexico on 02/13/23, after initial successes were already achieved with four agreements on, among others, humanitarian actions and the development of a communication strategy. fer

COLOMBIA (FARC DISSIDENTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2017**

Conflict parties: FARC dissidents vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, subnational predominance, and resources between several dissident groups of the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. The different groups of militant dissidents of the FARC remained active throughout the year, most notably in the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, Meta, and Valle del Cauca.

As in previous years, the dynamics were dominated by conflict over territorial control, as well as drug trafficking routes. FARC dissidents were among the groups vying for control over areas previously held by FARC [→ Colombia (inter-cartel rivalry, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants); Colombia (neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels)]. Throughout the year, FARC dissident groups remained loosely organized. The latest numbers released in October 2021 by the Institute for Development and Peace Studies (INDEPAZ), pointed out that FARC dissidents were composed of 34 subgroups, grouped in

two blocks: bloque Gentil Duarte and Segunda Marquetalia, with a total of 5,200 dissidents.

Over the course of the year, security forces arrested and killed several prominent FARC dissident leaders. On June 13, for example, FARC dissident leader of the Jaime Martínez front, Leider Johani Noscué alias Mayimbú, was killed in a clash with security forces in Suárez municipality, Cauca department.

Fighting between FARC dissident groups and the government continued throughout the year. For instance, on February 24, security forces carried out a joint security operation in Puerto Rondón municipality, Arauca department, killing 23 FARC dissidents and arresting another five belonging to the 10th Front. On July 9, at least ten FARC dissidents were killed in San Vicente del Caguán municipality, Caquetá department, in a joint military operation between the army and national police. On September 2, seven police officers were killed in an ambush in the village of Corozal, Huila department, after their car was hit in an IED attack and subsequently fired at by FARC dissidents.

Violent clashes led to further internal displacement during the year. On June 23, the army carried out a military operation against FARC dissidents of the Carlos Patiño subgroup, resulting in the death of four dissidents and the displacement of at least 170 families in Argelia municipality, Cauca.

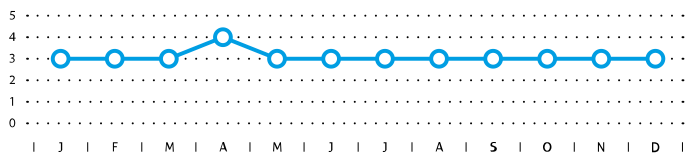
FARC dissident groups continued to target communal leaders, a strategy commonly used by different armed groups in Colombia. According to INDEPAZ, the number of community leaders assassinated this year was 189, many either in areas controlled by FARC dissidents or other illegal armed groups.

COLOMBIA (INTER-CARTEL RIVALRY, NEO-PARAMILITARY GROUPS, LEFT-WING MILITANTS)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: AGC vs. CDF, Los Caparros vs. ELN vs. FARC dissidents vs. EPL vs. Los Rastrojos vs. ASCN

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The limited war over subnational predominance and resources between several neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels, including Aguilas Negras, the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC) also known as Gulf Clan, Los Caparros, Border Command (CDF), the Self-Defense Conquerors of Sierra Nevada (ASCN) and Los Rastrojos as well as the National Liberation Army (ELN), dissident factions of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) continued.

Throughout the year, armed groups clashed, attempting to control profitable regions for illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, resource exploitation, and extortion, as well as reinforcing their power over territories they had previously owned whilst pushing to take areas which were previously

dominated by the FARC.

In February, ELN declared war on the Venezuelan drug cartel Tren de Aragua. Later, on August 2, the two groups clashed near the Venezuelan border. In another incident, on May 20, clashes between AGC and the ELN in the municipality of Istmina, Chocó department, left 20 combatants dead and two injured. On June 28, a clash between alleged members of the criminal gang Los Plumas and another armed group in Tuluá municipality, Valle del Cauca department, resulted in 53 dead and 20 injured.

Throughout the year, armed groups repeatedly announced armed strikes lasting several days and introduced movement and trade restrictions, curfews and confinements. On May 5, for example, suspected Gulf Clan members opened fire at people in a bar during curfew hours in El Paso municipality, Cesar department, injuring six.

In order to maintain control over the civilian population, armed groups put up illegal checkpoints and increased killings of declared political enemies. In February for instance, alleged AGC members killed 17 people in the municipality of Monteria, Cordoba department. To safeguard their territories, armed groups installed explosive devices, including landmines, which accounted for at least 230 events with over 55 percent civilian casualties.

On September 29, alleged AGC members killed a social leader in Puerto Wilches municipality, Santander department.

The development towards a fragmentation into substructures and small groups trying to manifest their power on the level of departments or municipalities continued. For example on April 24, suspected members of Los Flacos killed five and injured two people in Cartago municipality, Valle del Cauca. Moreover, drug cartels and other armed organizations continued to target demobilized FARC members, killing at least 42.

The civilian population was affected by armed clashes, resulting in forced displacements and confinements. Armed confrontations between the AGC and the ELN led to massive displacements of the local population in Bolivar, Chocó, and Antioquia departments. As of October 27, the national police registered 46 killings in Atlántico department. Most of them were presumably related to a clash between the AGC and Los Costeños over local routes for micro-trafficking along the Atlantic coast on October 25. Reportedly there were 70,000 IDPs from January to November due to continuous confrontations between armed groups.

COLOMBIA (NEO-PARAMILITARY GROUPS, DRUG CARTELS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1983**

Conflict parties: drug cartels, neo-paramilitary groups vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between neo-paramilitary groups and drug cartels, including the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC), also known as the Gulf Clan, Los Rastrojos, and Los Caparros, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Clashes among armed groups attempting to control drug trafficking routes and other illicit economies such as mining remained a contentious issue for national security

[→ Colombia (inter-cartel violence, neo-paramilitary groups, left-wing militants)].

Throughout the year, security forces conducted operations targeting the leaders of cartels and neo-paramilitary groups and their finances. For instance, on February 1, military personnel killed at least nine members of AGC during Operation Cónдор in the municipality of Ituango, Antioquia department. On March 24, the army seized 5.4 tons of cocaine from AGC, valued at USD 188 million. On June 9, security forces captured 33 alleged members of AGC, including important leaders of AGC substructures, in Antioquia and Córdoba departments.

AGC conducted an armed operation from May 5 to 10, which led to the burning of several public transport vehicles and the forced confinement of various communities in the departments of Antioquia, Córdoba, Chocó, Bolívar, Sucre, and La Guajira. As a result, at least 26 people were killed and 37 injured. For instance, on May 5, AGC killed a local merchant at the marketplace of Cereté municipality, Córdoba, for not abiding by the order to suspend commercial activities. During the so-called Plan Pistola in July, AGC targeted police and military personnel, allegedly in retaliation for the capture and extradition of its former leader Otoniel on 10/23/21 and May 4, respectively. For example, on July 26, AGC detonated a car bomb next to a police station in the town of La Gloria, Cesar department, killing one policeman and injuring three.

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COLOMBIA (SOCIAL PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2019**

Conflict parties: Comité Nacional de Paro, Primera Línea vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, including the respect of economic, social, and cultural rights, between Primera Línea and the Comité Nacional de Paro (CNP), supported by student groups, workers associations, and indigenous communities, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Approx. 123 demonstrations took place throughout the year. Most of them occurred without any violent altercation between demonstrators and security forces. However, in some cases, acts of vandalism and/or aggression towards the police led to confrontations and to the intervention of the anti-riot police Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios (ESMAD). Throughout the year, at least 54 civilians were injured.

Indigenous groups and organizations continued to hold demonstrations [→ Colombia (indigenous groups)].

On September 3, Primera Línea representatives and delegates of the national police negotiated a reform of the anti-riot police. The negotiations resulted in restrictions for ESMAD-agents, such as a ban on the usage of 12-gauge shotguns and marking ammunition for anti-riot guns.

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COLOMBIA – VENEZUELA (BORDER SECURITY)

Intensity: **1** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: Colombia vs. Venezuela

Conflict items: other

The non-violent crisis over border security between Colombia and Venezuela de-escalated to a dispute.

Throughout the year, the National Liberation Army (ELN) and FARC dissidents clashed along the shared border [→ Colombia (ELN); Venezuela (FARC dissidents)]. This led to tension between the two governments. Thus, since January 6, the Colombian government gradually deployed security forces and announced on February 13 a so-called “Stabilization Plan for Arauca”, the department most heavily affected by the confrontation between ELN and FARC dissidents. On February 19, the Venezuelan government reinforced border security and launched Operation Bolivarian Shield 2022 in neighboring Apure state. On May 16, the Venezuelan government accused then-President of Colombia Iván Duque of financing criminal organizations against Venezuelan troops. On April 29, the Colombian foreign ministry claimed that Venezuelan national guard troops stepped about 300 meters into Colombian territory in the rural area of Tibú municipality, Norte de Santander department. Venezuela denied this claim, referring to counter narcotics operations within the boundaries of neighboring Zulia state.

On August 7, with the election of Colombian President Gustavo Petro, bilateral relations improved and both countries agreed to reopen the border, closed since 02/22/19 for trade. On June 22, Petro and Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro had their first phone call to establish normality to the borders between the countries. On August 9, the Venezuelan government declared its intentions to re-establish military-to-military relationships with Colombia. Subsequently, on August 31, bilateral relations were formalized by a symbolic meeting between diplomats from both countries. On November 1, both presidents met in the Venezuelan capital Caracas and announced the integration of Venezuela into the Andean Community of Nations and new measures to reintegrate the country into the interamerican system of human rights. On December 12, Maduro announced that his administration was preparing the opening of the land border with Colombia as of 01/01/23. tbs

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – HAITI

Intensity: **2** | Change: ↗ | Start: **2009**

Conflict parties: Dominican Republic vs. Haiti

Conflict items: other

The dispute between the Dominican Republic (DR) and Haiti over immigration and racist sentiments escalated to a non-violent crisis. Tensions intensified due to a worsening situation in Haiti and increased deportations of migrants from the DR [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry); Haiti (opposition)].

On February 20, the DR began building a border wall that will cover almost half of its border with Haiti to stop the flow of migrants. On November 18, a group of protesters attempted to burn down the DR consulate in Cap-Haïtien city, North Department. In the same month, the DR increased

deportations and created a special police unit to focus on foreigners. Previously, the UN had called for countries to not expel Haitian citizens due to the insecurity in the country [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)]. On November 10, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights asked the DR to stop deportations of Haitians. In November, Haiti accused the DR of inhumane treatment of detained migrants while the DR denied the allegations. On November 19, the US embassy in Santo Domingo warned its darker-skinned citizens that they could be targeted by authorities in the DR.

Throughout the year the conflict affected migratory populations. According to Dominican authorities, between July and October, 43,900 mostly Haitian migrants were deported. The head of the Haitian National Migration Office stated that between mid-August and mid-November, 50,000 Haitians were deported. According to UNICEF, by November, the DR had expelled at least 1,800 unaccompanied Haitian children. The DR denied this claim. *swc*

ECUADOR (INTER-GANG RIVALRY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2021**

Conflict parties: Choneros et al. vs. Lobos et al. vs. R7
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between the Choneros, their main rival group the Lobos, and the R7 continued. After the assassination of the Choneros leader 'Rasquiña' in 2020, criminal groups fragmented into gangs such as the Gángsters, the Fatales, and the Águilas, on the one hand, and the Lobos, the Chone Killers, as well as the Tiguerones, on the other. The latter are allegedly related to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) [→ Mexico (drug cartels); Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. They are additionally rival to the R7, a smaller Ecuadorian gang.

The country faced a spike in drug violence as criminal organizations fought in and outside of prisons over the control of the drug trafficking supply chains. Inter-gang violence was marked especially by decapitations and riots in overcrowded prisons. Throughout the year, rivalries between different Ecuadorian gangs resulted in at least 150 deaths and at least 130 injuries.

In the beginning of the year, the government of President Guillermo Lasso undertook several measures aimed at the prevention of further gang violence. For instance, the government almost doubled the number of prison guards and introduced a pardon program for prisoners convicted of minor crimes, as well as a human rights policy for prisons. They also intervened by transferring inmates to different prisons. Throughout the year, inter-gang violence resulted in several homicides. For instance, as a consequence of a territorial dispute between gangs, a gang member was found beheaded on January 11 in Guayas province. Furthermore, in January and February, several bodies were found hanging from bridges in Guayas.

As in the previous year, various prison riots led to numerous casualties. For instance, on May 9, a violent confrontation between the Lobos and R7 took place in a prison in Santo Domingo province. This clash, which led to the death of at least 43 prisoners and at least 13 injured, was allegedly triggered by the leader of the Lobos ordering an attack on R7's leader. Prison riots continued over the course of the

year. Another violent incident occurred on October 4 in a prison in Latacunga city, Cotopaxi province, with at least 15 deaths and approx. 40 injuries. Among the victims was one of the main financiers of, inter alia, the Lobos, the Tiguerones and the Chone Killers. *lle*

ECUADOR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1980**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over resources, such as fuel prices and oil extraction, and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, such as the United Front of Workers (FUT), the Popular Front (FP), the United Nation of Teachers (UNE), and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

On February 11, teachers, supported by UNE, protested in the capital Quito and in Guayaquil city, Guayas province, demanding the equalization of salaries, the reinstatement of dismissed personnel, and a larger budget for education. Furthermore, between May 3 and 21, at least 50 teachers held a hunger strike in demand of the ratification of the Organic Law of Intercultural Education.

On March 8, hundreds of women protested in Pichincha province and Guayas, demanding gender equality, the decriminalization of abortion, and governmental measures to fight femicides. In Quito and Guayaquil, police officers used tear gas and pepper spray against protesters. On October 1, thousands of women marched in Quito, demanding government protection against gender violence and justice for the murder of a female lawyer, found dead on September 21.

Starting on June 13, CONAIE called for a national strike, triggered by the rise in fuel prices. The demands focused on subsidized fuels as well as denouncing mining and oil activities in areas inhabited by peasant and indigenous communities, especially in the Amazon. Subsequently, massive protests were held in more than 20 provinces. Especially in Pichincha, clashes between the police and protesters escalated. This series of violent confrontations led to the deaths of at least six protesters and left approx. 500 injured. For instance, on June 21, police killed a protester during a clash between protesters, police, and military personnel in Puyo city, Pastaza province. Protesters burned cars and destroyed several buildings. Roadblocks by protesters in several cities, such as Cuenca, Quito, Latacunga, Ambato, Tulcán, Ibarra, and Riobamba, led to gas and medical oxygen shortages in hospitals as deliveries could not pass the roadblocks. The government declared a state of emergency in nine provinces. On June 28, an impeachment attempt by the opposition in the National Assembly failed. CONAIE and the government signed an agreement on June 30, including the reduction of fuel prices. Subsequently, protest activities stopped. In addition, a 90-day dialog table was implemented for the follow-up of agreements. On October 14, the dialog closed with numerous agreements but also with disagreements on key issues, such as the targeting of fuel subsidies.

FUT, FP, UNE, and other related organizations mobilized hundreds for peaceful protests over salaries at the end of September in Quito, which were taken up again in October. They demanded the government to pay its debt to the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security. *lle*

EL SALVADOR (MARAS) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2003**Conflict parties: Barrio 18, MS-13 vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between El Salvador's main gangs, namely Barrio 18 and Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

This year, the government enforced more repressive measures to fight gang violence, such as the implementation of a state of emergency, large number of arrests, additional deployment of security forces, and acquisition of new military equipment. Throughout the year, the number of alleged arrested gang members rose significantly, reaching approx. 60,450. Additionally, several clashes between gang members and security forces were reported, resulting in the death of at least 26 gang members, four police officers, and one soldier. The overall homicide rate dropped by 46.56 percent, with 613 homicides recorded this year.

On March 21, the National Civil Police (PNC) arrested four MS-13 leaders. These arrests endangered the alleged pact between the government and the main gangs, in which the government guaranteed prison benefits, protection from arrests, and the release of gang members in exchange for the gangs reducing gang violence and guaranteeing electoral support. Consequently, MS-13 demanded the release of their arrested members or the alleged pact would be broken. Between March 25 and 27, 87 civilians were killed by gang members in twelve out of 14 departments of El Salvador.

On March 26, President Nayib Bukele declared a 30-day state of emergency to fight gang violence. During the first 48 hours of the state of emergency, 576 arrests were conducted by the PNC and the Armed Forces (FAES).

Throughout the year, security forces and gang members clashed. For instance, on May 19, approx. 20 MS-13 gang members conducted an armed attack on a joint force of 27 soldiers and police officers in Textistepeque municipality, Santa Ana department. Security forces killed two gang members, while one soldier was killed.

On October 2, following the homicide of one civilian conducted by MS-13 gang members, 2,500 soldiers and policemen besieged Comasagua town, La Libertad department in order to search for gang members. Consequently, six members of MS-13 were arrested. Following the seventh extension of the state of emergency on October 14, PNC and FAES conducted mass arrests of alleged gang members. For example, on October 31, at least 72 members of Barrio 18 were arrested.

Local and international human rights organizations reported numerous human rights violations under the state of emergency, such as arbitrary arrests of non-gang members and abuses of authority [→ El Salvador (opposition)]. 92 alleged gang members died in prison without the cause of their deaths being specified to the families.

Furthermore, gang members crossed the borders to Honduras and Guatemala. Both countries took measures to impede this development. For example, on November 27, Honduran President Xiomara Castro announced the militarization at the border of 600 soldiers [→ Honduras (drug trafficking organizations, organized crime)].

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EL SALVADOR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: civil society groups, opposition parties vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between opposition parties and civil society groups, on the one hand, and the government of President Nayib Bukele, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.

Throughout the year, several opposition and civil society groups regularly staged protests, denouncing the mass arrests of alleged gang members in the context of the emergency regime set in place by the government on March 26, to fight the increase in gang violence [→ El Salvador (Maras)]. On May 1, civil society groups and labor unions staged protests to express their discontent with the government's policies and the expansion of executive power, in the departments of La Paz, La Libertad, San Salvador, and San Vicente. Moreover, numerous protests were held by relatives of the arrested over the course of the year. For instance, on August 9, at least 200 people protested in demand of the release of their relatives and the end of the emergency regime.

On September 15, in light of the Salvadoran Independence Day and after Bukele had announced his plan to seek reelection in 2024 despite the constitution barring him from doing so, thousands of people protested in the capital San Salvador. In several cases, government forces installed checkpoints to prevent people from participating in the protests. Several human rights defenders were allegedly arrested by government authorities in addition to the closure of several NGOs. For instance, on May 23, police arrested a human rights defender and her family at her home in Tacuba department. On June 2, Amnesty International released a report denouncing human rights violations and arbitrary arrests by the government and requesting an immediate dialog with national and international human rights organizations. Additionally, on August 31, at least six Salvadoran civil society organizations released a joint statement, stating that they had registered at least 3,186 allegations of power abuses under the state of emergency. [ala](#)

VENEZUELA (FARC DISSIDENTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: ELN, government, Segunda Marquetalia vs. FARC dissidents

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The limited war over resources, such as drugs, and subnational predominance between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissident groups, on the one hand, and the government, supported by the Army of National Liberation (ELN) and Segunda Marquetalia, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.

FARC dissidents were subdivided into at least three different groups, most notably the 10th Front, 28th Front, and the

Segunda Marquetalia [→ Colombia (FARC dissidents). This year, hostilities extended to Arauca department, Colombia [→ Colombia (ELN)].

After FARC dissidents had killed an ELN member in Fernández Feo municipality, Apure state on 12/30/21, violent clashes between FARC dissidents and ELN increased. Throughout 2022, ELN attacked FARC dissidents in Apure as well as Arauca. On January 1, about 300 ELN fighters attacked FARC dissidents in the municipalities El Amparo and Tres Esquinas, Apure, pursuing them across the Colombian border. The same day, ELN captured and executed 24 dissidents near Tame city, Arauca. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), the National Bolivarian Armed Forces of Venezuela (FANB) collaborated with ELN fighters to counter FARC dissidents. HRW stated that on January 2, ELN and FANB members allegedly killed one person and kidnapped two more in El Ripial, Páez municipality, Apure. The two kidnapped persons were found dead several days later.

On January 15, the FANB conducted Operation Bolivarian Shield 2022 in response to the crisis in Apure. They focused on seizing or destroying drug trafficking-related assets, such as cocaine, explosives, airplanes, and landing strips.

On January 28, ELN attacked a camp of 28th Front dissidents in Los Cañitos parish, Páez municipality, Apure, leaving at least three dissidents dead and two injured. According to local media reports, the attack was coordinated by ELN and Segunda Marquetalia. On February 8, FANB, Segunda Marquetalia and ELN fighters attacked a camp of 10th Front and 28th Front dissidents using drones in Isla Guárico, Páez, Apure. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs assessed that the clashes in January and February in Venezuela forced at least 5,900 Venezuelans, Colombians, and binational indigenous peoples to migrate to the Colombian departments of Arauca and Vichada.

Unknown assailants targeted high-ranking FARC dissidents and an ELN leader. On May 4, an explosive killed Miguel Botache Santillana alias Gentil Duarte, the leader of a Colombian FARC subgroup and supporter of the 10th and 28th Fronts, in Jesús María Zemprúm municipality, Zulia state. On June 29, an explosion injured Luciano Marín Arango alias Iván Márquez, leader of Segunda Marquetalia, in the rural area of Caicara del Orinoco, Bolívar state. Moreover, on June 10, unknown individuals kidnapped and executed ELN Easter Front treasurer in Monsenor Fernandez Feo municipality, Táchira state. run

GUATEMALA (DRUG CARTELS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2009**

Conflict parties: drug cartels vs. government
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and re-sources between drug cartels, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

This year, the conflict was marked by the expansion of the Mexican cartel Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) into Guatemalan territory. CJNG cooperated with drug rings in Guatemala that operate on the Pacific coast and the western border with Mexico, receiving cocaine shipments from Colombia and Venezuela and delivering them to Mexico [→ Mexico (drug cartels)].

Throughout the year, several incidents involving CJNG were

reported. For instance, on January 11, more than one ton of cocaine allegedly belonging to CJNG was seized by the police in Petén department. On July 30, an armed group opened fire at soldiers at a highway checkpoint near La Laguna city, Huehuetenango department. One of the attackers was injured and later identified as a member of CJNG.

Throughout the year, numerous incidents of violence against civilians took place. The National Police connected these incidents primarily with the Barrio 18 gang. For instance, on August 23, gang members killed three taxi drivers in the capital Guatemala City. The same day, two gang members held up a transport bus in the municipality of Tecpán, Chimaltenango department, sexually abusing two, and injuring three civilians. On August 27, an armed attack carried out by alleged Mara 18 members took place in the city of Villa Nueva, Guatemala department. The attackers fled in a pick up truck, killing three civilians and were later arrested by the police.

Furthermore, the government arrested a significant number of cartel and gang members. From March to May, 43 suspected gang members were arrested on the border from El Salvador to Guatemala. These arrests took place after the government of El Salvador initiated a joint operation [→ El Salvador (Maras)]. On October 26, the national police arrested 23 members of the Mara Salvatrucha and seven members of Barrio 18 during 48 raids in the regions of Sacatepéquez, Chimaltenango, Izabal, Suchitepéquez, and Chiquimula. This year, the government arrested 27 people requested for extradition by the United States for crimes related to drug trafficking.

Throughout the year, the seizure of drugs and drug trafficking assets in Guatemala totaled more than USD 132.9 million. elf

GUATEMALA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1985**

Conflict parties: Government vs. Opposition groups
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, including university students, feminist organizations, labor unions, as well as indigenous people on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Issues included wide-spread corruption, gender-based violence, and indigenous land rights. Additionally, tensions rose due to rising living costs, especially gas prices, and controversial government decisions in the educational sector. For instance, on January 2, indigenous people of the municipalities of Nahualá and Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá department, attacked National Civil Police (PNC) forces with stones, machetes, and homemade bombs after they had been besieged by the government for 30 days in December 2021. As a consequence, PNC personnel used tear gas to disperse the crowd. Six soldiers and one officer of the PNC were injured. Between April 7 and 9, various civil organizations, landworkers, as well as indigenous and labor groups mobilized themselves throughout the country. They denounced the embezzlement of the people's resources, corruption, and state violence. On April 23, environmental groups from Guatemala and El Salvador protested against exploitation of mines and environmental damage at the lake of Güija, Jutipa department.

Throughout the year, education policies were also points of contention between opposition groups and the government. For instance, on April 29, demonstrators blocked the headmaster's elections at the University of San Carlos (USAC) in the capital Guatemala City. A candidate was accused of being supported by President Alejandro Giammattei and thereby violating the university's autonomous status and the principle of non-corruption. The election was held again on May 16 and resulted in violent clashes between opposition groups and state forces. Batons and tear gas were used against protesters. Protests erupted again on June 29, led primarily by student organizations. On August 20, thousands of people gathered to protest in Guatemala City against corruption and for the independence of educational institutions, especially the USAC.

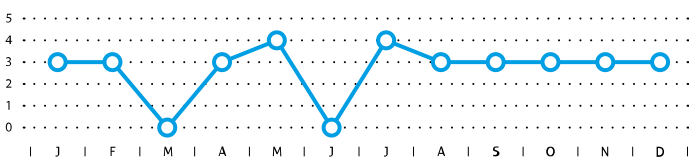
On July 30, a journalist and critic of Giammattei was arrested on charges of money laundering and corruption. The allegations were questioned as the arrest took place five days after a corruption scandal involving several politicians had been reported. In the following days, opposition groups and media professionals called for the journalist's release.

lop

HAITI (INTER-GANG RIVALRY)

Intensity: **5** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: G9 Alliance vs. Gpèp
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources



The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between rivaling gangs escalated to a war.

Haiti saw around 200 active gangs with about half of them operating in the capital Port-au-Prince. Many of them were organized in two rivaling alliances: the G9 Family and Allies (G9) led by Jimmy "Barbecue" Cherizier, and the GPèp la (Gpèp) led by Gabriel Jean Pierre. Haitian gangs allegedly often had connections to political factions and supported them in achieving their goals. While gangs had existed in Haiti since the early 2000s, after the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on 07/07/21, they exploited the power vacuum to expand their own power [→ Haiti (opposition)].

In clashes between rivaling gangs, at least 1,576 people were killed, among them at least six journalists. Kidnappings and violence were widespread, with a total of 1,200 kidnappings reported up to November, almost double the number of the record high in 2021. For instance, on May 8, the 400 Mawozo gang abducted 17 people from a tourist bus in the Croix-de-Bouquet neighborhood, Port-au-Prince. Moreover, gangs used rape and sexual violence as weapons. Gangs damaged and set fire to numerous homes. For instance during fighting in the Cité Soleil neighborhood, Port-au-Prince, in July, gangs gang-raped at least 52 women and girls, and used bulldozers and fire to destroy houses. According to the UN, around 3,000 people fled the neighborhood. Police were unable to contain the violence. By December, gangs had taken de-facto authority of the capital and controlled around

60 percent of Port-au-Prince. By November, the IOM counted at least 86,000 IDPs in the capital due to insecurity and gang violence.

Between April 24 and May 6, at least 191 people were killed in the Croix-de-Missions neighborhood in the capital during fights between the rivaling 400 Mawozo and Chen Mechan gangs. On June 10, the 5 Segonn gang took control of the Port-au-Prince Palace of Justice, the seat of the Haitian court system, and continued to hold it at least through July. Fighting between G9 and Gpèp affected Cité Soleil from July 7 onward. According to the UN, between July 8 and 17 at least 470 people were killed, injured or went missing, while gangs expanded their territory. The two gangs, for instance, further clashed on August 12 in the same neighborhood, killing 50 people.

During protests on September 17, G9 took control of Varreux fuel terminal [→ Haiti (opposition)]. The subsequent fuel shortages led to a halt of economic activity and a humanitarian crisis in the country, followed by an outbreak of cholera. By November 16, according to the WHO, at least 283 people had died and more than 13,672 had been hospitalized due to the disease. On November 3, the police claimed to have gained back control of Haiti's primary fuel terminal. On November 7, Cherizier said that he would allow fuel distribution to begin. Gas stations reopened on November 12.

Due to the fuel crisis, Prime Minister Ariel Henry called for foreign troops to reopen the fuel terminal on October 7. Multiple countries and organizations, including the USA, Canada and the UN, discussed sending troops or special task forces but none had been sent by the end of the year. In the fall, the US and Canada sent weapons and armored vehicles to the police and Canada sent two fact-finding missions. In October and November, Canada, the UK, and the US sanctioned current and former Haitian officials as well as businessmen with alleged gang connections. swe

HAITI (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1986**

Conflict parties: anti-government protesters, Fanmi Lavalas, Petit Dessalines vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between anti-government protesters and several opposition parties and groups, including Fanmi Lavalas and Pitit Dessalines, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. On 08/31/21, numerous civil society groups and political parties had signed the Montana Accord, calling for the formation of a new transitory government.

The socio-economic, institutional, and security situation in Haiti further deteriorated throughout the year. The country experienced widespread gang violence, with gangs controlling about 60 percent of the capital Port-au-Prince by December [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)]. On October 7, the Prime Minister Ariel Henry requested intervention from foreign governments. He continued to receive international backing. Due to the socio-economic situation, according to the UN, around 34 percent of schools remained closed by November. Furthermore, cholera broke out on October 2, infecting 13,672 people by December 6 and killing 283 people, according to the WHO. The UN reported that around half the

population faced food insecurity and around 20,000 people faced famine-like conditions.

In 2021, President Jovenel Moise had been assassinated, and Henry sworn in as interim prime minister. On January 1, after a shootout possibly involving gangs, Henry was forced to flee Gonaives city, Artibonite department. On January 30, the Montana Accord group designated former prime minister Fritz Jean as leader of its proposed transitional government and called for the organization of elections. In May, the group began talks with Henry’s government, which collapsed in August. In November, Henry dismissed his justice minister, government commissioner, and interior minister, naming himself as new interior minister. After being criticized as illegitimate, for instance in February by the Montana Accord, Henry announced plans for national elections for late 2023 on December 21. While around 600 organizations endorsed the corresponding agreement, the Montana Accord had yet to sign the agreement by the end of the year.

Throughout the year, the country experienced widespread protests in which police and protesters clashed regularly. Police used tear gas, guns, and rubber bullets, while protesters threw stones and set up burning barricades. At least 54 people were killed. People protested against the government, the socio-economic situation, the low value of their currency, insecurity, and the influence of gangs. Garment and healthcare workers demanded better working conditions. Pitit Dessalines organized protests throughout the year, demanding Henry to leave office. In September, widespread protests spread through the country due to an announced increase in fuel prices. Protesters looted warehouses of international organizations on various occasions, for instance on September 15, a WFP warehouse in Gonaives and on October 6, a UNICEF warehouse in Les Cayes, Sud department. swe

ments to the penal code in 2021, this year, numerous convicted criminals tied to organized crime were released from prison. Media and the opposition criticized the releases as an attempt to protect corrupt politicians and current government officials, several of whom had their charges dropped in the aftermath of said reforms.

Furthermore, throughout the year, organized crime saw an expansion of activities by drug trafficking organizations and gangs. Cattle ranching as well as deforestation were frequently employed by drug trafficking organizations to launder drug money. In the jungle region of La Mosquitia, Gracias a Dios, the entry point for cocaine entering Honduras by air, illegal cattle ranching continued to threaten the land inhabited by indigenous communities. In general, the entanglement between politics and organized crime decreased. For instance, on February 15, former president Juan Orlando Hernández was arrested and later extradited to the US, where he was charged with drug trafficking, arms smuggling, corruption, and bribery. Similarly, the government increased measures to fight the spread of gangs, such as the MS-13 and Barrio 18, that engaged in extortion, drug sales, and human trafficking. For instance, on May 30, 16 suspected gang members that crossed the border from El Salvador, were arrested by security forces in the capital Tegucigalpa [→ El Salvador (Maras)]. As a reaction to days of protests by business owners, bus and truck drivers against gang extortion, on November 25, President Xiomara Castro declared a national security emergency. She arranged the deployment of 20,000 national police officers and frequent road checks to combat gangs with a focus on neighborhoods in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula city, Cortés department. While no major protests against the measures took place, they were criticized by human rights organizations and activists for suspending various constitutional rights. jhu

HONDURAS (DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS, ORGANIZED CRIME)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: criminal organizations, drug trafficking organizations vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various gangs, as well as international drug trafficking organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The official homicide rate remained high compared to international statistics, despite being the lowest in 16 years. The rate of solved crimes remained low, as several trends continued to undermine government capacity and authority. While land and sea routes running through Honduran territory remained vital for international drug trafficking, drug production had significantly proliferated over the last years. This year, strongholds for coca growing were the departments of Colón, Olancho, Yoro, and Gracias a Dios. Particularly the farming of coca became part of the permanent drug trafficking infrastructure, and spread to new regions. Between January and November, Honduran authorities destroyed at least 3.2 million coca plants and shut down at least 23 drug laboratories, significantly exceeding the total amount of the previous year.

As a consequence of controversial legal reforms and amend-

JAMAICA (DRUG GANGS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2010**

Conflict parties: Drug gangs vs. Government

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between various drug gangs and the government continued.

For the second year in a row, Jamaica had the highest homicide rate in the Caribbean. According to the Independent Commission of Investigation, security forces were responsible for more than 123 fatal shootings. Until June 22, 376 illegal firearms were seized by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

On January 17, in Planters district, Saint Catherine parish, police seized 935 pounds of marijuana related to the drugs-for-guns trade with Haiti.

The Clansman trial which started on 09/20/21 regarding the Clansman gang, one of the most prominent third generation gangs in the country with more than 400 members, continued. On May 26, five of the 33 arrested gang members, who were accused of being part of a criminal organization, were freed due to lack of evidence. On November 18, the trial for the remaining 28 gang members was delayed to January 2023. Police corruption, as direct participation in gang criminal activity, continued. At least eight police officers were identified as members of the Ranko Gang based in Clarendon parish. On March 25, four police officers were arrested for being members of the Ranko Gang during a joint police

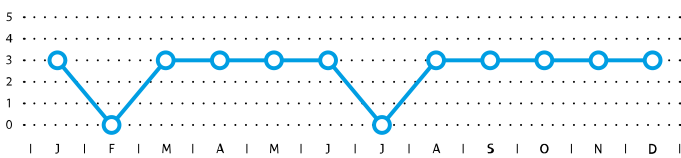
operation in an unspecified location.

In the beginning of August, increased gang activities were reported in Gregory Park in Portmore, Saint Catherine. On August 2, three houses were burned down during a confrontation between rival gangs. As a consequence, Saint Catherine South police imposed a curfew in that area until August 4. On the same day, members of a joint police-military operation clashed with gangs and fatally shot one man at Dyke Road, Portmore. Consequently, authorities extended the curfew until August 6. In relation to this incident, security forces also discovered the headquarters of a criminal gang. On October 7, law enforcement personnel killed one gang member in Banga Gully community, Gregory Park, wanted for several murders and the shootings. On September 23, JCF launched Operation Relentless II to target criminal gangs involved in violent crimes or the illicit gun trade. **lim**

MEXICO (DRUG CARTELS)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2006**

Conflict parties: drug cartels vs. vigilante groups vs. government
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The limited war over subnational predominance and the production, trade, and trafficking of illegal drugs and other illicit activities between various drug cartels, vigilante groups, and the government continued.

The most active and comprehensive drug cartels were the Gulf Cartel (CDG), Northeastern Cartel (CDN), Sinaloa Cartel (CDS), Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel (CSRL), and Carteles Unidos (CU), as well as their respective splinter groups.

The government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador continued its strategy of "abrazos no balazos" to counter drug trafficking, while continuing to deploy the military against drug cartels.

Furthermore, heavy fighting over local predominance between drug cartels continued [→ Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. As in the previous years, this resulted in a high homicide rate with more than 26,000 murders, although at a slowly decreasing rate.

As in the previous year, CJNG members kept heavily targeting police officers on numerous occasions. For instance, on April 5, they attacked police stations in the municipalities of Chavinda and Jacona, Michoacán state. During the confrontations, police killed at least five CJNG members. On April 22, police and the National Guard encountered a group of CJNG members while carrying out preventive intelligence work in Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco state. A shootout between the National Guard and CJNG members led to the death of one cartel member. Following this incident, at least 400 security personnel of the Secretary of National Defense were transferred to Puerto Vallarta to prevent further violence. On August 9, military forces interfered with a meeting of CJNG

leaders in Guadalajara city, Jalisco. During the confrontation military personnel killed one cartel member and arrested five. This event provoked a violent response by cartel members who set at least three public transport trucks on fire, erected several street barricades and destroyed numerous stores in the states of Jalisco and Guanajuato.

During an anti-kidnapping operation of the National Guard on November 24, CJNG members killed a brigadier general in Pinos, Zacatecas state. CJNG kidnappings of officers continued through December 10, when a general was abducted in the municipality of Tapalpa, Jalisco.

Following the arrest of CDN leader Juan Treviño, alias el Huevom on March 13, several confrontations between CDN members and security forces were reported. For instance on June 26, a police patrol was ambushed by CDN members in the municipality of Colombia, Nuevo León state and six police officers were killed. On October 14, CDN members kidnapped at least nine individuals, including the mayor of Guerrero municipality, Coahuila state. A further clash took place on October 25, in the municipality of Villa Union, Coahuila, resulting in the death of one CDN member and injuring one police officer.

Similarly, a high number of confrontations were documented between CDS and security forces throughout the year. For instance, on July 12, a shooting between police officers and CDS members took place in Topilejo, in the capital Mexico City, resulting in two state officials being injured and 14 cartel members getting arrested.

Additionally, on August 8, CDS members murdered the deputy director of the Police of Culiacán city, Sinaloa state.

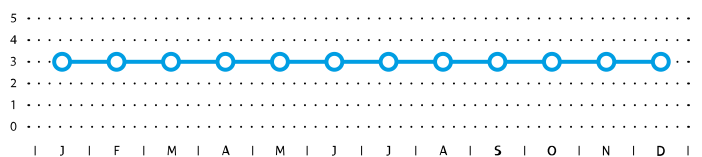
Violence against politicians also took place this year. For instance, on October 5, in San Miguel Totolapan, Guerrero, when the mayor of the municipality and ten other people were murdered in an attack on the town hall by Los Tequileros. The same day, a member of parliament was killed in the city of Cuernavaca, Morelos state.

According to Reporters Without Borders, eleven journalists were killed this year, making Mexico one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. **bho**

MEXICO (INTER-CARTEL RIVALRY, PARAMILITARY GROUPS)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2005**

Conflict parties: CJNG et al. vs. CU et al. vs. CSRL et al. vs. CDS et al. vs. CDN et al. vs. CDG et al.
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The limited war over subnational predominance, the trade and trafficking of illegal drugs, as well as illicit activities between various drug cartels and their respective splinter groups continued. The groups most visibly involved in the conflict were Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Sinaloa

THE AMERICAS

MEXICO (INTER-CARTEL RIVALRY, PARAMILITARY GROUPS)



January



February



March



April



May



June



July



August



September



October



November



December



Cartel (CDS), Northeastern Cartel (CDN), Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel (CSRL), Gulf Cartel (CDG), and the cartel alliance United Cartels (CU). As in previous years, the detention or killing of cartel leaders led to internal fights over succession [→ Mexico (drug cartels)].

CJNG continued to be the most dominant cartel in Mexico. The rivalry between CJNG and CSRL, CDS and groups formerly associated with CJNG led to massive violence in the states of Guanajuato and Zacatecas. For instance, on May 23, alleged CSRL members shot at civilians in a bar in Celaya municipality, Guanajuato, leaving eleven people dead and five injured. After the attack, the group used explosives to burn down several buildings and left a narco-message to CJNG. Violence between CJNG and CSRL taking place in Guanajuato escalated in September, resulting in more than a dozen clashes. For instance, between September 13 and 14, 35 people were killed during several attacks and clashes.

Other states were also affected by violence in connection with CJNG. On January 6, alleged CJNG members killed ten people in Zacatecas city, eponymous state. On May 1, another alleged CJNG member attacked four civilians in Tecate municipality, Baja California state. In Buenavista city, Michoacán state, a clash between alleged members of CJNG and CU was reported on October 7. The clash left 17 people dead and several vehicles destroyed. Moreover, CJNG members attacked each other on various occasions. For instance, on February 27, a CJNG faction called Pájaros Sierra attacked a funeral party of a CJNG leader's relative in San José de Gracia town, Michoacán, killing 17 people.

As in previous years, clashes over control of CDS operations between the Los Chapitos gang, led by the sons of Joaquín Guzmán Loera alias El Chapo, and the gang led by their uncle, Ismael Zambada García alias El Mayo, continued. For instance, on May 23, Los Chapitos killed one of Zambada García's partners. On August 13, Los Chapitos clashed with Los Mexicles in a state prison in Juárez City, Chihuahua state, resulting in 20 people injured. Afterwards, alleged gang members vandalized the city, resulting in at least eleven civilians dead, injuring another 16 and torching several buildings. Consequently, President Manuel López Obrador deployed over 300 army soldiers to Juárez City.

CDN and CDG fought over influence in the northeastern states, due to their strategic location at the US border. For instance, on June 19, CDG and CDN clashed in Reynosa city, Tamaulipas state, leaving 15 civilians and four alleged cartel members dead. On June 29, the cartels clashed again in the municipality of San Miguel Alemán, Tamaulipas, resulting in nine deaths.

Throughout the year, the government registered a total of 30,968 homicides and approx. 15,000 disappearances. Most of these violent acts were attributed to organized crime in general and inter-cartel rivalry in particular. apv

MEXICO (PUBLIC SECURITY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: normalistas, social movements vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and the handling of public security between teacher trainees, so-called normalistas, and associated social movements, on the one hand, and the government, on the other,

escalated to a violent crisis.

The conflict was triggered by the abduction of 43 normalistas from Raul Isidro Burgos normal school in Ayotzinapa town, Guerrero state, as well as the killing of six and the injuring of 25 on 06/26/2014, in Iguala town, Guerrero state, with the alleged involvement of municipal police forces and a local cartel offshoot. The normalistas continued to demand an investigation into the case.

On March 28, a commission formed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to investigate the kidnapping and disappearance of the 43 normalistas published a report, revealing drone footage. The evidence showed the unreported presence of Mexican marines in Cocula's municipal dump on 10/27/14. According to GIEI, the marines altered the scene which was later presented as the place where the 43 were killed and incinerated. The GIEI's report triggered a wave of protests at military facilities by normalistas demanding access to military files concerning the events. Between June and September, several protests took place at military facilities. One of the most violent incidents was a clash between protesters and security personnel at the Military Camp 1 in the capital Mexico City on September 23. At least 39 security members were injured as a consequence.

On September 22, a violent protest in Mexico City left eleven police officers injured. On August 18, the sub-secretary for Human Rights, Populations and Migration and the President of the Commission for Truth and Access to Justice in the Ayotzinapa case officially recognized the disappearance as a state crime. According to him, the 2014 abduction was carried out by the Guerrero Unidos gang in cooperation with municipal, state, federal, and military authorities. However, on October 28, authorities declared in an interview that the evidence presented on August 18 could not be verified.

As in previous years, normalistas regularly took control of road toll booths to protest and finance their protest activities. At the end of January, authorities prevented normalistas from taking over booths on the Federal Highway 95D in Guerrero state. This resulted in a clash of at least 400 Mexican national guard troops and Guerrero state police officers against 500 normalistas at Palo Blanco on February 4, leaving at least 37 people injured. Authorities dissolved the takeover. On December 12, Guerrero state police reportedly stopped a caravan of vehicles retained by normalistas from Ayotzinapa village and shot at them. The clash took place after a takeover of toll booths located at the road between Chilpancingo and Tixtla towns, Guerrero. In response, the normalistas blocked the road and set two vehicles ablaze. The clash left two normalistas and at least one police officer injured. run

MEXICO (WOMEN'S PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: feminist groups, human rights activists, women's rights groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over women's rights and the political and judicial handling of femicides between feminists, students, activists, and indigenous groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

This year, the government reported 858 cases of femicide. For the first time in several years, the number of femicides in Mexico decreased. Moreover, the issue of abortion, and

its decriminalization in 2021, polarized the debate. Major protests throughout the country took place, often triggered by cases of femicide and a lack of judicial prosecution. For instance the disappearances of two women in Nuevo León state on April 9 and in Mexico state on November 3 prompted nationwide protests. Thousands of protesters blocked streets and demanded actions from authorities in the days following the incidents. Consequently, the president of the Mexican Supreme Court called for a national protocol in handling femicides and stated that all homicides of women should be investigated as such. Mass protests were held mostly by women protesting gender inequality across the country on International Women's Day on March 8. The protesters denounced the alleged insufficient rule of law regarding the persecution of femicide cases, and demanded an enhanced protection, equal rights, and the clarification of previous cases. While the protests remained mostly peaceful, they turned partially violent when riots broke out, resulting in at least eight protesters and police officers injured in the capital Mexico City.

On May 10, on International Mother's Day, parents who lost their children because of femicides called for marches, stating that there was no reason for celebrating. In several cities of the country, non-violent protests were held demanding justice and clarification of the cases of their relatives.

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MEXICO, USA (BORDER SECURITY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2005**

Conflict parties: Mexico, USA vs. illegal immigrants, refugees, smugglers

Conflict items: other

The violent crisis over border security between Mexico and the USA, on the one hand, and refugees, illegal immigrants, and smugglers, on the other, continued.

This year marked a new all time high in encounters between undocumented people and border security authorities at the US border with Mexico as thousands of encounters on both sides of the border were recorded.

This year, officials at the US-Mexican border registered a total of 2,766,582 encounters with migrants, most of them from Mexico, Venezuela, Cuba or Nicaragua. Throughout the year, more than 800 deaths were recorded, a drastic increase in comparison to previous years. Most of these deaths were related to extreme heat exposure, drowning due to maritime migration routes, falls from border walls or other migration route obstacles rather than violent encounters with border security authorities. Border security authorities continued to be criticized for failing to provide medical assistance and the necessary humanitarian support at the border. Still, violence was exercised against migrants by law enforcement units.

On February 19, a Mexican citizen was fatally shot by a US border patrol after trying to escape an arrest on a desert trail in Arizona state, US. On October 4, a Mexican citizen was fatally shot inside the Ysleta US Border Patrol station near El Paso city, Texas, because he allegedly menaced Border Patrol agents with a pair of scissors.

Up to October, Title 42 of the United States Code, which had been introduced by the US government under former president Donald Trump to facilitate the rapid expulsion of undocumented people regardless of their expressed need for asylum and which was prolonged by President Joe Biden's

government, was used to expel citizens from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras into Mexico. In light of the rising migration from Venezuela, the Biden Administration announced that Venezuelan asylum seekers would also be expelled into Mexico under Title 42. Several NGOs repeatedly raised human rights concerns. However, on November 14, a federal US judge blocked Title 42 and thereby invalidated the rule allowing easy migrant expulsions. [cra](#)

NICARAGUA (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: Mayangna, Miskito groups, Rama, YATAMA vs. government, non-indigenous settlers

Conflict items: autonomy, resources

The violent crisis over autonomy and resources between indigenous groups, primarily consisting of Miskitos, Mayangnas, and Ramas, as well as the indigenous political party Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka (YATAMA), on the one hand, and armed settlers as well as the government, on the other, continued.

This year, the work of NGOs that supported indigenous rights and indigenous efforts to reclaim and protect land from settlers continued to be restricted by the government. Reportedly, approx. 3,100 national and international NGOs were closed by the government. For instance, on April 21, the government canceled the legal status of the NGO Nicaraguan Permanent Commission of Human Rights [→ Nicaragua (opposition)]. Furthermore, on April 24, the government announced the withdrawal from the OAS, further restricting the human rights protection mechanisms of indigenous people.

As in previous years, settlers attacked indigenous groups in conflicts over natural resources on indigenous territories, which resulted in the displacement of indigenous communities. For instance, the leader of the Mayangna community was allegedly kidnapped by settlers and, on March 14, found shot dead with signs of torture in the remote area of Pansunwás, Matumbak territory, North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region (RACCN). Moreover, on May 21, settlers attempted to evict members of a Miskito community in the Twi Waupasa indigenous territory, RACCN. In subsequent clashes, settlers killed four Miskito members, including a leader. Starting in late January, at least 120 settlers moved towards the Bosawas Nature Reserve, Jinotega department/RACCN, in order to take over a local gold mine, the working site of several indigenous people. Subsequently, on February 6, armed settlers intercepted and threatened members of the Mayangna community working at the mine.

During the nationwide municipal elections on November 6, the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front won every municipality, while YATAMA won less than a percent of the vote. After the elections, riot police reportedly repressed supporters of YATAMA in November, who claimed to have won in the Waspam municipality, RACCN. Subsequently, at least 19 protesters, mostly indigenous people who protested against alleged electoral fraud, were arrested in RACCN and detained for several days. [rra](#)

NICARAGUA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: anti-government protesters, opposition groups vs. government, paramilitary groups

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and anti-government protesters, on the one hand, and the government of President Daniel Ortega's Sandinista National Liberation Front, on the other, continued.

The year was marked by the restriction of opposition work, numerous convictions of oppositional figures, the persecution of civil society organizations and the Catholic church, as well as law reforms expanding executive power.

Arrests and the treatment of political prisoners continued to be a contentious issue. For instance on February 12, a political prisoner died due to the lack of medical services in a prison in Managua department. At least 15 further opposition figures were arrested and at least 37 faced convictions. For instance, on March 3, three former presidential candidates were sentenced to prison terms for allegedly conspiring against the government. Many of the trials were denounced by civil society organizations for being held closed to the public and thus being non-conformant to the law.

Additionally, the government continued to restrict the work of approx. 3,100 non-profit organizations. For instance, on March 17, the government passed an act ordering the closure of at least 25 NGOs working on press freedom, women's rights, indigenous rights, and environmental rights. On May 5, the government initiated a reform of the electoral law, granting the executive greater control over the electoral process. The restriction of the press continued in the form of major oppositional newspapers and channels being closed and raided. For example, on June 11, the government closed the Noticias media outlet in Managua department, for allegedly disturbing social peace, and took its assets into custody.

Starting in August, the Catholic church was at the focus of political persecution by the government. For instance, starting on August 1, at least ten Catholic radio stations were closed down and at least eleven Catholic priests arrested. Furthermore, Police also banned religious ceremonies in most parts of the country and several religious leaders fled into exile.

The repression of oppositional figures, the press and religious freedom raised international attention. Dozens of member states of the OAS and the UN condemned the repression and systematic human rights violations of the Ortega government. gbl, ala

PARAGUAY (EPP, AGRARIAN MOVEMENTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1989**

Conflict parties: agrarian movements, EPP vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over resources and the orientation of the political system between the Paraguayan People's Army (EPP) and the government continued. The groups continued to de-

mand political, societal, and agrarian reforms.

As in previous years, the conflict was marked by kidnappings by EPP and sporadic clashes between EPP and security forces. For instance, on March 5, EPP abducted three people in the town of Yby Yaú, Concepción department. While one was released on March 14, two were found dead on April 2.

Furthermore, on April 27, an IED, allegedly installed by EPP members, destroyed a vehicle of the Internal Defense Operations Command belonging to the Joint Task Force (FTC), which is a special force specifically created to target the groups. The explosion left three soldiers injured. The incident took place when the patrol was moving between the departments of Concepción and Amambay.

Additionally, another incident took place on October 27, when a contingent of EPP entered the Jasuka Venda indigenous community of Cerro Guazú, Amambay department, shooting dead two of its members and injuring another. Subsequently, an armed confrontation between an FTC unit that was patrolling the area and EPP took place, in which three EPP members, including its leader Osvaldo Villalba, were killed. mvd

PERU (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: opposition movements vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, resources

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and resources between various opposition movements, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

On March 28, truckers, farmers and merchants, began a national strike by blocking roads in various regions, protesting against the rise in fuel and fertilizer prices, as well as increasing living costs. On April 2 and 3, protesters and police clashed when the police tried to break up the roadblocks in the city of Huancayo, Junín department. The clashes resulted in at least four people killed, 22 arrested, and at least 15 injured police officers. Protesters also burned toll stations and looted stores. Following this, then-President Pedro Castillo deployed armed soldiers in the capital of Lima and Callao city, Callao Constitutional Province, and imposed curfews to quell the partially violent protests. After the curfew was lifted on April 5, protests continued. On April 6, in a clash, police killed at least one person and injured several others while protesters injured 25 police officers in the town of Ica, eponymous department.

On August 25, police and miners clashed, when hundreds of miners blocked the Interoceanic Highway and accused the police of committing sexual abuse and injuring people during an operation against illegal mining near Tambopata province, Madre de Dios department. During the confrontation, police killed one person and injured 13 others.

The political crisis between Castillo and the congress intensified in October, when the prosecutor's office filed a constitutional complaint against him for leading an allegedly criminal organization. Prosecutors opened six criminal investigations against Castillo which resulted in an impeachment motion by the Congress. Castillo denied any wrongdoing and accused the legislature of attempting a coup d'état against him. On December 7, Castillo announced the temporary dissolution of Congress, the installation of an emergency

government and called for new legislative elections. On the same day, the Congress impeached him in an emergency meeting and elected former vice president Dina Boluarte as new president. On December 8, Castillo was arrested for breaching constitutional order. This led to partially violent protests by Castillo's supporters, who denounced his removal as illegitimate and demanded Boluarte's resignation as well as presidential elections. On December 14, the new government declared a 30-day national state of emergency and Boluarte called the Congress to approve early elections in order to de-escalate the situation. The congress dismissed these proposals which led to the continuation of the protests. In the course of the demonstrations, between December 11 and 31, police killed at least 22 people. More than 250 protesters and police were injured in the departments La Libertad, Junín, Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Arequipa. The protests were especially violent in the country's southern mining regions, where support for Castillo was high. mgm

PERU (SHINING PATH) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1980**

Conflict parties: SL vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational pre-dominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance, resources, and the orientation of the political system between the left-wing Maoist rebel group Shining Path (SL) and the government continued.

SL was predominantly active in the Valley of the Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro rivers (VRAEM), the main coca-growing region in the country, covering parts of Ayacucho, Cusco, and Junín departments. The government accused SL of protecting and operating with coca growers and drug traffickers, and throughout the year it tried to force SL out of its operating region.

On August 11, the Armed Forces, National Police, and the Public Prosecutor's Office started the joint Operation Patriot with 150 officers in the Vizecán area of VRAEM, Junín department. According to a Peruvian army general, security forces killed 15 SL members and wounded several others. Furthermore, authorities seized weapons such as firearms, ammunition, and technical equipment. On August 14, security forces injured the SL's central committee leader Víctor Quispe Palomino alias Comrade José who subsequently escaped. During the operation, SL fighters killed two soldiers and injured four others. In October, the Armed Forces announced that they had managed to destabilize and completely dismantle the SL's central committee. mgm

USA (RACIAL TENSIONS)•

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2014**

Conflict parties: anti-discrimination protestors vs. right-wing extremist groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over racial discrimination in the law enforcement and justice system as well as in society between

anti-discrimination protesters, on the one hand, and right-wing groups and the government, on the other, continued. Throughout the year, police officers fatally shot several Black people while on duty. Various incidents occurred during so-called no-knock warrants in private properties or traffic controls. For instance on June 26, police officers fatally shot a Black man in Akron city, Ohio state. According to body camera footage, two police officers tasered the man during a traffic control. When he tried to escape, eight officers opened fire, shooting him 60 times. As a consequence, demonstrators gathered in Akron for several days, demanding actions to be taken against the police officers involved. Over the course of the protests, 61 persons were arrested on charges including rioting, misconduct at an emergency, and failure to disperse. Furthermore, the city of Akron temporarily put in place a curfew. On July 6, protesters gathered near Summit County Jail in solidarity with those arrested. During the incident, police officers fired tear gas at them.

Several incidents of use of excessive force against Black men in custody were reported during the course of the year. For example, on June 19, Connecticut police officers refused to provide medical assistance to a man in custody, who got injured while being transported in a police van to New Haven city without a seat belt. The omission resulted in the man being permanently paralyzed. The police officers involved were subsequently investigated by the state's attorney office and charged with negligence, carelessness, and use of excessive force.

Throughout the year, several incidents with xenophobic civilians were also reported. Repeated threats or racially motivated assaults on members of ethnic minority groups, including Asian and Black communities, took place. For instance, on January 24, two men shot a Black pickup-driver who did not result in injury in Brookhaven city, Mississippi state. Attorneys called for a federal hate crimes probe of the attempted shooting saying "this was another example of Black Americans facing danger for going to their daily activities". Throughout the year, public institutions were also affected by racial threats. 49 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, including Howard University in the capital Washington D.C., and Xavier University in Cincinnati city, Ohio state, received bomb threats. The incidents triggered investigations as hate crimes. sob

USA (RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1990**

Conflict parties: right-wing extremists vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various right-wing extremist groups, Christian nationalist groups, and individuals within the Republican Party questioning the legitimacy of election results, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Right-wing activists, including white supremacists, misogynists, anti-LGBTIQ+, as well as Christian nationalist activists, carried out various attacks on members of minorities or political opponents. For instance, on March 14, a man attacked an Asian-American woman in an apartment building in Yonkers city, New York state, injuring her. On April 8, a man assaulted an orthodox Jewish civilian in Lakewood city, Washington state, stealing his car and causing injuries. Afterwards, he intentionally hit two other orthodox Jewish people with the

stolen car and stabbed one of them with a knife. Another anti-semitic incident took place on May 7, when a rabbi was punched in the head and kicked in New York city, eponymous state. Before getting away, the attacker allegedly made anti-semitic threats against Jewish people. On May 14, a man opened fire with an AR-15 style rifle in a supermarket in Buffalo city, New York state, killing ten and wounding three. Prior to the attack, the shooter published a manifesto online, professing to white supremacist ideology and mentioning the "Great Replacement" theory. He was later indicted on murder and attempted murder as a hate crime and domestic terrorism.

Throughout the year, members and supporters of right-wing groups and parts of the Republican Party called for, threatened, or committed violence against political opponents on various occasions. For instance, on October 28, a right-wing activist entered the house of the then-House Speaker of the Democratic Party Nancy Pelosi in San Francisco, California state, attacking her husband with a hammer.

Women and members of the LGBTIQ+ community were also repeatedly targeted by right-wing groups. For instance, several Pride Month celebrations in June were disrupted by right-wing activists, including members of the Patriot Front. On June 11, 31 Patriot Front members who allegedly planned to disrupt an event using smoke grenades, were arrested on charges of conspiracy to riot in Coeur d'Alene city, Idaho state.

Over the course of the year, right-wing groups, including public figures and Republican Party candidates, who were discontent with Covid-19 restrictions, compared health staff, especially the immunologist and then-chief medical advisor to the president Anthony Fauci, with the Nazi regime, insulted and threatened them. Furthermore, according to the Washington Post, 219 Republican candidates of this year's midterm elections denied or questioned the legitimacy of the last presidential elections. sob

USA – VENEZUELA •

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2001**

Conflict parties: United States vs. Venezuela
 Conflict items: system/ideology, international power

The non-violent crisis over international power and ideology between the USA and Venezuela continued

On March 5, representatives of the US government met up for diplomatic consultations with the Venezuelan government in the Venezuelan capital Caracas. It was the first direct diplomatic contact since 2019. On April 12, the US State Department published a human rights report, criticizing the situation of human rights and the regional elections in November 2021. Two days later, the foreign ministry of Venezuela renounced the report.

As a consequence of the partial easing of sanctions, the US government allowed the US oil company Chevron to negotiate with the public Venezuelan oil company PDVSA on May 16. Further, on June 17, the US government allowed oil exports from Venezuela to member states of the EU. On October 2, both governments exchanged prisoners of whom seven were US citizens and two Venezuelan citizens.

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VENEZUELA (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1988**

Conflict parties: indigenous groups vs. miners
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various indigenous groups and miners, including business- or government-affiliated actors, security forces, Brazilian garimpeiros, armed groups and gang members, continued. On 02/24/16, the government of President Nicolás Maduro decreed the so-called Orinoco Mining Arc as an economic area to exploit gold and rare earths, ending the 1989 prohibition to exploit metals in Southern Venezuela, intensifying both predatory mining practices and violence against indigenous communities living in Bolivar and Amazonas states. Since then, indigenous communities organized territorial guard groups to protect their territories.

On April 22, unidentified gunmen killed the coordinator of Uwotüjja's territorial guards in Puerto Ayacucho city, Atures municipality, Amazonas. On January 12, people from Pemon and Arawak peoples took over an abandoned shed in the proximity of a gold mine controlled by the Juancho gang in the Tierra Blanca area, Sifontes municipality, Bolivar. In response, the gang attacked and injured the leader of the Hoboshirima community and two other people. On January 17, after a six-day-protest on the Troncal 10 highway, Bolivar, indigenous protesters met the Bolivar state governor and agreed to put the shed under the custody of the governorship and the military. On April 23, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissidents heading to gold sites in Yapacana national park broke through a checkpoint set by indigenous territorial guards on the shores of Orinoco river in Súpiro sector, Atabapo municipality, Amazonas, with their boats, injuring three indigenous people with gunshots.

Venezuelan NGO Kapé-Kapé denounced that garimpeiros, Brazilian miners, illegally set a camp on April 18 near to a Ye'kwana settlement in Marahuaca parish, Alto Orinoco municipality, Amazonas state. Garimpeiros mine gold in indigenous territories and commit abuses against indigenous communities in Venezuelan and Brazilian Amazonas [→ Brazil (indigenous groups)].

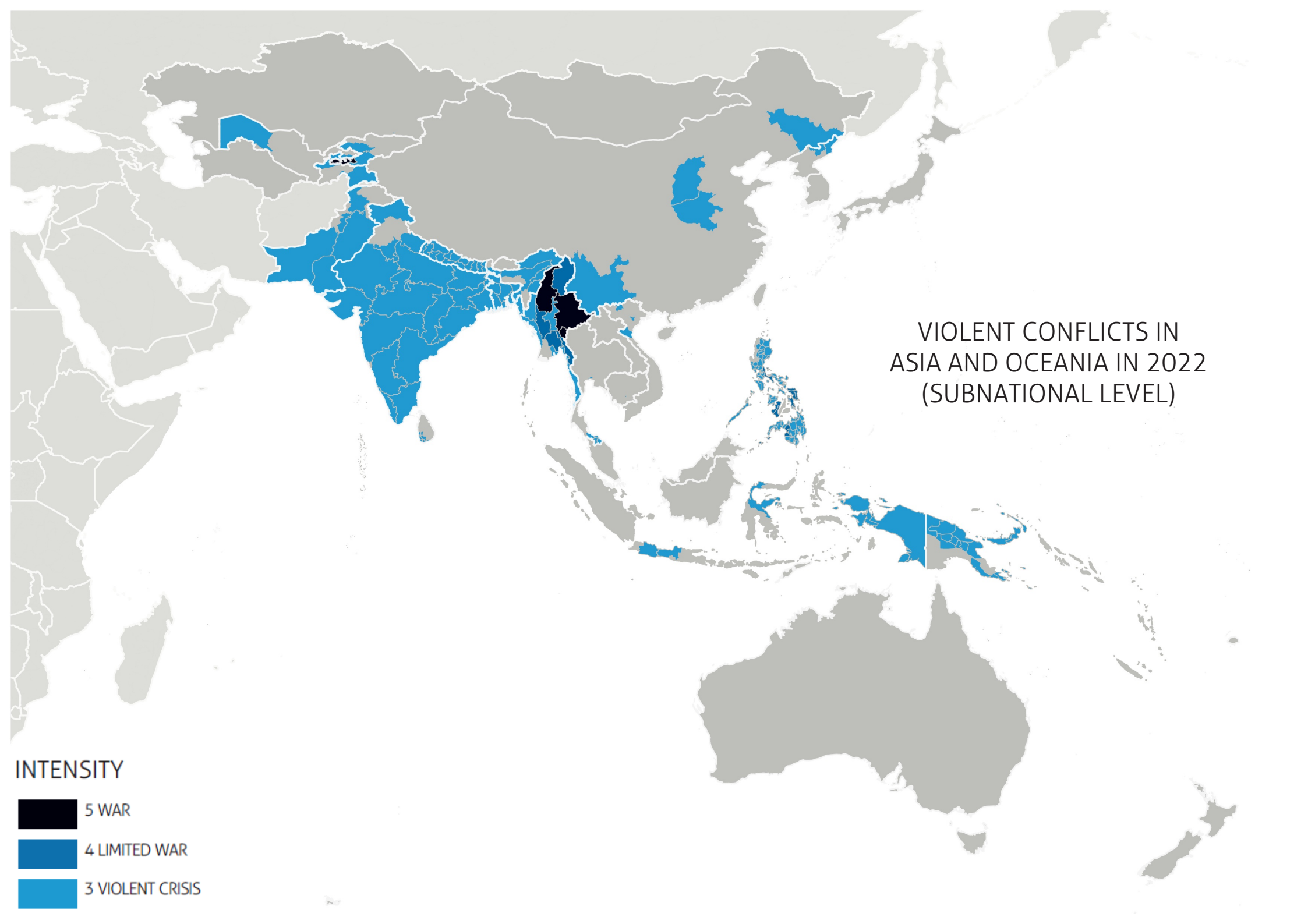
State and non-state actors attacked the Yanomami people during the first half of the year]. On March 20, in a brawl over access to an internet modem, Venezuelan air force troops killed four indigenous people and injured another three in Parima B Sector, Alto Orinoco municipality, Amazonas. The confrontation left at least two soldiers injured.

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ASIA AND OCEANIA

VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN
ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2022
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

INTENSITY



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

With 105 active conflicts observed by HIIK in 2022, Asia & Oceania continued to be the region with the highest number of conflicts. However, compared to 2021, the number of active conflicts increased by five. This year, 62 conflicts were fought on a violent level, an increase of six compared to 2021. HIIK observed one war and eight limited wars in the region, with five of the limited wars having escalated from previously violent crises.

In Nepal, opposition groups continued to protest against the government. Local elections on May 13 and general elections on November 20 led to increases in violent incidents between supporters of various political parties as well as with security forces, killing at least four civilians [→ Nepal (opposition)].

In 2022, ten violent conflicts were observed in India. Caste-based violence continued in India, including upper caste members assaulting and murdering Dalits. Adivasi communities continued to protest for more rights [→ India (Dalits / Adivasis)]. In India, the government continued its eviction drives in Assam state, leading to violent clashes between protesters and security forces, while Assamese communities continued to protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act in several states [→ India (inter-communal rivalry / Assam)].

Violence over religious predominance continued in India. For instance, clashes between various Hindu groups and the Christian minority, as well as between Hindus and the Muslim minority, took place over the course of the year, causing at least nine deaths [→ India (Christians – Hindus); India (Hindus – Muslims)].

Various actors continued to pursue autonomy or secession throughout the country. Over the course of the year, various factions of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) clashed with security forces in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland [→ India (Nagalim)]. The government continued peace talks with NSCN factions, resulting in the extension of ceasefires with NSCN-Neopao Konyak, NSCN-Reformation, NSCN K-Khango and NSCN-K-Niki Sumi. Furthermore, the United Liberation Front of Assam Independent faction (ULFA-I) continued to be involved in several violent incidents across Assam, leaving at least four militants dead [→ India (ULFA-I et al. / Assam)]. The Manipur Assembly elections led to further violence involving various militant groups, leaving at least two dead and injuring seven [→ India (Manipur)]. The violent crisis between the left-wing extremists Naxalites and security forces continued [→ India (Naxalites)]. Clashes between Naxalites and security forces resulted in the death of at least 115, a decrease in violence compared to last year.

In Central Asia, the limited war over territory and international power in the Fergana Valley border region between Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek border communities, backed by their respective governments, continued, leaving at least 117 people dead and 21,500 displaced. Despite recurrent clashes, the Tajik and Kyrgyz governments continuously demarcated 178 km of common border. Furthermore, the Uzbek and Kyrgyz governments agreed on the redrawing of parts of the shared border, resulting in 24,184 hectares of land, as well as water usage and ownership of the Kempir-Abad reservoir changing hands [→ Kyrgyzstan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)].

Furthermore, two conflicts between ethnic and linguistic minorities and the central governments could be observed in the Central Asian region. In Tajikistan, the violent crisis in the region of Gorno-Badakhshan between the Pamiri people and the Tajik government continued, killing at least 42 people [→ Tajikistan (Gorno-Badakhshan)]. In Uzbekistan, a new violent crisis erupted between the Karakalpak people and the government after the country's president proposed the removal of the autonomous status of the Republic of Karakalpakstan [→ Uzbekistan (Karakalpakstan)].

In Kazakhstan, the non-violent crisis between various opposition groups and the government escalated to a limited war. The violent break-up of nationwide protests in January by security forces, the Kazakh military, and Russian-led forces of the Collective Security Treaty Organization led to 238 people being killed, 4,500 injured, and 9,900 detained [→ Kazakhstan (opposition)].

In Indonesia, violent clashes between indigenous Papuans with security forces as well as violence against civilians in the provinces of Papua and Papua Barat left at least 51 people dead [→ Indonesia (Papua)]. Additionally, Papuans protested throughout the year against the government's plans to establish new provinces in Indonesian West Papua. The violent crisis between the government and Islamist militant groups, such as Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), Mujahidin Indonesia Timur and Jemaah Islamiyah continued [→ Indonesia (Islamist militant groups)]. This year, Islamist militants carried out one deadly attack. On December 7, a JAD affiliate entered a police station in Bandung city, West Java province, and blew himself up with a bomb. The attack left the attacker and one police officer dead, as well as at least nine people injured. In Aceh province, the dispute over subnational predominance between the Aceh regional government and the opposition continued [→ Indonesia (Aceh regional government – opposition / Aceh)].

In the Maldives, the opposition conflict continued on the level of a violent crisis [→ Maldives (opposition)]. This year, tensions centered especially around the opposition's "India Out" campaign, leading to repeated protests, during which security forces arrested at least 80 demonstrators.

In Papua New Guinea, clashes between various communal groups over subnational predominance and resources left at least 278 people dead and at least 45,000 displaced, escalating the conflict to a limited war [→ Papua New Guinea (inter-communal rivalry)]. Tensions increased this year in part due to the national elections. Violence between opposition groups, the government, and various electoral supporters resulted in the death of at least 14 and the displacement of at least 35,000 civilians [→ Papua New Guinea (opposition)].

In Sri Lanka, a new violent crisis erupted in March when the government cracked down on large-scale protests over inflation, food and fuel shortages, and corruption organized by civilian protesters, trade unions, and students [→ Sri Lanka (opposition)]. Anti-government protests were violent for several months and culminated when demonstrators stormed then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's House and the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo on July 9. Rajapaksa resigned on July 14, however, protests over the state of affairs and police brutality continued until the end of the year.

In Thailand, the violent crisis over ideology and secession of several southern provinces between various Islamist separatists and the government continued. Several bomb attacks and clashes between the separatist groups and security forces led to 31 individuals being killed and 69 injured [→ Thailand (Islamist separatists / southern border provinces)].

In Myanmar, a total of nine of the eleven conflicts observed were violent this year. The war between the opposition, consisting of the National League for Democracy, People's Defense Forces and the National Unity Government, on the one hand, and

ASIA AND OCEANIA

the Myanmar Army, on the other, continued as the highest intensity violent conflict in Asia and Oceania, with approx. 1,300 civilian deaths [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. In Shan State, several ethnic armed organizations respectively continued clashes with the Myanmar Army over resources and subnational predominance or autonomy: the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) in Kokang region, the Shan State Army-North and South (SSA), and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) [→ Myanmar (MNDAA / Shan State); Myanmar (SSA / Shan State); Myanmar (TNLA / Shan State)]. In contrast, the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and National Democratic Alliance Army's (NDAA) conflict with the military over autonomy remained on the level of a dispute as they took part in negotiations, although no progress on agreements was made [→ Myanmar (UWSA, NDAA / Shan State)]. An inter-militant violent crisis in the same state also continued between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and, aided by UWSA and TNLA, which joined the conflict in 2021, the Shan State Progress Party, leading to territorial losses of RCSS [→ Myanmar (inter-militant rivalry / Shan State)]. The Karen National Union (KNU) and its allies moreover continued to violently clash with the military in Kayah and Karen States [→ Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et al. / Kayah State, Karen State)]. In Rakhine State, the Arakan Army (AA) continued to fight against the Myanmar Army for autonomy at the level of a limited war, resulting in at least tens of thousands of IDPs [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)]. Violent clashes involving AA near the border also affected Bangladesh. Furthermore, demands for citizenship by ethnic Rohingya and armed organizations claiming to represent them continued, as violent skirmishes of the Myanmar Army and Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army occurred at the beginning of the year [→ Myanmar (Rohingya)]. Kachin State remained one of the centers of ethnic conflict in Myanmar due to the ongoing limited war between the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIA) and the Myanmar Army [→ Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)].

In China, the "zero-Covid" policy incited criticisms online throughout the year. In October, mass protests in the mainland broke out in major cities including the capital Beijing and Shanghai after a fire in Urumqi killed at least ten who were unable to escape allegedly due to the strict lockdown measures [→ China (lockdowns)]. In Hong Kong, despite the absence of protests against National Security Law, protesters staged solidarity protests online and in person [→ China (Hong Kong)]. Following the rare demonstrations, both local and the central government's loosened the "zero-Covid" policies. The government also continued the policy of surveillance, repression, and Sinicization of religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities. Human rights, especially forced labor, remained a point of contention, with the USA and several other countries condemning the conduct of the PRC government in Xinjiang and Tibet [→ China – USA; China (Uyghurs / Xinjiang); China (Tibet)].

On the international scene, China faced tensions with neighboring countries including India and Vietnam. Although all parties sought mostly diplomatic solutions, Chinese and Indian troops clashed violently in late December in Tawang Sector, injuring several soldiers on both sides [→ China – India]. In the South China Sea, despite efforts to establish a code of conduct for the disputed waters, multiple countries including China and the US conducted military drills throughout the year [→ China – Vietnam et al. (South China Sea)].

The East China Sea also remained disputed between the People's Republic of China (PRC), Republic of China, and Japan. This year, Japan drastically increased its military spending and continued to strengthen relations with the US through joint military exercises [→ China – Japan]. Tensions between South Korea and PRC also arose as PRC warplanes entered the South Korean air identification zone. The planned implementation of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile defense system in South Korea remained another point of contention [→ China – South Korea].

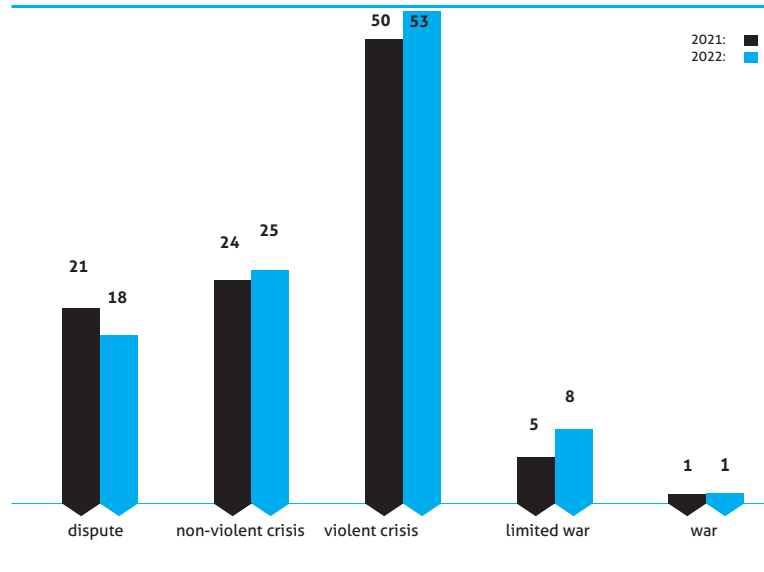
The power competition between China and the US continued, highlighting economic disputes, human rights, Taiwan, and the Russian invasion. President Joe Biden and president Xi Jinping met for the first time in November, both reaffirming their existing political positions and not reaching further consensus [→ China (Taiwan^o); China – USA].

In Cambodia, the massive layoff of the NegaWorld Casino in 2021 and the subsequent protests escalated to a violent conflict between the government and laborers in 2022 in the capital Phnom Penh [→ Cambodia (socioeconomic protests)]. The non-violent crisis between the ruling Cambodian People's Party and political opposition also continued. Legal constraints prohibiting oppositions from entering politics were lifted, yet most of the activists remained on trial [→ Cambodia (opposition)].

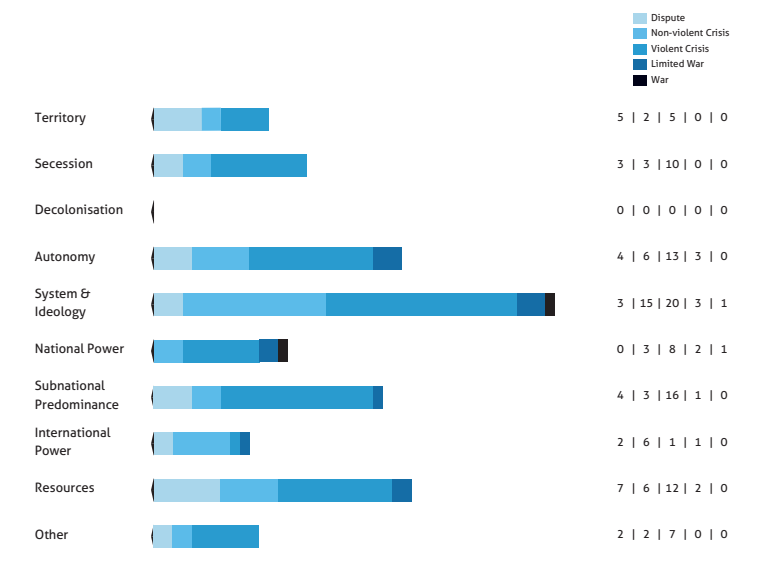
Tensions between the Buddhist majority and Christian minorities persisted in Laos. One Christian family was attacked at a funeral by Buddhist villagers and a pastor was killed, allegedly for his faith [→ Laos (Buddhists – Christians)].

Several domestic conflicts continued to be carried out on a violent level in the Philippines, with some decreasing in intensity. The limited war over subnational predominance and secession of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) between the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) on the one hand, and the government, supported by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis [→ Philippines (BIFF)]. Violent clashes occurred from May to August. The limited war between Islamist groups, such as Dawlah Islmamiyah, and Abu Sayyaf Group, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, also de-escalated to a violent crisis [→ Philippines (Islamist militant groups)]. Furthermore, the limited war between the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), supported by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Clashes between the conflict parties led to at least 191 deaths and left at least 18,683 people internally displaced. Lastly, the violent crisis over the autonomy of the so-called Bangsamoro Republic as well as the orientation of the political system and resources between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government continued.

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2022



ASIA AND OCEANIA

Overview: Conflicts in Asia and Oceania in 2022

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts)*	MNP, PCJSS MN Larma, UPDF, UPDF-Democratic vs. KNF, MNP vs. Bengali settlers vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	1971	•	3
Bangladesh (Islamist groups)*	AAI, HuJI, JMB vs. government, Hindus	system/ideology, subnational predominance	1971	↘	2
Bangladesh (opposition)*	BNP, Hel, ICS, Jel vs. AL, government	system/ideology, national power	1991	•	3
Bangladesh (RMG workers)*	RMG workers vs. factory owners, government	other	2006	•	3
Bangladesh (Rohingya / Cox's Bazar)*	Salman Shah group, various gangs vs. Putia group vs. Munna group vs. Islami Mahaz	subnational predominance	2018	•	3
Cambodia (opposition)*	CRNM, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1997	•	2
Cambodia (socioeconomic protests)*	government vs. laborers and activists	resources	2021	↗	3
Cambodia – Vietnam*	Cambodia vs. Vietnam	territory	1969	•	1
China (Christians)*	Christians vs. government	system/ideology	1949	•	3
China (Falun Gong et al.)*	Falun Gong vs. government	system/ideology	1999	•	1
China (Hong Kong)*	pro-democracy groups, pro-independence groups vs. HKSAR government, PRC government	secession, autonomy, system/ideology	1997	•	2
China (Hui)*	Hui vs. government	system/ideology	1949	↗	3
China (Inner Mongolia)*	Mongolian ethnic minorities vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1981	•	2
China (lockdowns)*	factory workers, civilians vs. government	system/ideology	2022	NEW	3
China (Taiwan ^o)*	ROC vs. PRC	secession, system/ideology	1949	•	2
China (Tibet)*	CTA, ethnic Tibetans vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1950	•	2
China (Uyghurs / Xinjiang)*	Uyghurs, WUC vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	1949	•	2
China – India*	PRC vs. India	territory, international power, resources	1954	•	3
China – Japan (East China Sea)*	Japan vs. PRC vs. ROC	territory, international power, resources	1971	•	2
China – South Korea*	PRC vs. ROK	territory, international power, resources, other	2003	•	1
China – USA*	PRC vs. USA	system/ideology, international power	1949	•	2
China – Vietnam et al. (South China Sea)*	PRC vs. Vietnam vs. Brunei vs. ROC vs. Malaysia vs. Indonesia vs. Philippines vs. USA	territory, international power, resources	1951	•	2
Fiji (opposition)*	government vs. opposition groups	national power	1987	NEW	2
Fiji – Tonga (Minerva Reefs)*	Fiji vs. Tonga	territory	2005	•	1
India (Christians – Hindus)*	BD, BJP, Hindu Munnani, Hindus, RSS, VHP vs. Christians	subnational predominance	1999	•	3
India (Dalits / Adivasis)*	Adivasis (Scheduled Tribes), Dalits (Scheduled Castes) vs. Upper Caste members	system/ideology, subnational predominance	1948	•	3
India (Hindus – Muslims)*	BD, BJP, Hindus, RSS, VHP vs. JIH, Muslims, PFI, TJ	subnational predominance	1947	•	3
India (inter-communal rivalry / Assam)*	AASU, AJYCP, Assamese vs. AABYSF, AAMSU, Bangladeshi immigrants vs. Adivasis et al. vs. government	subnational predominance, other	1979	•	3
India (Islamist militant groups)*	IS, JeM, JMB, LeT, SIMI, PFI vs. government	system/ideology	2000	•	3
India (Kashmir)*	APHC, HM, JeM, LeT, PDP vs. government	secession, autonomy	1947	•	3
India (Kukis – Nagas)*	KIM, KLA, KNA, KNO, Kukis vs. Nagas, NNGP, NSCN-IM	subnational predominance	1992	↘	2
India (Mafia Raj)*	sand mafia, timber mafia vs. civil society actors, government	subnational predominance, resources, other	1986	•	3
India (Manipur)*	KCP, KNF, KYKL, NRFM, PLA, PREPAK, PREPAK-Pro, RPF, UNLF vs. government	secession, autonomy	1992	•	3
India (Meghalaya)*	ANSC, HNLC vs. government	autonomy	1992	↘	2

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
India (Nagalim)*	ENNG, NSCN-IM, NSCN-K, NSCN-K-Khango, NSCN-K-NS, NSCN-KYA, NSCN-NK, NSCN-NS, NSCN-R, NSCN-U vs. government	secession, autonomy	1947	•	3
India (Naxalites)*	Naxalites vs. government	system/ideology	1967	•	3
India (NLFT factions et al. / Tripura)*	IPFT, NLFT vs. government	secession, autonomy	1978	•	3
India (Patels et al.)*	Dalits, Gujjars, Jats, Kapus, Marathas, Patels vs. government	other	1981	•	2
India (Sikhs)*	AISSF, BKL, Dal Khalsa, KLF, SAD (Amritsar), SFJ, SLF vs. government	secession	1947	↘	2
India (ULFA-I et al. / Assam)*	AANLA, DNLA, KLO, NLF, TLA, UGPO, ULB, ULFA-I, ULFA-PTF, UPRF vs. government	secession, autonomy	1979	•	3
India – Pakistan*	India vs. Pakistan	territory, international power, resources	1947	↘	2
Indonesia (Aceh regional government – opposition / Aceh)*	opposition vs. Aceh regional government	subnational predominance, resources	2006	•	1
Indonesia (Aceh)*	Aceh regional government, PA, KPA vs. government	autonomy, resources	1953	•	1
Indonesia (Ahmadi)*	Ahmadi vs. Muslims	subnational predominance	1980	↘	1
Indonesia (Christians – Muslims)*	Christians vs. Muslims	subnational predominance	1998	•	2
Indonesia (Islamist militant groups)*	MIT, JAD, JI et al. vs. government	system/ideology	1981	•	3
Indonesia (Papua)*	AMP, FRI-West Papua, KNPB, OPM, TPN, ULMWP vs. government	secession, resources	1961	•	3
Japan – Russia*	Russia vs. Japan	territory, international power, resources	1945	•	1
Japan – South Korea*	ROK vs. Japan	territory, other	1951	•	1
Japan, South Korea, USA – North Korea*	Japan, ROK, USA vs. North Korea	system/ideology, international power, other	1993	•	2
Kazakhstan (opposition)*	civil rights activists, DPK, DVK, independent trade unions, journalists, Oyan Qazaqstan vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2004	↑	4
Kyrgyzstan (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2005	↗	3
Kyrgyzstan – Uzbekistan – Tajikistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)*	Kyrgyz border communities, Kyrgyzstan vs. Uzbek border communities, Uzbekistan vs. Tajik border communities, Tajikistan	territory, international power	2000	•	4
Laos (Buddhists – Christians)*	Buddhists vs. Christians	system/ideology	1975	↘	2
Laos (Hmong)*	Hmong vs. government	system/ideology	1975	↘	2
Malaysia (Chinese, Indian, indigenous Malaysians – Malays)*	Chinese Malaysians, Indian Malaysians, Indigenous Malaysian minorities vs. Malay Malaysians	system/ideology, subnational predominance	1946	•	1
Malaysia (eastern Sabah)*	Philippines, Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo vs. government	secession	2013	•	1
Malaysia – Singapore*	Malaysia vs. Singapore	territory	1963	•	1
Maldives (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	national power	2003	•	3
Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)*	AA vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	2015	↗	4
Myanmar (inter-militant rivalry / Shan State)*	RCSS vs. SSPP, TNLA, UWSA	subnational predominance	2015	•	3
Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)*	KIA, KIO vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy, resources	1961	•	4
Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et al. / Karen State, Kayah State)*	DKBA, DKBA-splinter group, KNLA, KNU vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	1948	↗	4
Myanmar (MNDAA / Shan State)*	MNDAA vs. Myanmar Army	subnational predominance, resources	1989	↘	3
Myanmar (opposition)*	opposition vs. Myanmar Army	system/ideology, national power	1962	•	5
Myanmar (Rohingya)*	ARSA, Rohingya, RSO vs. Myanmar Army	subnational predominance, other	2012	•	3

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Myanmar (socioeconomic protests)*	local protesters vs. Myanmar Army, resource companies	resources	2012	↘	2
Myanmar (SSA / Shan State)*	SSA-N, SSA-S vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	1952	•	3
Myanmar (TNLA / Shan State)*	TNLA vs. Myanmar Army	subnational predominance, resources	2013	•	3
Myanmar (UWSA, NDAA / Shan State)*	NDAA, UWSA vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	1988	•	1
Nepal (Kiratis / Kosi, Mechi, Sagarmatha)*	Kiratis, Limbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha vs. government	autonomy	1992	•	1
Nepal (Madhesis, Tharus / Terai)*	Janamat Party, JSPN, JTMM vs. government	autonomy	2004	↗	3
Nepal (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2008	•	3
Nepal (right-wing Hindu groups)*	RPP, RPP-D, SNN vs. government	system/ideology	2006	↗	3
North Korea – South Korea*	DPRK vs. ROK	territory, system/ideology, international power	1948	•	2
North Korea, China (defectors)*	DPRK, PRC vs. defectors (network)	system/ideology, other	2000	↑	3
Pakistan (Balochistan)*	BLA, BLT, BNA, BNP-M, BRAS vs. government	secession, resources	1948	•	3
Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)*	al-Qaeda, IS-K, JuA, LeJ, TTP vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, national power	2001	•	3
Pakistan (opposition)*	opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1973	•	3
Pakistan (Pashtuns / PTM)*	Pashtuns, PTM vs. government	autonomy	2018	•	3
Pakistan (religious groups – Sunni militants)*	IS-K, JuA, JUI-F, TTP vs. Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, Shiites, Sufis	subnational predominance	1985	•	3
Pakistan (Sindh)*	Mohajirs, MQM vs. Balochs, PPP, Sindhis vs. ANP, Pashtuns vs. Pakistan Rangers, Sindh Rangers	subnational predominance, resources	1947	•	3
Pakistan (SRA / Sindh)*	SPA, SRA vs. government	secession, resources	2020	•	3
Papua New Guinea (Bougainville)*	national government vs. Autonomous Bougainville Government	secession, resources	1964	•	1
Papua New Guinea (inter-communal rivalry)*	vs. Aiyala vs. Normali vs. Morobe vs. Sepik vs. Waiya vs. Lewai vs. Kulumata vs. Kuboma vs. various other tribes	subnational predominance, resources	1975	↗	4
Papua New Guinea (opposition)*	opposition vs. government vs. various electoral supporters	system/ideology, national power	2011	↑	4
Papua New Guinea (socioeconomic protests)*	customary landowners vs. government vs. resource companies	autonomy, resources	1995	•	1
Papua New Guinea (urban tensions)*	highlanders vs. lowlanders vs. Ethnic Chinese	subnational predominance	1975	•	1
Philippines (BIFF)*	BIFF vs. government	secession, subnational predominance	2008	↘	3
Philippines (CPP, NPA)*	CPP, NPA vs. government	system/ideology	1968	•	4
Philippines (drugs)*	Cartels, Drug syndicates vs. Human rights activists vs. government	resources	2016	•	3
Philippines (Islamist militant groups)*	ASG, DI vs. government	system/ideology, other	1991	↘	3
Philippines (MILF – MNLF)*	MILF vs. MNLF	subnational predominance	2009	↗	3
Philippines (MILF)*	MILF vs. Philippine Government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1977	•	3
Philippines (MNLF)*	MNLF vs. government	secession, system/ideology, resources	1969	•	1
Sri Lanka (inter-religious tensions)*	Sinhalese Buddhists vs. Muslims vs. Christians vs. Hindus	system/ideology	1948	•	3
Sri Lanka (Northern Province, Eastern Province)*	Sinhalese Nationalists, JHU, BBS, JVP vs. Tamils, TNA vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	2009	•	2
Sri Lanka (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2022	NEW	3
Tajikistan (Gorno-Badakhshan)*	Pamiris vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	1992	•	3
Tajikistan (Islamist groups)*	Islamist groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1997	↗	2

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Thailand (Islamist separatists / southern border provinces)*	BRN, PULO vs. government	secession, system/ideology	1902	•	3
Thailand (opposition)*	pro-democracy activists vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	3
Uzbekistan (Karakalpakstan)*	Karakalpaks vs. government	autonomy	2022	NEW	3
Vietnam (Montagnards)*	Montagnards vs. government	system/ideology	1958	•	2
Vietnam (socioeconomic protests)*	factory workers, other civilians, peasants vs. government, manufacturing companies	resources, other	1986	↗	3

¹ Conflicts marked with * are without description

² Mentioned are only those conflict parties relevant for the period under review

³ Change in intensity compared to the previous year: ↑ or ↗ escalation by one or more than one level of intensity; ↓ or ↘ deescalation by one or more than one level of intensity; • no change

⁴ Levels of intensity: 5 = war; 4 = limited war; 3 = violent crisis; 2 = non-violent crisis; 1 = dispute

⁵ HIIK considers statehood to be non-contested if the state is an official UN members state.

Disputed statehood is marked with a ° if a territory is recognized by at least one other official UN member state ("limited recognition")

BANGLADESH (CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1971**

Conflict parties: MNP, PCJSS MN Larma, UPDF, UPDF-Democratic vs. KNF, MNP vs. Bengali settlers vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over autonomy and subnational predominance of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) between indigenous Jumma, Chakma, Kuki-Chin and Marma, and the government as well as Bengali settlers continued. The Jumma and Chakma were mainly organized in the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) and the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) respectively, reinforcing their demand to implement the 1997 CHT Peace Accord, while the Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) and the Marma National Party (MNP) demanded an autonomous state.

Communal tensions between Chakma groups and Bengali settlers continued over the course of the year. On July 5, for instance, Bengali Muslim settlers burned down 40 houses belonging to ethnic Chakma people in Mahalchhari Upazila, Khagrachari District, after tribal Chakma had prevented Bengalis from growing crops locally, leading to a clash which left at least four people injured. Following the incident, police and military forces were deployed to prevent further violence in the area. Moreover, KNF continued targeting security forces, militants and civilians. For instance, on June 21, KNF militants killed at least three Tripuri civilians and injured two in Rangamati city, Rangamati Hill District. In response, on July 3, the ethnic Tripuri community formed human chains and demanded justice for the killings of their community members.

Throughout the year, the army reportedly detained indigenous people. For instance, on March 15, army personnel beat up an indigenous political activist and took him away in a military vehicle in Dighinala Upazila, Khagrachari District. Four hours later, soldiers admitted the activist to a hospital where he later died.

Various indigenous groups rallied for an end to harassment and torture of local residents and tribes by security forces. For instance, on August 17, civil society organizations held protests across CHT against the government for not allowing the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit CHT. Moreover, indigenous leaders demanded the withdrawal of military rule in CHT and an end to the alleged human rights violations against the indigenous community.

On June 9, UPDF proposed a new CHT accord for greater political representation of different communities in Khagrachari, Rangamati, and Bandarban districts. On June 13, the home minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to peace and welcomed peace talks.

. abr

BANGLADESH (ISLAMIST GROUPS)

Intensity: **2** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1971**

Conflict parties: AAI, HuJI, JMB vs. government, Hindus
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over ideology and religious predominance between various Islamist militant groups, on the one hand, and the government and religious minorities, such as Hindus, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.

Throughout the year, security forces such as the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) continued countrywide operations against Islamist militant groups such as Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen (JMB), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami (HuJI), or Ansar al-Islam (AAI), also known as Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT). Operations were primarily carried out in the divisions of Dhaka, Khulna, Rangpur, and Chittagong. Overall, at least 59 alleged members of Islamist groups were arrested over the course of the year.

For instance, on March 1, security forces arrested the HuJI-affiliated fugitive in Khilkhet Thana, Dhaka District, who had been convicted of the attempted murder of then-PM Sheikh Hasina on 07/21/00. On March 19, RAB arrested ten suspected members of Jamaat Muslimeen, an allegedly newly formed splinter group of JMB, in Khulna city, eponymous district. During other arrests, security forces retrieved extremist publications, for example, following the detention of one alleged AAI member in Mohakhali neighborhood of the capital Dhaka, on April 23. Two days later, RAB arrested one alleged AAI division leader in Satkhira Sadar Upazila, Khulna District. On June 6, security forces arrested one member of ABT in Jaldhaka Upazila, Nilphamari District. On July 15, a mob of villagers vandalized a Hindu temple, several shops and homes in Sahapara village, Narail District.

On October 6, RAB arrested seven members of Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya, who allegedly had planned attacks in Cumilla city, Chittagong District. The group allegedly consisted of members of AAI, JMB and HuJI and had been formed in 2017 in Cumilla. sik

BANGLADESH (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: BNP, Hel, ICS, Jel vs. AL, government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between the opposition parties Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), on the one hand, and the government, led by the Awami League (AL), on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, opposition and government supporters engaged in violent protests across the country. For instance, on January 5, a total of 30 people were injured during protests, and police arrested 44 BNP supporters in Chattogram and Khulna cities, eponymous divisions. On February 23, in Bagha Upazila, Rajshahi Division, ICS members injured five policemen, using bricks and Molotov cocktails. Police arrested seven members of ICS after the incident. On May 17, Jel and ICS activists allegedly injured two policemen using

sticks while holding a procession in Sylhet city, eponymous division. On September 1, during a violent protest of BNP supporters against the government, one was killed and at least 50 were injured in Narayanganj city, Dhaka Division. Similarly, on September 21, a violent clash between police and BNP supporters in Munshiganj District, Dhaka Division, resulted in one dead and 90 injured. On December 30, a violent clash between Jel members and the police led to twelve people injured.

Security forces conducted several arrests over the course of the year. For instance, on February 2, security forces arrested five leaders of Jel in Pabna town, Rajshahi Division. On March 10, police arrested 26 members of ICS and seized several publications in Chandgoan Residential Area, Chattogram Division. Similarly, on May 15, police arrested 45 Jel members for holding an "anti-government" meeting in Sadar Upazila, Chattogram Division. On November 18, police arrested 66 members of Jel and ICS in the capital Dhaka, claiming to have seized IEDs.

On April 9, the BNP Secretary General accused the government of trying to undermine next year's presidential election by arresting opposition leaders and activists on false charges. On December 13, the leader of Jel was arrested after his son had allegedly been linked to Ansar al-Islam [→ Bangladesh (Islamist groups)]. One day after the arrest, in a violent clash between Jel and ICS activists with AL supporters, at least two were injured in Rajshahi city, eponymous division. sik

BANGLADESH (RMG WORKERS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2006**

Conflict parties: RMG workers vs. factory owners, government

Conflict items: other

The violent crisis over working conditions, social security, and pending payments between ready-made garment (RMG) workers, on the one hand, and factory owners and the government, on the other, continued. RMG workers' demands included the payment of due wages and benefits, the reinstatement of fired workers, the reopening of closed factories, and an end to sexual violence against workers. Their activities included protests, in some cases violent, and road blocks.

On January 17, RMG leaders met with the leaders of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association in Uttara Model Town, a suburb of the capital Dhaka, demanding food ration facilities for RMG workers due to rising prices of daily necessities. On February 1, RMG workers protested and vandalized four factories, after an employer humiliated a worker, in Gazipur city, eponymous district. The police used batons and rubber bullets, injuring ten workers. The clash also left five police personnel injured. On June 2 and from June 4 to 7, RMG workers protested for a wage hike in Dhaka's Mirpur and Uttara areas. The police used sound grenades, teargas, and batons to disperse the protesters. Furthermore, on November 7, Garments Sramik Odhikar, an assembly of garment labor rights bodies, demanded an immediate revision of the wage structure of garment workers in Diabari neighborhood in the capital of Dhaka, as a result of the low wages.

Over the course of the year, RMG workers repeatedly blocked roads. For instance, on February 15, at least 500 RMG workers blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway in Gazipur during demonstrations against layoffs. RMG protesters reportedly

threw bricks at the police, while the police used batons and rubber bullets against the protesters. The clash left 25 people injured. Similarly, on March 31 and April 16, RMG workers blocked a road in Siddhirganj city, Narayanganj District, demanding the payment of their salaries. On August 22, RMG workers blocked a road in Savar city, Dhaka District, also demanding wage payments.

On September 24, police arrested four people for the rape of two garment workers in Ishwardi Upazila, Pabna District. On November 15, RMG workers staged demonstrations in Savar Upazila, Dhaka District, to protest against the sexual harassment of female workers. abr

BANGLADESH (ROHINGYA / COX'S BAZAR)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2018**

Conflict parties: Salman Shah group, various gangs vs. Putia group vs. Munna group vs. Islami Mahaz

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance in Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar District, Chittagong Division, between various rivaling gangs, including Islami Mahaz, the Salman Shah group, Putia group, and Munna group, continued. Since last year, civilians and the Bangladeshi government frequently accused militant groups, such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) the Rohingya Solidarity Organization, of operating within the camps, which they denied [→ Myanmar (Rohingya)].

In total, at least 23 residents were killed. As of December, there were around 952,000 refugees in the camps according to UNHCR. Violence was concentrated in the largest camp, Kutupalong, Ukhia Upazila. Criminal gangs from within the camps were reportedly involved in robberies, human trafficking, as well as drug and gold smuggling. Most violent incidents took place in October with at least ten residents shot or stabbed to death, including four community leaders. For instance, on October 15, a mob of a dozen people attacked two camp leaders in Camp 13, hacking them to death. A majority of residents continued to refuse repatriation to Myanmar, which was a goal of both the Bangladeshi and Myanmar Army governments. Instead, about 8,000 residents were moved to Bhasan Char Island, Noakhali District, Chittagong, throughout the year. Since 2020, attempts to relocate around 100,000 refugees to Bhasan Char had sparked resistance from the camp population due to concerns about isolation and climate vulnerabilities.

Bangladeshi security forces regularly attempted to handle criminal cases in the camps. In June, 29 Rohingya suspects were charged with a prominent rights activist's murder on 09/29/21, of which 15 were arrested and four confessed. Police stated that some had ties to ARSA. The ARSA chief's half-brother was arrested on January 15 for suspected involvement in drug trafficking and murders. Police stated that they rescued one kidnapped person during the arrest. Between July and October, 800 allegedly ARSA-affiliated Rohingya were arrested for various crimes. However, residents also accused the Bangladeshi Armed Police Battalion, which was in charge of 34 camps, of harassment, torture, and arbitrary arrests.

On November 14, a Bangladeshi intelligence officer and a civilian were killed during a shootout related to smuggling in Bandarban District near Cox' Bazar and the Myanmar border.

Police blamed an armed group linked to ARSA, while ARSA denied any involvement. Consequently, the Bangladeshi government shut the border due to concerns of arms trade and terrorism. kv

CAMBODIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1997**

Conflict parties: CRNM, opposition parties vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between the Cambodia National Rescue Movement (CNRM) and opposition parties, primarily the Candlelight Party, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Power competition persisted between the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the Candlelight Party, which consists of many former Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) members. Other points of contention including labor rights and environmental issues also emerged [→ Cambodia (socioeconomic protests)].

As in the previous year, the government conducted multiple trials against opposition activists, many of whom were former members of the CNRP or part of CNRM. The largest trial took place on June 14, in which 51 opposition activists and politicians were convicted. After the Phnom Penh municipal authorities banned social gatherings on September 2, the police arrested two opposition leaders, including one monk, on September 7, for attempting to organize demonstrations. On May 9, a rare meeting took place between the prime minister Hun Sen and major opposition leader Kem Sokha, who was still on trial. On June 26, the government confirmed the landslide victory of the CPP during this year's commune election, with the CPP winning 1,648 seats of the commune chief positions and the only opposition, the Candlelight Party, winning four. On November 16, the five-year ban on opposition activists expired, allowing former CNRP members to re-enter politics, although most of them remained on trial.

The international community also continued to criticize the lack of political and civic freedoms in Cambodia. For instance, on August 3, the UN published a report concerning the restricted freedom of the press. On November 13, during the ASEAN Summit, US President Joe Biden urged Hun Sen to free the imprisoned activists. fyn

CAMBODIA (SOCIOECONOMIC PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **2021**

Conflict parties: government vs. laborers and activists

Conflict items: resources

The non-violent crisis over resources, including layoff compensations and other labor rights issues between workers, mostly in the gambling industry, and labor rights activists, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

In December 2021, suffering from huge net loss due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NagaWorld Casino in the capital Phnom Penh, which had a monopolistic share on the gambling

market, laid off one sixth of its workers, totalling 1,300, with half of them union members. Around 300 union members and some other workers claimed that the casino offered inadequate compensations and began a strike on 12/18/21, which carried on into this year. Police arrested nine workers and union members on January 3, including a union leader.

The Phnom Penh City Hall issued a statement on February 4, urging the workers to end the strike. Yet the demonstration continued. On February 22, in Phnom Penh, police officers injured two workers while arresting more than 100 others for allegedly violating Covid-19 protocols, most of whom were released later.

The protests and massive arrests persisted throughout the year in Phnom Penh. For instance, on March 7, the police arrested approx. 180 workers and union leaders and released 200 previously detained protesters on March 10. The police beat and pushed protesters to board buses on June 27 and August 11, injuring ten and one worker, respectively. On September 11, 400 workers as well as activists rallied outside the labor ministry for labor rights. fyn

CHINA (CHRISTIANS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: Christians vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the right to practice religious beliefs between unregistered Christian groups and the government continued.

The regulations restricting religious activities persisted. Censorship of online religious content and communication came into effect on March 1, and were followed in April by the ban of the word "Christ" on the social media app WeChat, and the forced removal of the website of the Shanghai Presbyterian Church. In May, Christians, among others, in Zhejiang province, were denied new passports and Christian groups criticized the selective denial. On June 1, the State Administration of Religious Affairs announced measures mandating religious organizations to register their financial assets and on June 15, declaring the objective for religious organizations to practice frugality. Local Civil Affairs Bureaus continuously shut down house churches for their unregistered status.

Raids and demolitions of Christian house churches carried on throughout the year. For instance, on June 27, government officials demolished the Loyalty Church in Shijiazhuang city, Hebei province, after the bishop of the congregation refused to join the state-vetted church. The police raided the Church of Abundance in Xian city, Shanxi province, beginning on July 20 and turning violent on August 17, when a Christian pastor was injured. On August 21 in Changchun city, Jilin province, police officers raided a house church during worship, injuring two people.

The government continued arresting church leaders, which received increased international attention. On April 7, the bishop of Wenzhou city, Zhejiang, was arrested for the eighth time. The Catholic Cardinal and former bishop of Hong Kong was arrested on May 11 for his advocacy in the 2019 pro-democracy protests [→ China (Hong Kong)]. European diplomats attended the hearing, the US government and a British parliamentarian also condemned the arrest. The Vatican extended the 2018 provisional agreement with the Chinese government on October 24. llg

CHINA (HONG KONG)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1997**

Conflict parties: pro-democracy groups, pro-independence groups vs. HKSAR government, PRC government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy, system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over autonomy or secession of Hong Kong (HK) and the orientation of the political system between pro-democracy and pro-independence groups and individuals, on the one hand, and the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), on the other, continued.

Courts in HKSAR carried out multiple trials, convictions and arrests mostly of individuals who had taken part in protests in 2019 and 2020, with now more than 80 percent of court cases linked to the 2019 protests closed.

On January 18, students from Hong Kong University staged an anonymous protest on campus via AirDrop to express their discontent with the removal of the Pillar of Shame, a sculpture memorializing the victims in the Tiananmen crackdown. Due to the strictly enforced National Security Law, the protesters changed the form of demonstrations from massive on-street protests to small-scale protests organized individually.

Individuals showed gestures of remembrance on June 4, the 33rd anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown, carrying flowers and candles which resulted in body searches and arrests by police. Civic groups, news outlets, and unions continued to terminate their activities, citing either legal risks or external pressure. This includes, among others, the cessation of operation of student unions of three universities, Citizen News, Factwire, and also the suspension of the Human Rights Press Awards.

As a response to the fire and following deaths in Urumqi on November 25 and to the protests demanding Covid-19 regulations to be relaxed in mainland China, Hongkongers staged a few peaceful blank placard protests in solidarity between November 27 and 29 [→ China (lockdowns)]. spi

CHINA (HUI)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: Hui vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over ideology between the Hui minority and the government escalated to a violent crisis. Throughout the year, the Han-dominated government tightened its control over religious practices, leading to tensions with the predominantly Muslim Hui minority.

In March, a Hui Muslim senior official was one of the only three invitees not in attendance at China's annual parliamentary meeting, reportedly due to corruption allegations and alleged promotion of Muslim culture. He had briefly served as head of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and was a vocal defender of the system of regional ethnic autonomy instead of the Sinicizing policy.

The forced remodeling of mosques by authorities to allegedly Sinicize their appearance continued throughout the year,

turning violent in one instance. On June 11, approx. 80 local police officers reportedly began to forcibly demolish the Baoshan Mosque in Zhaotong city, Yunnan province, and removed domes and minarets. They beat up at least 20 of the Hui Muslim protesters who were trying to guard the mosque. State channel CCTV televised successes of the ongoing, forced renovation campaign on June 30, leading to attention and discussion online. Forced reconstruction of the East Mosque in Zhaotong began on August 24, and on September 11 of the Doudian Mosque in the capital Beijing. llg

CHINA (INNER MONGOLIA)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1981**

Conflict parties: Mongolian ethnic minorities vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources

The non-violent crisis over autonomy, ideology, and resources, such as coal, natural gas and rare earth materials, in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR) between ethnic Mongolian minorities, on the one hand, and the government and the Han majority, on the other, continued.

Party officials of the Chinese Communist Party and government in IMAR continued to publicly call for a uniform Chinese heritage and culture. For instance, on March 5, President Xi Jinping stressed the importance of ethnic unity in a meeting with a delegation from IMAR in the capital Beijing.

Suppression and silencing of political critiques persisted. For instance, on October 5, the Thai police arrested a Chinese activist from IMAR in the capital Bangkok. The activist had publicly criticized the circumstances in IMAR and had a UN-backed refugee status. Chinese officials allegedly tortured the activist forcing him to confirm his consensus to return to China.

The strict lockdown policies due to the Covid-19 pandemic also sparked protests both online and locally [→ China (lockdowns)]. On November 6, after a civilian was found dead in a community compound, reportedly due to the quarantine policies, the local government of Hohhot pledged to improve lockdown restrictions. llo

CHINA (LOCKDOWNS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **NEW** | Start: **2022**

Conflict parties: factory workers, civilians vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the socioeconomic and health system, focusing on Covid-19 disease control policies such as lockdowns, between citizens and factory workers, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, erupted.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, the government had adopted a so-called zero-Covid policy that required repetitive testing and strict lockdowns. Many cities including Shanghai city and Lhasa city, Tibet Autonomous Region, experienced month-long lockdowns. On April 23, after one and a half months of lockdown, a video documenting quar-

antime life in Shanghai went viral on social media, and the government quickly banned the spread of the video. In the beginning of May, the Shanghai government began to loosen the lockdown measures.

On September 18, a bus transporting Covid contacts crashed in Qiannan district, Guizhou province, killing 20 people. The accident triggered massive public discussions on Covid policies. On October 13, three days before the Chinese Communist Party's 20th Party Congress, a man hung banners over a bridge in the capital Beijing, challenging both the legitimacy of the ruling party and the Covid policies.

The first protest erupted on May 14 as hundreds of students from Peking University gathered on campus in Beijing and protested against the Covid policies. On October 26, hundreds of ethnic Han Chinese migrant workers in Lhasa protested against the Covid policies on the street [→ China (Tibet)]. On October 31, the police arrested 200 protesters. Between November 23 and 24, the protest turned violent. Reportedly 20,000 workers from the electronics manufacturer Foxconn were forced to stay in the factory site in Zhengzhou city, Henan province, for a month. Some workers tried to flee the factory on October 30. On November 23, hundreds of workers in Zhengzhou violently clashed with health workers and security forces, demanding bonus payment and/or freedom to leave the factory, leaving at least two workers injured. On November 24, a fire in a residential building in Urumqi city, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, killed at least ten people. The public widely held the lockdown policies accountable for the deaths. Consequently, on November 28, hundreds of citizens in Shanghai gathered near the Urumqi Road to hold a vigil for the fire victims. Mass protests also erupted in at least 17 cities, such as Urumqi, Beijing, and Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region [→ China (Uyghurs / Xinjiang); China (Hong Kong)]. The demonstrations persisted over the weekend domestically and abroad in cities such as London, United Kingdom. On November 30, the local governments of Chongqing city and Guangzhou city, Guangdong province, announced the easing of Covid restrictions, followed by the official directives from the central government lifting Covid measures and ending the lockdown on December 7. fyn

CHINA (TAIWAN°) .

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: ROC vs. PRC

Conflict items: secession, system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over secession and the orientation of the political system between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China° (ROC), also referred to as Taiwan°, continued.

Visits of US and Taiwanese officials, respectively, continued to aggravate tensions between Taiwan and PRC. For instance, the US House of Representatives Speaker visited Taiwan between August 2 and 3, making her the highest-ranking US official to visit the island in over 24 years. On August 4, PRC fired eleven missiles near Matsu, Wuqiu and Dongyin islands, Fujian province, ROC, and 22 PRC warplanes entered the Taiwanese Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). This was the first time PRC fired missiles over the island as well as encircling the island with military exercises. On August 5, another 49 warplanes entered the ADIZ. As a response, ROC armed forces conducted live-fire artillery drills in Fenggang, Ping-

tung County, ROC, on August 9, including 78 self-propelled howitzers and six mortars.

Similarly, arms sales of the US to Taiwan elevated tensions. On September 2, the US Department of State announced the sale of weaponry, including air-to-air and air-to-sea missiles, totalling USD 1.1 billion to ROC.

On September 19, US President Joe Biden further stated that US forces would defend Taiwan if there were to be an unprecedented attack. PRC subsequently lodged a formal complaint over the remarks and stated its resolute opposition to the statement.

Furthermore, Taiwan's status within international organizations remained disputed. On November 15, representatives of Guatemala and Nauru called for the inclusion of Taiwan in the Paris agreement and in the fight against climate change at COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheik, Egypt. PRC in response called on the participating nations to abide by the One China Principle. lja

CHINA (TIBET) .

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1950**

Conflict parties: CTA, ethnic Tibetans vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources

The non-violent crisis over autonomy, the orientation of the political system as well as resources between the Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetans, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The government continued its Sinicization policy in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and arrested several Tibetans for possessing or posting pictures of the Dalai Lama on social media.

As in neighboring regions, protests against lockdown policies also erupted in TAR in early October [→ China (lockdowns)]. On December 5, police arrested four Tibetan citizens from Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, after they had participated in the protests in Chengdu city, Sichuan.

Internationally, several countries also expressed concerns regarding ongoing human rights issues in TAR. For instance, on February 9 and March 5, Taiwanese and Tibetan activists held protests in the capital Taipei. On December 7, the Japanese Upper House adopted a resolution condemning human rights abuse in TAR. On December 9, the US government sanctioned two officials of the People's Republic of China (PRC) working or having worked in the region. On December 10, an EU delegation called on the PRC government to fulfill its obligation of allowing international access to the region. On December 15, the Canadian parliament passed a motion supporting Tibetans seeking autonomy under the PRC constitution. On December 23, the PRC government sanctioned two US citizens for their support for Tibet.

. fyn

CHINA (UYGHURS / XINJIANG)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: Uyghurs, WUC vs. government
 Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over secession of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and ideology between the Uyghur minority and the government continued. The government continuously relied on comprehensive policing, surveillance, and incarceration policies in XUAR, severely constraining civil rights of ethnic Uyghurs among others. The so-called Xinjiang Police Files leaked on May 24, disclosed in-depth details from 2017 and 2018 of about 20,000 detained Uyghurs in Konasheher and Tekes counties, and linked high-level officials of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the incarceration system. By September, according to the Council of Foreign Relations of the USA, PRC had detained more than a million individuals since 2017. Furthermore, on November 16, the Uyghur Human Rights Project published a report stating the government systematically forced Uyghur women into marriages with Han-Chinese in order to promote ethnic unity and social stability. Western governments increased the pressure on PRC regarding human rights violations. 50 predominantly Western countries issued a joint statement, which condemned PRC's detention of Uyghurs. Furthermore, a former UN high commissioner for human rights visited XUAR and published a report condemning the treatment of Uyghur minorities. PRC criticized the report as being instrumentalized by the West to stir up anti-Chinese resentments [→ China – USA]. A fire in a residential building in Urumqi on November 23, killing at least ten people, triggered wide-spread protests against Covid-19 policies [→ China (lockdowns)]. rld

CHINA – INDIA •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1954**

Conflict parties: PRC vs. India
 Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The violent crisis over territory, resources, such as water, and international power between China and India continued. Throughout the year, both China and India continued to withdraw troops from sites along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) where previous altercations had taken place in 2020 and 2021. After a consensus was reached during the 16th round of the India-China Corps Commander Level Meeting on July 17, Chinese and Indian troops withdrew from the disputed territory along Gogra Hot springs, Ladakh union territory, India / Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China, along the LAC. On February 2, a Chinese commander, wounded in the 2020 clashes, carried the Olympic torch in preparation for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. As a response, the Indian embassy stated on February 4 that the Indian ambassador to China would no longer attend the opening and closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics. The Kashmir conflict remained a point of contention between the two nations [→ India (Kashmir)]. On March 23, the Chinese

foreign minister, while visiting the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Pakistan, affirmed his support of the OIC's stance on Kashmir. India rebuked these comments a day later. On March 25, however, tensions were elevated as the Chinese foreign minister visited the capital New Delhi, India, for the first time since the 2020 skirmishes, expressing the need to normalize Sino-Indian relations. Both sides continued to carry out military drills throughout the year. Most notably, on November 29, US and Indian troops conducted joint unarmed drills including helicopters in Chamoli district, Uttarakhand state, India [→ China – USA]. On December 9, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) clashed with Indian troops at Tawang Sector, Arunachal Pradesh state, after an alleged intrusion of the PLA into Indian territory. Both sides fought with sticks and bricks, injuring 34 Indian soldiers and several PLA soldiers. lja

CHINA – JAPAN (EAST CHINA SEA)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1971**

Conflict parties: Japan vs. PRC vs. ROC
 Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over international power, territory, and resources between the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of China°, also known as Taiwan°, and Japan continued. This year was marked by a stark increase in Japan's military investments, citing security concerns in the region [→ Japan, ROK, USA – North Korea; Japan – Russia]. For instance, on March 25, Japan's parliament approved spending approx. USD 8 billion on hosting US troops to strengthen their military cooperation. On September 3, Japan's defense ministry approved USD 4.1 billion to purchase two destroyer ships equipped with the Aegis Ashore ballistic missile defense system. On December 1, Japan's ruling coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Komeito party approved for Japan to possess counter strike capabilities, breaking a long-standing maxim of the Japan Self-Defense Forces. On December 23, the cabinet of Japanese PM Fumio Kishida approved a 26.3 percent increase in defense spending to USD 51.4 billion for the following fiscal year, amid what it calls "the most severe and complex security environment since World War II." Japan and the USA held several joint military exercises in February, March, and November. On August 16, Japan and the US pledged to cooperate more strongly in response to five PRC missiles landing in Japan's EEZ during a PRC military exercise near Taiwan two weeks prior. On September 14, Japan and the US announced plans to integrate defense strategies. jwl

CHINA – SOUTH KOREA •

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: PRC vs. ROK
 Conflict items: territory, international power, resources, other

The dispute over regional power, fishing rights, maritime

territory, and historical perceptions between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) continued.

Throughout the year, several government meetings were held to improve relations. However, territorial and security issues remained points of contention. On March 23, 24 and May 24, PRC airplanes entered the ROK air identification zone without prior notice. In the first instance, ROK sent fighter jets to monitor the situation. On June 11, ROK seized a PRC fishing vessel near Socheong island, Yellow Sea, suspected of fishing illegally in ROK waters.

In August, PRC opposed ROK's plan to expand the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense systems. Representatives from both countries stressed that THAAD should not burden bilateral relations. PRC officials re-emphasized the perceived security threat posed by THAAD and the US-Japan-ROK alliance, while ROK officials pointed out that THAAD was only aimed at North Korean threats and was not up for negotiation. jkl

CHINA – USA

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: PRC vs. USA
 Conflict items: system/ideology, international power

The non-violent crisis over international power and ideology between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the USA continued. The crisis was marked by ongoing tensions around regional security, increasing international power competition, human rights, and economic disputes.

The US continued its opposing approach towards PRC and its "Freedom of Navigation Operations" as well as naval exercises throughout the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait [→ China (Taiwan^o); China – Vietnam et al. (South China Sea)].

Human rights issues and economic tensions remained further points of contention. The US diplomatically boycotted the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, citing among other reasons human rights violations by PRC in Xinjiang and Hong Kong [→ China (Uyghurs / Xinjiang); China (Hong Kong)].

The US continued its confrontational trade and commerce policies, adding 33 companies to the Unverified List of the Bureau of Industry and Security on February 4. However, it announced tariff exemptions on 352 goods on March 23. On November 15, US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping met for the first time ahead of the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia, discussing increased cooperation on issues including climate change, global macroeconomic stability, and health security. Biden made a "five-noes commitment" assuring PRC among other things that the US does not aim to change PRC's political system, support Taiwanese independence, or contain PRC, however raising concerns about human rights issues, particularly in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Tibet [→ China (Tibet)].

Another pressing issue for PRC-US relations was the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24 [→ Russia – Ukraine]. For instance, on May 18, US and PRC officials exchanged views on the invasion during a call. A PRC spokesperson emphasized that the situations in Ukraine and Taiwan were not comparable. cni

CHINA – VIETNAM ET AL. (SOUTH CHINA SEA)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1951**

Conflict parties: PRC vs. Vietnam vs. Brunei vs. ROC vs. Malaysia vs. Indonesia vs. Philippines vs. USA
 Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis in the South China Sea (SCS) over territory, international power, and resources between the People's Republic of China (PRC), Vietnam, the Republic of China^o (ROC), Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, and the USA, supported by Australia, continued.

PRC maintained its position of territorial assertions in the region throughout the year and continued its navy and air force exercises in the SCS. Satellite images released on December 20 showed evidence for newly developed land formations on Eldad Reef, Lankiam Cay, Whitsun Reef and Sandy Cay. PRC dismissed allegations that it was responsible for these developments.

On March 2, a Chinese Coast Guard vessel conducted close distance maneuvering near a Philippine Coast Guard vessel. On May 26, a PRC fighter jet performed a dangerous maneuver in front of an Australian reconnaissance plane near the Paracel Islands. At the 25th ASEAN-China Summit on November 11 in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh, the ASEAN member states discussed a potential Code of Conduct for the region.

On January 7, Chinese media reported on the build-up of militia-armed fishing boats by Vietnam. The Vietnamese government denied the allegations. On March 7, following PRC military drills near the Vietnamese coast, Vietnam urged PRC to respect its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf. Disputes between the Philippines and PRC continued, including over alleged illegal intrusions of Chinese vessels into Philippine waters on March 12. On December 22, the Philippines ordered the military to strengthen its presence in the SCS, in response to the growing Chinese presence near Thitu Island. ROC conducted live-fire drills on Itu Aba Island on June 28 and 29, to which the Philippines objected.

The US held several freedom of navigation missions and joint military exercises, for example with Australia and Japan, throughout the year in the SCS. The US defense minister called out PRC on June 11 at the Shangri-La Dialogue for building outposts on man-made islands to advance its maritime claims. The US vice president visited the Philippines between November 21 and 22, discussing the extension of security ties with the Philippine government and stressing freedom of navigation in the SCS. cni

INDIA (CHRISTIANS – HINDUS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1999**

Conflict parties: BD, BJP, Hindu Munnani, Hindus, RSS, VHP vs. Christians
 Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over religious predominance between various Hindu groups, such as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Bajrang Dal, and Hindu Munnani, on the one hand, and

the Christian minority, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, Hindus attacked pastors on various occasions. For instance, on January 14, a Hindu group broke into a pastor's house in the Chandauli District, Uttar Pradesh state, and attacked him and his wife, using fists, knives, and wooden sticks. The attackers accused the pastor of luring people to Christianity. On January 28, a Hindu group attacked two pastors and burned a bible in the Anand Nagar neighborhood, Rewari city, Haryana state, accusing them of using foreign funds as a bribe to convert people to Christianity. On February 25, a group of Hindu extremists tied a pastor to a post at an intersection in South Delhi District, National Capital Territory of Delhi, and beat him publicly due to alleged forced conversions.

Over the course of the year, Christians and Christian sites of worship were attacked. On May 14, unidentified individuals destroyed a Christian shrine in Edlapadu village, Andhra Pradesh state, after members of the Bharatiya Janata Party had called it illegal and claimed that a sacred spot for Hindus had originally existed there. On August 6, a Hindu Munnani functionary punched and threatened three Christian preachers, accusing them of spreading Christianity in the Sungam neighborhood, Coimbatore city, Tamil Nadu state. On September 12, unknown individuals lynched a Hindu man in Lakhimpur District, Assam state. On October 2, Hindu Munnani workers interrupted a Christian Sunday prayer in Suchindram city, Tamil Nadu. They entered the church with a Hindu Munnani flag and spread death threats. From December 9 to December 18, Hindus forced Christians to convert to Hinduism in Chhattisgarh state. Houses and churches were destroyed and 600 to 1,000 Christians were displaced.

On September 15, the Karnataka Legislative Assembly passed an anti-conversion law for the protection of the right to freedom of religion. Christian communities, however, criticized the bill for restricting their religious freedom, by targeting social and educational activities they promote [→ India (Dalits – Adivasis); India (Hindus – Muslims)]. dju

INDIA (DALITS / ADIVASIS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1948**

Conflict parties: Adivasis (Scheduled Tribes), Dalits (Scheduled Castes) vs. Upper Caste members

Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over the Hindu caste system and subnational predominance between Dalits and Adivasis, recognized by the government as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, on the one hand, and members of upper castes, on the other, continued.

On January 12, a Dalit man accused of theft died under unclear circumstances in police custody in Namakkal District, Tamil Nadu state. Family members and Dalit activist groups made allegations of torture by the police and three officers who had been present during the arrest were suspended.

After the removal of a portrait of Ambedkar, a prominent figure of Dalit history, during Republic Day festivities, a protest initiated by a Dalit organization took place on February 19 in Bengaluru city, Karnataka state. According to the organizers, nearly 150,000 people participated in the protest.

On April 25, upper caste members killed a Dalit man in Ferozabad city, Uttar Pradesh state. Previously, the Dalit man and

his family had filed a complaint with the local police about upper caste members threatening to occupy his land and to kill his father. Moreover, on September 21, about 100 members of the Dalit rights organization Bhim Army protested in Hisar city, eponymous district, Haryana state, demanding an investigation into an alleged murder of a Dalit man in Kapro village, Hisar. Police and protesters clashed, leaving at least ten police officers and an unknown number of protesters injured.

Throughout the year, several incidents of upper caste teachers assaulting Dalit students received media attention and resulted in protests. For example, on September 7, an upper caste teacher allegedly assaulted a Dalit student in Achalda village, Auraiya District, Uttar Pradesh, leading to the student's death in the following days. Following the incident, on September 26, villagers protested in Achalda, throwing stones and setting two police vehicles on fire. The police detained 286 civilians.

Adivasi communities continued to stage protests demanding more rights. For instance, on October 10, 500 Adivasi members clashed with the police in Latehar city, eponymous district, Jharkhand state, after being stopped from entering a court hearing about alleged violations of constitutional provisions for scheduled tribes by the local administration. Adivasi members threw stones and blocked the exits of the court building, while the police used tear gas, sticks and water cannons against protesters. Reportedly, at least five police officers were injured and 30 Adivasi members arrested. lih

INDIA (HINDUS – MUSLIMS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1947**

Conflict parties: BD, BJP, Hindus, RSS, VHP vs. JIH, Muslims, PFI, TJ

Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over religious predominance between Hindus and various Hindu organizations, on the one hand, and the Muslim minority and Islamic political groups, such as the Popular Front of India (PFI), on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, members of both communities carried out violent attacks. For instance, on February 16, a Hindutva mob in Samastipur city, Bihar state, beat a Muslim to death, accusing him of having consumed beef. On June 10, members of the Muslim community protested in Ranchi city, Jharkhand state, against comments made by two Bharatiya Janata Party members on Prophet Mohammed they perceived as disrespectful. Police arrested 18 Muslims after they threw bricks and improvised bombs, aiming at shops. On October 5, a Muslim group interrupted a Hindu celebration by throwing stones in Kheda District, Gujarat state. Subsequently, police publicly flogged five Muslims. On October 9, a group of Muslims attacked Hindu houses, shops, and religious decorations in Kolkata city, West Bengal state.

On September 23, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested 107 PFI leaders all over the country, accusing PFI members of terror links, radicalizing people, and organizing camps to provide armed training. Five days later, the government banned the PFI for five years. dju

INDIA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY / ASSAM)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1979**

Conflict parties: AASU, AJYCP, Assamese vs. AABYSF, AAMSU, Bangladeshi immigrants vs. Adivasis et al. vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, other

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and the issue of Bangladeshi immigration in Assam state between various ethnic groups, notably those identifying as indigenous versus perceived outsiders, and the government continued. The eviction drive that had been launched in 2021 continued this year in several districts where residing families were evicted from their homes. During the drive, on January 31, in Lahorijan neighborhood, Dimapur city, Nagaland state, residents and security forces clashed, leading to the injury of several protesters and the officer in charge. Around 70 families were evicted during the drives in Barpeta District on February 5 and April 1. On May 13, another drive was conducted in Silchar city, Cachar District, and Silsako Beel, Kamrup Metropolitan District. Over a thousand armed personnel were present and approx. 100 square meters of government lands were cleared. In December, with thousands of police and security personnel present, two eviction drives were launched in Nagaon and Barpeta District, clearing hundreds of acres of land.

On April 21, a panel of the Assam government recommended that Muslims should receive identity cards or certificates to “identify and document” the Assamese Muslim community and to distinguish them from Bengali-speaking Muslims. The Sadou Asom Gorias Jatiya Parishad, a mostly Muslim ethnic group, criticized the recommendation, stating that the government was trying to erase their ethnic identity. On June 6, the cabinet of Assam declared five Assamese-speaking communities as indigenous, further emphasizing the Assamese identity and distinction from the migrated Bengali-speaking Muslims. On October 25, local authorities sealed the recently inaugurated Miya Museum on Bengali history and culture in Alamganj city, Dhubri District, and three people associated with the museum were arrested for their alleged ties with terror groups. The museum had been criticized by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislators for allegedly appropriating Assamese culture.

In February and May, the All Assamese Students’ Union (AASU) stated that protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) implementation would continue. On August 17, groups belonging to the Northeast Students’ Organization, which also includes the AASU, staged protests against the CAA in the capitals of the seven Northeast Indian states. In a statement on November 12, the chief minister of Assam stated that the BJP was committed to implementing the CAA.

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INDIA (MANIPUR)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1992**

Conflict parties: KCP, KNF, KYKL, NRFM, PLA, PREPAK, PREPAK-Pro, RPF, UNLF vs. government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The violent crisis over either autonomy or secession of Manipur state between militants and activist groups, including Meiteis, Kukis, and other ethnic groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Militants were organized in armed groups, such as Kuki National Front, People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), People’s Liberation Army (PLA), Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), National Revolutionary Front of Manipur (NRFM) and United National Liberation Front (UNLF).

At the beginning of the year, militant groups committed multiple acts of violence before the Manipur Assembly elections. For instance, on February 18, suspected militants opened fire during a campaign event of a National People’s Party candidate and injured his father in Imphal East District.

On February 20, the Coordination Committee of Manipur, comprising the six militant groups KCP, KYKL, PREPAK, PREPAK-Progressive (PREPAK-Pro), RPF and UNLF, declared that it was boycotting the prime minister Narendra Modi’s campaign visit on February 22 and stated that the Assembly elections on February 28 and on March 5 will not decide the fate of Manipur.

Throughout the year, militant groups claimed responsibility for multiple IED explosions. For example, on January 5, PREPAK-Pro militants detonated a bomb, killing a member of the Assam Rifles and injuring another one in the Usoipokpi Sangomsang area, Thoubal District. On May 30, another IED blast killed one laborer from West Bengal and injured four others, while they were sleeping in the Sapam Mayai Leikai community hall in Thoubal District. On June 6, in Imphal East District, security forces arrested a cadre of the NRFM in connection with the blast. On August 16, in Thoubal District, five members of the PLA were arrested for allegedly being involved in the IED blast as well. lrs

INDIA (MEGHALAYA)

Intensity: **2** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1992**

Conflict parties: ANSC, HNLC vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy

The violent crisis over autonomy in Meghalaya state between militant Garo and Khasi groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. The Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) was the most active group. The goal of the HNLC remained to create an autonomous state within the Indian Union in the Khasi Hills area of Meghalaya state.

On January 30, HNLC detonated an IED at the Police Bazar in Shillong city, East Khasi Hills, damaging the shopfronts of two stores. On January 31 and February 2, the police arrested six members of HNLC in Shillong, in connection to the IED explosion.

On February 8, HNLC released a statement proposing peace

talks with the government, which were initiated shortly after. In April, a group of students named Lawei ba Phyrnai sent two bomb threats to the chief minister of Meghalaya in Shillong. On April 13, the police arrested the founder and two members of Lawei ba Phyrnai in Shillong. adi

INDIA (NAGALIM) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1947**

Conflict parties: ENNG, NSCN-IM, NSCN-K, NSCN-K-Khango, NSCN-K-NS, NSCN-KYA, NSCN-NK, NSCN-NS, NSCN-R, NSCN-U vs. government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The violent crisis over either secession or autonomy of Naga-inhabited areas between factions of the militant National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. The Naga ethnic minority predominantly lives in the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh.

Throughout the year, various NSCN factions had violent encounters with regional security forces, such as the Assam Rifles (AR). For instance, on March 21, a shootout broke out between NSCN-Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM) and AR in Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh. According to the police, the incident left two NSCN-IM militants dead and one other injured. Locals claimed that one of the two killed and the injured person were civilians without any affiliation to NSCN. On August 9, NSCN-K Yung-Aung (NSCN-KYA) and United Liberation Front of Assam militants together attacked security forces with mortars in Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh, during border patrols before the so-called "Naga Independence Day", leaving one security personnel injured. On August 15, another shootout broke out between NSCN-KYA and security forces in Mon District, Nagaland, leaving two security personnel injured.

Throughout the year, security forces arrested militants of various NSCN factions, often in relation to extortion of civilians. For instance, after the March 21 shooting in Tirap, security forces arrested one NSCN-IM militant, seizing large amounts of arms and ammunition. On May 4, security forces arrested five NSCN-KYA members in Deban Nandan Kannan village, Changlang, for military recruitment among locals. NSCN members further surrendered to security forces, such as on July 28, when ten NSCN-IM, two NSCN-KYA, and one NSCN-Unification militant surrendered to security forces in Longding District, Arunachal Pradesh. On November 29, the police and the AR arrested two members of the NSCN-U for extorting money from shopkeepers in Dastong village, Longding.

On September 18, NSCN-IM and the government formally agreed to resume peace talks, which NSCN-IM had previously abandoned because the government would not meet its demands for a separate Naga flag and constitution. On April 20, an existing ceasefire agreement between NSCN-Neopao Konyak, NSCN-Reformation, NSCN K-Khango, and the government was extended by another year. The ceasefire agreement between the government and NSCN-K-Niki Sumi was also extended by one year on September 7. To represent Naga interests unanimously, on October 18, NSCN-IM and the political organization Naga National Political Groups agreed to the formation of a new platform called "Council of Naga Relationships and Cooperation". ser

INDIA (NAXALITES) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1967**

Conflict parties: Naxalites vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the left-wing extremist Naxalites, primarily organized in the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-M), as well as in splinter groups such as the Jharkhand Jan-Mukti Parishad and the People's Liberation Front of India, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. On the government side, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), especially the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA), cooperated with state and district forces.

Despite an overall decrease in casualties, violent encounters, IED explosions, and other attacks throughout the year resulted in the deaths of at least 115 people. Naxalites were primarily active in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha. Further violence occurred in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Telangana. Violent encounters between security forces and Naxalites continued. On March 21, Naxalites attacked a CRPF camp in Sukma District, Chhattisgarh, injuring three security personnel. On December 24, security forces killed two Naxalites in a shootout between security forces and CPI-M members in Gandhamardan Hills, Bolangir District, Odisha. On November 21, Naxalites fired upon a vehicle of security personnel, leading to a gunfight in Bendi forest, Jharkhand, during which at least three Naxalites were killed.

As in previous years, security forces continued to carry out search operations and patrols. For instance on February 8, Jharkhand police launched the twelve day operation "Double Bull" in Jharkhand, during which the police arrested nine Naxalites on February 12 in Lohardaga city, West Singhbhum District. On June 20, at least 50 Hawk Force personnel, an anti-Naxal force of Madhya Pradesh police, launched an operation in Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh, resulting in a violent encounter with the Naxalites, in which three Naxalites were killed. In another anti-naxalite operation on November 20, security forces found approx. 120 IEDs, allegedly planted by Naxalites in Budapahad area, Latehar District, Jharkhand. Naxalites carried out abductions and assassinated civilians, members of security forces as well as former members, suspected to be informants for the police. On March 19, Naxalites killed a civilian, accusing him of working with the police, in Kanker District, Chhattisgarh. In a similar incident, on August 18, Naxalites killed a civilian in Dhekunpani village, Nuapada District, Odisha.

Naxalites further continued to target infrastructure. On January 26, alleged Naxalites blew up portions of a railway track in Giridih District, Jharkhand. On April 17, Naxalites set fire to seven tractors at a construction site in Manganar village, Bijapur District.

Naxalites, as well as supporters of CPI-M, surrendered before security forces. On September 17, at least 700 supporters, including 300 militants, surrendered in Bonda Hill, Odisha. iha

Police's counter-terrorism force Densus 88 arrested 21 suspected members of Negara Islam Indonesia, a movement rooted in the Islamist group Darul Islam, in Dhamasraya and Tanah Datar, West Sumatra province, and South Tangerang, Banten province. On March 9, Densus 88 fatally shot a suspected member of JI in Sukoharjo, Central Java province. The suspect was fleeing from arrest and injured two officers in the ensuing pursuit. On July 22, Densus 88 arrested 17 suspected affiliates of JI and JAD in the provinces of Aceh, North Sumatra, and Riau. The East Jakarta District Court on January 19 sentenced the former head of JI's military section to 15 years in prison for his involvement in the 2002 Bali bombings, Indonesia's deadliest terrorist attack to date. This year, Islamist militants carried out one deadly attack. On December 7, a JAD affiliate entered the premises of the Astana Anyar police station, Bandung city, West Java province, and blew himself up with a pressure cooker bomb. The attack left the attacker and one police officer dead, as well as at least nine people injured. In the aftermath of the attack, Densus 88 arrested seven suspected accomplices in West Java and Central Java.

The government also continued persecuting MIT militants in Central Sulawesi province. Madago Raya, a joint police and military operation which had started in 2016 and was again extended this year, spearheaded these efforts. On January 4, members of the task force tracked down two MIT militants in Dolago village, Parigi Moutong Regency, fatally shooting one. On April 27, Madago Raya personnel shot dead an MIT militant who was reportedly resisting arrest in Sausu district, Parigi Moutong. On May 14, Densus 88 arrested 24 suspected sympathizers of MIT and the so-called Islamic State in the provinces of Central Sulawesi, West Java, and East Kalimantan. On September 29, Madago Raya personnel tracked down the supposedly last remaining MIT militant in Poso Pesisir Utara, Poso Regency, and killed him in a firefight. Security forces believed that one further unaccounted MIT militant had died from a gunshot injury although his body was never recovered. mno

INDONESIA (PAPUA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1961**

Conflict parties: AMP, FRI-West Papua, KNPB, OPM, TPN, ULMWP vs. government

Conflict items: secession, resources

The violent crisis over the secession of the provinces of Papua and Papua Barat and natural resources, such as gold, copper, and timber, between indigenous Papuans and the government continued. Violent clashes between Papuan militant groups, such as the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB), and security personnel as well as violence against civilians left at least 51 people dead and 129 more injured. Throughout the year, TPNPB militants and security personnel, mostly of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) and the police, repeatedly engaged in violent clashes. For instance, on March 26, TPNPB attacked a TNI post with grenades in Kwareh Bawah village, Kenyam district, Papua, killing two and injuring eight. On June 29, armed Papuan militants killed one TNI soldier in a firefight in Kiwirok village, Bintang Mountains Regency. Similarly, on November 13, TPNPB-affiliated militants injured one TNI soldier during a clash in Yengernok village, Gome district, Papua.

On the contrary, the peace dialogue continued. On November

11, various Papuan civic groups, along with the Indonesian Commission on Human Rights, signed a memorandum of understanding in Geneva, Switzerland, to implement a joint humanitarian pause that allowed humanitarian assistance to internally displaced indigenous persons in certain areas of Papua. Despite the agreement, violence continued. For instance, in a clash between police officers and civilians at a police station in Tolikara Regency, Papua, on November 19, the police shot dead one civilian and injured three, while five officers were injured.

Throughout the year, TPNPB repeatedly attacked civilians, suspecting them of being government-affiliated spies. For instance, in two attacks on March 2 and September 29, TPNPB fighters attacked technicians and construction workers in Beoga district, Puncak Regency, Papua, and in the area between Bintuni and Maybrat Regency, Papua Barat, shooting a total of twelve civilians dead. On July 16, TPNPB fighters shot a civilian dead during a flag ceremony in Nogolait village, Kenyam, Papua. After this, they opened fire on nearby civilians, killing at least ten and injuring two more.

Throughout the year, indigenous Papuans repeatedly protested against the government's plans to establish new provinces in Indonesian West Papua. On March 15, for instance, a protest attended by hundreds in Dekai, Yahukimo Regency, Papua, turned violent when protesters damaged nearby shops and government buildings. Two protesters were killed and three more as well as several police personnel were injured in ensuing clashes. On June 6, thousands protested in various places in West Papua. Police used rubber bullets, tear gas, batons, and stun guns against protesters, injuring 15 in Papua's capital Jayapura and ten in Sorong, Papua Barat. Despite the protests, the parliament on June 30 passed a new law for the establishment of three new provinces in West Papua. hbe, mmu, kv

JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, USA – NORTH KOREA

Intensity: **2** | Change: • | Start: **1993**

Conflict parties: Japan, ROK, USA vs. North Korea

Conflict items: system/ideology, international power, other

The non-violent crisis over international power, ideology, and the Democratic People Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear program between Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), and the USA, on the one hand, and DPRK, supported by the People's Republic of China (PRC), on the other, continued.

This year in particular, military tensions increased between DPRK and the US-ROK alliance, with at least 36 incidents of North Korean weapon launches, including long-range missiles and artillery. For instance, on March 24, DPRK allegedly tested its first intercontinental ballistic missile since 2017. Other systems tested include cruise missiles and railway-borne missiles. On June 5, DPRK fired a total of eight missiles into the East Sea prompting ROK and the US to immediately respond with a drill also involving eight missiles. On October 6, ROK deployed 30 fighter jets to respond to twelve DPRK warplanes conducting exercises near the border [→ North Korea – South Korea].

Japan, ROK, and the US responded to the launches with an increased military presence and new sanctions. In addition, ROK and the US conducted several additional military maneuvers. For instance, on April 12 and October 6, two US-aircraft carriers entered South Korean waters for the first

time since 2017. Moreover, Japan, ROK and the US participated in several bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral exercises in the second half of the year, prompting strong criticism from DPRK. Japan and the US also imposed new sanctions on individuals from DPRK accused of involvement in DPRK's missile program. Japan, ROK and the US held several rounds of bilateral and trilateral talks to coordinate their DPRK policies.

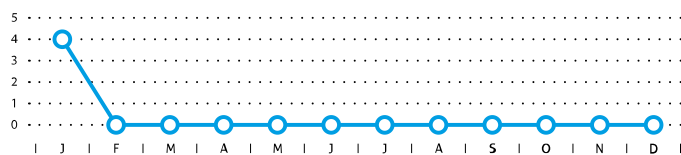
On January 20 and March 7, PRC blocked UNSC resolutions for further sanctions and condemnation of the DPRK missile tests. On August 1, the DPRK minister of defense announced that the DPRK military would seek to conduct "coordinated operations" with PRC armed forces to maintain regional stability. jkl

KAZAKHSTAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **4** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2004**

Conflict parties: civil rights activists, DPK, DVK, independent trade unions, journalists, Oyan Qazaqstan vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The non-violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, such as the illegal Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DVK), the Democratic Party of Kazakhstan (DPK), and individual activists, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a limited war.

On January 2, protests erupted in Zhanaozen, Mangystau Region, due to an increase in the price of liquified gas. Over the next two days, the protest spread to other Kazakh cities, such as Almaty, Aqtobe, and the capital Astana, eponymous regions, with protesters now also criticizing socio-economic issues, such as corruption, unemployment, and low wages. In Almaty, clashes between protesters and security personnel broke out on January 4. Police forces used stun grenades and tear gas to disperse the crowd. On January 5, protests continued throughout Kazakhstan with protestors torching government buildings, private shops, and public offices as well as taking control of Almaty airport.

On the same day, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev issued a nationwide state of emergency and announced the dissolution of the government. The following day, the Kazakh military as well as Russian-led forces of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) were deployed to end the unrest. On January 7, after continued clashes between security forces and protestors, government and CSTO forces regained control of most cities. Even though sporadic demonstrations continued during the following days, such as in Zhanaozen on January 9, Tokayev announced that CSTO forces would withdraw two days later, on January 11. During the protests, internet access and mobile communication were restricted and blocked nationwide.

Kazakh authorities estimated the resulting death toll to be 238. According to a statement of the Kazakh Prosecutor General's Office on January 15, 4,500 people were injured, of which 3,393 were security personnel. Furthermore, police

detained around 9,900 protesters, of which at least 25 were considered by human rights groups as victims of torture by the Kazakh government. Human rights organizations and activists claim this number to be much higher.

After the Kazakh government regained control, protests persisted throughout the year in commemoration of those killed, for instance, in Almaty on 13 February and in Astana on July 11. In response, Kazakh security forces dissolved the protests and detained 20 participants.

In the days ahead of the presidential election on November 20, police forces detained several activists and opposition figures, for instance on November 11 in Astana and on November 15 in Bobrovka, East Kazakhstan region. During the re-inauguration of Tokayev on November 26 in Astana, police forces clashed with protesters and detained dozens.

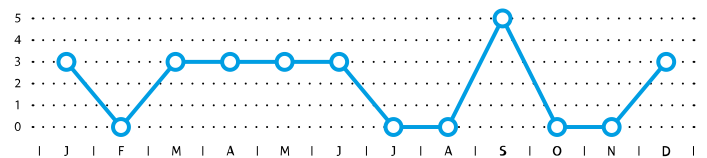
Furthermore, media outlets, journalists, and bloggers remained a target of repression. For instance, on October 14 and November 23, unknown assailants broke glass doors and windows of an independent news channel in Almaty. Another news outlet received a parcel with a pig's head on October 5. mor

KYRGYZSTAN – UZBEKISTAN – TAJIKISTAN (BORDER COMMUNITIES / FERGANA VALLEY)

Intensity: **4** | Change: **•** | Start: **2000**

Conflict parties: Kyrgyz border communities, Kyrgyzstan vs. Uzbek border communities, Uzbekistan vs. Tajik border communities, Tajikistan

Conflict items: territory, international power



The limited war over territory and international power in the Fergana Valley border region between Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek border communities, backed by their respective governments, continued. Despite recurrent clashes, the parties continued talks on further demarcation of the shared border and other kinds of consultation.

Throughout the year, the Tajik-Kyrgyz border saw recurring firefights between the respective nations' border guards. For example, on January 27, Tajikistan's and Kyrgyzstan's border guards engaged in a firefight. The fighting left at least two Tajik combatants dead and resulted in the injury of at least 24, including at least 6 civilians. Furthermore, approx. 1,500 people were permanently displaced. On June 3 and 14, border guards fired upon each other near the Kyrgyz village of Bulak-Bashy, Leylek district, Batken region, after Tajik border guards had allegedly crossed into Kyrgyz territory. The firefights resulted in the death of one Tajik border guard and left another four as well as two Kyrgyz border guards injured.

The most severe confrontation in terms of casualties and destruction occurred between September 14 and 17 at the Kyrgyz-Tajik border. Firefights between Tajik and Kyrgyz armed forces at checkpoints along the border of Batken region, Kyrgyzstan, on September 14 spread to checkpoints all along the shared border as well as to the surrounding villages of both countries in the following days. This escalation

ASIA AND OCEANIA

KYRGYZSTAN – UZBEKISTAN – TAJIKISTAN
(BORDER COMMUNITIES / FERGANA VALLEY)



January



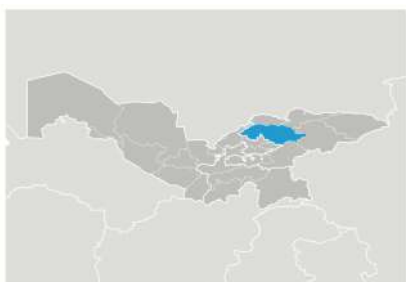
February



March



April



May



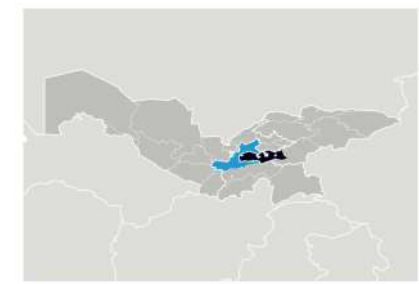
June



July



August



September



October



November



December




left at least 103 combatants and civilians of both countries dead as well as more than 200 combatants and civilians injured. At least 10,000 people were displaced internally as a direct consequence of the fighting. Another 130,000 were temporarily evacuated, almost all of whom returned to their homes by early October. A minimum of 400 homes as well as 15 schools and daycares were destroyed in both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the majority of the damage occurring in the latter.

Despite violent clashes, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan remained in diplomatic contact throughout the year and continuously completed the demarcation of approx. 178 km of common border. On September 20, the Tajik and Kyrgyz governments signed a ceasefire. On September 25, both nations agreed to the demilitarization of portions of the common border and the appointment of a joint commission to further demarcate it. Local populations on both sides of the border heavily criticized the agreement as they feared the takeover of the demilitarized area by the other country.

In addition to violent clashes and diplomatic settlements between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, further incidents occurred between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Violent incidents involving Uzbek border forces occurred on April 5 and May 3, when Uzbek border guards killed a total of five Kyrgyz men in altercations connected to alleged smuggling. Apart from this, however, Uzbekistan's involvement was entirely diplomatic. On October 10, the Uzbek and Kyrgyz governments agreed on a redrawing of a portion of the common border, resulting in 24,184 hectares of land changing hands. Despite an initial outburst of political turmoil in Kyrgyzstan, tensions over the Kempir-Abad reservoir, spanning across the territory of both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, decreased in November and December as the two sides agreed on water usage practices and ownership [→ Kyrgyzstan (opposition)]. msa, tda


LAOS (BUDDHISTS – CHRISTIANS)

Intensity: **2** | Change:  | Start: **1975**

Conflict parties: Buddhists vs. Christians
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent conflict between the Christian minority and the Buddhist majority de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. On February 9, several Buddhist villagers set ablaze a Christian family's house in Dong Savanh village, Savannakhet Province, also displacing twelve people. Subsequently, police authorities allegedly forced the family to delete all video material of the burned house from social media. On October 20, three assailants reportedly kidnapped, tortured and killed a pastor on his way to a Christian community gathering in Thakai village, Khammouane Province. His body was found three days later. Prior to the incident, authorities had reportedly visited the pastor's home to demand he cease all religious activities. Friends and family members claimed that the police were responsible for his death, citing a pre-existing record of police brutality against him. By the end of the year, there was no progress in the investigation of the case. ilo

MALDIVES (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government
 Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between the opposition, consisting of the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), headed by former president Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, as well as the People's National Congress (PNC), on the one hand, and the government with its ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), on the other, continued.

Despite the government's efforts to ban the "India Out" campaign calling for a decrease of India's presence in the Maldives, supporters protested throughout the year and police arrested at least 80 protesters. Furthermore, the police injured two journalists with pepper spray during protests in the capital of Malé on May 18 and July 1, one of whom was hospitalized. The campaign remained a contentious issue because of the 2023 presidential election with "India Out" being one of the main slogans of Yameen's PPM.


On April 20, the government introduced a bill to outlaw domestic political movements that adversely impact bilateral relations with other countries, criminalizing the "India Out" movement. On the same day, the National Security Council stated that the campaign "incited hatred against India" and constituted a "threat to national security".

On June 21, protesters stormed the National Football Stadium in Malé during a government-hosted yoga session held in commemoration of the International Day of Yoga. The protesters were carrying banners and other emblems used by PPM as well as flags printed with the Shahada, the Muslim profession of faith, destroyed property and allegedly attempted to assault attendees. The police detained 38 intruders. A police investigation concluded that PPM had facilitated the demonstration.

On August 1, the opposition's joint senate, consisting of PPM and PNC, elected Yameen as the opposition's presidential candidate for the presidential election. Furthermore, on November 11, the Maldives National Party officially declared itself an opposition party and announced that they would participate in the election.

On December 26, Yameen was sentenced to eleven years in prison after he was found guilty of corruption and money laundering charges. Subsequently, the PNC head became the new interim leader of the opposition. He had called for nationwide protests demanding the release of Yameen, and the PPM-PNC coalition responded with several marches, stating that Maldivians would boycott an election excluding Yameen. fmo

MYANMAR (INTER-MILITANT RIVALRY / SHAN STATE)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2015**

Conflict parties: RCSS vs. SSPP, TNLA, UWSA
 Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance in Shan

State between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), on the one hand, and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), the Shan Progress Party (SSPP), as well as the United Wa State Army (UWSA), on the other, continued. After reports that UWSA had supported TNLA against RCSS last year, further tensions between UWSA and RCSS emerged in January. UWSA thus entered the conflict as an ally of TNLA and SSPP and further solidified its own territory since then.

On January 10, TNLA made a public statement that they had evicted RCSS from Shan State's Ta'ang-majority areas. After six years of on-and-off fighting with RCSS, TNLA leaders stated on January 12 that they had pushed back RCSS away from Ta'ang-majority areas and behind the Mandalay-Muse Highway, Shan State/Mandalay Region.

In early February, heavy fighting broke out between RCSS and joined forces of SSPP and TNLA in Namtu, Hsipaw, and Kyaukme townships, respectively Kyaukme District, and in Mongyai township, Lashio District, reportedly leaving at least two injured. These clashes intensified between February 8 and 11, expanding to Yatsauk township, Taunggyi District. As a result, approx. 2,000 civilians were displaced. On April 5, clashes between UWSA and RCSS broke out near the Thai-Shan border, leaving one UWSA member and five RCSS members dead.

On April 22, the Myanmar Army invited ethnic armed groups to peace talks, in which RCSS and SSPP leaders participated. The talks did not lead to any consensus, neither between the armed groups, nor with the Myanmar Army.

Starting in September 21, SSPP and RCSS clashed in Kyethi and Laikha townships, both Loilem District, as well as in Mongmit township, eponymous district. While casualty numbers were unknown, 33 villagers temporarily fled to monasteries in Laikha.

Landmines remaining from violent clashes before TNLA's takeover of RCSS' headquarters in Kyethi in October last year made it difficult for displaced civilians to return to their hometowns. Between January and March, landmines and remnants of weaponry reportedly killed 13 people and injured more than 30 in Shan State. Moreover, RCSS abducted civilians with alleged ties to SSPP or TNLA, 24 of whom were released on August 6. Local media reported that RCSS, TNLA, and SSPP continued to forcibly recruit civilians. ann

MYANMAR (MNDAA / SHAN STATE)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1989**

Conflict parties: MNDAA vs. Myanmar Army
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources, such as opium and heroin, and subnational predominance in the Kokang region, Shan State, between the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) and the Myanmar Army continued.

At least 14 violent incidents resulted in a minimum of 15 people killed and 15 injured. For instance, on January 2, MNDAA troops clashed with approx. 80 soldiers of the Myanmar Army's Light Infantry Division 99 in Hpauk Matwt village, Muse township, eponymous district, resulting in the latter retreating from the area and MNDAA acquiring heavy weapons and military equipment. On April 27, about 40 soldiers from Myanmar Army's Light Infantry Division 99 attacked MNDAA troops near Hukan village, Muse, using a mortar and wounding at least one civilian. In June, fighting continued with at

least three armed clashes between MNDAA and the Myanmar Army. For instance, on June 17, the Myanmar Army, targeting MNDAA, shelled an IDP camp in Kutkai with artillery, killing two, injuring two, and displacing about 200 people. Between November 27 and 29, several clashes occurred between MNDAA and hundreds of Myanmar Army soldiers north of Chin Shwe Haw town, Laukkaing township, Kokang Self-Administered Zone, after the Myanmar Army had attacked an MNDAA base in Mount Nampha, using heavy weapons. As a result of the fighting, at least ten people were killed, seven injured, and thousands fled the area. On December 21, the Myanmar Army withdrew from an area near Wein Hseng village, Mongpaw village tract, Muse. They had attacked an MNDAA post with about 80 soldiers and artillery, among other weapons, killing at least one person, injuring another, and reportedly destroying one house in the neighboring Samar village.

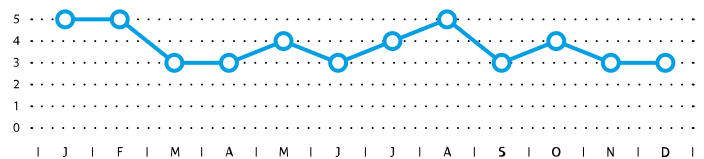
Civilians continued to be targets of kidnapping and to be used as porters or recruits by armed groups. For instance, on April 5 and May 15, MNDAA forcibly recruited civilians from Mongko and Kutkai townships, both Muse district, respectively. This resulted in the temporary displacement of at least twelve people. Of those affected in Kutkai, seven were released the following day.

Throughout the year, MNDAA, along with its allies of the Brotherhood Alliance, pledged its support for national opposition groups challenging the Myanmar Army on several occasions [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. On April 17 and May 31, MNDAA declared its support for the Bamar People's Liberation Army and the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force in their fight against the military. Moreover, on July 27, the alliance condemned the execution of four imprisoned members of the opposition and warned the Myanmar Army that such actions would exacerbate the civil war. ls

MYANMAR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **5** | Change: **•** | Start: **1962**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. Myanmar Army
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The war over national power and the orientation of the political system between the elected National League of Democracy (NLD) party and its interim government, the National Unity Government (NUG), supported by the People's Defense Forces (PDF), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army led by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, on the other, continued. PDF received training from various ethnic armed organizations, which sometimes joined in PDF clashes with the Myanmar Army [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State); Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State); Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et al. / Karen, Kayah State); Myanmar (TNLA / Shan State)].

The previous year, the Myanmar Army had staged a coup triggering a wave of non-violent protests across the country which led to a military crackdown as well as the arrest of hundreds of elected politicians. The protesters organized and armed themselves as various PDF across the country and officially declared a "people's defensive war" against

Myanmar Army control on 09/07/21.

This year, violence between the Myanmar Army and opposition forces spread nationwide. Over the course of the year, the conflict reportedly resulted in the death of at least 1,300 civilians and 5,400 arrests of activists and political opposition. Fighting predominantly occurred in the border regions and Sagaing Region, which became a hotspot for armed clashes, arson attacks, and airstrikes. For instance, on February 6, local PDF attacked the Myanmar Army in Kale township, Sagaing Region, with drones and mines, killing 38 soldiers, injuring ten and destroying five houses. Moreover, unarmed protests and other non-violent forms of resistance continued, concentrating in cities like Yangon, eponymous region, and in central Myanmar.

So-called Pyu Saw Htee militias supported the Myanmar Army, frequently targeting villagers accused of being members or supporters of PDF. For instance, on September 24, soldiers and Pyu Saw Htee members attacked Innpat village, Khin-U township, Sagaing Region, with heavy artillery, killing eight civilians and destroying ten houses.

Furthermore, the Myanmar Army carried out at least 16 airstrikes this year, causing high numbers of civilian casualties and IDPs. For instance, on August 11, it started a weeks-long raid, targeting 20 villages in three townships west of the Chindwin river, Sagaing Region. Three Myanmar Army fighter jets launched airstrikes on Yin Paung Taing village, Yinmarbin township, Sagaing Region, where members of the Chin PDF resided. At the same time, an additional 60 soldiers carried out a ground offensive, which left at least 17 civilians dead and around 3,000 displaced. The Myanmar Army shelled other townships and burned down at least 200 houses in the offensive. Reportedly, they were also responsible for arbitrary detention, torture, and at least four abductions. PDF responded with ambushes, using explosive devices and landmines on military convoys, which also resulted in the destruction of civilian property and infrastructure, and allegedly left 30 soldiers dead. In another instance of airstrikes on September 16, army helicopters attacked a school, firing rockets and machine guns, in Let Yet Kone village, Tabayin township, Sagaing Region, leaving at least twelve people dead and around 30 students injured.

On July 25, the Myanmar Army executed four political opposition members at Insein Prison, Yangon Region, marking the first judicial death penalties in over 30 years. The opposition members were former NLD members and well-known pro-democracy activists accused of organizing or partaking in armed resistance. However, on November 17, the Myanmar Army announced an amnesty, whereby nearly 6,000 prisoners were released. Reportedly, 712 of them were political prisoners, some of whom were later re-arrested. International and national journalists, politicians, pro-democracy activists, and protesters were regular targets of mass arrests. For instance, on December 23, former NLD and civilian government leader Aung San Suu Kyi's prison term was extended to a total of 33 years, following her 18 months of trials on 19 different charges.

On December 21, UNSC adopted the first resolution on Myanmar since the coup, calling on the Myanmar Army to end all violence, release political prisoners, restore democratic institutions, and implement the ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus.

tlh

MYANMAR (ROHINGYA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2012**

Conflict parties: ARSA, Rohingya, RSO vs. Myanmar Army

Conflict items: subnational predominance, other

The violent crisis over subnational predominance in Rakhine State and the right to citizenship between the ethnic Rohingya and Rohingya armed groups, such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, ARSA posted videos of its armed activities, for instance of organized drills in January including ARSA chief Ata Ullah, which reportedly took place in Maungdaw township.

On February 4, clashes between ARSA and the Myanmar Army in Laung Boke village, Maungdaw, left at least three soldiers injured. According to ARSA, Myanmar Army attacks involving mortars and rocket launchers in Nga Yant Chaug, Ka Mauk Seik, and Ta Man Thar, Maungdaw, continued until February 8 and resulted in four ARSA members being injured. According to local reports, ARSA also supposedly intimidated civilians and clashed with the Arakan Army [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)].

After the disappearance of two ethnic Rakhine teachers on June 16, and the murders of a Bangladeshi intelligence officer and a civilian on November 14, ARSA denied allegations of responsibility for violent attacks near the Bangladesh-Rakhine State border. In response to the latter incident, Bangladeshi and Myanmar Army security forces met up in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw on November 29, deciding to launch joint border security operations and naming ARSA and RSO terrorist threats. Moreover, ARSA repeatedly denied responsibility for any crimes within the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, of which they had been accused by Rohingya civilians and Bangladeshi security forces [→ Bangladesh (Rohingya / Cox's Bazar)].

On March 22, RSO welcomed the US government's decision of formally determining crimes against the Rohingya as acts of genocide, calling for support for displaced Rohingya, an arms embargo against the Myanmar Army, as well as a safe-zone within northern Rakhine State. A day later, ARSA also welcomed the declaration, reiterating its call for accountability and demanding an autonomous Rohingya state.

On July 22, ICJ ruled to reject the former government's objections made in 2021 to alleged breaches of the international Genocide Convention against the Rohingya. The case had been registered by the Gambia in 2019. Upholding jurisdiction for Rohingya rights was welcomed by RSO and the Bangladeshi government. Bangladesh also called on other member states of the Organization of Islamic States on November 10 to show support for the case. On August 28, 384 civil society organizations in a joint statement demanded the international community to hold the Myanmar Army criminally accountable for the Rohingya genocide and for ongoing crimes against Myanmar's civilian population [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. Several Rohingya civil organizations also expressed their recognition of and support for the National Unity Government against the Myanmar Army. mng

MYANMAR (TNLA / SHAN STATE)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: TNLA vs. Myanmar Army
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, re-sources

The violent crisis over resources, such as poppy, and sub-national predominance in Shan State between the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Myanmar Army continued. TNLA continued to condemn the Myanmar Army's coup d'état on 02/21/21 and ongoing human rights violations, while expressing support for the National Unity Government and the People's Defense Force (PDF) [→ Myanmar (opposition)].

Overall, approx. 71 people, among them seven civilians, were killed, 37 injured and thousands displaced within Shan State. TNLA was frequently supported by its allies of the so-called Northern Alliance, consisting of the Arakan Army, Kachin Independence Army, and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State); Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State); Myanmar (MNDAA / Shan State)]. In February, clashes between the Northern Alliance and Myanmar Army took place. For instance, on February 4, the Myanmar Army attacked a Northern Alliance training ground in Wan Hpa-pan village, Kyethi township, Loilem District, with fighter jets, reportedly resulting in 30 alliance members dead and 20 injured.

TNLA continued its operations against the Myanmar Army in southern Shan State. For instance, on December 7, hundreds of Myanmar Army soldiers launched airstrike and ground operations on Kone Thar, Humen and Pein Lone villages, Namhsan township, Pa-Long Self-Administered Zone. Reportedly, they threw bombs from several fighter jets, while the ground troops clashed with TNLA. Other soldiers fired artillery shells from two bases in Manton and Mongmit townships. TNLA repelled the ground troops, with fighting continuing until the next day. Local media claimed that TNLA killed at least 20 soldiers and captured 28. At least five houses were destroyed, several villages damaged, and over 1,000 civilians fled. The Myanmar Army came to an agreement with TNLA to temporarily cease fighting in the township.

Civilians were frequently impacted by clashes between the Northern Alliance and Myanmar Army. For instance, on March 5, three were killed and another eleven injured in an explosion caused by a mortar shell or landmine which had been placed in Hu Kam village, Lashio District. Furthermore, throughout the year, there were several reports of TNLA extorting and forcibly recruiting villagers, for instance in April in Mongko township, causing at least dozens to flee, and in July in Kyaukme township.

Due to continued mistrust, neither TNLA nor the other Northern Alliance organizations attended the Myanmar Army's Union Day celebrations on February 12, nor the nationwide peace talks held with some armed groups in August and in October. lg

NEPAL (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between the opposition and the government continued. After party reshuffling in 2021, the political opposition consisted mainly of the Communist Party of Nepal - Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), while the government was formed by a coalition of the Nepali Congress (NC) and other parties, such as the Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist Centre (CPN-MC).

Throughout the year, several protests in the capital Kathmandu and other provinces resulted in violent clashes between security forces and protesters. Moreover, supporters of political opponents violently attacked candidates from various political parties in several provinces. For instance, on January 26, in the Dhanusha district, Madhesh province, cadres of the Janamat opposition party attacked a local CPN-UML mayor and Bharatiya Janata party member.

Particularly throughout February, violent protests against the government continued in Kathmandu over the ratification of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, a USD 500 million infrastructure grant from the USA. Between February 20 and February 28, security forces used tear gas, water cannons, and sticks to disperse the crowd, leaving several dozen individuals injured and dozens arrested.

Local elections on May 13 led to the largest increase in violence across the country between the political groups, leaving 70 civilians injured. On May 17, security personnel shot one civilian in Udayapur district, Province No. 1. Another civilian died of head injuries caused by hurled stones during a violent clash between NC and CPN-MC in Sotang Rural municipality, Province No. 1.

After the local election won by NC in May 2022, violent incidents decreased across the country. CPN-UML organized peaceful opposition protests over inflation, rising costs of living, and opposition against the NC-led government and its main coalition ally CPN-MC.

On November 20, Nepal held general elections, which resulted in civil unrest and protests. Prior to the election, several bombs were found at polling stations, with one allegedly exploding without causing harm to bystanders. During the entire election period, security personnel arrested several individuals, shot one civilian at a polling station in Province No. 7, and injured several more.

Following the election, CPN-MC formed the new government as part of a coalition with seven other parties, including CPN-UML, whereas NC joined the political opposition. pbi

NORTH KOREA – SOUTH KOREA

Intensity: **2** | Change: • | Start: **1948**

Conflict parties: DPRK vs. ROK
 Conflict items: territory, system/ideology, international power

The non-violent crisis over international power, the orientation of the political system, and territory between the

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), supported by the People’s Republic of China (PRC), on the one hand, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) supported by the USA, on the other, continued.

This year, tensions between the two countries increased with DPRK intensifying its weapon tests by launching missiles or shooting artillery shells every month of the year [→ Japan, South Korea, USA – North Korea]. In response, ROK imposed unilateral sanctions in two instances. For example, on October 14, ROK sanctioned 15 North Korean individuals and 16 institutions associated with DPRK’s missile program.

On December 26, five DPRK UAVs breached the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) and entered South Korean airspace for the first time since 2017. While four of the UAVs flew near Ganghwa Island, Incheon Metropolitan City, one UAV reached Gimpo city, Gyeonggi Province. This caused temporary suspensions of flights at both nearby airports. ROK reacted by deploying fighter jets and attack helicopters as well as firing warning shots and sending warning messages to DPRK. An ROK attack helicopter fired shots, trying to disable the UAVs near Ganghwa Island. The UAV detected near Seoul returned to DPRK whereas the remaining four UAVs disappeared from ROK’s radars. Furthermore, ROK deployed crewed and uncrewed reconnaissance aircrafts to record DPRK’s military facilities close to and north of the MDL.

In two instances, DPRK vessels breached the Northern Limit Line in the Yellow Sea. For example, on March 8, for the first time since 2018, a North Korean military patrol ship crossed the disputed maritime border. It retreated when an ROK Navy vessel fired three warning shots and sent warning messages. The North Korean ship was allegedly tracking another North Korean stray vessel that was later seized by the South Korean Navy.

Furthermore, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency, DPRK started restoring the nuclear test site Punggye-ri in North Hamgyong Province, which DPRK had dismantled in 2018. As in the previous year, DPRK also continued expanding facilities at Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center in North Pyongan Province. akw

NORTH KOREA, CHINA (DEFECTORS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↑** | Start: **2000**

Conflict parties: DPRK, PRC vs. defectors (network)

Conflict items: system/ideology, other

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and North Korean defectors’ (NKD) right to migrate between the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), on the one hand, and the NKD, defector support networks, such as aid groups and other NGOs based mostly in the Republic of Korea (ROK), on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

Throughout the year, North Korean authorities killed at least five NKDs for attempting to leave DPRK. Moreover, at least 120 civilians in Yanggang Province were forcibly repatriated to rural areas for having personal connections to NKDs living in ROK. Several NKDs and their relatives were sentenced to prison terms in political prison camps.

In ROK, defector support networks resumed leaflet campaigns under the new South Korean administration of President Yoon Suk-yeol despite criticism from the ROK government. In April and June, organizations such as the Fighters for Free North Korea announced they had sent information and humanitar-

ian goods with air balloons over the border to DPRK [→ North Korea – South Korea].

In addition, ROK courts sentenced two NKDs to multi-year prison terms for espionage. In February, an NKD was sentenced to over three years in prison for spying on the NKD community in ROK and its connections to DPRK. In May, another NKD was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for working as an “overseas operative” on behalf of agents from North Korea’s secret police.

This year, the number of NKDs arriving in ROK remained low. 67 NKDs were counted by the ROK Ministry of Unification, marking the second lowest rate recorded after 63 NKDs in 2021. Between 1998 and 2020, an annual average of 1,607 NKDs reached ROK. jkl

PAKISTAN (ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **•** | Start: **2001**

Conflict parties: al-Qaeda, IS-K, JuA, LeJ, TTP vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power, autonomy of the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and the orientation of the political system between Islamist militant groups, such as Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) and Islamic State Khorasan (IS-K), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. In violent confrontations between Islamist militant groups, government forces and civilians, 120 people were killed and at least 66 injured. The main territory of the conflict continued to be Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (KP). After TTP had declared an end to a one-month ceasefire with the government on 12/09/21, it re-started its attacks on security forces. For example, on April 11, TTP militants attacked a police van in Kulachi city, Dera Ismail Khan District, killing five and injuring four. On May 3, negotiations between the government and TTP re-commenced, resulting in a ceasefire agreement on June 3. However, TTP members continued to carry out attacks on security forces, while the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) resumed raids and arrests. On November 28, TTP officially called off the ceasefire. Two days later, TTP killed four and injured 23 in a suicide attack in Quetta city, Balochistan province. On December 18, imprisoned Islamist militants took hostages at a prison in Bannu city, KP. In a rescue operation in the following days, at least 33 militants and two military personnel were killed and at least 10 military personnel injured. TTP confirmed that some of the perpetrators had been their members.

On February 6, unknown militants fired at a military post in Angoor Tangi, Kurram District, from across the Afghan border. In the ensuing clash, five soldiers were killed and four injured. Throughout the year, CTD forces conducted raids and arrests, often leading to firefights with Islamist militants. For instance, on March 8, CTD forces engaged in a firefight with IS-K militants in Peshawar city, KP, killing three militants. On April 9, CTD forces killed five TTP militants in Bannu District, KP.

The US government stated on December 19 that it would assist the Pakistani government in its fight against Islamist militant groups. On December 22, following repeated TTP attacks, the Pakistani government accused the Afghan Taliban of supporting TTP and urged them to stop.

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PAKISTAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1973**

Conflict parties: opposition parties vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power, the orientation of the political system, and ideology between various opposition parties and the government continued.

At the beginning of the year, opposition parties, especially the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), continued to push for then-Prime Minister Imran Khan from the Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party to step down because of the government’s handling of the economic crisis. On February 27, PPP started a ten-day protest march from Karachi city, Sindh province, to the capital Islamabad. On April 10, Khan lost a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly. One day later, PML-N leader Shehbaz Sharif was elected prime minister with the support of PPP and other opposition parties.

PTI heavily protested the change in government on several occasions and called for new elections. For instance, on May 25, PTI organized protests in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore city, Punjab province. During the rallies, police forces clashed with protesters and arrested 1,700. On October 28, Khan started a protest march from Lahore to Islamabad, calling for re-elections. On November 3, a gunman injured Khan during a rally in Wazirabad, Punjab, also killing one and injuring at least six participants. On August 6, unidentified gunmen ambushed a PTI MP’s car in the Maidan valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. They killed two civilians and two policemen, and injured the MP and three other civilians in the ambush.

Since the change in government, several corruption charges were brought against PTI. For instance, on May 21, the former human rights minister of the PTI government was arrested in Islamabad. On October 21, the Election Commission banned Khan from participating in elections based on the same accusations.

Several violent attacks against journalists critical of the Pakistani military were reported throughout the year. For instance, on January 24, unidentified gunmen shot a journalist in Lahore. On June 13 and 24, unknown attackers kidnapped two journalists for 24 hours in Karachi. On June 30 in Lahore, and nine days later in Islamabad, respectively, unidentified attackers beat up two journalists.

Journalists also faced non-violent repression. For example, on February 20, the government passed a law increasing the jail terms for defamation of people or institutions from three to five years and limiting access to bail. Furthermore, after reports critical of the military, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority temporarily suspended the ARY News channel on August 8.

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PAKISTAN (PASHTUNS / PTM)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2018**

Conflict parties: Pashtuns, PTM vs. government
 Conflict items: autonomy

The violent crisis over autonomy between Pashtuns, organized in groups such as the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), and the government continued.

On February 2, Pakistan Army soldiers attacked a convoy of PTM leader Manzoor Pashteen in Zhob city, Balochistan province, injuring one PTM member.

As in previous years, the imprisonment of PTM leaders remained an issue. On March 3, a PTM leader received a life sentence for anti-government statements in 2020. On June 23, another PTM leader, imprisoned since 2020, claimed that unknown attackers had tried to assassinate him twice while staying in a hospital in Karachi city, Sindh province. On November 10, the Karachi Anti-Terrorism Court reissued an arrest warrant for Pashteen and other PTM leaders, based on charges of anti-state rhetoric during a protest four years ago. Throughout the year, PTM held protests and sit-ins against human rights violations by the government and called for the release of imprisoned PTM members.

After an increase in terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province starting in August, PTM joined several protest marches for peace [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. For instance, on September 30, PTM members were part of a protest in Matta Tehsil, KP, and on October 10, PTM leaders joined a 40-hour sit-in with at least 10,000 protesters in Swat, KP. mom

PAKISTAN (SINDH)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1947**

Conflict parties: Mohajirs, MQM vs. Balochs, PPP, Sindhis vs. ANP, Pashtuns vs. Pakistan Rangers, Sindh Rangers
 Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources and subnational predominance in Sindh between Mohajirs, Balochs and Sindhis, Pashtuns, and government-affiliated paramilitary forces, namely Pakistan Rangers and their subdivision Sindh Rangers, continued. The ethnic groups respectively had affiliated political parties who were also active: the Mohajirs with the two factions of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Balochs and Sindhis with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), and Pashtuns with the Awami National Party (ANP).

On July 12, ethnic tensions resurfaced between Pashtuns and Sindhis following the killing of a Sindhi man in the course of a dispute with a Pashtun restaurant owner in Hyderabad city, Sindh province. In the days following the attack, protests of both ethnic groups emerged in several cities, such as Hyderabad and Larkana, Sindh province. Several political parties made statements criticizing the Sindh government for failing to stop the violence.

Both factions of MQM, MQM-Pakistan (MQM-P) and MQM-London (MQM-L), staged protests throughout the year. For instance, on January 26, protesters affiliated with MQM-P

gathered in Karachi city, Sindh province. Police responded to the protest using tear gas and batons, killing one and injuring several, among them a MQM-P leader. Multiple protesters were arrested.

After five years of inactivity, on April 4, MQM-L announced the resumption of its organizational activities in Pakistan. Four days later the Sindh Home Department released a detention order for two newly appointed leaders. On September 14, the bodies of three missing MQM workers were discovered after they had allegedly been in custody of paramilitary rangers. The bodies reportedly showed signs of torture and were found in different areas of the province. lih

PAKISTAN (SRA / SINDH)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **2020**

Conflict parties: SPA, SRA vs. government

Conflict items: secession, resources

The violent crisis over the secession of Sindh province and resources, such as Chinese infrastructure projects and businesses, between the Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA) and the Sindhudesh People's Army (SPA), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

As in the previous year, SRA actions predominantly targeted police and the Chinese presence in the province. For instance, on March 31, SRA carried out two IED attacks in Kotri city, Jamshoro District, and Detha village, Hyderabad District, which resulted in minor destruction of railway tracks. On May 12, SRA attacked a Pakistan Coast Guard vehicle using an IED in Saddar area, Karachi city, killing one civilian and injuring at least nine more. On May 16, SRA carried out a further IED attack at a market in Kharadar area, Karachi, leaving one person dead and injuring eleven. In response, on May 18, the Counter Terrorism Department killed two individuals in Keamari area, Karachi, for alleged involvement in the May 12 and 16 IED attacks. On December 6, SRA damaged two transmission line pylons in Jamshoro District with an IED.

A new militant group, known as SPA, emerged in September. Reports showed discrepancies as to whether SPA could be considered part of SRA or if it was an independently organized group. On September 28, a member of SPA fired a gun at ethnic Chinese in a medical clinic in Karachi, killing one and injuring two.

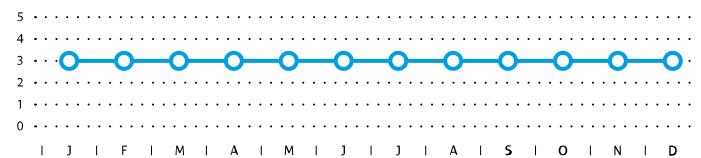
Overall, this year, SRA and SPA killed three civilians in gun and IED attacks, while authorities killed two and arrested at least 19 individuals affiliated with SRA.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **4** | Change: ↗ | Start: **1975**

Conflict parties: vs. Aiyala vs. Normali vs. Morobe vs. Sepik vs. Waiya vs. Lewai vs. Kulumata vs. Kuboma vs. various other tribes

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources, such as arable land, between various communal groups escalated to a limited war.

Over the course of the year, inter-communal clashes, particularly in Enga Province and the Highlands region as well as Milne Bay Province and East New Britain left at least 278 people dead and at least 45,000 internally displaced. UN estimates even state approx. 80,000 displaced people from election-related and communal violence. Tensions increased especially in the context of the national general elections from July 2 to 22, with different communal groups supporting rival electoral candidates [→ Papua New Guinea (opposition)].

Following a two-month truce between the Aiyala and Normali, on May 6, renewed clashes, reportedly over land ownership, between the two communities left at least 71 people dead, more than 50 injured, and 5,000 displaced. Furthermore, various houses and properties were burned or destroyed, with destruction also affecting the nearby closed Porgera mine. Police and military forces attempted to contain the conflict by deploying additional security personnel. On November 14, all parties agreed to a ceasefire.

On August 6, a fight between Morobe and Sepik people in Lae, Morobe Province, started over past issues when Sepik men allegedly attacked and robbed Morobe after returning from a church fellowship. In the ensuing fights, the Morobe killed two Sepik members, properties were destroyed, houses burnt and thousands displaced. A peace agreement was reached on October 16, including the exchange of cash and pigs as well as a signing of a memorandum of understanding.


In the Western Highlands, a disagreement over a rugby match started a fight between Waiya and Lewai people, which lasted from June until November. During the clashes five Lewai and one Waiya were killed, property destroyed, and hundreds of families displaced while police forces attempted to negotiate between the communities. On November 14, both parties agreed to restore peace.

In early September, a clash between Kulumata and Kuboma people erupted after a person from the Kuboma tribe was killed in a fight over a soccer game on the island of Kiriwina. On October 24, violence further escalated when Kuboma villagers allegedly retaliated by destroying the Kulumata gardens. The subsequent fight left at least 24 dead and several injured.

In Wau, Morobe Province, a fight between Finschhafen and Mumeng Kapin people reportedly erupted from a marital ar-

gument in March, leaving twelve dead, 100 houses destroyed and more than 300 people displaced. The accusation of sorcery remained a common practice throughout the country. For instance, on July 22, a group of men in Lakolam village, Enga, accused nine women of sorcery, following the death of a businessman, and beat them with objects and mutilated their genitalia with heated objects. awa

PHILIPPINES (BIFF)

Intensity: **3** | Change:  | Start: **2008**

Conflict parties: BIFF vs. government
 Conflict items: secession, subnational predominance

The limited war over subnational predominance and secession of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) between the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) on the one hand, and the government, supported by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.


Violent clashes mainly occurred in BARMM from May to August. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continued their operations against radical Islamist groups such as BIFF. Throughout the year, various clashes between AFP and BIFF involving artillery, air strikes and IEDs left at least 30 people dead, including three military personnel, two police officers, 22 BIFF, and three civilians. At least 333 BIFF militants surrendered throughout the year. Compared to the previous year, overall casualties decreased while the number of surrenders increased. Over the course of the year, more than 1,900 people were internally displaced due to fighting.

For instance, on May 23, AFP launched a military operation in Datu Salibu town, Maguindanao province, which involved artillery and air strikes and was followed by a ground assault, leaving two BIFF militants dead, another 17 injured, and at least 600 civilians displaced. Following a bomb attack by BIFF on May 26, injuring two, AFP launched an attack on June 4 in Dungan town, Cotabato province, in a joint operation with a counter-terrorism unit and the police, killing one BIFF militant held responsible for the bombing. On July 18, AFP conducted an operation in Mustapha town, Maguindanao, when BIFF opened fire, resulting in the death of a BIFF militant.

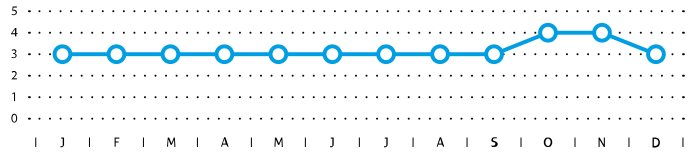
On June 22, approx. 200 BIFF members took 31 residents hostage and occupied a school in Pigcawayan town, Cotabato. AFP attacked BIFF to retake the school. The hours-long firefight resulted in the death of eight BIFF members and displaced 1,300 residents. Another ten people were injured. On July 21, BIFF attacked 30 AFP soldiers in Mamasapano town, Maguindanao, with at least 100 fighters, leading to a firefight. Three BIFF members were killed and one AFP soldier was wounded. On August 30, BIFF ambushed a police vehicle in Kapinpilan, Maguindanao, killing two police officers and injuring another two. Similarly, BIFF attacked an AFP marine unit in Lanao del Sur province, on September 25, resulting in the death of two BIFF and one AFP soldier. On November 5, BIFF attacked an AFP checkpoint in Shariff Aguak municipality, Maguindanao, killing two BIFF members.

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PHILIPPINES (CPP, NPA)

Intensity: **4** | Change:  | Start: **1968**

Conflict parties: CPP, NPA vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology



The limited war over the orientation of the political system and ideology between the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), supported by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The last year saw continuous military action between the conflict parties, resulting in the death of at least 191 persons, of whom 154 were NPA fighters, 23 security personnel, and 14 civilians. Moreover, at least 28 NPA fighters, 56 security personnel, and 17 civilians were injured. The clashes between the conflict parties were not limited to a specific region, although, the most intense fighting was reported in the Negros Island Region, Eastern Visayas, Caraga, Bicol Region, and Northern Mindanao. At least 18,683 civilians were displaced and infrastructure, such as means of transportation, was destroyed on several occasions.

During a military operation from October 6 to 19 in the vicinity of Himamaylan city, Negros Occidental province, Negros Island Region, 18,236 people were evacuated. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) deployed heavy weaponry, including infantry fighting vehicles, towed artillery, and airborne ordinances, killing at least one commanding NPA officer and injuring at least eight NPA militants. In return, NPA fighters killed at least two AFP soldiers and wounded six more during the operation. On November 23, AFP troops raided an NPA stronghold in Imelda municipality, Northern Samar province, Eastern Visayas, using low-flying aircraft and artillery support. AFP justified this use of heavy weaponry with the presence of minefields around the NPA encampment.

NPA made use of anti-personnel mines and IEDs in multiple instances to attack military and civilian targets. On February 10, a detonation injured three civilians and a militiaman, while in July two separate detonations injured twelve people and killed one.

NPA fighters also regularly destroyed property. For instance, on March 22 and September 15, a total of 18 civilian motorcycles were torched. NPA fighters also burned down multiple trucks, for instance, on January 1, February 2, and July 31. On February 10, NPA blocked a regional motorway and destroyed a civilian house in Cortes city, Surigao del Sur province, Caraga.

As in 2021, there was no bilateral ceasefire declared by the end of December. mho

PHILIPPINES (ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1991**

Conflict parties: ASG, DI vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, other

The limited war over the orientation of the political system between the Islamist groups Dawlah Islamiyah (DI) and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.

While ASG remained on the defensive, this year saw an increase in numbers of DI attacks. JTF continued their concerted military operation against Islamist groups. For instance, security forces killed four suspected DI members during an operation following an IED attack on a public bus near Aleosan town, North Cotabato province on January 11 in which militants had killed one and injured five civilians. On February 1, two more DI militants were killed in an armed confrontation with government forces in Polomok town, South Cotabato province, during a clearing operation. Two days later, on February 3, soldiers of the Philippine Marine Corps (PMC) killed one and arrested two DI militants from the faction previously known as the Maute group in an armed encounter in Balabagan, Lanao del Sur province. Four PMC soldiers were injured during the firefight. In May, DI carried out two more bus attacks in Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, allegedly in cooperation with the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters [→ Philippines (BIFF)]. The attacks left two civilians injured.

March and April saw the most intense fighting of this year. On March 1, the JTF launched a three-day military operation to raid a DI camp in Lanao del Sur occupied by 50 to 60 militants who had allegedly planned attacks on Mindanao island. JTF deployed ground troops and fighter jets to search for the self-declared new Islamic leader of Southeast Asia (SEA). This led to the death of seven militants and one soldier, while at least four soldiers were injured. The army evacuated over 1,000 civilians. On March 26, AFP killed a high-ranking ASG leader during a gunfight in Baiwas village, Basilan province, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Throughout the rest of the year, minor clashes occurred. For instance, on May 19, AFP killed two and arrested two more DI militants, accusing them of supplying weapons to Islamist groups in Mindanao. A firefight broke out when AFP soldiers and drug enforcement agents conducted a counter-narcotics operation in Pigcawayan town, Cotabato. On October 9, prison guards shot dead one ASG leader and two other ASG militants in prison in Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur province, after they attacked and injured two prison staff members and briefly held another inmate hostage.

In December, JTF expressed concerns over resumed DI recruitment in Lanao del Sur following the appointment of the SEA leader. [aya](#)

PHILIPPINES (MILF)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **•** | Start: **1977**

Conflict parties: MILF vs. Philippine Government
 Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over the autonomy of the so-called Bangsamoro Republic as well as the orientation of the political system and resources between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the government continued.

With the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) through the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2018, peace efforts started but were hindered by a violent escalation in March 2021. Progress towards peace continued this year with the Senate on January 24 backing the amnesty granted to MILF and Moro National Liberation Front members by then-President Rodrigo Duterte on 02/16/21 [→ Philippines (MNLF)].

Throughout the year, the third phase of the decommissioning and resocialization of MILF's armed wing, the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) that had begun in late 2021 continued. The National Police stepped up its recruitment to include former MILF fighters and allowed approx. 11,000 to participate in the qualification exams. While the government stressed its intention to uphold the peace agreement, MILF pointed out the importance of the ceasefire and renewed its commitment to not use anti-personnel mines on April 30.

Tensions between MILF fighters and government forces intensified from November 8 to 10, when the Armed Forces of the Philippines and approx. 30 BIAF fighters clashed in a shootout in Basilan province, BARMM, leaving seven people dead and at least twelve injured. The clash ended with a new temporary ceasefire agreement and a security action plan on November 11. [mho](#)

SRI LANKA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **NEW** | Start: **2022**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

A new violent crisis over the orientation of the political and economic system, especially failed economic reforms and alleged corruption, erupted between opposition groups, such as civilian protesters, trade unions, as well as the Inter University Students' Federation, on the one hand, and the government, on the other. The conflict was linked to the worsening of the socio-economic situation that led to high inflation, as well as food and fuel shortages.

In early March, civilians started to gather peacefully, protesting the government's mismanagement of the economy. The movement, known as Aragalaya, primarily demanded the resignation of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa and key government officials linked to his family, with some also calling for constitutional reforms. Security forces pushed back a roadblock of anti-government protesters near the president's residence in Mirihana, Colombo city, Western Province, on March 31. Clashes ensued between protesters and police, aided by the Sri Lankan Army and special forces who used teargas, as well as either rubber bullets or live ammunition.

Consequently, 37 were injured, among them 27 security personnel and two journalists, and over 50 protesters arrested. On April 1, the government announced a nationwide state of emergency, blocking social media, imposing a temporary curfew, and allowing arrests without warrants. Two days later, all 26 ministers of the cabinet resigned. Mass protests and sit-ins in Galle Face Green, Colombo, composed of opposition protesters, trade unions, religious leaders, and LGBTQI+ activists, lasted from April 9 to early August. The site also became known as GotaGoGama, and two other main protest camps in Colombo's government district as MynaGoGama and HoruGoGama. Protests with several thousands of participants respectively also took place in several other cities, such as Kandy, Central Province, Trincomalee, Eastern Province, and Rambukkana, Sabaragamuwa Province.

Protests escalated violently during the following months. For instance, on May 9 in Nittambuwa town, Western Province, pro-government groups, armed with sticks and poles, clashed with opposition protesters. Consequently, eight people were killed, among them a district MP and his bodyguard, and approx. 150 injured. 41 vehicles, a hotel, a museum, and seven politicians' houses were set on fire. Moreover, protesters stormed the President's House and the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo on July 9, occupying them for several days. On July 13, police dispersed protesters in Colombo and injured at least 84 by using teargas. The same day, protesters set fire to then-Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's residence in his absence and stormed a state-run television channel, demanding the protests to be broadcast. After leaving the country for the Maldives on July 13, Rajapaksa resigned via e-mail a day later. On July 20, Wickremesinghe was elected as the new president.

Smaller protests and police crackdowns, including alleged abuse of force, continued until the end of the year. Reportedly, 143 opposition protesters, among them several protest leaders, were arrested in Wickremesinghe's first month of presidency. Following a new restrictive law, police forces dispersed protesters who were demanding the release of student activists in Colombo, with teargas and water cannons on September 24, arresting 84. Human rights organizations criticized these actions and the restrictions as unlawful. Trade unions, student and civil rights groups in Colombo protested police brutality and emergency measures throughout October and November, continuing to call for solutions to corruption and foreign debt. In a report released on October 6, UNHCR called for accountability and an investigation into violence during the protest crackdowns, as well as for institutional reforms. kv

TAJIKISTAN (GORNO-BADAKHSHAN)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1992**

Conflict parties: Pamiris vs. government
 Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over autonomy and subnational predominance in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (GBAO) between the Pamiri people and the government continued. The conflict had re-emerged in November last year. On 11/25/21, a group of security forces tortured and killed a civilian in the Tavdem village, Roshtakly district, GBAO. The following days, major protests took place with thousands of civilians in GBAO participating and demanding investigations

into the circumstances of the death. Security forces violently dispersed the protests, killing one civilian. From the start of the protest until March of this year, the authorities restricted internet access and mobile communication in the region.

On May 14, a meeting of traditional leaders in GBAO's capital Khorugh was joined by several hundred protesters demanding investigations into the killing of the civilian, the release of all those arrested during the protests in November 2021 and the resignation of the centrally appointed head of GBAO. On May 16, after the government refused the consideration of these demands, Pamiri protestors announced their willingness to continue with open-ended protests in the region, joined by around 1,000 people. Security and military forces violently dispersed the protests in the following days. For instance, on May 17, when protestors attempted to reach the main square of Khorugh, security forces blocked the road and dispersed the crowd using rubber bullets, stun grenades, and teargas, killing one civilian. On May 18, the authorities declared the protests to be terrorism and launched an anti-terrorist operation in GBAO moving military forces into the region, which violently dissolved the protests by the next day, killing 40 protestors and detaining at least 46 others. In the following month, authorities reduced and cut off internet access and mobile communication, while security and military forces continued to detain and attack local leaders, journalists, and civilians in the region. For instance, on June 12, security forces killed two prominent informal leaders in Khorugh. Other sources reported that they committed suicide to avoid detention.

On June 17, the Interdepartmental Headquarters for Security and Public Order in GBAO officially announced that all activities of "organized terrorist groups" had been stopped, restoring internet access and mobile communication and moving military forces out of the region.

During the second half of the year, courts in the capital Dushanbe sentenced several Pamiris, especially activists, to imprisonment for involvement in the May protests. For instance, on November 23, the Tajik Supreme Court sentenced five Pamiris to life imprisonment. Furthermore, several Pamiri activists have been detained in Russia and might be handed over to the authorities. On December 1, a relative of a Pamiri informal leader was detained by authorities on the Russian-Ukrainian border and extradited to Tajikistan a few days later. jkr

THAILAND (ISLAMIST SEPARATISTS / SOUTHERN BORDER PROVINCES)

Intensity: **3** | Change: • | Start: **1902**

Conflict parties: BRN, PULO vs. government
 Conflict items: secession, system/ideology

The violent crisis over ideology and secession of several southern border provinces between various Islamist separatists, such as Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) and Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Despite a ceasefire during Ramadan and ongoing negotiations in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, at least 31 individuals were killed and 69 injured. The violent actions were mostly contained to the four southern provinces of Yala, Songkhla, Pattani and Narathiwat.

Throughout the first three months of the year, clashes be-

tween separatists groups and the government continued. For instance, on February 2, an attempted arrest of suspected separatists in Songkhla, eponymous province, resulted in a firefight during which the government forces shot three insurgents. On March 30, separatists ambushed paramilitary rangers by detonating a roadside bomb and shooting at their truck in Bannang Sata district, leaving two killed and two injured.

In early April, the government and the BRN entered into peace talks and agreed upon a ceasefire allowing separatists to visit their families unarmed. On April 15, PULO responded to their exclusion from the talks by detonating a bomb in Sai Buri district, Pattani Province, killing one civilian and injuring three policemen. For the first time in years, the group officially claimed responsibility for the attack.

The ceasefire reduced the level of violence but ended on May 5 with a BRN attack on a marine police station in Narathiwat, eponymous province, with assault rifles and bombs, leaving three policemen injured and the surrounding power lines damaged. On July 8, security forces clashed with separatist insurgents at the home of a suspect and killed two PULO members in Raman district, Yala province. On July 20, separatists set off explosives in a garbage truck in front of a police station in Panare district, Pattani province, injuring three policemen.

Civilian casualties became more frequent towards the second half of the year. On August 15, BRN set off bombs on a plantation in Khok Kai village, Narathiwat province, injuring at least two civilians and seven police officers and killing one. The attack preempted another ceasefire the government had tried to negotiate with the BRN in Kuala Lumpur. On November 13, insurgents attacked civilians in Chanae district, Narathiwat province, killing one and injuring two. Following the attack, the insurgents ambushed officers dispatched by the Narathiwat special operations unit on their way to the scene with bombs and guns, killing one officer and injuring another. On November 21, separatists executed a large-scale attack using an explosive device on a police housing compound in Mueang district, Narathiwat province, killing one and injuring ten policemen. tj

UZBEKISTAN (KARAKALPAKSTAN)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **NEW** | Start: **2022**

Conflict parties: Karakalpak vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy

A new violent crisis over autonomy erupted between the Karakalpak people and the Uzbek government. Karakalpak form an ethnic and linguistic minority in Uzbekistan living predominantly in the autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan.

On June 20, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev proposed amendments to the national constitution, including the removal of the autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan's sovereignty and its right to secede from Uzbekistan.

The proposed changes lead to public criticism by local activists and discussions on social media among Karakalpak. On July 1, police arrested a local blogger after he called on people to participate in a peaceful rally against the amendments on July 5. The detention resulted in major protests against the constitutional changes in the region's capital Nukus and surrounding areas between July 1 and 3, joined by thousands of Karakalpak from all over the region.

Uzbek authorities declared a month-long state of emergency in the region. Internet connection in Karakalpakstan was shut down and President Mirziyoyev publicly withdrew his plans restricting the region's autonomy on July 2. On the same day, security forces started violently dispersing the demonstrations using water cannons, tear gas, and stun grenades. In total, at least 21 people were killed, including four law enforcement officers, 270 were injured, and 516 detained. On July 20, Uzbek authorities lifted the state of emergency. In the aftermath of the protest and its crackdown, on July 15, the parliament created a commission to investigate the events in Karakalpakstan in July, consisting of government officials, civil society representatives and experts. At the initiative of the commission, 107 detainees had been released by November 1. Human rights groups questioned the independence of the body.

Between September 13 and October 5, Kazakh authorities arrested four Karakalpak diaspora activists in Almaty city, Kazakhstan, after Uzbek authorities placed them on an international wanted list for alleged offenses against the state.

On December 1, Uzbek authorities began the trial of 22 Karakalpak accusing them of several crimes related to the protests in Karakalpakstan. jkr

VIETNAM (SOCIOECONOMIC PROTESTS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↗** | Start: **1986**

Conflict parties: factory workers, other civilians, peasants vs. government, manufacturing companies
Conflict items: resources, other

The non-violent crisis over natural resources, land allocation, industrial pollution, and working conditions between peasants, factory workers, and environmental activists, on the one hand, and the government as well as manufacturing companies, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

Throughout the year, labor strikes and protests, especially over land rights and environmental consequences of industrial projects, persisted. At least ten socioeconomic protests were reported. The government continued to restrict and censor activists on online platforms. For instance, a new cybersecurity law passed on November 1 that further increased restrictions on activities was criticized for its alleged goal of surveillance and harassment of activists.

Moreover, the government continued to arrest environmentalists and labor activists. For instance, on January 24, the director of an environmental NGO was sentenced to five years in prison in the capital Hanoi for alleged tax evasion. On June 17, another climate activist was sentenced to prison in Hanoi for the same charges. The US government and EU criticized this sentence, calling for her release. On September 6, a land rights activist was allegedly beaten and chained in solitary confinement in prison in Thanh Chuong district, Nghe An province. He protested his treatment with a hunger strike. Similarly, on October 17, another political prisoner went on a hunger strike, claiming he was harassed in prison in Xuan Loc district, Dong Nai province.

Environmental activists were attacked during protests on various occasions. For instance, police and hundreds of protesters clashed in Hung Nguyen district, Nghe An, over a large-scale cemetery and crematorium project. Police officers removed protest tents from the construction site, injuring four as they shoved down and kicked protesters.

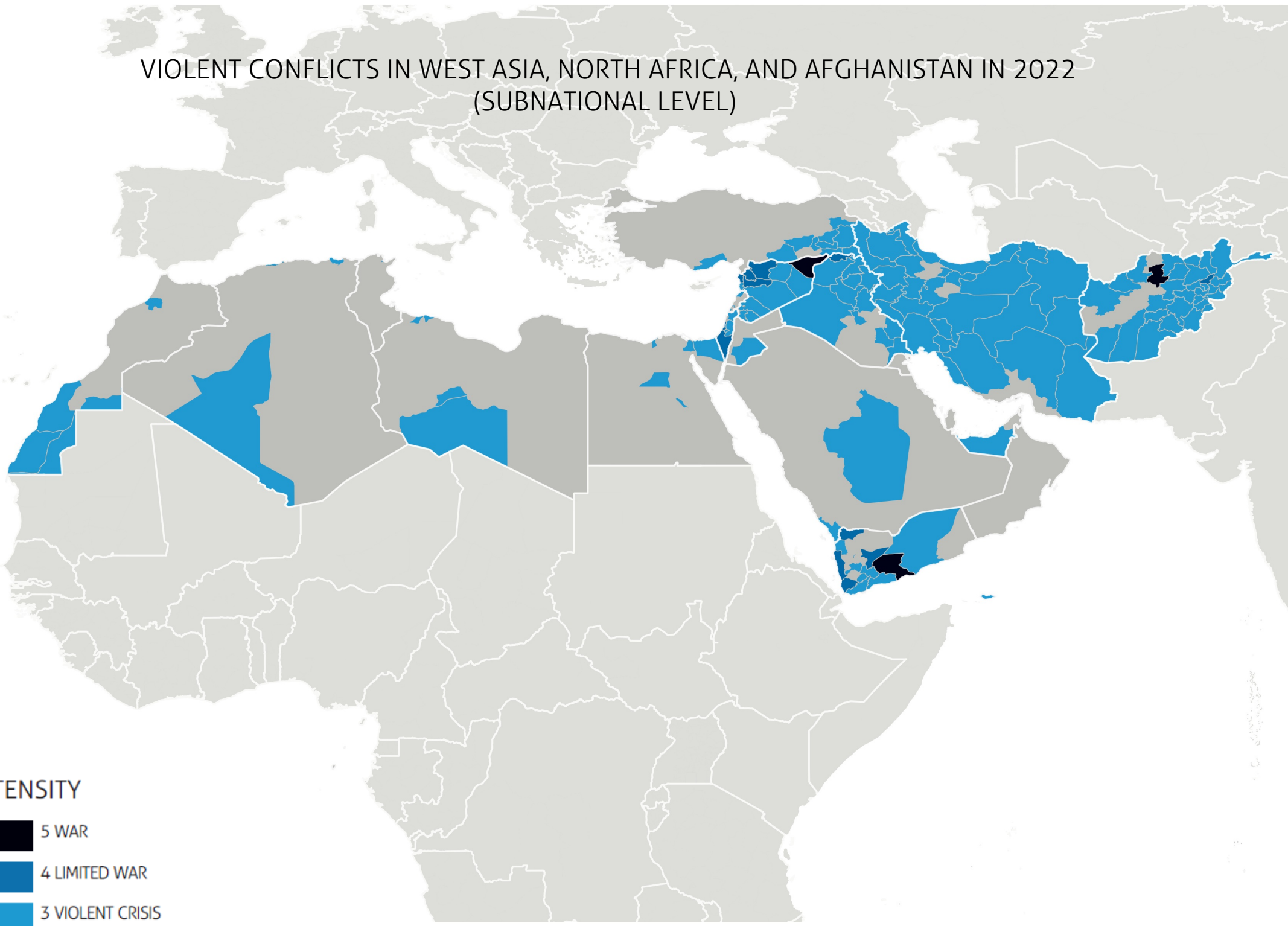
ASIA AND OCEANIA

In the same province, hundreds of villagers, mostly from a Catholic parish, gathered to protest the demolition of residential roads in Nghi Thuan commune, Nghi Loc district, on July 13. In subsequent clashes with riot police who set up blockades, protesters reportedly used petrol bombs and allegedly sickles, rocks and bottles, while police officers used tear gas and beat protesters with light weapons. One police officer and several protesters were injured, and ten

protesters arrested. In another incident on March 5, around 30 assailants allegedly attacked approx. 100 Vietnamese villagers protesting for their land rights since 2017 in Dien Ban town, Quang Nam province. A state-owned newspaper reporting on the protests the same day made no mention of any attacks, whereas protesters claimed the assailants had been affiliated with the police to disperse them and make arrests. mng

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2022 (SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)



INTENSITY

- 5 WAR
- 4 LIMITED WAR
- 3 VIOLENT CRISIS

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the region West Asia, North Africa, and Afghanistan, HIIK observed a total of 58 active conflicts in 2022, a decrease of one compared to the previous year. Overall, 34 conflicts were on a violent level, one more than last year. Only one full-scale war retained its intensity, while one de-escalated. Altogether, two full-scale wars and four limited wars were observed in 2022.

In Syria, violent clashes between the government and the opposition groups occurred mainly in opposition-held regions, mostly in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates while the Russian-supported attacks on opposition groups decreased. The Syrian Constitutional Committee meetings, led by the UN, did not yield any significant proposals [→ Syria (opposition)]. In the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, US-backed Syrian Kurdish groups continue their clashes with Turkish-backed forces and troops, Syrian government forces, and the so-called Islamic State (IS) fighters in and around areas controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Aleppo, Al Hasakah, and Raqqqa Governorates. IS remained a major security threat and launched its biggest attack in Syria since the major loss of territorial strongholds to SDF forces in 2019 [→ Syria (SDF – Türkiye / northern Syria); Syria (Kurdish groups); Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. Rivalry among opposition groups also continued and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham consolidated its dominance in Aleppo Governorate and captured several towns in Afrin District [→ Syria (inter-opposition rivalry)].

In Iraq, after the last year's decision of the US and the Iraqi government to withdraw the remaining US troops from Iraq the clashes between the militant groups and the US military eased. The remaining US troops switched to an advisory role including supporting Iraqi security forces in their counter-IS operations [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. Internal clashes between the militia groups occurred on the issues of parliamentary elections and Iranian influence in Iraq. Sadr and his supporters, including his Saraya al-Salam militia, played an important role in the political crisis and clashed with other Shiite militant groups, as well as with the government, interweaving the militia conflict into the internal political scene in Iraq and the opposition conflict [→ Iraq (Shiite militant groups); Iraq (opposition)]. In October, the Iraqi parliament finally approved a new government headed by Mohammed Shia al-Sudani and ended the political stalemate that endured more than a year.

In Yemen, the war over national power between Ansar Allah, commonly known as the al-Houthi, supported by the Iranian government, on the one hand, and the internationally recognized Yemeni government embodied by the newly founded Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and supported by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, anti-Houthi popular resistance, and tribal forces, on the other, de-escalated to a limited war [→ Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)]. This year, new peace negotiations took place and led to a UN-mediated agreement on a two-month, nationwide truce from April 2, which was later extended to October 2 but ended without the parties reaching an agreement on further extensions. Despite a truce-related decline in civilian deaths as a result of bombings and shootings, the number of landmines and other explosive remnants of war continued to rise. The violent crisis over secession of southern Yemen between al-Hirak, also known as the Southern Movement and dominated by the Southern Transitional Council (STC), backed by the United Arab Emirates, on the one hand, and the government represented by PLC, on the other, continued [→ Yemen (al-Hirak / Southern Yemen)]. This conflict is closely related to the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), on the one hand, and STC and PLC, on the other [→ Saudi Arabia, Yemen (AQAP)]. AQAP released several statements, threatening retaliatory measures against the opposing coalition and issuing threats against civilians who cooperate with anti-AQAP forces. The violent crisis over the religious and political system and subnational predominance between AQAP, supported by its local arm, Ansar al-Sharia, on the one hand, and the al-Houthi forces, on the other, also continued [→ Yemen (AQAP – al-Houthi forces)].

In Algeria, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between labor unions, opposition parties, and the Hirak movement and the government de-escalated to a non-violent crisis [→ Algeria (opposition)]. This year, the regular activities of the protest movement of Hirak subsided and shifted to hunger strikes in prison and the mobilization of the diaspora.

In Morocco, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between opposition groups on the one hand, and the government on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis [→ Morocco (opposition)]. The year was characterized by several street protests with the participation of several hundred people demonstrating against high prices, especially the rise of fuel prices and food, in cities across the urban regions of Rabat-Salé-Kénitr, Casablanca-Settat, Marrakech-Safi, and Tanger-Tetouan-Al Hoceima. Furthermore, the violent crisis over Western Sahara between the Popular Front of the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamran and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) and the Moroccan government continued [→ Morocco (POLISARIO / Western Sahara)]. Whereas the first half of the year was characterized by intense fighting between the Moroccan Army and POLISARIO, there were also important diplomatic actions.

In Tunisia, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition and civil society groups and the government continued [→ Tunisia (opposition)]. The year was characterized by several protest waves, some ending in violent confrontations between protesters and Tunisian security forces.

In Libya, the Government of National Stability, a rival government to the Government of National Unity, was established by the House of Representatives. This led to confrontations between both governments and supporting militants. UNSMIL urged for the finalization of the constitutional basis for democratic elections [→ Libya (opposition)]. Further, two communal groups signed a reconciliation agreement and committed to the implementation of measures that aim to foster reconciliation, forgiveness, and human rights [→ Libya (inter-communal rivalry)].

In Türkiye, the non-violent crisis between the Nation Alliance, the People's Democratic Party (HDP), and the Worker's Party (TIP) with the People's Alliance continued. HDP and TIP formed a new alliance, challenging the two other existing alliances. Candidates for the 2023 presidential elections were announced and the police conducted several arrests against members of the opposition party, Republican People's Party [→ Türkiye (opposition)]. In the southeastern region of Türkiye and northern Iraq, the Turkish government continued to carry out operations and launched new ones against the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK). In August, a new group, the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK), was mentioned and described as ideologically close to the PKK by the Turkish government and was consequently targeted in Turkish operations in Iraq [→ Türkiye (PKK, KCK)].

In Lebanon, protesters continued to demonstrate against the economic crisis on various occasions, sparked by shortages of water and electricity, and widespread corruption [→ Lebanon (opposition)]. For the first time since the conflict started in

2019, no deaths were reported. The violent crisis over ideology and territory between Hezbollah and the Israeli government continued [→ Israel (Hezbollah)]. Throughout the year, Israeli military forces carried out airstrikes in the Syrian governorates of Damascus and Quneitra, killing one Hezbollah member, while drones belonging to Hezbollah crossed the border into Israel's Northern District. Tensions arose over the Karish gas field, a disputed maritime border area between Lebanon and Israel; while Lebanon claimed that Karish is not part of the UN-recognized exclusive economic zone, Israel said it is [→ Israel – Lebanon]. A final, US- brokered, agreement was reached on October 11, two years after negotiations had first started. The violent crisis over subnational predominance between various Palestinian groups, such as the Palestinian political parties Hamas and Fatah, continued. Throughout the year, violence resulted in the death of two Palestinian security personnel and at least ten were injured [→ Lebanon (inner-Palestinian tensions)].

In Israel and the State of Palestine^o (PNA), the limited war over the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state and over resources between the government of Israel, on the one hand, and Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and other Islamist militant groups operating in the Gaza Strip, on the other, continued [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)]. The conflict experienced a spike in violence in August. Between August 5 and August 7, Israeli forces bombed infrastructural targets and military sites of the PIJ, killing at least 43 Palestinians, injuring another 300, and causing destruction in civilian areas, for instance a house in the Rafah refugee camp. In response, the Islamic Jihad fired hundreds of rockets at Israel, threatening cities in southern Israel without leaving any casualties. On August 7, both sides agreed to a ceasefire, mediated by Egypt. Over the course of the year, Israeli forces and settlers killed at least 152 Palestinians in the West Bank, leading to the deadliest year since UN data collection began in 2005. In addition, on February 1, Amnesty International issued a report accusing Israel of Apartheid [→ Israel – State of Palestine^o (PNA)]. Unrest escalated in April during Ramadan, when Israeli forces repeatedly conducted raids in and around Al-Aqsa Mosque. Israeli officials throughout the year put Gaza and neighborhoods in the West Bank in lockdown, closing crossings into Israel, denying residents access to water, food, electricity, or fuel.

In Jordan, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, comprising trade unions and civil society organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Compared to 2021, most protests remained small in scale, with only several hundred to a few thousand participants, despite increasing numbers of arrests [→ Jordan (opposition)]. Protests erupted over tensions between Israel and Palestine [→ Israel – State of Palestine^o (PNA)]. Protesters expressed solidarity and support for Palestinians and called for expelling the Israeli ambassador to Amman. In December, several protests and riots broke out in the southern provinces leading to the death of four state security personnel and one alleged perpetrator. Thousands demonstrated against rising fuel prices and called for government intervention.

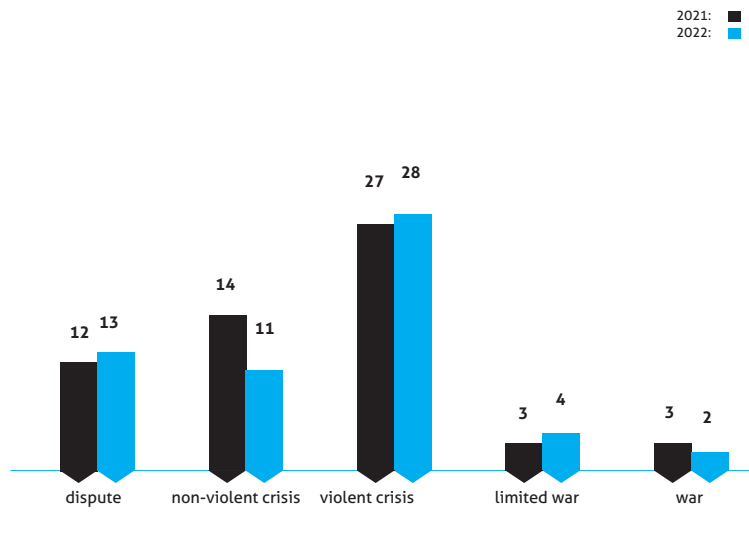
In Egypt, the violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the opposition and the government de-escalated to a non-violent crisis [→ Egypt (opposition)]. Despite declaring 2022 the year of civil society and launching a national dialogue with opposition groups, the government continued its practice of prosecuting perceived critics. The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predominance in the Sinai Peninsula between militant groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued [→ Egypt (militant groups / Sinai Peninsula)]. Over the year, at least seven military personnel, three fighters from state-allied tribal groups and 31 militants were killed in clashes. Most clashes occurred in the North Sinai Governorate. Throughout the year, militant groups carried out several attacks against the Egyptian Armed Forces and state-allied tribal groups. Security forces continued their counter actions against militant groups.

In Afghanistan, a war over the orientation of the political system erupted between various armed opposition groups and the Taliban-led government, following the Taliban's take-over of Afghanistan in August 2021 and the withdrawal of international troops [→ Afghanistan (opposition)]. The Islamic State Khorasan Province also continued its attacks throughout the year, mainly targeting Shiite and other religious minorities as well as the Islamic Emirate's security forces [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. Furthermore, the violent crisis over border security and water resources between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and Iran continued, following several violent clashes between Afghan and Iranian forces along the border and the completion of the Kamal Khan Dam, which greatly limited water flows from the Helmand River to Iran [→ Afghanistan – Iran]. The demarcation of the Afghan-Pakistan border also remained an issue with the violent crisis over territory and international power between IEA and Pakistan persisting [→ Afghanistan – Pakistan].

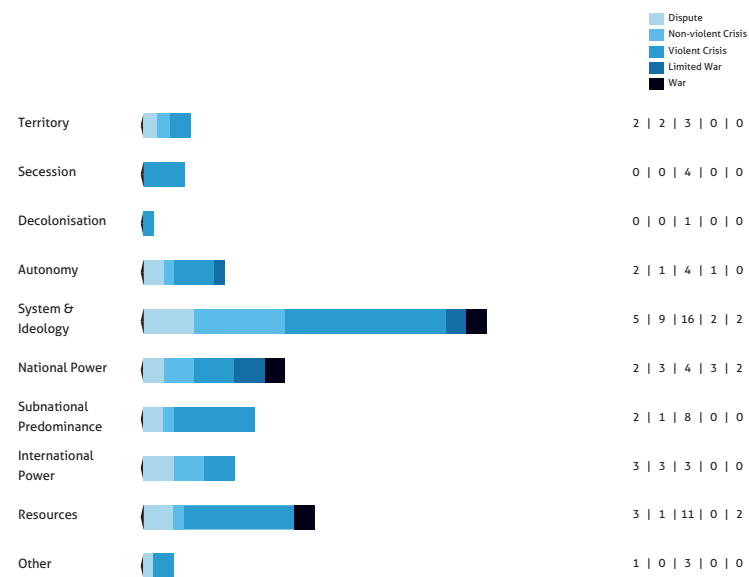
In Iran, the conflict over the orientation of the political system and national power between opposition groups and large popular movements, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a limited war following the death of Mahsa Amini and the ensuing country-wide protests [→ Iran (opposition)]. Moreover, the violent crisis over international power and ideology between Iran and Israel continued, with Israel targeting Iranian official personnel, Hezbollah, and other pro-Iranian militias, as well as military and industrial sites in Syria and Iran [→ Iran – Israel].

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

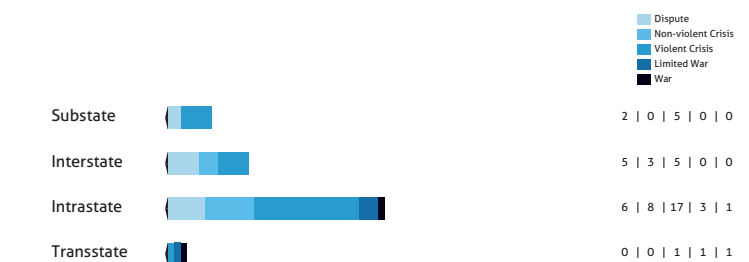
CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2022 COMPARED TO 2021



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2022



WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

Overview: Conflicts in the Middle East and Maghreb in 2022

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Afghanistan (Hazara – Kuchi)*	Hazara vs. Kuchi	subnational predominance, resources	2007	↗	3
Afghanistan (opposition)*	AFF, ALM, NRF, other armed opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2022	NEW	5
Afghanistan – Iran*	Afghanistan vs. Iran	resources, other	2021	•	3
Afghanistan – Pakistan*	Afghanistan vs. Pakistan	territory, international power, other	1949	•	3
Algeria (Berbers / Kabylia)*	Berbers vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	1963	↗	2
Algeria (opposition)*	Hirak movement, labour unions, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	↘	2
Algeria – Morocco*	Algeria vs. Morocco	international power	1963	↘	1
Bahrain (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1975	•	2
Egypt (Christians – Muslims)*	Christians vs. Muslims	subnational predominance	1952	↗	3
Egypt (militant groups / Sinai Peninsula)*	militant groups vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2011	•	3
Egypt (opposition)*	activists, opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	1954	↘	2
Egypt – Sudan*	Egypt vs. Sudan	territory, resources	1958	•	1
Iran (opposition)*	intra-systemic opposition, non-systemic opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1993	↗	4
Iran (PDKI et al.)*	PDKI, various other Kurdish parties and groups vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	1979	•	3
Iran (People’s Mujahideen)*	PMOI vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1979	↘	1
Iran (PJAK)*	PJAK vs. government	autonomy	1979	↓	1
Iran (Sunni militant groups / Sistan Baluchistan)*	Ansar al-Furqan et al., Jaish al-Adl vs. government	autonomy	1979	•	3
Iran – Israel*	Iran vs. Israel	system/ideology, international power	1979	•	3
Iran – Saudi Arabia*	Iran vs. Saudi Arabia	system/ideology, international power	1979	•	1
Iran – UAE*	Iran vs. UAE	territory	1971	•	1
Iran – USA*	Iran vs. USA	system/ideology, international power	1979	↘	1
Iraq (KRG – opposition)*	KRG vs. opposition movement	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2011	↘	2
Iraq (Kurdistan Regional Government)*	Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) vs. government	autonomy, resources	1971	•	1
Iraq (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
Iraq (Shiite militant groups)*	Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq, Badr Organization, Kata’ib Hezbollah, Saraya al-Salam vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2004	•	3
Israel (Hamas et al.)*	Hamas, other Islamist groups, PIJ vs. government	secession, resources	1988	↘	3
Israel (Hezbollah)*	Hezbollah vs. government	territory, system/ideology	1982	•	3
Israel – Lebanon*	Israel vs. Lebanon	territory, international power, resources	1948	•	2
Israel – State of Palestine ^o (PNA)*	Palestinian protesters, PNA vs. government, Israeli settlement movements	secession, system/ideology, resources	1948	•	3
Israel – Syria*	Israel vs. Syria	territory, international power, resources	1948	•	3
Jordan (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2011	•	3
Kuwait (Bedouins)*	Bedouins vs. government	other	1959	•	1
Kuwait (opposition)*	opposition movement vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	1
Lebanon (inner-Palestinian tensions)*	Ansar Allah et al. vs. Fatah vs. other Palestinian factions	subnational predominance	2006	•	3
Lebanon (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2019	•	3

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Libya (inter-communal rivalry)*	Aheli vs. Tuareg vs. Tebu	subnational predominance, resources	2012	•	1
Libya (opposition)*	GNU vs. GNS	system/ideology, national power, resources	2011	•	3
Mauritania (anti-slavery activists)*	IRA, opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2015	•	2
Morocco (opposition)*	AMDH, Front Social, Justice and Spirituality, labor rights activists vs. government	system/ideology	2011	•	2
Morocco (POLISARIO / Western Sahara°)*	POLISARIO, Sahrawis vs. government	secession, decolonisation, resources	1975	•	3
Oman (opposition)*	opposition groups, government	system/ideology	2011	•	1
Saudi Arabia (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology	1992	•	3
Saudi Arabia (Shiites)*	Shiites vs. government	system/ideology	1979	↑	3
Saudi Arabia, Yemen (AQAP)*	AQAP vs. Saudi Arabia, USA, Yemen	system/ideology	1990	•	3
State of Palestine° (Fatah – Hamas)*	Fatah vs. Hamas	subnational predominance	1994	↘	1
Syria (inter-opposition rivalry)*	HTS vs. various Islamist groups vs. Syrian Liberation Front (SLF), Syrian National Army (SNA)	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	2013	•	3
Syria (Kurdish groups)*	KDPS, PYD vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance, resources	1962	•	3
Syria (opposition)*	FSA, HTS, NC vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	4
Syria (SDF – Türkiye / northern Syria)*	HRE, SDF, YPG vs. FSA, Türkiye	autonomy, subnational predominance, resources	2018	•	3
Syria – Türkiye*	Syria vs. Türkiye	territory, international power	1946	•	2
Syria – USA*	Syria vs. USA	system/ideology, international power	2003	•	2
Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)*	IS vs. Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, USA	system/ideology, national power, resources	2014	•	5
Tunisia (opposition)*	civil society groups, opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2010	•	3
Türkiye (opposition)*	HDP, Nation Alliance, TIP vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2013	•	2
Türkiye (PKK, KCK)*	KCK, PKK vs. government	autonomy	1978	•	4
Yemen (al-Hirak / Southern Yemen)*	Al-Hirak vs. government	secession	2007	•	3
Yemen (AQAP – al-Houthi forces)*	al-Houthi forces vs. Ansar al-Sharia, AQAP	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2010	•	3
Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)*	al-Houthi forces vs. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen	national power	2004	↘	4

¹ Conflicts marked with * are without description

² Mentioned are only those conflict parties relevant for the period under review

³ Change in intensity compared to the previous year: ↑ or ↗ escalation by one or more than one level of intensity; ↓ or ↘ deescalation by one or more than one level of intensity; • no change

⁴ Levels of intensity: 5 = war; 4 = limited war; 3 = violent crisis; 2 = non-violent crisis; 1 = dispute

⁵ HIIK considers statehood to be non-contested if the state is an official UN members state.

Disputed statehood is marked with a ° if a territory is recognized by at least one other official UN member state ("limited recognition")

AFGHANISTAN – IRAN •

 Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2021**

Conflict parties: Afghanistan vs. Iran

 Conflict items: resources, other

The violent crisis over border security and water resources between the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and Iran continued.

Starting in December 2021 and following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, violent clashes between Afghan and Iranian forces erupted multiple times along the border. Most of the incidents were caused by confusion about the exact demarcation of the border as well as a general lack of communication. For instance, on March 7, a firefight broke out between both countries' security forces in Afghanistan's Kang District, Nimruz Province, after Iranian border forces crossed the border to stop the dredging of a water canal by Afghan farmers, leaving four Iranian soldiers dead. On April 23, five Iranian border guards were arrested in Afghanistan's Kohsan district, Herat Province, after they had entered Afghan territory in response to the pavement of a road by Afghanistan allegedly breaching the border. On June 28, another Iranian border guard was killed in clashes with Afghan forces near the Milak border crossing in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Similarly, on July 31, at least one Afghan border guard was killed and another injured during clashes near Dust Mohammad, Hirmand County, Sistan and Baluchistan Province, following an alleged border violation by Afghan forces.

Tensions over rights to water resources from the Helmand River erupted following the inauguration of the Kamal Khan Dam on 24/03/21 in Afghanistan's Nimruz Province, which led to the drying out of the Hamoun wetlands, Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Following a release of water from the Kamal Khan Dam on January 19, Iranian news outlets falsely claimed that the water would reach Sistan and Baluchistan provinces. After realizing that the water would not reach Iranian territory, protests erupted near the Milak border crossing into Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan province on January 28, during which Iranian protesters attacked Afghan trucks crossing the border with stones. The protest was dissolved shortly after by Iranian security forces firing warning shots. On May 12, the Iranian government issued a statement of concern regarding IEA's position on the Iranian rights to the Helmand river as agreed upon in the 1973 Helmand-River Water Treaty and on June 23, called on IEA to implement the terms of agreement. On August 11, the Iranian energy minister announced that Afghanistan had agreed to provide Iran with water from the Helmand River in accordance with the 1973 treaty. njk

AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

 Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1949**

Conflict parties: Afghanistan vs. Pakistan

 Conflict items: territory, international power, other

The violent crisis over territory and international power between the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and Pakistan continued. The disagreement over the demarcation of the shared border and security concerns by Pakistan

were the primary issues of contention.

Pakistan continued to fence the Durand Line and multiple violent clashes occurred between Pakistani and Afghan forces throughout the year. For instance, on February 24, clashes between Afghan and Pakistani forces at the Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing between Afghanistan's Spin Boldak District, Kandahar Province, and Pakistan's Chaman District, Balochistan Province, killed two Afghan civilians and wounded at least 13 others. After Afghan forces confronted Pakistani forces over the construction of a military outpost near the Durand Line on September 13, both sides exchanged fire in the border area between Afghanistan's Dand Patan District, Paktia Province and Pakistan's Kurram District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, leading to the death of at least three Pakistani soldiers. Following the death of another Pakistani soldier and at least two others being wounded in clashes between Afghan and Pakistani forces at the Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing, on November 13, Pakistani authorities initially closed the border crossing, then reopened it on November 21. In further clashes between Afghan and Pakistani forces at the Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing, seven people were killed and at least 27 wounded on December 11, and one person was killed with at least twelve others injured on December 15. Both, IEA and the Pakistani governments accused each other of having caused these incidents but agreed on strengthening dialogue to prevent future clashes.

Pakistan, citing militants operating from inside Afghanistan attacking their forces, repeatedly stressed the need for security along the border, causing further confrontations with the Taliban [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. Consequently, on April 16, the Pakistani military carried out air strikes on villages in Afghanistan's Sperai District, Khost Province, and Sheltan District, Kunar Province, leaving 47 dead and at least 20 wounded. In response, the Taliban strongly condemned the air strikes and anti-Pakistan protests were staged by residents in Kandahar, Khost, and Nangarhar Provinces. On August 28, Afghanistan accused Pakistan of allowing the US to use its airspace for drone attacks on its territory that resulted in the killing of al-Qaeda leader al-Zawahiri in Kabul on July 31. Pakistan has denied any involvement in the killing, but stated that it remains committed to fighting terrorism in the region.

Despite these incidents, both sides engaged in talks and committed to strengthening bilateral relations throughout the year. Pakistan's UN envoy stated on March 17 that the country will formally recognize IEA once a regional consensus has been reached. Starting May 7, Pakistan also sent humanitarian aid for flood-affected people to Afghanistan and provided logistical support and medical assistance in response to the earthquake in eastern Afghanistan on June 22. cve

ALGERIA (OPPOSITION)

 Intensity: **2** | Change: ↘ | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: Hirak movement, labour unions, opposition parties vs. government

 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between labor unions, opposition parties, and the Hirak movement, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. The protest movement shifted its activities to hunger strikes

in prison and the mobilization of the diaspora. For instance, on January 28, more than 40 detainees started a hunger strike in El-Harrach prison in the capital Algiers to protest against the prison conditions and the pretrial detentions, claiming that prison personnel had beaten three Hirak activists.

The police continued to arrest Hirak activists and human rights defenders as well as to restrict freedom of the press. For instance, on January 24, the director of an independent web radio was arrested in Constantine district, eponymous province. On February 19, a leader of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights was arrested in Tlemcen province. On June 7 and December 23, police arrested the directors of a radio station and a magazine, respectively. On July 5, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune pardoned and subsequently released approx. twelve Hirak activists on the 60th anniversary of Algeria's independence. Throughout the year, journalists of a national newspaper protested against salary freezes after tax authorities blocked the newspaper's bank accounts.

The government continued its restrictions on opposition parties. For instance, on January 5, the party Rally for Culture and Democracy received a formal notice not to host further meetings without authorization. On January 20, the State Council suspended the activities of the Socialist Workers' Party.

On February 5, the ruling party National Liberation Front and its ally National Democratic Rally secured the majority of seats in the partial elections of the upper house of parliament.

Throughout the year, the Court of Algiers sentenced eight former ministers on corruption charges. Hirak activists had previously criticized the ministers. nfe

EGYPT (MILITANT GROUPS / SINAI PENINSULA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: militant groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predominance in the Sinai Peninsula between militant groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Over the year, at least seven military personnel, three fighters from state-allied tribal groups and 31 militants were killed in clashes. Most clashes occurred in the North Sinai Governorate. Throughout the year, militant groups carried out several attacks against the Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) and state-allied tribal groups.

On January 25, an explosion targeting a convoy near Bir al-Abd, North Sinai Governorate, killed at least five Egyptian military personnel. On April 30, militants blew up a gas pipeline in Bir al-Abd causing a fire without any casualties. On May 19, EAF foiled a suicide bombing attempt at a police checkpoint, leading to the killing of a militant. On November 6, an IED blast killed an officer and three members of state-allied tribal groups.

Security forces continued their counter actions against militant groups. Beginning on May 7, the air force carried out a series of airstrikes targeting terrorist hideouts. The anti-terror operations followed the attack on security forces on May 7 claimed by the IS affiliate Sinai Province [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. During the operations in the northern and western part of the Sinai, EAF killed 30 militants and destroyed several

hideouts and three vehicles. EAF found a variety of weapons such as hand grenades, explosive belts, TNT explosive, rocket launchers and ammunition. rbu

EGYPT (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1954**

Conflict parties: activists, opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the opposition and the government de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.

Despite declaring 2022 the year of civil society and launching a national dialogue with opposition groups, the government continued its practice of prosecuting perceived critics. For instance, on March 5, an economist and member of the liberal Reform and Development Party died in prison in the capital of Cairo, leading to an outcry from human rights organizations over alleged torture. On March 8 and 10, the government executed seven prisoners convicted of terrorism-related charges despite allegations of forced disappearance, torture, and forced confessions in prison. On June 28, the Cairo Criminal Court sentenced ten people to death in a mass trial of more than 200 defendants known as the "Helwan Brigades" case over various charges including terrorism, destruction of property and murder, amid harsh criticisms regarding the proceedings from human rights organizations such as Amnesty International.

President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi initiated a national dialogue with opposition groups and the authorities released 41 political prisoners on April 24 in Cairo.

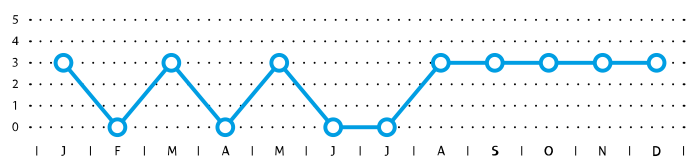
In the run-up to the climate change conference COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, South Governorate, authorities increased surveillance measures and arrested dozens of people for calling for anti-government protests on November 11. On November 12, hundreds of people gathered in Sharm el-Sheikh to protest climate injustice as well as the imprisonment of a human rights activist who was a leading figure during the Egyptian revolution in 2011.

jbe

IRAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **4** | Change: **↗** | Start: **1993**

Conflict parties: intra-systemic opposition, non-systemic opposition vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between opposition groups and large popular movements, on the one hand, and the government,

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

IRAN (OPPOSITION)



January



February



March



April



May



June



July



August



September



October



November



December



on the other, escalated to a limited war.

Throughout the first half of the year, large-scale peaceful protests took place against the sustained economic crisis, far-reaching economic sanctions imposed by the USA, and the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, starting on May 6, protests broke out in more than 20 cities including Ahvaz and Izeh, Khuzestan Province, as well as Shahr-e Kord city, Chahar Mahall and Bakhtiari Province, due to the extreme increase in bread prices. In reaction, authorities disrupted internet access in multiple provinces and police used tear gas and fired warning shots and pellet guns to scatter the crowds. Reportedly, by May 16, at least five protesters were killed in the course of the protests.

Protests intensified on September 16, following the death of Mahsa Amini, who died in hospital after being detained by morality police in the capital Tehran. The next day, on September 17, protesters again gathered in Saqez city, Kurdistan province, to mourn Amini and protest against the government. Protests spread throughout the country in the following months. By December 31, at least 491 civilians had died and approx. 18,000 civilians had been arrested. The government also restricted access to the internet again.

Alleging brutality and arbitrariness of the morality police, protests against repression and dress codes primarily for women occurred for the remainder of the year. For instance, on September 20, women burned their veils and cut off their hair in public in Sari city, Mazandaran province. On September 30, security forces killed at least 66 people and injured hundreds of others during a protest after opening fire with live ammunition in Zahedan city, Sistan and Baluchistan province. Furthermore, on October 16, security forces arrested over 250 protesters in Ardabil city, eponymous province, with at least two protesters being hospitalized.

Supporters of the opposition movement became increasingly threatened by the enforcement of the death penalty. On November 16, the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced three protesters to death. On December 8, security forces executed the first protester by hanging in Tehran. At least 20 people were at risk of execution in connection with the protests by the end of the year.

On October 3, the UN Human Rights Council issued a statement on the Iranian protests, urging the government to refrain from disproportionate use of force against the protesters. On November 24, UNHCR launched an investigation into the protests, and on December 12, the EU imposed sanctions against the government over the worsening human rights situation in the country. lou

IRAN – ISRAEL

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1979**

Conflict parties: Iran vs. Israel
Conflict items: system/ideology, international power

The violent crisis over international power and ideology between Iran and Israel continued. As in recent years, Israel targeted Iranian official personnel, as well as military and industrial sites and conducted aerial campaigns in Syria, targeting Hezbollah and other pro-Iranian militias, while Iran attempted to kidnap Israeli tourists abroad [→ Israel – Syria; Israel (Hezbollah)].

On May 22, Israel allegedly assassinated an Islamic Revolu-

tionary Guard Corps (IRGC) colonel, who was second-in command of an IRGC Quds Force Unit, while he was driving his car in the Iranian capital Tehran. Furthermore, Israel continued to target Iranian scientists linked to the development of critical military technologies. For instance, on June 12 and 13, two Iranian scientists with links to Iranian satellite, UAV and missiles projects were killed in Khomein city, Markazi Province, and Semnan city, eponymous province. Iran accused Israel of being behind these assassinations.

As in previous years, Israel allegedly carried out several strikes targeting Iranian military bases and industrial plants. On February 12, for instance, Israel launched six loitering weapons against a major IRGC drone manufacturing site, destroying dozens of Iranian drones in Kermanshah city, eponymous province. In late June, Israeli officials hinted at direct Israeli involvement in the June 27 cyberattack against Khuzestan Steel Company, located in Ahvaz city, Khuzestan Province, which led to a temporary shutdown of the steel plant. Iran, on the other hand, initiated a cyberattack on Israeli government websites on March 14, paralyzing online services for about an hour.

On February 2, the Turkish National Intelligence Organization, in collaboration with Israeli secret services, foiled an Iranian attempt to assassinate an Istanbul-based Israeli businessman who owns an engineering company specializing in aerospace technology. In May, Iran allegedly sent operatives to Türkiye, with orders to kidnap Israeli tourists spending their holidays in Istanbul city, eponymous province. However, on June 23, Turkish authorities thwarted the attempt and arrested five Iranians who were accused of having taken part in the operation.

Israeli airstrikes in Syria killed at least 38 individuals and injured at least 31. For instance, strikes on April 27, targeting pro-Iranian positions and an ammunition depot near the capital Damascus, killed five Syrian soldiers and four Iran-backed militants while injuring another seven. On November 11, Israeli airstrikes hit near the Al-Qa'im border crossing, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, and destroyed a convoy carrying fuel and weapons. The attack killed 10 people in total, several of which were Iranian militants. lrn

IRAQ (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between the opposition and the government continued.

The political crisis following the parliamentary election of 10/10/21 continued. In February and March, the Iraqi parliament twice failed to elect a new president. The 73 members of the Sadrist bloc led by Moqtada al-Sadr, who won the majority of the seats in 2021, resigned on June 15. On July 27, hundreds of protestors, mainly Sadr supporters, stormed the Iraqi parliament in the capital of Baghdad to protest against the candidacy of Mohammed Shia al-Sudani for prime minister. There were no casualties reported. Three days later, there was a second storming of the parliament, during which 100 protesters and 25 security personnel were injured. Protesters staged a sit-in which ended a day later.

Sadr's announcement to retire from politics on August 29 caused another wave of violence, resulting in over 30 deaths

and approx. 400 injured. For instance, Sadr supporters stormed the Republican Palace in Baghdad's Green Zone and clashed with both security forces and pro-Iranian militias, interlinking the conflict with the Shiite militia conflict [→ Iraq (Shiite militant groups)]. On the same day, violent clashes also erupted, among other places, in Basra, eponymous governorate, and Karbala, eponymous governorate, where Sadr supporters also stormed provincial government buildings. A nationwide curfew was imposed, but escalations continued. Sadr's Saraya al-Salam militia and the different militias of the Popular Mobilization Front played an important role during this conflict and were responsible for most casualties, since government security forces mainly remained neutral. Sadr gave his supporters an ultimatum to leave Baghdad's Green Zone on August 30, which ended the violent fighting. However, Sadr's supporters tried to storm the Green Zone during a meeting of the parliament on September 28. Security forces blocked them, injuring approx. 120 security personnel and eleven civilians.

During clashes between security forces and protesters on the anniversary of the 2019 anti-government protests on October 1, in the capital and other cities throughout the country, at least 84 people were injured, about half of them security personnel. On October 28, a new government was elected, with Mohammed Shia al-Sudani as prime minister and Abdul Latif Rashid as president.

Throughout the year, attacks on activists and journalists continued. Examples of this were an assassination attempt on an activist on February 19 in Nasiriyah, Dhi-Qar Governorate, which did not result in casualties, as well as an attack on an Iraqi journalist in Baghdad on July 24, which left two family members injured. On August 14, in Diwaniyah, Al-Qadisiyyah Governorate, and on August 19, in the capital, lawmakers were targeted; both attacks did not result in casualties and the responsible actors were not identified. anb

IRAQ (SHIITE MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2004**

Conflict parties: Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Badr Organization, Kata'ib Hezbollah, Saraya al-Salam vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and ideology, as well as national power between Shiite militant groups and the government continued.

The Shiite militias were organized under the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) and include the Badr Organization, Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Kata'ib Hezbollah, as well as Saraya al-Salam, the former Mahdi Army, led by Moqtada al-Sadr. Sadr and his supporters played an important role in the political crisis between Shiite militant groups and the government in July and August, interweaving the two conflicts [→ Iraq (opposition)]. Though the other Shiite militant groups were mainly pro-Iranian, Sadr opposed the Iranian influence.

The political rift since the parliamentary elections on 10/10/21 led to tensions between different Shiite militant groups, foremost between Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq and Saraya al-Salam. Throughout the year, several violent clashes occurred between the two militias. For instance, on January 10 a prominent leader of the Sadrist movement was shot in Amara, Maysan Governorate, allegedly in retaliation for his suspected killing of an Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq militia leader. On

January 28, a Ministry of Interior officer with links to Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq was assassinated and on February 9, a Saraya al-Salam fighter was shot dead, both in Amara. On September 1, four militants were killed in Basra, eponymous Governorate, when followers of Sadr and members of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq attacked each other, killing two of each party.

All groups agreed in their opposition to the USA and the stationing of US troops in Iraq. Tensions relaxed since last year's decision of the US and Iraqi government to withdraw the remaining US troops deployed in Iraq. The US has partially implemented its decision. The remaining 2,500 soldiers have switched to an exclusively advisory role. However, rocket attacks on US targets continued. On January 13, a rocket attack on the US embassy in Baghdad's Green Zone occurred, with one of the missiles hitting a nearby school, injuring two civilians. Another attack on Baghdad airport on January 28, damaged a civilian airplane but caused no casualties. On September 28, a rocket attack in Baghdad's Green Zone left seven Iraqi soldiers injured and a similar attack at the same place occurred on October 13, injuring approx. ten people. Though no group claimed responsibility, the Iraqi government usually ascribes similar incidents to Shiite militant groups. anb

ISRAEL (HAMAS ET AL.)

Intensity: **3** | Change: **↘** | Start: **1988**

Conflict parties: Hamas, other Islamist groups, PIJ vs. government

Conflict items: secession, resources

The limited war over the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state and over resources between the government of Israel, on the one hand, and Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and other Islamist militant groups operating in the Gaza Strip, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.

After the ceasefire of the latest crisis between Hamas and the Israeli government in May 2021, the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) attacked several sites in Gaza on January 2, damaging a rocket manufacturing site and military posts.

On March 22, a former member of Islamic State (IS) killed four Israeli civilians and wounded two others in a stabbing attack at an outdoor shopping mall in Beersheba city, Southern Governorate, Israel. On March 28, an IS member shot dead two Israeli police officers in Hadera city, Haifa Governorate, Israel. On April 19 and 21, IDF fired rockets into Gaza, demolishing a Hamas military post, a tunnel, an underground rocket manufacturing site and several houses. On April 22, allegedly Islamist militants fired three missiles from Gaza into Israel.

The conflict experienced a spike in violence in August. Between August 5 and 7, IDF conducted missile airstrikes on infrastructural targets and PIJ military sites, killing at least 43 Palestinians, injuring another 300, and causing destruction in civilian areas. In response, PIJ fired hundreds of rockets at Israel, threatening cities in southern Israel without leaving any casualties. On August 7, both sides agreed to a ceasefire, mediated by Egypt.

On November 4, Al-Quds Brigades, an armed wing of PIJ, fired a missile into Israel, breaking the ceasefire. IDF retaliated by firing missiles into Gaza, targeting weapon manufacturing sites. hma

ISRAEL (HEZBOLLAH) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1982**Conflict parties: Hezbollah vs. government
Conflict items: territory, system/ideology

The violent crisis over ideology and territory between Hezbollah and the Israeli government continued. Throughout the year, Israeli military forces carried out airstrikes in the Syrian governorates of Damascus and Quneitra, killing one Hezbollah member, while drones belonging to Hezbollah crossed the border into Israel's Northern District.

On January 31, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) conducted missile airstrikes in Syria's eastern Qalamoun region, Damascus, for the first time since August 2021, allegedly targeting positions of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia. The IAF airstrike damaged military facilities, and the Syrian military reportedly shot down a number of missiles. This incident was followed by an arrest of two Israelis for alleged smuggling of drugs into Israel on behalf of Hezbollah. On July 7, an Israeli drone strike resulted in the death of one Hezbollah member in Hadar, Quneitra Governorate.

Between January and May, Hezbollah drones crossed the border into Israel's Northern District three times, all of which the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) shot down. On February 17, for example, IDF forces shot down a drone near the Lebanese border town of Aitaroun, Nabatieh Governorate, after it entered Israeli airspace.

In June, tensions increased over Israel's intentions to conduct operations in the Karish gas field, located in the disputed maritime border area between Israel and Lebanon. Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and the group's deputy secretary general warned the Israeli government that Hezbollah reactions could include military means. On June 29 and July 2, IDF shot down unarmed Hezbollah drones in Lebanese territory before they crossed the disputed maritime border between Israel and Lebanon near the disputed Karish gas field [→ Israel – Lebanon].

While not leading to a military confrontation, the tensions between Hezbollah and Israel deteriorated further in August and September. Nasrallah warned, several times, that the conflict with Israel could escalate if the latter fails to respect Lebanon's rights in the US-brokered maritime border deal over natural gas fields. The Israeli defense minister, on the other hand, threatened that war would be likely if Hezbollah attacked Israel's offshore gas fields. *sap*

ISRAEL – LEBANON •

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **1948**Conflict parties: Israel vs. Lebanon
Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over territory, international power and resources between Israel and Lebanon continued. Throughout the year, tensions arose over the Karish gas field, a disputed maritime border area between Lebanon and Israel; while Lebanon claimed that Karish is not part of the UN-recognized exclusive economic zone, Israel said it is. Furthermore, the Lebanese government, on several occasions,

accused Israel of violating its airspace and international law in the process of carrying out airstrikes on Syria.

After Israel sent a natural gas storage and production ship to the Karish gas field on June 5, Lebanese President Michel Aoun accused Israel of provoking further tensions. Israel denied the claims and emphasized its will to defend its natural resources. On June 6, Aoun and Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati turned to the USA to ask for the resumption of US-mediated negotiations to solve the maritime border issue. One week later, after over a year-long pause, talks resumed. At the beginning of October, the US handed over a maritime border agreement proposal to both countries. An agreement on a final proposal was reached on October 11, two years after negotiations had first started. The agreement, also accepted by Hezbollah, was signed by Aoun and Israel's Prime Minister Yair Lapid on October 27 [→ Israel (Hezbollah)]. It gives Israel the right to exploit the Karish gas field, while Lebanon will have control over the Qana gas field. Israel will receive compensation for the exploitation of Qana gas field and Lebanon will recognise Israel's controversial "buoy line" in the Mediterranean, known as Line 23, as their maritime border. The Qana gas field crosses the demarcation line, thus Lebanon will have to pay 17 percent of its revenue to Israel. *sap*

ISRAEL – STATE OF PALESTINE^o (PNA)Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1948**Conflict parties: Palestinian protesters, PNA vs. government, Israeli settlement movements
Conflict items: secession, system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state, the orientation of the political system and resources between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Palestinian protesters, on the one hand, and the Israeli government as well as Israeli settlers, on the other, continued. Over the course of the year, Israeli forces and settlers killed at least 152 Palestinians in the West Bank, leading to the deadliest year since UN data collection began in 2005. In addition, on February 1, Amnesty International issued a report accusing Israel of Apartheid.

Throughout the year, Israeli settlers and armed forces violently clashed with Palestinians on several occasions, such as raids, forced evictions, home demolition and protests in Palestinian neighborhoods. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) carried out more than 2,000 military search and arrest operations in the West Bank, most often resulting in Palestinian casualties. On September 28, an IDF raid left five Palestinians dead and 44 more injured. On October 8, IDF killed two Palestinians and injured eleven. On January 31, two families in East Jerusalem city were forced to demolish their own homes, displacing 13 Palestinians.

On January 15, Palestinians set a synagogue on fire in a Hebron settlement, and a Palestinian man fatally shot three Israeli civilians at a bar on April 6. In late November, two bomb attacks at a bus stop in Jerusalem killed two and injured 23 Israeli citizens. Violence flared up further after Benjamin Netanyahu won the parliamentary elections on November 1, and in response to rockets fired unsuccessfully from Gaza to Israel, Israel launched several airstrikes in Gaza on November 4.

Further violence erupted on and around the compound of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem throughout the year. For instance, on April 14, at least 158 Palestinians were injured and at least 400 were detained, leading to protests in Gaza. On September 25 and 26, hundreds of ultra-nationalist Israelis and Israeli forces entered the compound and violently attacked Palestinians, injuring at least three. Unrest escalated in April during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, when Israeli forces repeatedly conducted raids in and around Al-Aqsa Mosque. Israeli officials throughout the year put Gaza and neighborhoods in the West Bank in lockdown, closing crossings into Israel, denying access to water, food, electricity, or fuel. On October 9, Israeli authorities put 100,000 Palestinians in Shuafat refugee camp under siege to hunt for a Palestinian militant who shot an Israeli soldier on October 8.

On October 2, Israel held 798 Palestinians in detention, the highest number since 2008.

Further, on May 11, IDF killed a Palestinian-American journalist, who had been covering IDF raids in the West Bank city of Jenin. Israeli authorities denied a criminal investigation, but admitted on September 6 the high possibility of being responsible. rra

ISRAEL – SYRIA •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1948**

Conflict parties: Israel vs. Syria
 Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The violent crisis over territory, international power, and resources between Israel, on the one hand, and Syria, supported by Iran and the Lebanese militia Hezbollah, on the other, continued. Throughout the year, Israel continued to conduct airstrikes against Syrian Army positions, Hezbollah outposts, and Iranian infrastructure in Syria, which led to the killing of Syrian civilians and the destruction of civilian and military infrastructure in Syria [→ Israel (Hezbollah); Israel – Iran]. In most instances, Israel did not confirm its military operations. However, Israeli officials claimed that Israel has destroyed about 90 percent of Iran’s military infrastructure in Syria in recent years.

On January 5, Israeli tanks shelled a Syrian military post in Al-Huriyyah village, Quneitra Governorate, near the Disengagement Line in the occupied Golan Heights, causing a fire. On February 9, an anti-aircraft missile fired from Syria exploded in the air and set off warning sirens in the town of Umm al-Fahm, Northern District, Israel. On the same day, in response to Syria’s missile entering Israeli airspace, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) targeted several Syrian air defense system units in the Damascus area, Rif Dimashq Governorate, killing one and injuring five. The Israeli army acknowledged its attack. On February 24, Israeli airstrikes targeted Syrian military positions near Damascus, Rif Dimashq Governorate, killing at least three.

On May 13, IAF fired at least eight missiles on weapons depots and the Iranian military’s arsenal and command post near Masyaf, Hama Governorate, causing a fire. At least four people were killed and seven injured. On June 6, an Israeli airstrike targeted sites near the town of Aqraba, Rif Dimashq Governorate, where, according to the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights (SOHR), Hezbollah activists and Syrian air defense units were active. A factory for Iranian weapons was

destroyed, although most of the missiles were reportedly intercepted. Four days later, on June 10, an Israeli airstrike struck three arms depots for Iranian-backed groups inside the Damascus International Airport, causing major destruction of the airport, which led to the suspension of all flights for two weeks. This, in turn, interrupted humanitarian activities, according to the UN’s Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria.

On July 22, IAF fired missiles on an air force intelligence facility and an Iranian weapons depot near Damascus, killing three soldiers and injuring at least seven. On November 13, four Israeli missiles hit the Shayrat Airbase near Homs, eponymous governorate, killing two soldiers. According to SOHR, the missiles targeted positions of Iran-backed fighters in the area. On November 19, Israeli airstrikes targeted weapons depots of pro-Iranian groups in Homs and Hama and a Syrian air defense system unit in Latakia Governorate. One Syrian soldier was killed and four others were wounded. gew

JORDAN (OPPOSITION) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
 Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, comprising trade unions and civil society organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Compared to 2021, most protests remained small in scale, with only several hundred to a few thousand participants, despite increasing numbers of arrests. Prominent figures of the Islamic Action Front, the Ajarmeh Tribe, the Bani Hassan tribe, Jordan Teachers Association and the HIRAK movement also attended demonstrations and issued statements of support.

The opposition and minorities also demanded political rights and democratic reforms. For instance, on January 26, smaller protests broke out after the sentencing of a well-known figure of the Al-Ajarmeh tribe. Protesters burned state buildings and tires in the capital Amman. On March 24, security services arrested 29 activists of the pro-democratic HIRAK movement as well as members of the Teachers’ Association during protests on the anniversary of the Arab Spring. At least 161 were arrested in March and April, with 132 protesters arrested just on March 29 to prevent the teachers syndicate sit-in at the Ministry of Education building

In June and July, at least 2,000 workers of the Port of Aqaba went on strike, protesting poor safety precautions following the deaths of 13 people in a chlorine gas leak accident.

Protests erupted over tensions between Israel and Palestine, and the suspension of the Jordan Teachers Association (JTA) [→ Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)]. On August 6, October 14, and November 4, thousands demonstrated in support of the Palestinians in front of the Israeli embassy, the Grand Hussein Mosque and in the downtown of the capital Amman. Protesters expressed solidarity and support for Palestinians and called for expelling the Israeli ambassador to Amman.

In December, several protests and riots broke out in the governorates of Ma’an, Aqaba, Zarqa and Irbid, leading to the death of four state security personnel and one alleged perpetrator. Thousands demonstrated against rising fuel prices and called for government intervention. On December 15, demonstrators killed one senior police officer and injured two policemen in clashes in the southern city of Ma’an, Ma’an

Governorate. 44 protesters were arrested. phg

KUWAIT (BEDOUNS) .

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **1959**

Conflict parties: Bedouns vs. government
Conflict items: other

The dispute over the right to nationality between the Bedouns, a stateless community in Kuwait, and the government continued.

After the suicide of a member of the Bedoun on February 15, protests intensified demanding citizenship and related civil rights in Al-Jahra city, eponymous governorate. On April 8, six Bedoun activists started a hunger strike outside a police station in Sulaibiya town, Al-Jahra, that lasted 19 days. On May 24, the government intended to launch a new platform to help the Bedouns find work in the private sector. On August 31, 18 people were arrested for taking part in a demonstration in support of the Bedouns. On November 14, the parliament proposed a bill that addresses the nationality law and the issue of citizenship application. sfo

KUWAIT (OPPOSITION) .

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: opposition movement vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The dispute over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition groups and the government continued.

On April 5, the then-prime minister resigned ahead of a parliamentary non-cooperation motion. In the following months, two protests took place in the capital Kuwait City against political stagnation and for the appointment of a new government. On June 22, Crown Prince Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah dissolved the parliament and called for early elections. Subsequently, on July 24, Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Sabah was appointed prime minister and tasked with the formation of the new government. Early parliamentary elections were held on September 29, where the opposition obtained about 60 percent of the seats. Nonetheless, on October 5, the crown prince swore in a cabinet, which was publicly criticized by lawmakers for not reflecting the election results, in which the opposition won a majority. After a cabinet reshuffle, on October 17, the crown prince swore in the new government, and on October 25, reappointed Ahmad Nawaf Al-Sabah. sfo

LEBANON (INNER-PALESTINIAN TENSIONS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2006**

Conflict parties: Ansar Allah et al. vs. Fatah vs. other Palestinian factions
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between various Palestinian groups, such as the Palestinian political parties Hamas and Fatah, continued. Throughout the year,

violence resulted in the death of two Palestinian security personnel and left at least ten injured. The incidents occurred in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon's South Governorate, as in previous years. In contrast to previous years, there were no injuries or deaths related to explosive devices.

On February 17, an altercation between members of Hamas and Fatah escalated into a shooting in Burj El-Shemali Camp, which left four injured.

An armed clash between two unknown Palestinian factions on June 8 left two injured in Ain Al-Hilweh Camp. In a similar incident on September 20, a shooting between two Palestinian families left one person injured in Rashidieh Camp. Another two were injured in a clash between two unknown Palestinian groups on October 8 in Ain Al-Hilweh Camp.

In two instances, on April 4 and August 8, unknown Palestinian refugees shot Fatah security officers in Ain Al-Hilweh Camp, resulting in one death on each occasion. abl

LEBANON (OPPOSITION).

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2019**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power, resources

The violent crisis over national power, resources and the orientation of the political system between the opposition and the government continued.

Protesters continued to demonstrate against the economic crisis on various occasions, sparked by shortages of water and electricity, and widespread corruption. Demonstrators staged protests at government institutions, banks or infrastructure authorities, and erected roadblocks. For the first time since the conflict started in 2019 no deaths were reported.

On April 27, protesters gathered in several neighborhoods of the capital of Beirut to block roads and burn election posters of government parties. On July 1, a similar gathering occurred in Tripoli, North Governorate, when protesters closed access to al-Nour Square, where protesters gathered when the conflict began in 2019.

Violence spiked on September 1, when protesters blocked the Tripoli-Mineh highway, North Governorate, with burning tires. Police injured two protesters with teargas. Later that month, on September 19, protesters stormed a part of the Justice Palace in Beirut and burned a police vehicle. Police dispersed the crowd using teargas and batons, injuring four. In a similar instance on September 26, retired Lebanese Army soldiers protested in front of the Parliament Building in Beirut and briefly broke through a police cordon. Police used teargas and injured two.

In October, protesters demonstrated against water and electricity shortages by staging sit-ins at infrastructure facilities. For instance, on October 26, demonstrators broke into the South Lebanon Water Establishment in Sidon, South Governorate, leaving no casualties or injuries. Minor cases of destruction were reported. abl

LIBYA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: **1** | Change: | Start: **2012**Conflict parties: Aheli vs. Tuareg vs. Tebu
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The dispute over subnational predominance, resources such as oil, and minority rights between different tribes, for example the Tuareg and Tebu, on the one hand, and Arab communities, for example the Aheli, on the other, continued. On March 27, members of Tebu and Arab communities signed a reconciliation agreement under the auspices of the USA in the city of Murzuq, eponymous district. On December 14, representatives from the Tebu and Aheli of the Murzuq area signed a Peace Is Good agreement in the Italian capital Rome, which included measures to foster reconciliation, forgiveness and human rights.

In March and April, unidentified tribes entered the Al Fil Oil Field and El-Sharara Oil Field in Murzuq district demanding a government to be appointed by the parliament, causing a nationwide stop in oil production and transport. The blockade ended on July 15, after talks between the leader of the state-owned National Oil Corporation and tribal leaders.

sol

LIBYA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2011**Conflict parties: GNU vs. GNS
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power, resources

The violent crisis over national power, control over oil fields, and the orientation of the political system between the UN-backed Government of National Unity (GNU) based in the capital Tripoli and recognized as the legal government of Libya on the one hand, and the newly established rival Government of National Stability (GNS) on the other, continued. On February 10, the House of Representatives (HoR) appointed Fathi Bashaga as prime minister and head of the GNS, a government based in Sirte, eponymous governorate, and supported by the Libyan National Army (LNA) headed by General Khalifa Haftar. GNU was created in 2021 and was intended to replace the, until then, constellation of the two governments in Tripoli and Tobruk and to function as interim government until elections. On March 1, the HoR with 92 out of 101 attending members voted to give confidence to Bashaga's GNS. However, the High Council of State as well as GNU rejected the appointment. Interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamdi Dbeibah, head of GNU, refused to step down, emphasizing his intentions to only hand over power to an elected government. A few hours before Bashaga's appointment, Dbeibah survived an assassination attempt in Tripoli, eponymous governorate, when an unknown number of attackers fired bullets at his car and fled the scene.

Since May, there have been clashes between supporters of the two governments. On May 17, in the al-Mansoura and Souq al-Thullatha areas of Tripoli, GNS tried to take national power when clashes erupted between militia supporters of the two administrations. The fighters used rockets and au-

tomatic weapons on both sides; GNU fighters forced GNS supporters out of the city. On June 10, again, clashes broke out between GNS- and GNU-affiliated militias in Tripoli. The fighters used guns and explosives, leaving four people injured. The clashes stopped when the Libyan Army intervened. On July 23, clashes between militants affiliated with GNU and LNA in Tripoli left at least 16 people dead, including at least three civilians, and another 52 injured. On August 27, violent clashes between rival militias across Tripoli resulted in the damage of several neighborhoods as well as local infrastructure, such as hospitals and public buildings, and left at least 32 civilians dead and 159 injured and according to the UN, at least 50 families were displaced. On September 25, in Zawiya city, eponymous district, clashes between rival militias left at least five people dead and 13 injured.

On December 17, the Special Representative for Libya and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya warned the Security Council that further postponement of elections could lead to greater instability in the country and urged for the finalization of the constitutional basis for the polls. In past years, democratic elections have been postponed several times. sag

MOROCCO (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: AMDH, Front Social, Justice and Spirituality, labor rights activists vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, including Moroccan Association for Human Rights (AMDH), the Islamist association Justice and Spirituality, labor rights activists, as well as the Social Front, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

This year, thousands protested against rising prices of fuel and food in cities across the regions of Rabat-Salé-Kénitra, Casablanca-Settat, Marrakech-Safi, and Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima. For instance, on February 20, at least 2,000 protested against price inflation, corruption and repression, as well as calling for reforms on the anniversary of the so-called "February 20' protest movement. The leftist coalition Social Front, consisting of four parliamentary opposition parties, organized the protests. On May 13, the leaders of the four parties reinforced their commitment to cooperate but were unable to form a united opposition front.

Furthermore, on September 28, students and other civilians protested for the decriminalization of abortion in the capital Rabat.

On December 24, several thousand protested against the normalization of diplomatic relations with Israel since 2020 in over 30 cities, including in Casablanca city, Casablanca-Settat, in Oujda city, Oriental region and in Tangier city, Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima. lwb

MOROCCO (POLISARIO /WESTERN SAHARA^o)Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1975**

Conflict parties: POLISARIO, Sahrawis vs. government

Conflict items: secession, decolonisation, resources

The violent crisis over the secession, decolonization of the territory, and resources of the two former Spanish colonial regions Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro, commonly known as Western Sahara, between the Popular Front of the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamran and Río de Oro (POLISARIO) and the government continued. POLISARIO claimed to represent the Sahrawi people of Western Sahara, including the areas controlled by POLISARIO and those administered by the government.

The first half of the year saw intense fighting between the Moroccan Army and POLISARIO. On January 16, the Moroccan army killed four POLISARIO fighters in a drone attack in the Mheriz area, Western Sahara. Between February 1 and 8, POLISARIO forces killed twelve military officers during a ground attack in Guelta, Mahbes region, on the border wall, separating territories controlled by the government and POLISARIO-controlled Western Sahara. A Moroccan Army drone destroyed several civilian buildings on March 11, while another one killed two members of POLISARIO forces in Oum Dreyga, Oued Ed-Dahab province, on March 12. On June 2, POLISARIO forces killed twelve Moroccan military personnel in an artillery attack on Smara city, Saguia al-Hamran province. In March and April, military personnel arrested and injured at least six pro-Sahrawi activists protesting for self-determination and an end to Sahrawi discrimination.

In addition to violent measures, this year saw diplomatic actions and threats. For example, on October 3, POLISARIO threatened attacks on the Moroccan wall within Western Sahara with newly acquired drones.

On October 28, UNSC prolonged the MINURSO mission in Western Sahara. In March, the USA restated their commitment to the Moroccan settlement plan, and Spain, the Netherlands, Israel, Germany, and Peru declared their support. South Africa, on the other hand, declared its support for POLISARIO in October. On August 26, the government recalled its ambassador to Tunisia after the Tunisian president welcomed the POLISARIO leader. lwb

SAUDI ARABIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1992**

Conflict parties: opposition vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups and the government continued.

This year, the government released several imprisoned activists, whose trials had previously received significant media attention. For instance, on February 2, a protester who participated in a Shiite protest in 2015, and who had been previously sentenced to death, was released. His sentence was commuted to ten years in prison in 2021, after the government abolished the death penalty for those who committed crimes as minors. On March 11, a Saudi human rights activist, who created the online blog Free Saudi Liberals, was released after serving a ten-year sentence for blasphemy.

In August, a specialized criminal court in the capital Riyadh sentenced two female Saudi activists to 34 and 45 years in prison, respectively. They were accused, under the counter-terrorism law and the anti-cybercrime law, of disturbing public order for retweeting activists who support civic and women's rights.

On March 12, the Ministry of Interior announced the execution of 81 prisoners who had been convicted of a wide range of offenses, including terrorism-related crimes, murder, armed robbery and arms smuggling. A number of those executed were also convicted of charges such as "disrupting the social fabric and national cohesion" and "participating in and inciting protests". The human rights organization Amnesty International claimed that the government politicizes the use of the death penalty to silence dissent of the Shiite Muslim minority in the Eastern Province, since 41 of those who were executed were Shiites [→ Saudi Arabia (Shiites)]. vbo

SAUDI ARABIA, YEMEN (AQAP)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1990**

Conflict parties: AQAP vs. Saudi Arabia, USA, Yemen
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), on the one hand, and the Southern Transitional Council (STC), backed by the United Arab Emirates, and the Saudi-backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), on the other, continued.

While the first half of the year saw incidents occur in five different governorates in southern Yemen, incidents in the second half took place predominantly in Abyan governorate. AQAP released several statements, threatening retaliatory measures against the opposing coalition and issuing threats against civilians who cooperate with anti-AQAP forces.

Throughout the year, several bombings and clashes occurred between AQAP and STC-led forces. For instance, on May 6, fighting erupted inside the headquarters of the STC's Security Belt Forces, north of Dhale city, eponymous governorate, after a group of arrested AQAP members began shooting at security personnel, leaving ten people, including two officers and seven militants, dead. On April 15, AQAP organized a jailbreak from a PLC-held prison in Seiyun city, Hadhramaut governorate, during which ten AQAP members escaped.

The number of violent incidents increased from September onwards, with AQAP officially announcing an increase in attacks against anti-AQAP forces on October 12. While AQAP activities increased in Abyan, they ceased in other governorates. On September 6, AQAP attacked an STC outpost, leaving 27 dead. On October 20, an STC-backed brigade repelled an AQAP attack in Mahfad district, Abyan. Later that day, the Security Belt Forces raided an AQAP compound in Wadea district, Abyan. On October 22, AQAP fighters ambushed a medical vehicle near Wadi Homran village, Abyan. On the same day, STC forces raided an AQAP safehouse in Wadea, Abyan, killing two AQAP fighters.

From November onwards, AQAP used IEDs, with two confirmed and five alleged attacks by the end of the year. For instance, on November 19, AQAP detonated an IED near Wadi Omran, Abyan, leaving four STC-affiliated military personnel dead and injuring several others. mgu

SYRIA (INTER-OPPOSITION RIVALRY)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: HTS vs. various Islamist groups vs. Syrian Liberation Front (SLF), Syrian National Army (SNA)

Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance, the orientation of the political system, and resources among various Islamist groups, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), on the one hand, and different factions of Syrian National Army (SNA) as well as the Syrian Liberation Front (SLF), on the other, continued. This year most clashes occurred between Ahrar al-Sham, Hamza Division and HTS, on the one hand, and the Levant Front, SNA, Sham Legion and Jaysh al-Islam, on the other. On January 23, nine factions of the SNA announced a merger with SLF, creating a new group called the Revolutionaries for Liberation. On June 18, clashes erupted between the Turkish-backed factions of SNA, such as Levant Front and Ahrar al-Sham, in various cities such as al-Bab, Jarablus and Afrin, Aleppo Governorate, killing at least 14 and injuring 33. The fighting continued for a day and a half and resulted in the Levant Front taking over Ahrar al-Sham headquarters near al-Bab. On June 19, the Turkish-backed conflicting factions came to a ceasefire after Türkiye mediated a truce between them. On October 10, members of the Hamza Division killed a media activist, which led to the revival of the clashes with other factions of SNA. The fighting continued for another day, when HTS and Ahrar al-Sham joined on the side of the Hamza Division and the Sham Legion and Jaysh al-Islam joined on the side of the Levant Front. By October 13, HTS, which controls various areas in Idlib Governorate, captured several towns in Afrin District, Aleppo Governorate, securing their presence in Afrin. The fighting resulted in at least 58 deaths and ended on October 19 with all parties agreeing to the Turkish-brokered agreement. goy

SYRIA (KURDISH GROUPS)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **1962**

Conflict parties: KDPS, PYD vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over autonomy, subnational predominance, and resources between the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and affiliated militias, as well as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Syria (KDPS), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES), dominated by Syrian Kurdish groups and opposed by the government, continued to control wide parts of north-eastern Syria. US forces and SDF members conducted military training and joint operations to fight the so-called Islamic State (IS). In March, the USA announced the lifting of economic sanctions, and allowed direct investments favoring the economy of areas under control of AANES in order to counter IS [[→ Syria, Iraq et al. \(IS\); Syria – USA](#)]. In areas with an ethnic Arab majority, protests and violence

against Kurdish rule regularly occurred. The actors involved in the incidents often remained unclear or contested, either government affiliated militias, local residents or alleged members of the IS perpetrated the incidents. For example, on January 30, alleged pro-government militia attacked a military point of SDF, killing five in Raqqqa Governorate. SDF and the internal security force Asayish conducted several raids and arrests. On September 13, Asayish raided houses to arrest suspects in Abu Hamam town, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, during which one Asayish member was killed and three civilians injured.

Along the line of contact, occasional clashes erupted between government and SDF forces. For instance, on March 1, government forces clashed with SDF-affiliated militias in al-Hasakah Governorate, leaving four dead and three wounded. Especially over the Euphrate river, sporadic exchange of fire often occurred due to smugglers of oil, fuel, goods, and illegal narcotics, who kept crossing the de-facto borders between the two entities. In one incident, government forces injured one SDF fighter on April 15, firing over the Euphrate River close to Theban town, Deir ez-Zor Governorate.

From early March on, government soldiers besieged two mostly Kurdish-populated neighborhoods in Aleppo City, eponymous governorate. In response, SDF militias besieged government controlled neighborhoods of al-Hasakah city and Qamishli city, al-Hasakah Governorate. On April 28, both sides agreed to lift their blockades.

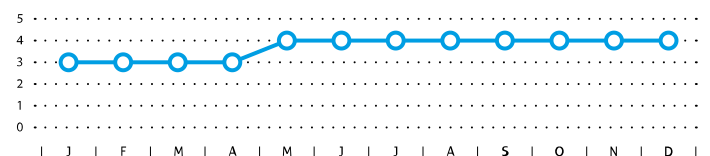
The Turkish government's announcement in early summer of a new, major military operation against territory held by AANES created a shift in this conflict. This led to a noticeable decrease of violence between AANES and the government [[→ Syria \(SDF – Türkiye / northern Syria\)](#)]. som

SYRIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **2011**

Conflict parties: FSA, HTS, NC vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The limited war over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, primarily comprised of the Syrian National Army (SNA) backed by Türkiye, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (NC), and its armed wing the Free Syrian Army (FSA), on the one hand, and the government with its Syrian Arab Army (SAA), supported by Russia, Iran, and Shiite militias, most prominently the Lebanon-based Hezbollah, on the other, continued.

Since the beginning of the civil war in 2011, the overall death toll was estimated at between 370,000 and 600,000 casualties. The death toll this year was at least 3,800, which is one of the lowest annual death tolls since the beginning of the conflict.

The Syrian Constitutional Committee meetings, led by the UN, between various opposing groups did not yield any significant proposals. At the same time, the humanitarian situation especially in the opposition-controlled areas became increasingly precarious.

Throughout the year, the 2020 ceasefire brokered by Russia and Türkiye was violated on several occasions. Violent clashes between the government and various opposition groups were mainly confined to opposition-held regions, mostly Idlib and Aleppo Governorates. Due to Russia's focus on the war in Ukraine, the number of attacks by the government with Russian support on opposition groups decreased, especially in the first months of the year. For instance, on January 2, Russian jets attacked various locations in Idlib, killing three civilians, injuring ten more, and damaging a water station.

Violent clashes between opposition groups, mainly HTS and FSA, and government troops peaked in June in Raqqa, Hama, and Aleppo Governorates. From June 15 to 20, missile and artillery attacks killed at least 20 government fighters and officials and five members of the opposition, as well as injuring many more. On June 29, a Syrian missile strike in Afrin, Aleppo hit an opposition vehicle, resulting in the death of nine Turkish-backed opposition fighters. Furthermore, on October 4, HTS attacked government forces in Aleppo, killing five military personnel.

Throughout the year, at least 118 civilians were killed in clashes between government and opposition forces. For example, on August 18, an alleged SAA artillery attack hit a market in opposition-held al-Bab city, Aleppo Governorate, killing 17 and injuring 35 civilians. In another instance on September 8, seven civilians in different locations in Idlib were killed and at least twelve people injured by the government and Russian airstrikes. On November 6, SAA attacked various locations held by the opposition in Idlib, killing at least nine and injuring at least 70. The shelling, by 30 rockets, also heavily affected IDP camps.

Over the weekend of December 2 to 4, protests against the government emerged in the southern city of Al-Suwayda, eponymous governorate. The protests were triggered by increased complaints about the deteriorating economic conditions in the country. One police officer and one protester were killed in the clashes. apa

SYRIA (SDF – TÜRKIYE / NORTHERN SYRIA)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2018**

Conflict parties: HRE, SDF, YPG vs. FSA, Türkiye
 Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance, autonomy, and natural resources between Türkiye and the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army (TFSA), on the one hand, and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and its affiliated groups, such as the People's Protection Units and Afrin Liberation Forces (HRE), on the other, continued.

Throughout the year the conflict accounted for at least 162 deaths, including civilian deaths, and 159 injured. Most attacks and clashes occurred in SDF-controlled areas in Aleppo, Al Hasakah and Raqqa Governorates. For instance, in January, Turkish-backed forces carried out several attacks by mortars, artillery, and tanks, resulting in the killing of one civilian and injuring 31. On January 22 and 23, clashes between Turkish troops and the SDF intensified in Ain Issa town, Raqqa Governorate, killing 17 and injuring twelve on both sides. The intense shelling and clashes resulted in the internal displacement of 53 families who took shelter in Giré

Spî refugee camp, north of Raqqa Governorate. Moreover, Turkish troops and TFSA forces launched several attacks in and around Afrin, Aleppo Governorate throughout April, to which HRE responded through ground attacks targeting military bases, killing 14 TFSA fighters and injuring many more.

Severe damage to civilian infrastructure such as schools, power stations, clinics, and monuments occurred throughout the year. For instance, on February 3, a school in the village of Qeramil, Halab Governorate, was bombed, destroying the school and interrupting the education of hundreds of students. At least 4,000 olive and pomegranate trees were cut down by pro-Türkiye militia in Afrin, along with wheat and barley fields destroyed by shelling.

On May 12, the USA lifted sanctions on foreign investments to allow activities in twelve different economic sectors, excluding oil, in the US-protected areas of Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) and parts of Turkish-occupied north and northwest Syria in an effort to stabilize areas previously controlled by the Islamic State [→ Syria – USA]. Subsequently, on May 23, Türkiye announced that a new operation would be launched to complete a safe zone in AANES to dislodge Kurdish-led forces.

A week after a bombing in Istanbul, the Turkish Defense Ministry launched Operation Claw-Sword on November 20 by initiating airstrikes on Kurdish targets in Iraq and Syria. Türkiye blamed the Kurdistan Workers' Party and SDF for the bombing in Istanbul, which SDF denied. At least 31 people were killed as a result of shelling in the villages of Dahir al-Arab and al-Beilonya, Aleppo Governorate, which housed IDPs from Afrin.

paj

SYRIA – USA

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2003**

Conflict parties: Syria vs. USA
 Conflict items: system/ideology, international power

The non-violent crisis over international power, system and ideology between Syria and the USA continued. This year was marked by important developments regarding US sanctions. The US first imposed sanctions on Syria in 2004, relating, among other things, to the Syrian government's alleged pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

On May 13, the US lifted sanctions against foreign investments in Northern Syria. Activities in twelve different economic sectors, including agriculture, telecommunications, power grid infrastructure, finance and healthcare were exempted from US sanctions. This authorization followed ongoing successes of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in securing control over Northern Syria and defeating the so-called Islamic State (IS), which continued to be present in some regions of Syria and Iraq beyond government control [→ Syria, Iraq et al. (IS)]. According to the US Department of Treasury, this move had been part of a strategy to defeat IS through an economic stabilization of the region. On the other hand, business with the Syrian government was still subject to US sanctions.

On October 12, US President Joe Biden extended the National Emergency declared in Executive Order 13894 for one year. The national emergency has been effective since 10/14/2019 and was declared in response to Türkiye's 2019 Operation Peace Spring, launched as a military offensive into

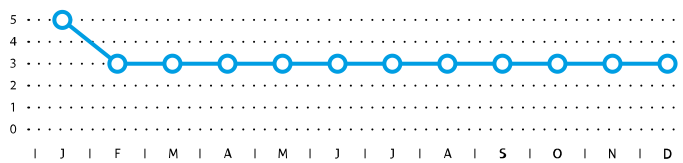
Northeast Syria. According to US authorities, the operation had undermined the campaign to defeat IS, endangered civilians and further threatened to undermine peace and stability in the region and thus posed a threat to the national security and foreign policy of the US [→ Syria (SDF – Türkiye / northern Syria)]. The National Emergency allowed the US, among other things, to block all property and interests in property in the US of selected people and to impose sanctions on foreign individuals. gew

SYRIA, IRAQ ET AL. (IS) .

Intensity: 5 | Change: | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: IS vs. Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, USA

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power, resources



The war over the orientation of the international system and the control of resources such as oil between so-called Islamic State (IS), on the one hand, and Syria, Iraq and other governments as well as various militant groups, on the other, continued. This year, IS violent attacks as well as anti-IS military operations were confined to Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt and Libya, leaving at least 1,871 dead. Anti-IS juridical and security measures were observed in countries such as Türkiye, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia.

Following its founding in 2014, IS had brought large territories under its control in Syria and Iraq and expanded its operations to Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, and Algeria in 2014, followed by Yemen, Tunisia, and Türkiye in 2015, as well as Saudi Arabia in 2016. Outside West Asia and North Africa, IS operated in Afghanistan and Pakistan [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. Yet, other militant groups from Asia pledged allegiance to IS, including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Caucasus Emirate, as well as Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf, the former Maute Group also known as a part of Dawlah Islamiyah, and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters [→ Russia (Islamist militants / Northern Caucasus); Tajikistan (Islamist militant groups); Indonesia (Islamist militant groups); Philippines (Islamist militant groups); Philippines (BIFF)]. The IS-affiliated groups from Sub-Saharan Africa include a fraction of ASWJ in Mozambique and the group ADF in DRC, both part of the Islamic State’s Central Africa Province, in Somalia, the affiliate Islamic State in Somalia, in the Lake Chad basin, the group Islamic State West Africa Province and in the triborder area of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, a group which was declared the Islamic State Sahel Province in March this year [→ Mozambique (ASWJ); DR Congo, Uganda (ADF); Somalia (ISS); Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)].

In order to halt the advances of IS, different coalitions led by the US, France, Russia, Saudi Arabia as well as some individual countries like Iran and Türkiye started to launch several operations in Iraq and Syria in 2014 and the following years. Besides the US-led coalition Operation Inherent Resolve, and Iranian support of the Syrian and Iraqi governments as well as other militant groups in combating IS in 2014, Russia

commenced its military operation in 2015 as a ght against radical Islamist militants [→ Iraq (Shiite militant groups); → Syria (opposition)]. In 2016, Türkiye intervened in Syria and pushed IS back from its border. The significant territorial losses in Syria and Iraq by IS started in 2016 and continued until early 2019, when IS lost almost all its territory and had not regained any since then. Its sleeper cells, however, have continued to attack governments, militias, and civilian targets, primarily from their hideouts in remote areas. Since 2020, the number of attacks carried out by IS in West Asia has decreased and the focus of the group’s activities has moved to Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2022, the US continued its support of the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Security Forces against IS, under Operation Inherent Resolve, during which security forces conducted 313 operations in Syria and Iraq, killing at least 686 and detaining 374 IS members. The number of IS members in detention amounted to more than 10,000 in Syria and 20,000 in Iraq, according to the US Central Command.

At country level, the conflict remained in Syria on the level of a war, while it de-escalated in Afghanistan from the level of war to a violent crisis, resulting in at least 314 deaths, including at least 269 civilians and security forces. In Iraq, IS insurgencies remained on the level of a violent crisis, resulting in the death of at least 48 security forces and civilians. In North Africa, the conflict remained on the level of a violent crisis in Egypt and Libya. Violent measures mostly occurred in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt, leaving at least 49 dead, as well as in Libya, leaving at least 63 dead. No violent measures were recorded in Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Algeria.

SYRIA

In January, IS launched its biggest attack in Syria since its loss of territorial strongholds to the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in eastern Syria in 2019. On January 20, IS detonated a car bomb outside the Al-Sina prison in Al-Hasakah city, eponymous governorate, seizing control over the SDF-controlled prison and surrounding area. The prisoners took control of the armory and held guards and employees hostage, subsequently starting a prison riot. On January 21, SDF fighters, with the aid of International Coalition fighter jets and helicopters, tried to regain control of the prison. The fighting spread all over Al-Hasakah city, whereby fighter jets launched two attacks on IS-held areas the same day. SDF arrested at least 89 escaped prisoners.

By January 23, the death toll had risen to at least 123 people, with 77 IS militants, 39 International Coalition personnel, and seven civilians dead. On January 24, negotiations started between SDF and IS leaders, resulting in the medical treatment of IS fighters and the release of 15 SDF hostages. While SDF retook most of the prison complex, fighting continued in the neighboring areas for another four days. On January 29, an IS leader and 20 other fighters surrendered to SDF. Fighting ended on January 31, when SDF regained full control over Al-Hasakah. The battle resulted in the death of at least 350 IS militants and 150 SDF fighters.

In April, IS attacked SDF-held areas, launching at least 37 attacks with IEDs, landmines, and machine guns in the governorates of Deir ez-Zor, Aleppo, and Al-Raqqah. For instance, on April 22, IS gunmen attacked an army post in a desert area south of Al-Raqqah Governorate, leaving two SDF soldiers dead and six others injured. SDF, backed by the International Coalition, launched several security campaigns to gain control over the escalating attacks.

Throughout the year, IS also attacked SDF soldiers in the Syrian desert, stretching between the western Homs Governorate and the eastern Deir ez-Zor Governorate, leaving at least 266 people dead. For instance, on April 19, an IED exploded near Jabal al-Bilas desert height, Homs Governorate, killing three military personnel and injuring three more. On October 14, clashes erupted between the Syrian Army and IS cells during a security campaign in Jassim city, Daraa Governorate, leaving at least two military personnel and two IS militants dead. Regime forces fired mortars on the city, while IS fighters retaliated, leaving at least three SDF personnel and three IS members dead, as well as at least three SDF personnel injured. Moreover, SDF security services imposed a curfew in Barka village, Jassim, in fear of clashes expanding to nearby areas.

Throughout the year, violence and IS recruitment in Al-Hawl IDP camp, Al-Hasakah, continued. For instance, in May, alleged IS female residents killed six people. In late August, SDF conducted a major operation against IS operatives from the camp, arresting at least 60 suspected IS militants. On September 20, SDF personnel intercepted seven IS fighters in two vehicles, planning a suicide attack, on their way to the camp. While en route, one vehicle exploded prematurely near Um Fakik village, Al-Hasakah, alerting SDF. One IS fighter detonated his suicide vest, killing himself. SDF personnel shot dead one IS militant and arrested one.

AFGHANISTAN

In Afghanistan, the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) continued its activities. ISKP killed at least 269 people, while itself losing at least 45 of its members throughout the year. Among the group's main targets were Shiite and other religious minorities. For instance, on April 21, ISKP killed at least twelve civilians in a bomb attack on a Shiite mosque in Mazar-i-Sharif, Balkh Province, injuring 90 others. In another IED attack on a Shiite mosque in Kunduz, Kunduz Province, at least 33 people were killed and another 43 injured on April 22. In a twin bombing targeting mini buses carrying Shiite passengers in Mazar-i-Sharif, Balkh Province, ISKP killed at least nine and injured 13 others. The group also claimed responsibility for an attack on a Sikh temple in Kabul, Kabul Province, that killed at least one and injured seven others on June 19. According to Taliban sources, three ISKP militants were killed in the ensuing firefight by security forces. In another incident on September 30, 43 people were killed and another 110 injured, in a bomb attack targeting a school in a neighborhood mainly inhabited by Shiite Hazara.

ISKP also attacked the Russian embassy in Kabul, Kabul Province, with an IED, killing at least six and injuring approx. ten on September 5. In another attack on an embassy, ISKP militants attempted to assassinate the Pakistani ambassador to Afghanistan on December 2, fatally shooting one of the embassy's security personnel in the attack.

Following the Taliban's take-over of the government in August 2021, ISKP continued to attack and clash with the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan throughout the year. On January 11, for instance, ISKP ambushed and killed a local Taliban intelligence chief in Bati Kot District, Nangarhar Province. On December 12, a provincial police chief and two of his guards were killed by a car bomb in Fayzabad, Badakhshan Province, with another two people being injured. According to Taliban sources, security forces, on the other hand, conducted at least ten raids on ISKP hideouts throughout the country. On August 3, for instance, four ISKP militants were killed and another captured during a police operation

in Kabul's Karti Sakhi neighborhood, Kabul Province. In the clashes, two police officers were killed and four injured. In another raid on October 22, security forces killed four ISKP militants including two commanders in Dashti Qala District, Takhar Province.

IRAQ

IS continued its attacks primarily in Anbar, Baghdad, Babil, Diyala, Kirkuk, Nineveh, and Salah Al-Din Governorates. For instance, on January 21, IS militants stormed army barracks in the al-Azim district outside Baqouba city, Diyala Governorate, killing eleven military personnel. From February 24 to April, 69 attacks, mostly targeting security forces, were attributed to IS.

In the following months, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) continued counter-operations, resulting in a significant increase in clashes and airstrikes targeting IS militants in Nineveh, Kirkuk, Salah Al-Din, and Anbar Governorates. IS continued to mount strategic attacks, in particular targeting infrastructure and agriculture. On May 23, IS militants set fire to wheat fields in two villages in southern Kirkuk Governorate, and then attacked security forces and civilians who came to extinguish the fire, killing three security personnel and three civilians. On the same day, another IS cell attacked civilians harvesting crops in Diyala Governorate, leaving nine civilians dead. A police car was also shot and attacked by an improvised IED with no injuries recorded. On July 5, ISF attacked IS militants in a cave in the Karaw mountain area, Kirkuk Governorate, leaving two IS fighters dead. On July 20, IS militants attacked a security checkpoint of the federal police near Al-Jalam village, Salah Al-Din Governorate, leaving six military personnel dead and seven more injured.

Both IS and security forces continued their operations in the second half of the year, albeit on a smaller scale. For instance, on November 11, Iraqi warplanes conducted an airstrike on an IS position in Salah Al-Din Governorate, killing five IS militants and capturing three others. On November 19, IS attacked an army position in Kirkuk Governorate, killing four soldiers. On December 18, IS militants attacked a police patrol, detonating an IED and then attacking with machine guns and hand grenades in Riyadh district, Kirkuk Governorate, killing at least nine security personnel and leaving one IS militant dead.

Throughout the year, US forces together with the ISF conducted 19 operations against IS, arresting 159 IS militants and leaving at least 220 dead.

EGYPT

As in previous years, most clashes occurred in the North Sinai Governorate, particularly in the cities of Rafah and Bir al-Abd. Over the year, at least 20 security personnel died in attacks the IS claimed responsibility for. Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) continued to fight against IS and other militant groups operating in the same area, killing at least 17 militants. [→ Egypt (militant groups / Sinai Peninsula)].

On March 16, Sinai Province, a local affiliate of the IS, pledged allegiance to the new leader of IS via its Amaq publishing outlet. On March 24, Sinai Province attacked EAF and the anti-IS coalition Union of Sinai Tribes, leading to the death of five tribal fighters, four Egyptian security personnel and seven militants. On May 7, one of the deadliest attacks against Egyptian security forces in recent years occurred. Militants foiled an attack on a water pumping station east of the Suez Canal, killing at least eleven military personnel, including one

officer, and injuring another five. The Sinai Province claimed responsibility for the attacks two days later. On May 11, IS operatives attacked an Egyptian army checkpoint, killing at least five soldiers and wounding another two. EAF killed seven of the attackers and seized a collection of machine guns, hand grenades, and ammunition.

In August, the Sinai Province clashed with EAF and other state-allied tribal groups. For instance, on August 11, armed groups of Sinai Province besieged vital infrastructure in El Quantara, Ismailia Governorate. EAF and the police entered the area with the help of state-allied tribal groups. On August 15, members from Sinai Province occupied a stretch of the Arish-Quantara International Road, a main road of North Sinai and infiltrated the village of Gelbana, Ismailia Governorate, by planting a web of explosives around the city. On the same day, the Sinai Province clashed with a tribal group fighting alongside the EAF, killing three civilians and three militants and kidnapping another three.

LIBYA

Throughout 2022, the so-called Islamic State in Libya (ISL) organizational power and influence remained at a low level. On several occasions, ISL clashed with the Libyan National Army (LNA) in the districts of Murzuq and Sabha. For instance, on January 17 and following days, ISL members attacked LNA brigades around the city of Al Qatrun, Murzuq district, leaving six LNA fighters and four militants dead. In the same area, between January 26 and 28, LNA launched a security operation which led to a three day long clash with ISL. 24 ISL members and four LNA fighters were killed during the fighting. On April 25, LNA injured one person and found explosive devices after opening fire on a vehicle allegedly belonging to ISL near the town of Ghadduwa, Sabha district. On May 29, LNA launched an air force-supported military operation in Al Qatrun after suspecting ISL members in the area, which led to a confrontation with local Tebu members refusing LNA the entry to the city and airbase. On June 18, LNA announced the arrest of one ISL member in Bani Walid, Misrata district. On September 7, LNA forces killed a senior IS operative in Al Qatrun. In another security operation near Al Qatrun LNA killed seven ISL members, captured two and secured weapons, ammunition and vehicles, on November 16.

In the second half of the year, trials against ISL members took place in Misrata city, eponymous district and Tripoli. On August 8, 56 people stood trial in Misrata for alleged ISL membership and killings. In a similar case, on December 19, the Tripoli Criminal Court found 33 former ISL members guilty of conducting armed attacks, destroying property, and contributing to the deaths of 53 people. The court sentenced 17 of the 33 defendants to death and 16 to prison.

Further, on October 2, a mass grave with 42 unidentified bodies was found in Sirte city, eponymous district. It is one of multiple mass graves found in recent years in the same area which contained the remains of Christians, that ISL had admitted to having executed between 2015 and 2016.

LEBANON

In Lebanon, security forces continued to carry out raids against IS throughout the year. They arrested several IS members in the capital Beirut in February over plans to attack religious Shiite sites, as well as in Beqaa valley, eponymous governorate, in September over planned attacks on Lebanon's military posts.

On August 25, Lebanese security forces arrested members of a Syrian IS cell who sought refuge in Ayta ash-Shab and Maroun El-Ras, South Governorate. After their arrest, security forces interrogated and allegedly tortured one detainee in South Lebanon State Security Center in Bint Jbeil, Nabatieh Governorate, leading to his death. No attacks were carried out by IS.

TÜRKIYE

In Türkiye, the government conducted raids and detentions as part of counterterrorism operations against the Islamic State (IS) across the country as well as in border regions in Syria. IS-members in Türkiye did not conduct any attacks throughout the year.

While raids took place throughout Türkiye, most raids were conducted in the capital Ankara and Istanbul city, eponymous province, as well as in the provinces close to the Syrian border, such as Adana, Hatay, Mersin and Sanliurfa. In the first half of the year, Turkish security forces detained at least 83 individuals with suspected ties to IS. For instance, on March 10, security forces detained four suspects and raided an office building in Ankara that had been allegedly used to transfer funds to IS members. In the second half of the year, security forces detained at least 170 suspects, at least 45 in December alone. For instance, on December 1, Türkiye reported their National Intelligence Organization, in operations conducted with local security forces of the Syrian National Army, captured five suspects in the area of Türkiye's Operation Peace Spring in northern Syria bordering Türkiye.

SAUDI ARABIA

On an international level, Saudi Arabia took part in three initiatives to counter IS. On May 11, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS (GCDI) held a ministerial meeting in the Moroccan capital Marrakech, to discuss ongoing and future efforts to counter IS. In the following month, on June 7, the multinational Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC) designated 13 individuals and three entities as being linked to terrorist organizations, of which four people and one company were directly connected to IS. Later in the year, on November 18, Saudi Arabia, the US, and Italy hosted the Counter ISIS Finance Groups meeting online, to debate ongoing and future efforts to counter IS financing.

On a domestic level, on March 12, Saudi authorities executed 81 men for terrorism-related offenses. According to the Saudi Press Agency, the convicts were linked to IS, al-Qaeda, and Yemen's al-Houthi rebel forces [→ Saudi Arabia, Yemen (AQAP); Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)]. rbu, njk, sap, sol, sag

TUNISIA (OPPOSITION) •

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2010**

Conflict parties: civil society groups, opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition and civil society groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The government under President Kais Saied carried out four major political maneuvers this year.

Saied announced on February 6 the dissolution of the Supreme Judicial Council and the dismissal of 57 judges. On February 13, at least 2,000 protested in the capital Tunis demanding judicial independence.

On February 18, Saied prolonged the state of emergency until the end of the year and on March 30, he announced the dissolution of parliament. The parliament had already been suspended since the previous year after it defied Saied by voting to repeal decrees that give him near total power. The same day, approx. 1,000 people protested in the capital Tunis. Moreover, five opposition parties formed the Opposition Front under the leadership of the Islamic party Ennahda on May 15. Two other violent clashes between security personnel and protesters occurred on June 4 and July 22, leaving at least 30 protesters injured.

On July 26, a constitutional referendum passed with a vote of 94.6 percent in favor and a turnout of 30.5 percent, allowing Saied to dissolve the parliament, to appoint new judges and to prevent impeachment. Ahead of the vote, opposition parties publicly called for a boycott. On December 17, in the parliamentary election, 92 percent of eligible voters did not cast their ballot.

Throughout the year, protesters clashed with security forces. For instance, Ennahda organized a protest against Saied on January 14, the anniversary of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fleeing into exile. Police used water cannons, batons, and tear gas, injuring at least 20 protesters. One protester later died in hospital from his injuries. The protest defied a Covid-19 ban on gatherings. On October 15, the rival opposition groups Ennahada and the Free Constitutional Party held parallel protests in Tunis, with thousands of protesters denouncing Saied's consolidation of political power amid worsening economic conditions, such as fuel and food shortages. lwb

TÜRKIYE (OPPOSITION) .

Intensity: **2** | Change: | Start: **2013**

Conflict parties: HDP, Nation Alliance, TIP vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The non-violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system, between the Nation Alliance consisting of the Republican People's Party (CHP), The Good Party (İYİ), the Felicity Party (SP), and the Democrat Party (DP) as well as the People's Democratic Party (HDP) and the Worker's Party (TIP) on the one hand, and the Turkish government run by the People's Alliance lead by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) on the other, continued.

On June 9, Erdogan announced his candidature for the parliamentary elections in June 2023, challenging CHP's oppositional candidate Kemal Kilicdaroglu. On September 26, a new political alliance between HDP and TIP was formed, challenging the two already existing alliances.

Throughout the year, the police made multiple arrests against CHP opposition members and journalists, in some cases resulting in prison sentences. For instance, on April 25, an Istanbul court sentenced one person to life in prison on charges of trying to overthrow the government by financing protests. On December 14, the Turkish Court convicted the CHP presidential candidate Erkem Imamoglu of insulting

members of the Supreme Election Board, sentenced him to two years in prison, and imposed a political ban on him. The court's decision was followed by civilian rallies demanding Imamoglu's release.

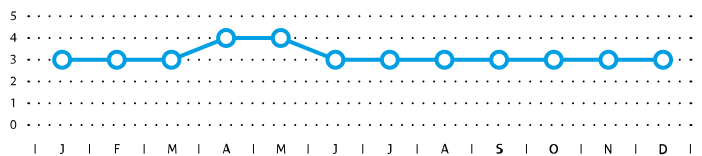
On October 13, the government adopted a new media law proposed by Erdogan. The law imposes prison sentences on journalists and social media users for up to three years for spreading disinformation. Consequently, police headquarters filed a complaint and called for a court case over a tweet by Kilicdaroglu, which accused the AKP of using drug smuggling money to finance the government. gov

TÜRKIYE (PKK, KCK) .

Intensity: **4** | Change: | Start: **1978**

Conflict parties: KCK, PKK vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy



The limited war over autonomy between the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and its alleged umbrella organization Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) on the one hand, and the Turkish government, on the other, continued. Throughout the year, at least 484 people were killed and eight injured.

Clashes between the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) and PKK mostly took place in the southeastern Turkish provinces of Agri, Van, Hakkari, Diyarbakir, Sanliurfa, and Sirnak as well as in the governorates of the Kurdistan Region of the Republic of Iraq (KRI). Most of the military confrontations took place on KRI territory rather than in Türkiye.

In Türkiye, the government launched 16 new military operations in the southeastern territory, continuing Operation Eren. For instance, on May 17, TAF killed one PKK member in Agri province. The operation consisted of 915 military personnel and officially aimed to defeat the so-called Mount Agri group, an alleged militant PKK subgroup. Within all Eren Operations, TAF killed 31 PKK members and arrested 45 more. Additionally, 33 PKK members surrendered to security forces. During the operations, TAF was sometimes reported to confiscate cannabis, allegedly a source of financing for PKK. For instance, on October 10, in Diyarbakir province, the task force consisting of 650 personnel including teams of gendarmerie and security guards, seized at least 3,000kg of cannabis and thousands of cannabis plants.

In Iraq, TAF continued their series of Claw Operations. On April 17, TAF launched a new Claw-Lock air and ground operation, deploying special forces, UAVs, helicopters, and fighter jets as well as Akinci drones in the Metina, Zap, and Avasin-Basyan regions of KRI. For instance, according to a pro-government news agency, on May 28, TAF killed 18 PKK members using combat drones in Duhok Governorate. In another Claw Operation, on May 16, TAF killed four PKK members in Erbil Governorate. On August 31, the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) killed an alleged director of the PKK military training academy in Duhok.

At the end of August, Turkish media mentioned for the first time the KCK, a group described as being ideologically close to PKK and supporting the establishment of a democratic

confederation proposed by one of the PKK founders. On August 31, MIT claimed to have killed one KCK member in the Gara region, Dohuk. Later, on October 10, MIT arrested a KCK member in Nineveh Governorate, subsequently transferring him to Türkiye.

On October 25, police detained the head of the Turkish Medical Association, for allegedly spreading terrorist propaganda after her call to investigate claims about TAF using chemical weapons against PKK. sak

YEMEN (AL-HIRAK / SOUTHERN YEMEN)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2007**

Conflict parties: Al-Hirak vs. government

Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over secession of southern Yemen between al-Hirak, also known as the Southern Movement and dominated by the Southern Transitional Council (STC), backed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), on the one hand, and the government represented by the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), backed by Saudi Arabia, on the other, continued. This year, at least 290 people were killed in the context of this conflict.

On March 1, STC military forces raided the headquarters of the ruling party General People’s Congress in the interim capital of Aden, eponymous governorate. On April 7, Interim President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi resigned and transferred his executive powers to the newly founded, internationally recognized Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), comprising rival political groups. The Saudi-backed anti-Houthi alliance, PLC, replaced the 2019 Riyadh Agreement. Despite STC President Aidarus al-Zoubaidi being the vice president of PLC, parts of STC challenged the legitimacy of the new government throughout the year. For instance, on July 13, violence escalated between tribal forces loyal to STC and PLC in Al-Qatn city, Hadhramaut governorate, involving guns and injuring five PLC military personnel.

On August 10, STC took control of Ataq city, Shabwah governorate, forcing the Yemeni Army units under PLC command to withdraw, the clashes left more than 53 fighters on both sides wounded. On August 22, al-Zoubaidi announced the military operation Arrows of the East in Abyan governorate to secure it from militant groups, such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula [→ Yemen (AQAP – al-Houthi forces); Saudi Arabia, Yemen (AQAP)]. STC announced the operation despite the directive of PLC leader Rashad al-Alimi to stop all military operations in Abyan until the repositioning of the military units present in Abyan and the announcement of the transfer of power by the Security and Military Committee was completed. Nonetheless, on August 24, STC forces took control of Abyan, after the army and security forces handed over the province to STC without violent resistance. On September 11, STC resumed “Arrows of the East” in Abyan, entering Wadea, Madiyah, and Lauder districts.

The STC continued to establish influence in the Mahra and Socotra governorates. For example, on August 30, a STC representative met with tribal leaders of those governorates, promising future independence of those regions. On October 3, STC opposed the attempts of the UN and PLC to extend the nationwide truce with the Houthi rebels that ended on October 2 [→ Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)]. lab

YEMEN (AQAP – AL-HOUSHI FORCES)

Intensity: **3** | Change: | Start: **2010**

Conflict parties: al-Houthi forces vs. Ansar al-Sharia, AQAP

Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational pre-dominance

The violent crisis over the religious and political system and subnational predominance between al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), supported by its local arm, Ansar al-Sharia (ASY), on the one hand, and Ansar Allah, commonly known as the al-Houthi, on the other, continued.

Despite a UN-mediated ceasefire agreement between the al-Houthi forces and the Saudi-backed, internationally recognized government between April 2 and October 2, AQAP continued their attacks on al-Houthi forces [→ Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)]. According to a UNSC report, in February, AQAP had approx. 3,000 fighters and continued to suffer losses caused by both internal divisions and military offensives, announcing on January 20, that a US airstrike killed its military commander.

Throughout the year, AQAP conducted several attacks using IEDs to target al-Houthi vehicles in the Al-Bayda and Shabwah governorates. For instance, on February 10, AQAP conducted a sniper attack on Houthi fighters, while on February 11, AQAP detonated an IED on an al-Houthi truck, both in Al-Bayda. On April 22, AQAP claimed an ambush on al-Houthi forces in As-Sawmaah district, Al-Bayda, where they also detonated an IED on an al-Houthi vehicle and fired on it with rifles. On May 22, AQAP detonated an IED on an al-Houthi truck in Mayfa’ah, Shabwah, killing and wounding those inside.

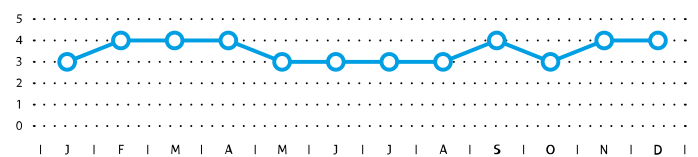
Moreover, on April 13, AQAP assisted a prison break, freeing 15 inmates, including ASY fighters, from a coalition-run prison in Seiyun city, Hadhramaut governorate. vbo

YEMEN, SAUDI ARABIA (AL-HOUSHI FORCES)

Intensity: **4** | Change: **↘** | Start: **2004**

Conflict parties: al-Houthi forces vs. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen

Conflict items: national power



The war over national power between Ansar Allah, commonly known as the al-Houthi, supported by the Iranian government, on the one hand, and the internationally recognized Yemeni government embodied by the newly founded Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and supported by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, anti-Houthi popular resistance, and tribal forces, on the other, de-escalated to a limited war. This year, new peace negotiations took place and led to a UN-mediated agreement on a two-month, nationwide truce from April 2, which was later extended until it expired on

October 2 without the parties reaching an agreement on further extensions. On April 7, Yemen's Interim President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi transferred his powers to a Presidential Leadership Council, which was sworn in on April 17 in the interim capital Aden [→ Yemen (al-Hirak / Southern Yemen)].

At the beginning of the year, al-Houthi forces claimed responsibility for attacks on the Saudi-led coalition. For instance, on January 17, al-Houthi drone attacks sparked an explosion in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, leaving three dead and several injured. On February 21, al-Houthi forces launched a drone targeting the airport in Jazan, eponymous province, Saudi Arabia. The destruction of the drone by Saudi Arabia left 16 people injured. The Saudi-led coalition retaliated with a heavy offensive against al-Houthi strongholds. For instance, on January 21, the coalition forces attacked an al-Houthi prison in Sa'ada district, eponymous governorate, leaving at least 80 dead and more than 240 injured. On February 4, the Saudi-led coalition carried out several airstrikes on the al-Houthi in Taiz governorate, killing at least seven al-Houthi militants.

Clashes continued despite the truce. Between April and July, the Saudi-led coalition attacked a number of al-Houthi strongholds. For instance, on April 28, they conducted airstrikes in Taiz and Al-Baidha governorates, leaving 15 civilians dead. On July 11, a crossborder fire with Saudi-led forces in Sa'ada left at least 17 civilians dead and injured several. Al-Houthi forces also continued their attacks throughout the truce. On April 29, they launched a rocket on Mushrifah village, Taiz, leaving five dead. On July 20, al-Houthi forces laid siege to a village in Al-Bayda, bombarding houses, killing 15.

In August, al-Houthi launched a series of attacks on the Saudi-led coalition. According to official sources, these attacks left 13 military personnel dead and wounded 27 others. A few days later, the Houthi launched another attack on government forces in Taiz, killing at least 33 and injuring 37 persons.

Despite a truce-related decline in civilian deaths resulting from bombings and shootings, the number of deaths and injuries from landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) continued to rise. In July, the UN Special Envoy for Yemen noted that the number of people wounded in regular fighting had decreased by around two-thirds but that most reported injuries resulted from ERWs. On September 22, a joint statement by 30 NGOs to the UN General Assembly confirmed that while civilian casualties dropped by more than half from April to June, compared to the three months prior, casualties as a result of ERWs increased. From June to November, UNMHA recorded 159 casualties from ERW-related incidents in Al Hudaydah governorate. Yemeni authorities have not released any official statistics.

With the truce, the number of new instances of IDPs had been declining. However, IOM Yemen reports that between January 1 and November 5, at least 55,656 persons had been displaced. In addition, al-Houthi bombed civilian targets and IDP camps in the Ma'rib and Taiz governorates, resulting in civilian deaths and injuries. In late October, shelling and sniper fire killed two civilians and wounded nine more in Taiz, of whom one later died in hospital. On November 7, a government weapons storage facility exploded due to fighting in Ma'rib, leaving four IDPs dead and at least five more injured. ^{16f}

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