



# CONFLICT BAROMETER | 2017

Heidelberg Institute for  
International Conflict Research

## Codebook Dataset 2017



disputes  
non-violent crises  
violent crises  
limited wars  
wars

## Codebook Conflict Barometer 2017

The HIIK dataset is based on information gathered in its CONTRA database. For each conflict, the dataset provides specific conflict information. Explanations regarding items, conflict intensity, and conflict types can be found in the following methodological section.

The database contains the following information:

<u>Variable Label</u>	<u>Description</u>
region	name of the greater conflict region
ID	conflict ID
conflict	conflict name (may vary over time)
type	conflict type (inter, sub, intra, trans)
start	start year, conflict-constitutive measure
intensity 2016	conflict intensity in 2016
intensity 2017	conflict intensity in 2017
<u>Items</u>	
territory	definition or change of an interstate border
secession	territorial separation from a sovereign state with the aim of establishing a new state or joining another state
autonomy	gaining or extending regional or sectoral self-determination of a population
system / ideology	change of the national or international system / ideologies with national or international scope
national power	central government power
subnational predominance	de facto political, economic, or cultural predominance that is not formulated in statist terms
international power	change of the power constellation in the global system or one of its regional subsystems
resources	natural resources
other	residual category

Additionally, this codebook provides information on inactive conflicts in 2017, closed conflicts in 2017, and several explanations on changes of basic conflict data such as merged conflicts, changed conflict names, transformed conflicts, newly opened conflicts and backdated newly opened conflicts. The HIIK cannot guarantee the completeness of the provided information. However, it aims at a more a transparent process of data collection and contributing to a higher usefulness of our data. If you have questions regarding the process of data gathering, contact [methodik@hiik.de](mailto:methodik@hiik.de).

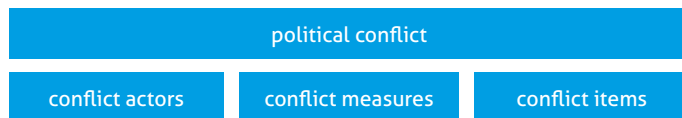
Marilena Geugjes, Marko Hermsen, Franziska Linke, Vincent Stüber

## Methodology

Since 1991, quantitative conflict research at the HIIK has analyzed political conflicts by focusing on conflict processes rather than e.g. purely quantitative thresholds of casualties of war. Thus, the HIIK is particularly concerned with the concrete actions and communications between conflict parties. Such a process-oriented approach gives the analysis of political conflicts, especially regarding intensities, a broader and more detailed empirical foundation.

Beginning in 2011, the HIIK in cooperation with Heidelberg University has taken steps to further elaborate its methodological approach. In particular, the institute has revised its definition of political conflicts and restructured its conflict intensity assessment. The latter now not only takes into account the intensity for a given conflict area in a given year, but determines the intensity of a conflict for first-level sub-national political units and months as well. As such, it allows for a much more detailed measurement of conflict dynamics. Furthermore, the conflict actions and communications, on which the assessment of violent conflict episodes is based are now evaluated by combining qualitative and quantitative indicators of the means and consequences of violence. This is intended to further enhance the exactitude, reliability, and reproducibility of the conflict information provided.

## THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT



According to the Heidelberg approach, a political conflict is a perceived incompatibility of intentions between individuals or social groups. Such an incompatibility emerges from the presence of actors who communicate and act with regard to certain objects. These actions and communications are known as measures, while the objects form the issues of positional differences. Actors, measures, and issues are the constitutive attributes of political conflict.

## CONFLICT ACTORS

Conflict actors are individuals or collectives that are relevant because they are taken into account by other conflict actors in their decision-making processes. Collective actors are characterized by a shared structure of preferences. They include states, international organizations, and non-state actors.

## CONFLICT MEASURES

Conflict measures are actions and communications carried out by a conflict actor in the context of a political conflict. They are constitutive for an identifiable conflict if they lie outside established procedures of conflict regulations

and—possibly in conjunction with other measures—if they threaten the international order or a core function of the state. Established regulatory procedures are defined as those mechanisms of conflict management that are accepted by the conflict actors. Examples include elections and court proceedings. Established procedures of regulation must be performed without resorting to the use or threat of physical violence. Core state functions encompass providing security of a population, integrity of a territory and of a specific political, socioeconomic or cultural order. A state function or the international order is threatened if its fulfilment and persistence, respectively, becomes unlikely in a conflict actor's point of view.

## CONFLICT ISSUES

Conflict issues are material or immaterial goods pursued by conflict actors via conflict measures. Due to the character of conflict measures, conflict issues attain relevance for the society as a whole—either for the coexistence within a given state or between states. Conflict issues are classified on the basis of ten items representing common goals of conflict actors: System/Ideology is encoded if a conflict actor aspires a change of the ideological, religious, socioeconomic or judicial orientation of the political system or changing the regime type itself. National power means the power to govern a state. Whereas Autonomy refers to attaining or extending political self-rule of a population within a state or of a dependent territory without striving for independence, Secession refers to the aspired separation of a part of a territory of a state aiming to establish a new state or to merge with another state. Furthermore, Decolonization aims at the independence of a dependent territory. Subnational Predominance focuses on the attainment of the de-facto control by a government, a non-state organization or a population over a territory or a population. The item Resources is encoded if the possession of natural resources or raw materials, or the profits gained thereof, is pursued. Territory means a change of the course of an international border, while International Power as an item describes the change aspired in the power constellation in the international system or a regional system therein, especially by changing military capabilities or the political or economic influence of a state. The item Other is used as residual category.

## THE CONCEPT OF CONFLICT INTENSITY

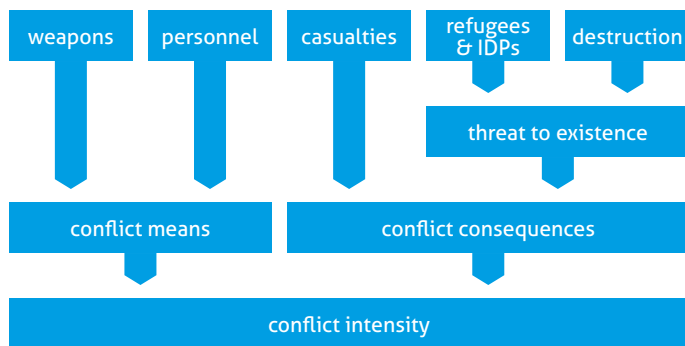
intensity level	terminology	level of violence	intensity class
1	dispute	non-violent conflicts	low intensity
2	non-violent crisis		
3	violent crisis	violent conflicts	medium intensity
4	limited war		high intensity
5	war		

In addition to the three constituting elements—conflict actors, measures, and items—conflict intensity is an essential feature of political conflicts. Conflict intensity is an attribute of the sum of conflict measures in a specific political conflict in a geographical area and a given space of time. The primary units of analysis are the calendar month and the 'region,' i.e. the first-level subnational administrative unit of a country. The basic conflict intensity is therefore determined for a 'region-month.' Since 2003, the HIIK has been using a five-level model of conflict intensity. Under its revised methodology, the intensity levels are now known as dispute, non-violent crisis, violent crisis, limited war, and war.

The last three levels constitute the category of violent conflicts, in contrast to the non-violent conflicts (dispute and non-violent crisis). Whereas a dispute is a political conflict carried out without resorting to violence, in a non-violent crisis one of the actors threatens to use violence. This includes violence against objects without taking the risk to harm persons, the refusal of arms surrender, pointing weapon systems against each other and sanctions.

## ASSESSING THE INTENSITIES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS

When measuring the three levels of violent conflict, five proxies are used indicating the means and consequences of violent conflict measures. The dimension of means encompasses the use of weapons and personnel, the dimension of consequences the number of casualties, destruction, and refugees/internally displaced persons.



Each indicator is scored on a ternary scale. Aggregating the five individual scores results in the total intensity of a region-month.

		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). Regarding the extent to which the fighting capacity of heavy arms is exploited, we differentiate restrictive and extensive use.

## 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. Counted are all persons who, by their actions, collectively 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-month is evaluated, comprising the number of deaths from violent measures or their direct consequences. Persons dying due to indirect effects, e.g. starvation or disease, are not counted. The thresholds employed here 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

Evaluated is the overall number of cross-border refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in a region-month. Displacement is the migration of human beings provoked by conflict measures, e.g. by creating inhumane living conditions. Taken into account is flow, not stock data. The thresholds employed here are 1,000 and 20,000 refugees.

## DESTRUCTION

The amount of destruction resulting from the conflict during the whole month and within the subnational unit is determined in four dimensions considered essential for civil populations: infrastructure, accommodation, economy, and culture.

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

## UP- AND DOWNGRADING

When assessing conflict intensities the HIIK differentiates between violent and non-violent conflicts. If violence occurred, we assess the region-month intensity (RMI, see above). RMIs are the first pillar for determining the yearly intensity for a specific conflict region (region-year intensity) as well as the overall area-year intensity of a conflict (area-year intensity). A conflict area is the sum of all subnational units affected by the violent conflict in question. In the standard case, the area-year intensity is equal to the highest RMI in a given area-year. Like this, intensities of a certain spatiotemporal unit directly translate into a certain 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. Up- and downgrading becomes relevant in the following example: two conflicts 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 RMI. In this case, it might be out of proportion to assign the same conflict intensity to both conflicts. Therefore, we apply up- and downgrading rules, the second pillar of our conflict intensity assessment, fine-tuning conflict intensities in order to ensure a better comparability.

This decision is based on the conflicts' annual and area-wide numbers of refugees / IDPs and casualties. A violent crisis must thereby be upgraded to a limited war level if more than 360 casualties or more than 18,000 refugees were counted in the whole year in the conflict area. A limited war must be upgraded to war level if more than 1,080 fatalities or more than 360,000 refugees were counted. In contrast, a limited war must be downgraded to a violent crisis if not less than 120 casualties and less than 6,000 refugees were counted. Likewise, a war must be downgraded to limited war level if less than 360 casualties and less than 120,000 refugees were counted. The area-year intensity is both displayed above each conflict description in this publication as well as in the regional conflict overviews.

## CONFLICT TYPES

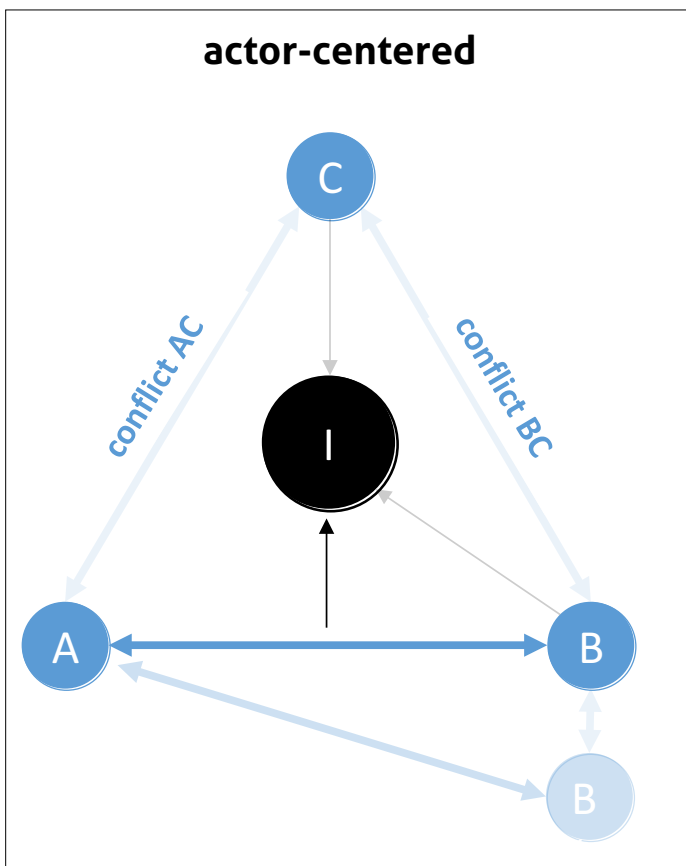
The methodology of HIIK distinguishes between interstate, intrastate, substate, and transstate conflicts. Whereas interstate conflicts only involve internationally recognized state actors, intrastate conflicts involve both state actors and non-state actors. Substate conflicts are carried out solely among non-state actors. Transstate conflicts involve both state and non-state actors and meet the criteria of political conflict for at least two sovereign states.

## FRAMING

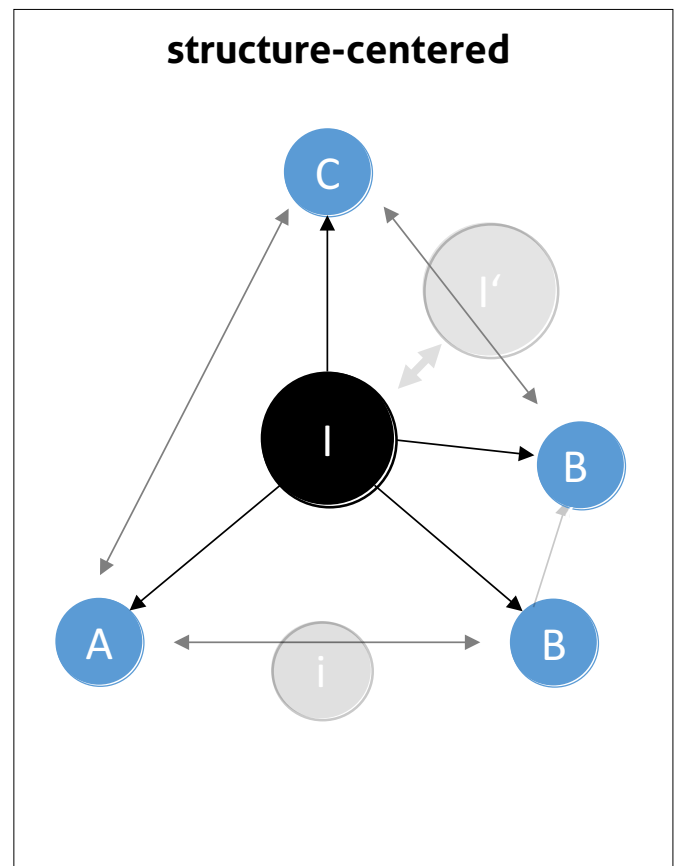
With the term 'framing' we refer to the HIIK's approach to assess a certain political conflict. Conflict frames are based on the three basic elements of a political conflict: its relevant actors, items, and measures. On the one hand, we capture conflicts as narrow and precise as possible. On the other, we aim at creating conflict frames that are time-stable without ignoring annual changes in the three basic elements of a political conflict.

In the majority of the cases, we apply one of the following two framing approaches. First, we frame conflicts actor-centered. This means we mainly focus on specific actors within a certain conflict, while conflict items might change. This frame is useful in order to observe actors over longer time periods. However, this frame bears the risk of ignoring actor changes or other actors that might become relevant for this conflict (see graph 1). Here, the conflict actors structure the conflict observation.

Second, we frame conflicts structure-centered. Examples are opposition conflicts in which actor constellations frequently change, but their political dimensions are inherent to the structure of their social environments. Structure-centered frames are useful to capture the conflictive relations that evolve from certain conflict items over longer time periods. In comparison to the actor-centered frame, the structure-centered frame bears the risk of becoming too broad, incorporating too many actors and measures so that the conflict frame lacks analytical focus. Also, this frame bears the risk of ignoring item changes or other items that are relevant for a certain conflict (see graph 2). Therefore, the HIIK frequently examines structure-centered frames regarding their appropriateness for observing certain conflicts. Within these frames, the conflict items structure the process of conflict observation.



Graph 1: actor-centered framing



Graph 2: structure-centered framing

actor   item

## Inactive conflicts

Nr	ID	name	region	comment
1	10000	Azerbaijan – Iran	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
2	10028	Georgia (Armenian minority)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
3	10029	Georgia (Azeri minority)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
4	11058	Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnian Croats / Herzegovina)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
5	10908	Bulgaria(opposition)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
6	10013	Greece – FYROM (official name of FYROM)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
7	10132	Serbia (Albanian minority / Presevo Valley)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
8	11054	Serbia (Bosniak minority / Sandzak)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
9	10031	Serbia (Islamist militant groups / Sandzak)	Europe	inactive since 2013 or longer
10	10202	Turkey – Greece (border)	Europe	inactive since 2016 oder longer
11	20049	Nigeria (MOSOP, Ogoni / Niger Delta)	Africa	inactive
12	41066	Samoa (landowner protests)	Asia and Oceania	inactive inactive since 2016 (tensions within the Berber community persist though they are rather accentuated towards the government. As future local tensions cannot be ruled out, the conflict was not closed)
13	54001	Algeria (Malekites-Mozabites / Ghardaia)	VMO	inactive since 2016
14	50049	Afghanistan (Kuchi Nomads – Hazara)	VMO	inactive since 2017
15	50048	Egypt (Bedouin activists)	VMO	inactive since 2015 or longer (no violent measures were observed for the past two years. Due to the conflict's history, the conflict is not actively closed but rather put on a observatory status. )
16	51005	Lebanon (Sunni – Alawite)	VMO	inactive since 2015 or longer (federalism demands are not actively pursued any more, the conflict actors converged with LNA)
17	51044	Libya (Federalist / Cyrenaica)	VMO	inactive since 2016
18	50122	Saudi Arabia (AQAP)	VMO	inactive since 2015 or longer (no violent measures were observed for the past two years. Due to the conflict's history, the conflict is not actively closed but rather put on a observatory status. )
19	50419	Turkey (Huda Par – PKK / Kurdish Regions)	VMO	inactive since 2015
20	50025	Turkey – Iraq	VMO	inactive since 2016 or longer
21	20954	Uganda (Baganda / Buganda)	Africa	



closed conflicts

Nr	ID	name	region	comment
1	20005	South Africa (KwaZulu – Natal)	Africa	closed (inactive since 2000 or longer)
2	20010	Tanzania (Uamsho / Zanzibar)	Africa	closed (last measure in 2014) actively closed in 2017 (an agreement was negotiated and implemented in September 2017)
3	40092	Australia – Timor-Leste	Asia and Oceania	closed
4	40061	Bhutan – Nepal	Asia and Oceania	closed (inactive for several years)
5	41086	India (PULF) India (inter-militant rivalry /	Asia and Oceania	
6	40020	Meghalaya)	Asia and Oceania	closed
7	41091	Pakistan (inter-islamist rivalry)	Asia and Oceania	closed
8	50235	Turkey – Russia	VMO	closed

## merged conflicts

Nr	ID	Name	Region	comment
1	10786	Serbia (Serbian minority – Kosovar government)	Europe	merged; in Serbia (Kosovo) integriert
2	10671	Russia – Ukraine (Crimea)	Europe	merged, in 10231 Russia – Ukraine
3	10111	Ukraine (right-wing militants)	Europe	merged, in Ukraine (opposition)
4	20314	Kenya (Mungiki)	Africa	merged; in 20179 Kenya (opposition)
5	40453	Bangladesh (inter-militant rivalry / Chittagong Hill Tracts)	Asia and Oceania	merged in 41014 Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts)
6	42006	India (inter-factional rivalry / Nagaland)	Asia and Oceania	merged into India Nagalim
7	50012	Iran – USA, EU (nuclear program)	VMO	merged into 50013 Iran – USA, items international power und system

new conflicts start 2017

Nr	ID	Name	Region	comment
		Colombia (artisanal miners /		
1	30321	Antioquia)	Americas	new (start year 2017)
2	30228	Colombia (FARC dissidents)	Americas	new (start year 2017)
		Dominican Republic (anti-		
3	33101	corruption)	Americas	new (start year 2017)
4	56250	Iraq (KRG – YBS)	MENA	new (start year 2017)
5	50099	Qatar – Saudi Arabia et al.	MENA	new (start year 2017)
		Ethiopia (inter-ethnic		
6	23678	rivalry)	Africa	new (start year 2017)


new conflicts start before 2017

Nr	ID	name	region	comment
1	20816	DR Congo (KN)	Africa	retroactively opened (start year 2016)
2	20378	Somalia (ISS)	Africa	retroactively opened (start year 2015)
3	21085	Djibouti – Eritrea	Africa	retroactively opened (start year 1996)
4	32887	USA (right-wing extremists)	Americas	retroactively opened (Start 1990)
5	50333	Iran – Saudi Arabia	MENA	retroactively opened (1979)

## transformed conflicts

ID	name	region	comment
20618	DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR)	Africa	name was changed to DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR, CNRD) from DR Congo, Rwanda (FDLR)
20200	Nigeria (MASSOB/BIAFRA)	Africa	name changed from Nigeria (MASSOB/BIAFRA) to Nigeria (Pro-Biafra Groups/Biafra)
20920	South Sudan (SPLM/A-IO)	Africa	name changed from South Sudan (SPLM/A-IO) to South Sudan (SPLA-IO)
30055	Mexico (inter-cartel violence, paramilitary groups)	Americas	name change from Mexico (inter-cartel violence, paramilitary groups) to Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)
40244	Pakistan (Baloch nationalists / Balochistan)	Asia and Oceania	name changed from Pakistan (Baloch nationalists / Balochistan) to Pakistan (Balochistan)
42013	Pakistan (inter-ethnic rivalry / Sindh)	Asia and Oceania	name changed from Pakistan (inter-ethnic rivalry / Sindh) to Pakistan (Sindh); government retroactively (since 2016) added as forth actor; 2016's intensity corrected from 2 to 3.
40313	Pakistan (opposition)	Oceania	start year changed to 1973
40039	Papua New Guinea (tribal violence)	Asia and Oceania	name changed from Papua New Guinea (tribal violence) to Papua New Guinea (tribal tensions)
40003	Philippines (Abu Sayyaf)	Asia and Oceania	transformed into Philippines (Islamist Militant Groups)
41016	India (NLFT factions et al. / Tripura)	Asia and Oceania	start date antedated
40184	India (NSCN et al. / Nagaland)	Asia and Oceania	name change from India (NSCN factions et al. / Nagaland) to India (Nagalim)
40322	Myanmar (UNFC)	Asia and Oceania	name changed from Myanmar (UNFC) to Myanmar (UNFC et al.)
40204	Sri Lanka (Buddhists, Sinhalese nationalists – Muslims, Christians)	Asia and Oceania	name changed from Sri Lanka (Buddhists, Sinhalese nationalists – Muslims, Christians) to Sri Lanka (inter-religious tensions)
51164	Afghanistan - Pakistan	MENA	item international power was added, Item other specified, start date changed to the first military attacks in June 1949
50302	Egypt (militant groups / Sinai Peninsula)	MENA	methodological reframing including a new conflict start year
50402	Egypt (Muslims – Christians)	MENA	item "system" changed to "subnational predominance" as the conflict between the two conflict parties evolves around issues concerning the socio-cultural order which is covered by the item subnational predominance typologically
50010	Iran (opposition)	MENA	start date changed to 1997, change in conflict parties

50031	Israel (al-Fatah – Hamas)	MENA	item "system" changed to "subnational predominance" as the conflict between the two conflict parties evolves around issues concerning the socio-cultural order which is covered by the item subnational predominance typologically
50047	Israel (Hamas -- Salafist groups)	MENA	item "system" changed to "subnational predominance" as the conflict between the two conflict parties evolves around issues concerning the socio-cultural order which is covered by the item subnational predominance typologically
50414	Kuwait (Bedouns)	MENA	start date was changed to 1959 gelegt; the item "other" was specified as "Kuwaiti citizenship"
50418	Kuwait (opposition)	MENA	start year changed to 2011
50052	Lebanon (Fatah al-Islam - Fatah)	MENA	name change from Lebanon (Fatah al-Islam - Fatah) to Lebanon (inner-Palestinian tensions)
50052	Lebanon (inner-Palestinian tensions)	MENA	start date predated to 2006
50125	Saudi Arabia (opposition)	MENA	start year changed to 1992
50025	Turkey - Iraq	MENA	Unbenannt in "Iraq – Turkey" (alphabetische Sortierung)
50235	Turkey - Russia	MENA	name changed from Turkey – Russia to Russia – Turkey (alphabetical order)
50412	Yemen (AQAP - al-Houthi)	MENA	name changed from Yemen (AQAP - al-Houthi) to Yemen (AQAP - al-Houthi forces), conflict start changed to 2010
50045	Yemen (SMM / South Yemen)	MENA	name changed from Yemen (SMM / South Yemen) to Yemen (al-Hirak / Southern Yemen)
50023	Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi)	MENA	name changed from Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi) to Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces), item subnational predominance removed



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