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PRESS RELEASE

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Wars, crises, and disputes worldwide: the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK) publishes its annual *Conflict Barometer 2018*

The HIIK presents the 27th edition of the annual world report *Conflict Barometer 2018*. The *Conflict Barometer* contains exhaustive qualitative descriptions of political conflict dynamics worldwide, including violent as well as non-violent conflicts. The violent conflicts are differentiated between violent crises, limited wars or wars. Indicators on conflict means and consequences are used in order to assign an intensity to a particular conflict. The assignment of intensity and HIIK's annual analysis make conflict dynamics traceable over time. The report is completed by conflict maps and graphs as well as accounts of conflict resolution. Further, the so-called spotlight texts present additional information on certain conflicts and their influence on political realities.

In 2018, HIIK observed a total of 372 conflicts worldwide. 150 conflicts were fought non-violently. 213 conflicts, constituting 57 percent of the overall number, were fought violently. The observations of nine conflicts were ended due to active settlement by the conflict parties or year-long inactivity.

The overall number of **full-scale wars** decreased from 20 to 16. Four wars de-escalated in Sub-Saharan Africa, just as the only war in Europe and both wars in Asia that had been fought on war-level in 2017. However, in Middle East and Maghreb, the number of wars rose from six to nine. Overall, 13 wars continued. While the number of wars decreased, the number of **limited wars** increased significantly from 16 to 24. While six of the 24 limited wars in 2018 had been on war-level in 2017, nine escalated from violent or non-violent crises, and nine remained on the same level as in the preceding year.

Middle East and Maghreb was the only region in 2018 in which the number of wars increased. Nine wars were observed, which marks an increase by three compared to 2017. All of the six wars that had already been on war-level in the previous year continued with the same intensity, while one new war erupted in the Afrin region in Syria and two escalated from the level of limited wars in Egypt and Turkey, respectively. Three limited wars were counted.



In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, four of the ten wars of 2017 receded to limited wars. No new wars emerged. The number of limited wars, however, increased from four in 2017 to eight. Three of these eight limited wars newly escalated, while two continued with the same intensity as in the previous year. In **Americas** region, the only war, fought in Mexico, continued. The number of limited wars decreased by one from six to five. While both in Colombia and El Salvador limited wars de-escalated to violent crises, the opposition conflict in Nicaragua escalated to a limited war, due to continued clashes between government security forces and the opposition demonstrating against President Ortega.

In **Asia and Oceania**, both wars that had been observed in 2017 de-escalated to limited wars. Subsequently, the HIIK observed no war in the region in 2018. The number of limited wars, however, increased significantly from two to seven, with three of them newly escalated from violent crises.

In **Europe**, the only war that had been observed during the past five years, taking place in eastern Ukraine, de-escalated to a limited war for the first time since the outbreak of the conflict. In consequence, no war was observed in Europe in 2018.

The **HIIK** is an independent, non-profit, and interdisciplinary organization which has conducted research on the emergence, dynamics, and settlement of political conflicts worldwide since 1991. More than 200 conflict researchers are currently working voluntarily for the HIIK. The *Conflict Barometer 2018* is open access and can be downloaded at www.hiik.de on March 1 2019, 12 noon.

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