CONFLICT BAROMETER | 2023

Heidelberg Institute for
International Conflict Research



disputes
non-violent crises
violent crises
limited wars
wars

No. 32

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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).

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Heidelberg Institute for
International Conflict Research

CONFLICT BAROMETER 2023

Analyzed Period: 01/01/23 – 12/31/23

PREFACE

With the 32nd edition of the Conflict Barometer, the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK) continues its annual study on global conflict.

Since 1992, the Conflict Barometer has qualitatively and quantitatively recorded the dynamics of political conflicts, both violent and non-violent, worldwide. In accordance with the HIIK methodology, violent conflicts are classified according to their intensity into violent crises (intensity 3), limited wars (intensity 4), and wars (intensity 5). Non-violent conflicts are divided into disputes (intensity 1) and non-violent crises (intensity 2). The annual report is supplemented by conflict maps, graphics, and datasets as well as Spotlight texts that shed light on the wider context of current conflict dynamics.

In 2023, the HIIK and its 190 researchers documented a total of 369 conflicts worldwide, an overall increase of ten conflicts. Of these, 220 were violent and 149 non-violent. Compared to the previous year, the number of wars rose from 20 to 22. The Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh) conflict, intrastate conflicts in DR Congo, Sudan and Myanmar (two in total), as well as a total of three conflicts in Israel, of which two involved the State of Palestine° and one involved Hezbollah, escalated into wars. Six wars de-escalated, while 14 wars continued. The number of limited wars worldwide remained constant at 21 conflicts.
The number of non-violent conflicts rose from 148 to 149. Twelve conflicts were settled by the conflict parties themselves or closed due to inactivity. As in previous years, the most common type of conflict was intrastate (252 conflicts), followed by interstate conflicts (58 conflicts). The most common of the ten methodically followed conflict items, material or immaterial goods, which are sought by the direct conflict actors through conflict measures, were (in descending order of frequency) system/ideology, resources, subnational predominance, and national power.

We recognize that this Conflict Barometer comes at a very late point of the year - a shortcoming that we mostly have to attribute to various technical issues with our software systems, major conflicts we had to research completely new again, and personal issues on various fronts. We understand that many international stakeholders rely on the data the HIIK provides and that the interested public or researchers from around the world have been waiting for the whole year, often left in the dark about the final date of publication. Our hands have been tied in many cases, but we deeply apologize to our readers and to our own researchers for this tremendous delay, analysed our own shortcomings, and are back on track to publish the Conflict Barometer of 2024 in early spring of 2025 again.

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.

The Board of Directors of the 2023 Conflict Barometer

Paul Dießelberg, Simeon Heimburg, Santiago Moncada, Katharina Müller, Rafael Uribe-Neira, Katharina Valjak, and Sarah Westedt

Heidelberg, December 2024

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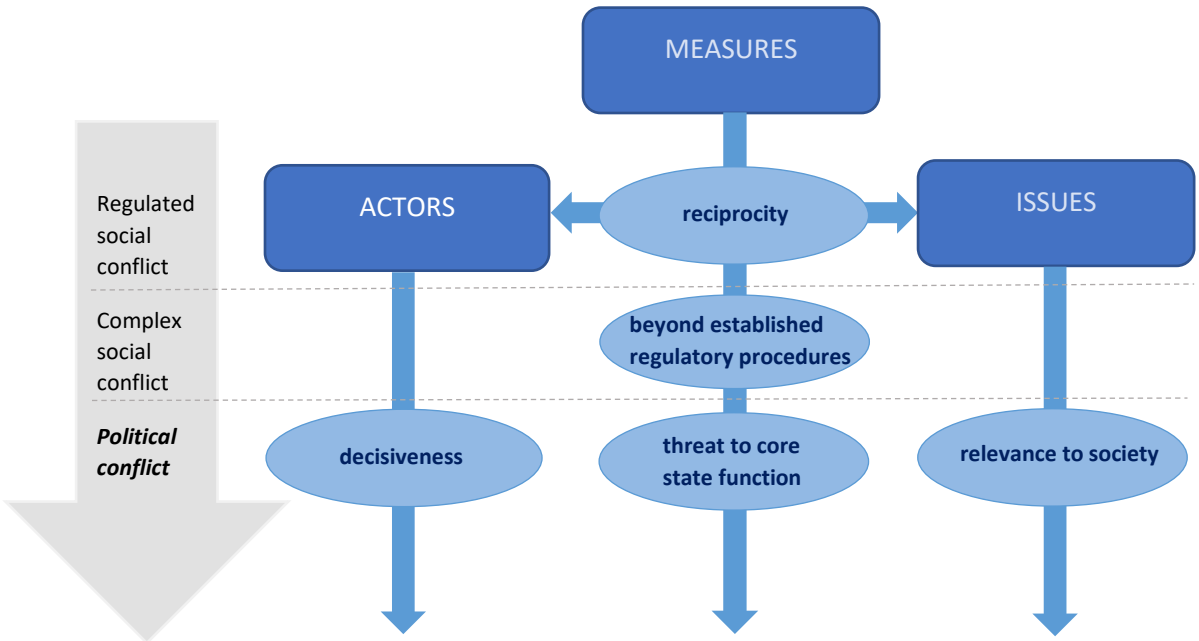
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Methodology

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.

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

HIIK'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

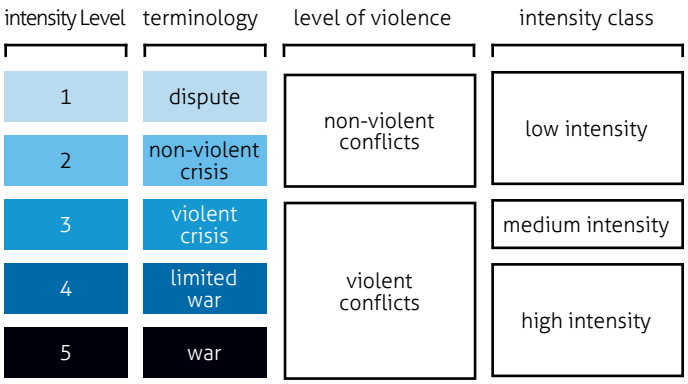
When assessing levels of violence, HIIK differentiates between violent and non-violent conflicts. A conflict is observed in the Conflict Barometer if it fulfills the minimum criteria defining a conflict. It may start at any level of intensity, therefore also at a non-violent level. As the start date, 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 reoccurrence of any violent or non-violent measures continues to be likely.

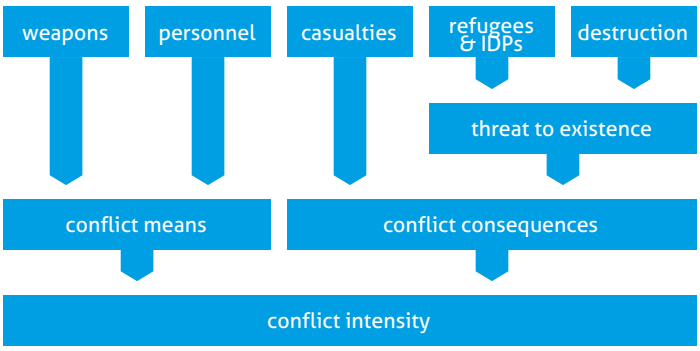
A conflict is actively closed if the basic conflict criteria are no longer fulfilled, with a set date of closure that justifies the decision. This may be the day a peace agreement is enforced between all conflict actors, for instance. Other forms of closure include the annihilation of a conflict actor,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

ASSESSING THE INTENSITIES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS

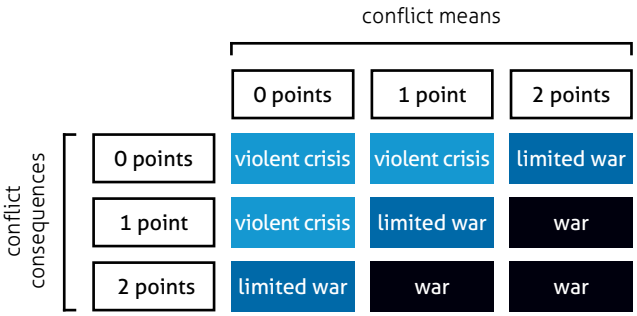
THE CONCEPT OF CONFLICT INTENSITY



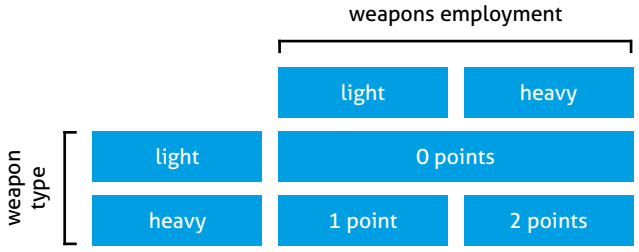
In order to measure the three levels of violent conflict, five proxies are used to indicate their means and consequences. The dimension of means encompasses the use of weapons and deployment of personnel, the dimension of consequences, the number of casualties, refugees and internally displaced persons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



WEAPONS



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 combattants 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.

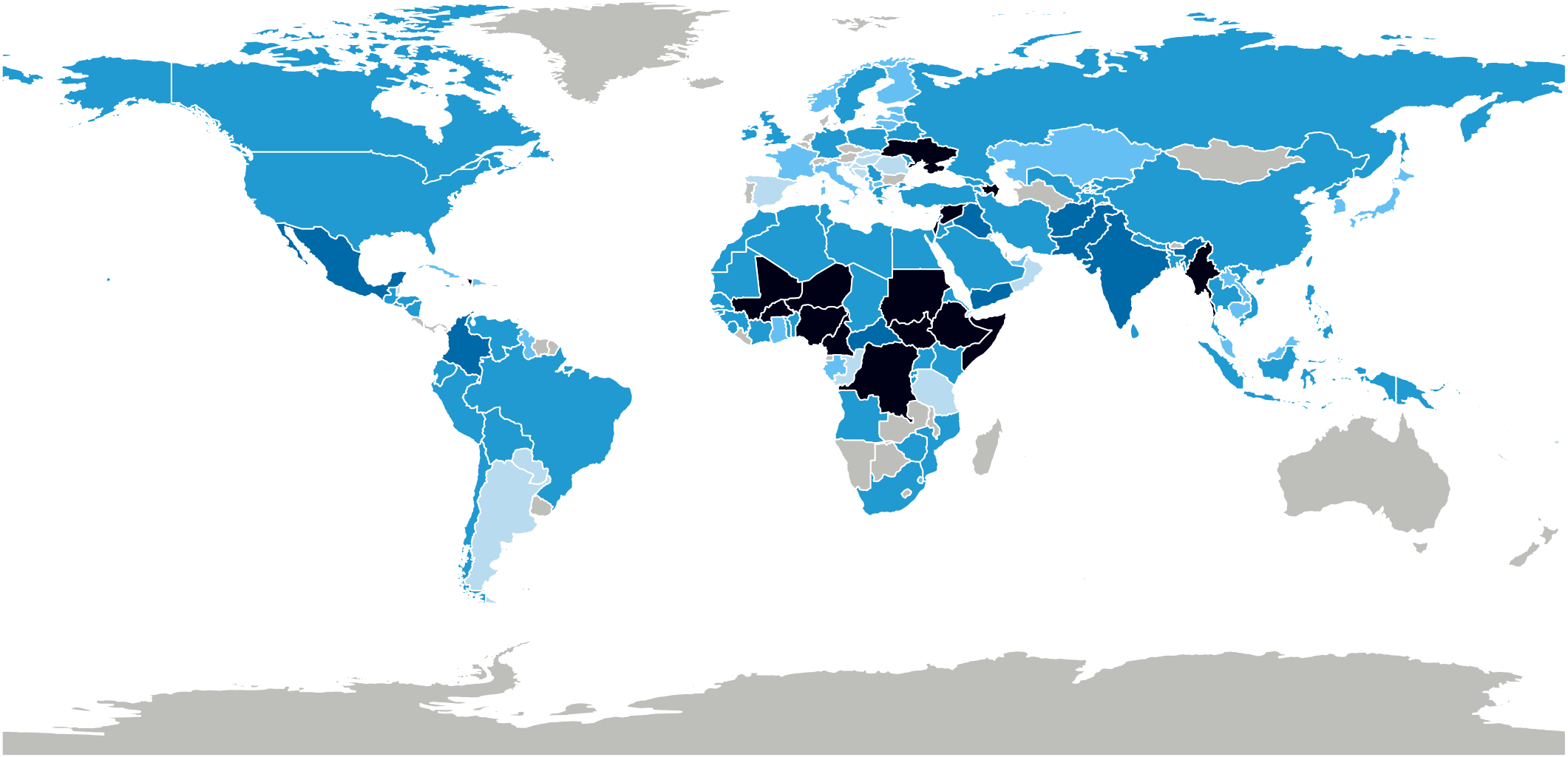
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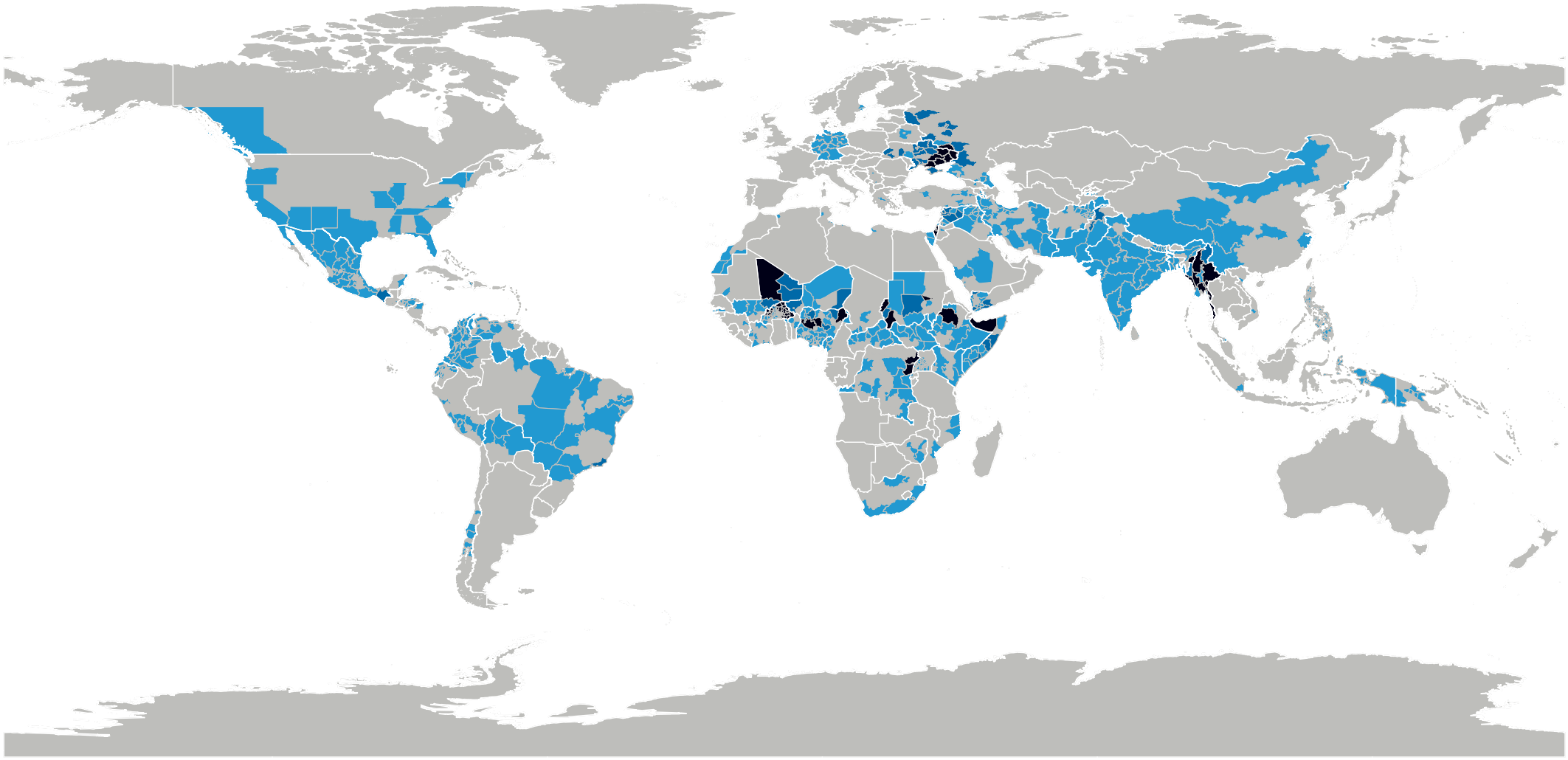
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Global Conflict Panorama

CONFLICTS IN 2023
(NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL)



VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN 2023
(NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL)



HIGHLY VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN 2023

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

LIMITED WARS (21)

Afghanistan (opposition)
Syria (Kurdish groups)
Syria (opposition)
Türkiye (PKK, KCK)
Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)

WARS (22)

Israel (Hamas et al.)
Israel (Hezbollah)
Israel - State of Palestine° (PNA)

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

LIMITED WARS (21)

Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)
Central African Republic (militant groups)
Ethiopia (Fano militias / Amhara)
Mali (CSP-PSD, CMA et al. / Azawad)
Nigeria (farmers – pastoralists)
Nigeria (ISWAP - JAS)
Somalia (Puntland – Somaliland)
Somalia (subclan rivalry)
Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)

WARS (22)

Cameroon (English-speaking minority)
DR Congo (Ituri militias)
DR Congo (M23 factions)
DR Congo, Uganda (ADF)
Mali et al. (IS Sahel)
Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, ISGS 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)
Sudan (opposition)

THE AMERICAS

LIMITED WARS (21)

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

WARS (22)

Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)

ASIA AND OCEANIA

LIMITED WARS (21)

India (Manipur)
Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)
Myanmar (MNDAA / Shan State)
Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)

WARS (22)

Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)
Myanmar (KNU, KNLA, DKBA et. al. / Karen State, Kayah State)
Myanmar (opposition)

EUROPE

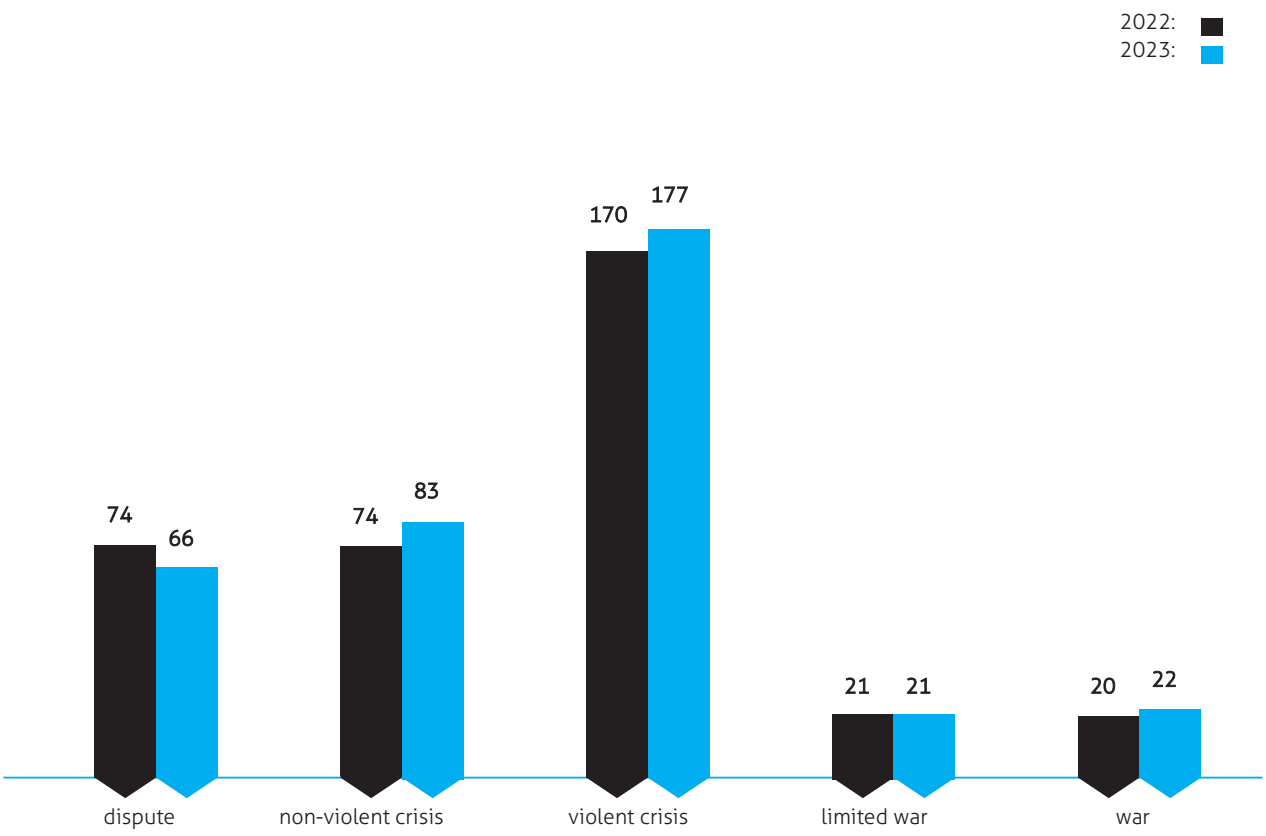
WARS (22)

Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)
Russia – Ukraine

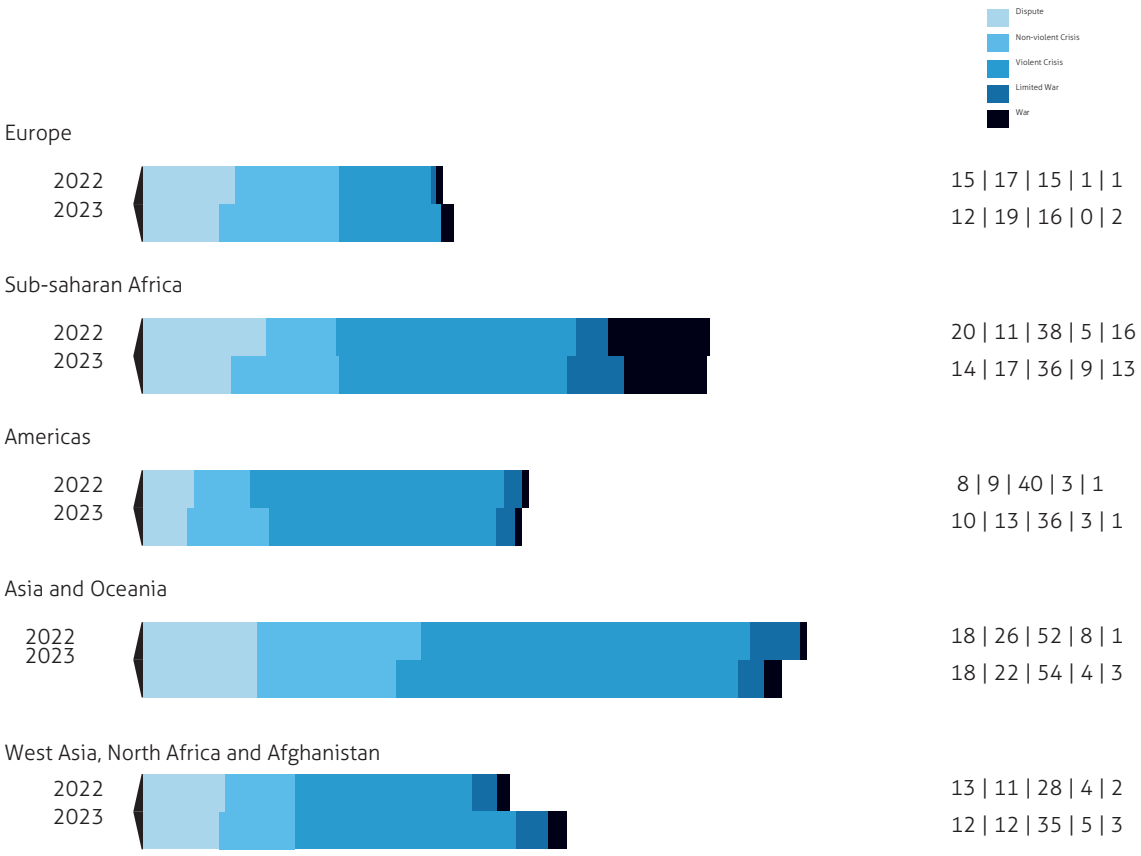
GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

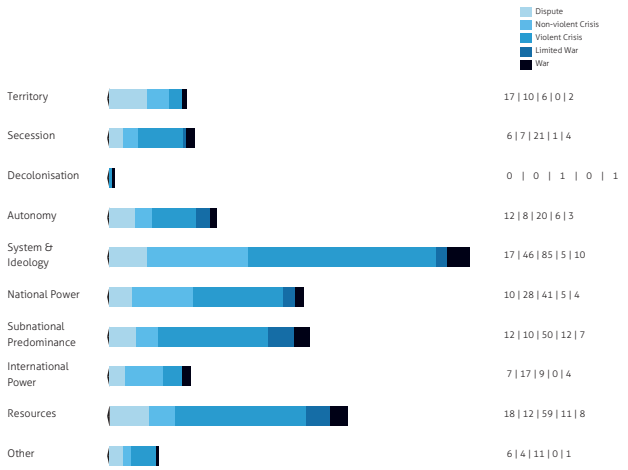
GLOBAL CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



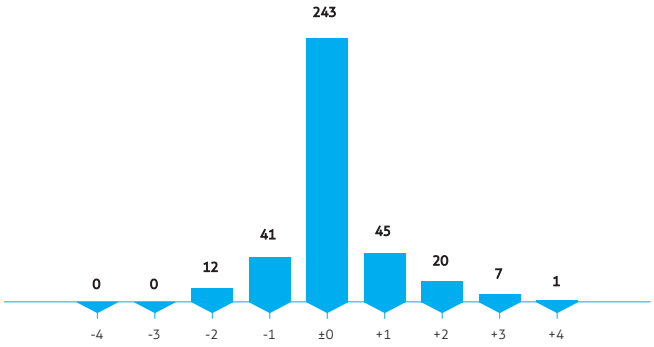
FREQUENCY OF REGIONAL CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN 2023 AND 2022



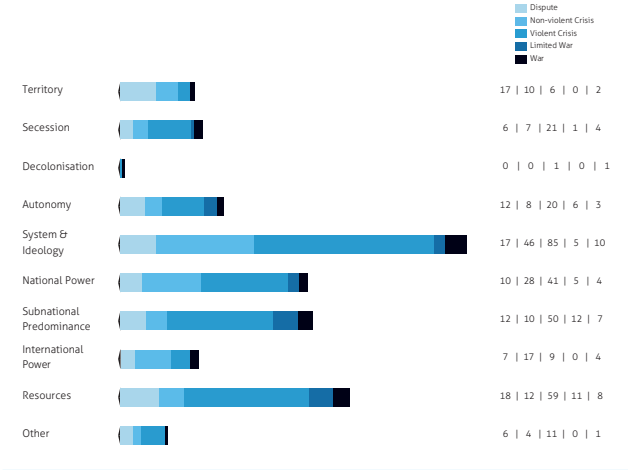
FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN 2023



GLOBAL CONFLICT INTENSITY CHANGES IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN 2023



AUTHORITATIVE DECISIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

This year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ; the Court) issued two merit judgements and one judgement on preliminary objections. The Court handed down a further six orders on provisional measures.

Seven new matters were submitted to the Court: In January, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested an advisory opinion from the Court on "Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem". In April, the Assembly requested an advisory opinion from the Court on the obligations of States in respect of climate change. In June, Canada and the Netherlands jointly instituted proceedings against Syria concerning alleged violations of the Convention against Torture. Also in June, Iran instituted proceedings against Canada concerning alleged violations of its immunities. Iran had filed a declaration recognizing the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court only shortly beforehand. In turn, Canada, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom jointly instituted proceedings against Iran in July, concerning a dispute under the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation in relation to the 2020 downing of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752. In November, the International Labor Organization (ILO) requested an advisory opinion from the Court on the interpretation of ILO Convention No. 87 with respect to the right to strike. In December, South Africa submitted a case against the State of Israel, alleging violations by Israel of its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Also in November, the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council elected five judges to the International Court of Justice. Judge Hilary Charlesworth (Australia) was re-elected as Member of the Court. Mr. Bogdan-Lucian Aurescu (Romania), Ms. Sarah Hull Cleveland (United States of America), Mr. Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo Verduzco (Mexico), and Mr. Dire Tladi (South Africa) were elected as new Members of the Court.

On March 30, the Court handed down a judgement in the case of Certain Iranian Assets (Iran v USA). The case concerns alleged violations by the USA of a 1955 Treaty of Amity as well as the law of State immunity, by allowing proceedings against Iran and Iranian State entities before US courts and the seizure of Iranian assets to satisfy judgements in these cases. This was made possible by a 1996 amendment to the US Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FISA), removing immunities from States designated as "State sponsors of terrorism", such as Iran. Subsequent acts of Congress and Presidential executive orders resulted in assets of the Iranian Central Bank (Bank Markazi) being seized to satisfy judgements – a practice which was upheld as legal under FISA by the US Supreme Court.

Following a 2019 judgement on Preliminary objections, the Court revisited the unresolved jurisdictional matter concerning Bank Markazi and concluded that it did not possess jurisdiction over alleged US breaches of the Treaty of Amity in this regard. The Court rejected the US argument that Iran had committed an abuse of process by applying the Treaty of Amity to measure not related to commerce. The Court was further unconvinced that the relevant US executive order fell within Treaty exceptions on the production of arms and essential security interests. The Court further found that the US legislative acts and executive orders violated the Treaty for being excessive measures in relation to the pursued goal of effective remedies to plaintiffs awarded damages. Furthermore, the Court ruled that by seizing assets of Iranian companies, the US had committed an expropriation in violation of the Treaty and that it had violated its obligation to provide "freedom of commerce" for Iranian companies. At the same time, it rejected Iran's claim that the US violated obligations to safeguard "freedom of access to the courts" and "prompt and impartial justice" for Iranian nationals and all other Iranian claims. The Court found that it could not order the US to cease these acts, as the obligations were no longer in force following the withdrawal of the US from the treaty in 2018. However, on the question of compensation for injury suffered, the Court recognized that the US is obligated to compensate Iran for the violations it committed. If Iran and the US fail to reach a consensus on the compensation within a two-year timeframe, the Court will ascertain the appropriate sum in a subsequent stage of the proceedings.

On April 6, the Court rendered its judgement on preliminary objections in the case of Arbitral Award of October 3, 1899 (Guyana v Venezuela). This dispute, which was submitted to the Court in 2018, turns on whether the "Essequibo Region" belongs to Venezuela or Guyana. The territory was historically attributed to the UK (the colonial power in Guyana), while Venezuela claims it as successor to the Spanish Empire. In 1897, the UK and Venezuela submitted the dispute to a Paris arbitral tribunal, which in an award of 1899 assigned most of the territory to British Guyana. After Venezuela rejected the award in 1962, the Geneva Agreement of 1966 established a mixed commission to resolve the issue. Article IV of the Agreement stipulated that, if the commission remained unsuccessful within four years, the parties would resort to peaceful dispute settlement means under Article 33 UN Charter. Guyana became party to the agreement in 1966 upon gaining independence. The mixed commission failed to resolve the dispute by 1970. After suspending Article IV for twelve years, Venezuela chose to enforce it in 1982. In 1990, the parties sought the UN Secretary General's Good Offices under Article IV (2) of the Agreement. The UNSG announced that he would refer the matter to the ICJ in January 2018. The preliminary objection of Venezuela concerned the assertion, that the Court was unable to proceed on the case without the United Kingdom being a party to the proceedings. The Court found that, by being a party to the Geneva Agreement, the United Kingdom accepted that the dispute between Guyana and Venezuela could be settled without its involvement. It therefore rejected Venezuela's preliminary objection.

On December 1, the Court also issued a provisional measures order in this case. Guyana had applied for this order after Venezuela announced plans to hold a referendum on the annexation of the Essequibo Region. The Court ordered that, pending a final decision in the case, Venezuela was to refrain from taking any action which would modify the situation that currently prevails in the territory in dispute. The Court thereby stopped short of prohibiting the referendum explicitly, as Guyana had requested. Venezuela has since followed through with the referendum, which saw an overwhelming majority in favor of annexation.

On July 13, the Court rendered a judgement in the case of the Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (Nicaragua v Colombia).

In this case, Nicaragua sought clarification on the delimitation of the continental shelf beyond the 200-nautical-mile limit from Nicaragua's baselines. In an earlier order from last year, the Court decided to first address certain questions of law be-

fore delving into technical considerations. In this judgement the Court now found that, under customary international law, a state's entitlement to a continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles could not extend within 200 nautical miles from another state's baselines. The Court therefore rejected the requests related to the delimitation of the maritime boundary and maritime entitlements. Nicaragua's first and second submissions were dismissed based on the conclusion regarding the state of the law. The third submission, which sought a specific finding on the effect of the maritime entitlements of certain islands, was considered to have been resolved conclusively by an earlier 2012 judgement.

There were four orders on provisional measures this year in the case concerning the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) between Armenia and Azerbaijan. This conflict concerns the hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh since 2020.

On February 22, the Court issued two new orders – one upon application by Armenia and on upon application by Azerbaijan. In the order upon application by Armenia, the Court ordered Azerbaijan to take all measures at its disposal to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles, and cargo along the so-called Lachin Corridor in both directions. The corridor constitutes the only connection by land between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. Armenia had alleged that Azerbaijan was responsible for protests along the corridor that constitute a de-facto blockade. The application by Azerbaijan concerned the alleged laying of landmines and booby traps by Armenia as well as an obligation on Armenia to assist in Azerbaijani demining activities. The Court rejected this application on the basis that it found no relevant connection between the alleged acts and the dispute arising under CERD.

On July 6, the Court ruled on a request by Armenia for the modification of the order it had obtained on February 22. On the facts, Armenia alleged that Azerbaijan had since set up two checkpoints operated by its armed forces on the Lachin Corridor, causing a drastic change in the situation on the ground. The Court refused to modify the order of February 22, holding instead that the earlier order already applies to any impediments to the freedom of movement along the corridor, whether they stem from protests or the alleged Azerbaijani checkpoints.

A third new order on provisional measures was issued on November 17. The application for this order was submitted by Armenia, following the offensive by Azerbaijan of September 19, which culminated in the surrender of Nagorno-Karabakh. In the order, the Court ordered Azerbaijan to ensure that persons who had left Nagorno-Karabakh after September 19 were free to return if they wished, to ensure that persons who had remained after that date and who wished to depart were able to do so in a safe, unimpeded and expeditious manner, and to ensure that persons who had remained or returned since and who wished to stay were free from the use of force or intimidation that may cause them to flee. The Court further ordered Azerbaijan to protect and preserve registration, identity, and private property documents and records that concern the persons covered by this order. The Court lastly placed upon Azerbaijan the obligation to submit a report on the implementation of this order within eight weeks.

On November 16, the Court handed down an order on provisional measures against Syria in a case concerning obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This case was brought by Canada and the Netherlands in June, alleging violations of the Torture Convention in the Syrian conflict since 2011. The Court ordered Syria to take all measures within its power to prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment and ensure that its officials, as well as any organizations or persons which may be subject to its control, direction or influence, do not commit any such acts. The Court further placed upon Syria an obligation to take effective measures to prevent the destruction and ensure the preservation of any evidence related to allegations of acts within the scope of the order. The Court thereby did not grant the request of Canada and the Netherlands in full, who had – among other measures – also sought to have Syria ordered to release all unlawfully detained persons, grant independent observers access to its official and unofficial places of detention, and disclose the location of burial sights of persons who died because of torture.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

This year, the International Criminal Court (ICC) had 31 pending cases and rendered an Addendum order on reparations. Six defendants were in the ICC's custody awaiting trial, while 15 defendants remained at large. The Office of the Prosecutor investigated cases in the DRC, Sudan (Darfur), the CAR, Kenya, Libya, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Georgia, Burundi, Bangladesh/Myanmar, Afghanistan, the State of Palestine°, the Philippines, Venezuela, and Ukraine. It also conducted preliminary examinations into situations in Nigeria, Venezuela, and the DRC.

On November 14, the Republic of Armenia formally deposited the instrument of ratification of the Rome Statute. The Statute entered into force for Armenia on February 1, 2024. Armenia became the 124th state party to join the Statute. By virtue of the Armenian ratification law, Armenia retroactively accepts the jurisdiction of the ICC since May 10, 2021.

In December, the Assembly of States Parties elected six new judges to the ICC: Mr. Erdenebalsuren Damdin (Mongolia), Ms. Iulia Antoanella Motoc (Romania), Mr. Niclas Guillou (France), Ms. Beti Hohler (Slovenia), Mr. Haykel Ben Mahfoudh (Tunisia), and Mr. Keebong Paek (Republic of Korea).

On March 17, Pre-Trial Chamber II issued warrants of arrest for two individuals in the context of the Russia – Ukraine war: Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin and Ms. Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova. The charges against them concern the war crime of unlawful deportation of population (children) and that of unlawful transfer of population (children) from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation.

On July 14, Trial Chamber II delivered an Addendum to the Reparations Order of March 8, 2021 in the Ntaganda case, after an earlier Reparations Order had been remanded by the Appeals Chamber with regards to its reasoning and procedural parameters. The Chamber conclusions included the estimate number of direct and indirect victims of crimes against child soldiers, to approximately 3,000 individuals; and the estimate number of direct and indirect victims of the attacks for which Mr. Ntaganda was partially or wholly responsible, to approximately 7,500 individuals. The Chamber assessed Mr. Ntaganda's liability for reparations at USD 31,300,000.

On November 17, Pre-Trial Chamber II terminated the proceedings against Vincent Otti, following confirmation of his passing. Mr. Otti had been sought for war crimes and crimes against humanity, allegedly acting as the Vice-Chairman and Second-in-Command of the "Lord's Resistance Army" in Uganda. Joseph Kony, the last living co-defendant in this case, remains at large.

LUKAS HEMMJE

Spotlights

RUSSIA UKRAINE 2023: CODING CONVENTIONAL WARFARE

INTRODUCTION

The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK) is an independent, non-profit, and interdisciplinary organisation devoted since 1991 to the follow the emergence, dynamics, and settlement of political conflicts worldwide. The HIIK estimates the intensity of political violence based on the mode and quality of the course of the conflict (see methodological section on pages 8-12). Key for the estimation are five indicators grouped per region (state, province, canton, oblast, etc.) and month, namely the number of casualties - including injured -, personnel, both refugees and IDPs, weaponry, and destruction.
Tracking the current high intensity between Russia and Ukraine [→ Russia – Ukraine] poses challenges in conflict monitoring in order of magnitude. The research on figures related to the violence indicators is complex and confusing. One side emphasises the rival's losses while downplaying their own and multiple non-verified reports and media distortion makes the monitoring difficult. Finally, the publicly available data is fragmented and rarely allows a clear regional-monthly discrimination.
At the face of such difficulties, this Spotlight describes the guidelines that the HIIK's Task Force used to track and code the conflict data into the database CONTRA for the Conflict Barometer 2023. The text provides the main sources of relevant data for conventional warfare in both Russia and Ukraine, and the methodological considerations concerning the four out of five indicators we used to track violence. By publishing this spotlight, we set our hopes on showing our readers in a plastic manner the challenges each researcher faces when monitoring violence from open sources.

CASUALTIES AND INJURED (AND A WORD ON SOURCES)

The first challenge the team faced was related to the selection of the right sources. They must be reliable and well-established, from institutions which grant credibility to the data provided. Further, as a rule of thumb, we code conservatively, meaning that we resort to the lowest guaranteed figure. Following these guidelines, we steered our search to monitor casualties along the Russia-Ukraine frontline in Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson oblasts (the HIIK Task-Force opted for the Ukrainian - instead of the Russian - spelling of Ukrainian cities as the Ukrainian government established as a matter of policy in 1995).
For Russian casualties we resorted to the observatory Mediazona & BBC News Russian Service. This joint project uses publicly available information, including social media posts by family members, local news reports, and official announcements from regional authorities (Mediazona n.d.). Mediazona provides the weekly number of Russian casualties in Ukraine and updates its data on a two-week-basis. Furthermore, given that the data can be downloaded as in csv files, we found this source useful to register monthly casualties. However, their numbers are not discriminated by oblast. In order to make the data useful for our database, we made informed guesses by dividing the total by the number of frontline oblasts. For instance, for January 2023, Mediazona reported:

week_start total
05.01.2023 722
12.01.2023 782
19.01.2023 717
26.01.2023 816
Total 3,037

The 3,037 were next divided by the five above-mentioned oblasts. As a result, in each Ukrainian oblast, there were at least 607 Russian casualties:

3,037 / (5 oblasts) = 607.4

For Ukrainian casualties, we took the webpage Lostarmour, an equivalent database to Mediazona and therefore appropriate for our goal. Moreover, it provides statistics on a monthly and yearly basis. For the whole 2023, losses among the Ukrainian military personnel were 22,289 (Lost Armour n.d.b), and, for our example, there were 1,953 deaths in January 2023 (Lost Armour n.d.a). According to rough estimates, there are 390 Ukrainian deaths within one month in each of five oblasts.

1,953 / (5 oblasts) = 390.6

Another project on Ukrainian casualties (UALosses n.d.) confirmed this number. It listed over 42,000 fallen soldiers (UALosses 2024) between February 2022 and February 2024, or 21,000 persons / year. So, it is very similar to 22,289 deaths from the Lostarmour database. However, the advantage of the latter is month and year statistics, which is very useful for HIIK's methodology.
A consolidated figure between the Russian and Ukrainian military losses in January 2023 is 997 deaths within one month in each of five oblasts.

607 + 390 = 997

Reporting military Injured personnel was even more challenging as numbers in practice are not recorded. For our database, we applied a 1:1 wounded-to-killed ratio. We did not take the standard 3:1 wounded-to-killed ratio as we deemed it as a standard tool anchored in military thinking and without a clear scientific basis. Conflict observers in the US, such as The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) (Bailey u. a. 2024, 2), use this ratio to estimate injured military personnel in Ukraine. They also claim either that a 3:1 ratio works quite well in describing WWII-battles (Fazal 2014, 1) or that this ratio can be historically observed since 1946 and that in "advanced democracies" it can decrease to 10:1 or even 17:1 due to the advances in medical care in modern militaries. Confronted at a rather uncertain guideline, we decided to code on a conservative basis and chose a 1:1 ratio as the minimum number of injured in the current Russian-Ukrainian war.
Therefore, following the previous example, the number of injured for the frontline per each oblast in January would be 997:

997*1 = 997

For civilian casualties and injured, The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR 2023) provides monthly reports on both. For January, we took the values given by OHCHR 170 killed and 506 injured (OHCHR 2023), resulting in an estimated 34 casualties and 101 injured for

each of the five oblasts.
Once established these numbers, we registered in CONTRA for January 2023 for each of five oblasts (Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson) the following military and civilian casualties:

Deaths: 1,031 (997 + 34)
Injured: 1,098 (997 + 101)

PERSONNEL

For the indicator personnel, we made the distinction between frontline oblasts and areas far from them, such as Kyiv and oblasts west of the capital. The distinction emerged from the need to differentiate between the data on troops fighting at the frontline, and personnel involved in missile strikes.
For the frontline, we resorted to more or less reliable numbers given by the conflict actors as basis for the calculation for personnel for each oblast. Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky stated on Telegram that the Ukrainian ground forces comprised nearly 600,000 soldiers across all branches on December 12, 2023 (Zelensky 2023). On December 14, 2023, during the end-of-year press conference, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that there are 617,000 Russian troops in the so-called "Special Military Operation" zone in Ukraine (2023). Thus, the consolidated data between Russian and Ukrainian personnel members is 1,217,000 soldiers. For CONTRA-purposes, we divided the estimated number of personnel in five military areas in the following manner: 243,400 members of personnel for each frontline oblast (1,217,000/5).
This solution, while not completely satisfying heads of state might be prone to exaggerate the strength of their national militaries , was the best one after our best-second option: Calculating the number of personnel based on the number of soldiers within brigades along the frontline. Existing open sources claim to track such units (MilitaryLand n.d.) and even publish complete orders of battle (Hird, Barros, and Kagan 2023). However, we rapidly faced some problems with this approach: Military units in combat are rarely fully crewed and therefore rates of attrition should be applied, which by this point would stretch the plausibility of informed guesses. Additionally, while data on Russian orders of battle are relatively well covered by third parties, data on Ukrainian units is not. For instance, ISW points out that their reports are "based on a number of assumptions about Ukrainian capabilities that ISW does not, as a matter of policy, attempt to assess or report on" (Hird, Barros, and Kagan 2023, 1). And last, but not least, the number of personnel in one brigade varies in both Russia and Ukraine.
For entries on casualties, personnel and IDPs/refugees, CONTRA allows besides the numerical value, the setting of low, medium and high thresholds. For personnel, a low threshold means less than 50 persons in a month/oblast, a medium threshold calls for more than 50 but less than 400, and a high threshold exceeds 400 participants.
The setting of credible thresholds were key for coding the number of people involved in missile strikes, the most common violent measure in Kyiv and zones far from the frontline. The team agreed with establishing a medium threshold assuming the presence of 90 required soldiers for the operation of one Patriot-battery (Feickert 2023, 1), one of many air defense systems currently employed in Ukraine; the presence of additional personnel involved in the coordination of the air defense and, of course, the victims. For a S-300, the most common air defense system in the Ukraine military, we could only establish three soldiers properly engaged in combat per launching vehicle (Cullen and Foss 1992, 136), but we could not find how many crew a battery.
In the database, we divided the estimated guess number of personnel in five military directions, so 243,400 members of personnel for each frontline oblast (1,217,000/5). For Kyiv and western oblasts, the medium threshold was established for missile attacks.

REFUGEES AND IDPS

The Ukraine Internal Displacement Reports by the United Nations International Organization for Migration (UN-IOM) provide reliable data regarding the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). For 2023, we considered three Survey Rounds: 13 (IOM 2023b, 13), 14 (IOM 2023a, 2), and 15 (IOM 2023b, 3). Each of these reports provide the number of people displaced by oblast of origin, although only the five or ten oblasts with the highest number of IDPs and excluding displaced persons from the Russian-controlled areas such as Donetsk, Luhansk, and Crimea. According to them, the number of IDPs decreased throughout the year: from 5,914,000 to 3,674,000. The similar picture happened with refugees: their number diminished from 7,968,510 to 5,931,500 (UNHCR 2023a; UNHCR 2023b). In agreement with HIIK's methodology, CONTRA should not contain stock data of IDPs or refugees, but only changes when the numbers rise through a period of time. Therefore, in 2023 the numbers fell and they were not registered in the database.

DESTRUCTION

We used Eyes on Russia (Centre for Information Resilience n.d.) to assess destruction. Eyes on Russia is a project by the Centre for Information and Resilience (CIR), a UK NGO devoted to counter disinformation and human rights abuses (Centre for Information Resilience n.d.a). Its database allowed us to look for destroyed infrastructure by month and oblast in both Ukraine and Russia. It also allowed us to differentiate among civilian infrastructure damage, environmental harm and military infrastructure damage, by oblast/month. In consequence, Eyes on Russia resulted doubly useful: on the one hand, it made it easier to differentiate the affected buildings the HIIK takes into account: civilian and military infrastructure, habitation, economy and self-sufficiency, and identity-establishing goods; on the other, it made the adjudication of destruction data by oblast and month possible.
For CONTRA, we reviewed the list of affected infrastructure and matched them to our own categories. Additionally, we listed the most important destroyed buildings, for instance, children's polyclinic, residential buildings, trolley bus depot, petrol station, etc.

CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE OF MONITORING CONVENTIONAL WARFARE

This Spotlight outlined the challenges the HIIK's Task Force faced while covering the most violent conventional war in Europe since the end of WWII. Although open sources claim to report on the war, only very few offer reliable data we can code following the HIIK-methodology. We hope that the experience of the HIIK's Task Force inspires other researchers to reflect on their own conflict monitoring on high-intensity and conventional conflicts [→ Sudan (opposition); Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA); Haiti (inter-gang rivalry); Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State) and many more]. Finally, the hurdles

the team faced highlight some of the qualities researchers should display in conflict monitoring: patience in their search of data, impartiality, creativity - but truthfulness - when applying the methodology and eagerness to discuss the limitations that both sources and the avatars of war impose on conflict monitoring.

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BENEATH THE WAVES AND BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: CHINA'S EXPANDING GRIP THROUGH GREY ZONE TACTICS

INTRODUCTION: THE DEFINITION OF GREY ZONE POLITICS AND SALAMI SLICING

"Build big ships, go deep into the sea and catch big fish."

These words from an address to Chinese maritime militia members on Hainan in 2013 by the then-new Chinese leader Xi Jinping have resonated over the past years with more force than ever before. The militia members Xi had spoken to are part of what has arguably evolved into one of the most important pieces of China's grey zone strategy, particularly active and effective in the People's Republic of China's (China) actions in the South China Sea (SCS). While the grey zone activities of maritime militias are directed towards other international state actors, such as the Philippines or Vietnam in the SCS, and Japan and the Republic of China (Taiwan) in the East China Sea, the general state of Chinese grey zone activities are Janus-faced. While the first part of this Spotlight is concerned with Chinese grey zone activities in the SCS, the second part will therefore concern domestic grey zone activities targeting ethnic minorities in China's domestic periphery – the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang. In our work on Chinese actions in the SCS, we follow the definition of Dutton who calls grey zone campaigns an aim to revise the international order, which are being "undertaken with non-military tools of coercion and with the application of levels of force well below that of which traditional naval power is capable." (Dutton 2023, 26-29) On the domestic level:

- Grey zone campaigns aim to revise the international order, but they differ in that, while hybrid campaigns explicitly involve the use or threat of military force, grey zone campaigns are undertaken with non-military tools of coercion and with the application of levels of force well below that of which traditional naval power is capable.
- Actions are not grey zone if
- they involve military force or a blend of military coercion and non-militarized coercion to achieve objectives;
- they are not expansionary in nature, in that their aim does not attempt to revise the existing international order;
- they have not redefined the nature of the space in dispute as rightfully under the jurisdiction or sovereignty of the aggressor state;
- and the law governing operations is the law of war or law of military operations, rather than competing domestic laws.

APPLYING GREY ZONE STRATEGY IN THE SCS: CHINA'S MARITIME MILITIA

Grey zone techniques in the SCS form a fundamental part of China's strategy in the conflict in the SCS [→ China - Vietnam et al. (South China Sea)]. While China uses its conventional armed forces – the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and especially their naval branches (PLAN) as well as the China Coast Guard (CCG), it also heavily counts on so-called Maritime Militias to assert its position vis-á-vis other claimant states in the SCS. The use of its Maritime Militia can be described as a grey zone technique, applying the definition of Dutton positing that China uses its Maritime Militia to revise the international order in the SCS, applying "non-military tools of coercion" coupled with the "application of levels of force well below that of which traditional naval power is capable" (Dutton 2023, 26, 29).

While the use of non-military tools as means of coercion is not new in China, the recent rise in activities of maritime militias in the SCS has shed a light on the issue of grey zone techniques in the SCS. Since Xi Jinping became the paramount leader of China, activities in the SCS have dramatically risen. This can be especially seen in the build-up of artificial man-made islands throughout the Paracel Islands and Spratly Islands. Xi also elevated the importance of the maritime militias, as he initiated a professionalisation and expansion of the militia (Polling, Mallory and Prétat 2021, 6). The activities of the maritime militia in the SCS had hence risen since Xi came to power.

This trend reached a new peak in 2023, when tensions between China and the Philippines rose dramatically. A particular rise in proactive militia activities can be seen in the months of October, November, and December, particularly in relation to the dispute between China and the Philippines about Second Thomas Shoal and Philippine resupply missions to the BRP Sierra Madre, a Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) vessel, which was deliberately run aground by the PCG in 1999 at Second Thomas Shoal to serve as an outpost for the Philippine Marine Corps and to assert Philippine sovereignty over Second Thomas Shoal (Yi 2024). While Second Thomas Shoal has been a focal point of the conflict in the SCS, the Chinese presence rose substantially in 2023, as evidenced by the average number of Chinese vessels during Philippine resupply missions rising from one in 2021 to 13.9 in 2023 (Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative 2024). The presence of Chinese militia vessels has also risen from just one in 2021 to 37 in late 2023.

Militia vessels were central to the events at Second Thomas Shoal. On October 22, a militia vessel collided with a PCG vessel which escorted a resupply mission (DW 2023). On November 10, six militia vessels harassed Philippine vessels on a resupply mission, as CCG vessels fired water cannons on the Philippine vessels (Reuters 2023), the PCG tracked 28 Chinese militia vessels swarming the area around Second Thomas Shoal the next day (Chi 2023).

CCP'S GRASP TO TACKLE REGIONAL AUTONOMY: INNER MONGOLIA, XINGJIANG, TIBET

In 2023, the trend of slowly eroding autonomous privileges and powers has continued, with many regions facing a consistent rising of pressure and growing grasp for control by security institutions and governing bodies.

In the Tibet Autonomous Region, the dismantling increased with more direct means to gain control over the region. Policies are mainly aimed for schools and education therefore connecting autonomous policy making and cultural matters. In March 2023, the Kanzi Prefecture Bureau of Education issued a notice for Middle Schools forbidding Tibetan Classes from 2024 on (Free Tibet 2023). In Kardze County, the Bureau of Education further banned all Tibetan classes in primary to higher secondary school from September 2023 onwards (Jones 2023). These bans show the tight grip the central Chinese government has on their autonomous regions and how they slowly erode previously granted freedoms step-by-step in counties and single regions. Another example for such invasive yet limited actions has been documented in the city of Qinghai, Sichuan Province, where new teaching guidelines force students to take tests in Mandarin, effectively banning the Tibetan native language in educational contexts (Kunchok 2023). In light of these events, teaching staff and cultural

activities are closely monitored for opposing behaviour. In Ngawa, Sichuan, for example, a Tibetan teacher was arrested and removed from his teaching duties for sharing a video of the Dalai Lama, a key figure of Tibetan Buddhism with roots in Mongolia (TCHRD 2023a).
In June 2023, government bodies cracked down on Buddhists freedom of religion even further. Previously admitted religious gatherings all over the Tibet Autonomous Region were cancelled, camps and religious monuments destroyed, and key personnel arrested (Kunchok 2023a; Free Tibet 2023a). In that time, courts in Qinghai, TAR, also removed the official dates for the trials and court hearing of Tibetan activists from official databanks (TCHRD 2023a). This act hinders free public information and support for arrested activists. These incidents fall in line with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which opposes the idea of religious teachings in China. This opposition can also be highlighted by the propaganda campaigns against religious activities and sights in Tibet, launched by official temple management committees (International Campaign for Tibet 2023).
Another example for such intrusive but limited actions with the support of governing bodies and different societal groups is the Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia (IMAR), where Han-Chinese form most of the population and Mongols make up the biggest minority. Regional neighbours Russia and Mongolia having close cultural ties to the latter.
In Inner Mongolia, lands that have been used by traditional Mongolian Nomads as grazing lands have been sold to Han-Chinese mining companies to develop the land. This is not only an economic decision, but also ignores the importance of such lands for the nomad lifestyle of traditional Mongolian herders, de-facto threatening their livelihood (Ting 2023). The land was sold by local authorities to a Han-Chinese mining company, raising the question of whether this was the only option or if the company has been chosen for its alignment with the cultural views of the one-party state. Yet, this incident clearly depicts the political agenda which ignored the needs of the Mongolian herders.
Furthermore, the Mongolian minority in IMAR faces similar policies as the Tibetans in the TAR. As government officials crackdown on Mongolian cultural heritage and society with language bans, regional government officials have ordered all educational institutions to end Mongolian language classes by September 2023 and switch to Mandarin-based teaching (Chun-mei 2023). This ban shows great similarities to the policies in Tibet and can be further connected to actions taken by the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Book and Periodical Distribution Industry Association. The association instructed its members to halt the distribution of all books on Mongolian ethnicity adhering to the CCP's historical perspective. Politics through their power on economic institutions alters the telling of history, leaving no space for the teachings of Mongolian culture and traditions other than private spaces. The absence of viral protests, political resistance, or economic backlash highlights the control the CCP has over the putative autonomous region.

ERODING CULTURES, REINVENTING ONE CULTURE: FALUN GONG, CHRISTIANS, HUI

Another aspect of Chinese grey zone methods is the forced Sinicization of cultural and spiritual minorities (Ho 2023). These minorities are more vulnerable to oppression, as it is harder for them to coordinate and act collectively. Examples of such minorities are Christians, Huis, and the followers of the Falun Gong. The control of religious sites, which has been connected to other minorities in the text above, can also be observed in the actions against the Huis.
The minority is currently experiencing a significant shift in identity, influenced by a dual process of ethnic governance and religious suppression through the tactic of salami slicing. This transformation is underscored by a shift towards citizenship values over religious freedoms, alongside the state's initiative of Sinicization of religions, aimed at fostering cultural homogeneity. The Sinicization campaign imposes strict criteria on the expression of Islamic religious customs, endorsing only those that align with Chinese cultural norms. An example for this is the closing of a restaurant in Beijing for displaying a sign with Islamic statements. This tactic effectively coerces conformity to Chinese characteristics, marginalising practices deemed incompatible. Muslims, like other minorities, are increasingly compelled to assimilate into a common citizenship framework, where cultural and inter-ethnic distinctions are minimised in favor of national unity (Ho 2023).
This approach, characterised by the gradual erosion of religious freedoms through incremental measures, illustrates the salami slicing tactics employed by the Chinese state. By incrementally curtailing religious practices that diverge from state-sanctioned norms, the government seeks to suppress dissent and promote conformity, ultimately contributing to the Sinicization of the Hui minority and other religious communities in China. Prominent for this agenda are the actions around the Najiaying Mosque in Yunnan. Authorities demolished parts of the Arab-style mosque, leading to an outcry from Muslim-Chinese around the area. These tensions were channelled into clashes between protesting Muslims and military police officers, who halted the demonstrations (Ting 2023b). Other communities around China have faced similar restrictive measures that lead to a modification of the mosques (Tao 2023).
This blueprint of dismantling religious freedom is also used towards the Christian population in China. Christians as well face the demolition of churches around the country and dissolvement of religious gatherings. While Muslim population centres such as Xinjiang have been restructured beyond recognition with mass imprisonments, high-tech surveillance technology, and planned resettlements of Han-Chinese to Xinjiang to change demographics, the Christian community face other systematic struggles. Clerks and religious figures have been harassed and arrested in alleged cases of fraud or other offences, while their religious materials such as bibles are confiscated to prevent religious teaching.
These attacks on protesters and religious sites across China illuminate the actions that are taken by the Chinese government to force religious minorities into their state-ruled social system, while formally promoting religious freedom and freedom of speech. They slowly dismantle personal freedoms while simultaneously promoting the same rights.
A more personal side of the restrictive measures applied to conform to the CCP's societal ideas can be exemplified by members of the Falun Gong, one of many minorities. In July 2023, a member of the Falun Gong community in China was reportedly tortured in a Chinese prison and physically abused by prison wardens (Minghui Hubei 2023; Haley 2023). This incident is one of many reported events of torture and abuse of minorities in Chinese prisons and re-education facilities, which have been prominently documented in the Xinjiang region, following reports on forced labour and mass imprisonment of Uyghurs in the area (Smith 2020; Finnegan 2020). These measures can also be linked to the salami slicing tactics of the Chinese government. Although there

is no published directive legitimising the mistreatment of minorities in prisons, Chinese authorities seem to at least tolerate the incidents. It can be seen as a calculated threat which targets all those who attempt to oppose the CCP's alignment plans.

CONCLUSION: WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE REGION AND FOR CONFLICT RESEARCH

The different actions taken by the Chinese government to undermine international and national law without forcing a direct reaction of international actors shows the principles under which Xi Jinping's Chinese bureaucracy tries to push its political and societal agenda. From allegedly non-military fishery militias, to forced consensus and language restrictions to force labour; policies try to keep it subtle to avoid any national or international debates. Tactics used in different national settings can be regarded as blueprints which are applied on other regions and communities if effective and purpose-fitting. These slowly conflict-avoidant policies contest the lines between international laws, understanding of conflicts and possibilities of diplomatic/political reactions. It therefore also contests the methodological approaches to conflict research and our understanding of terms of conflicts.

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FRANCAFRIQUE - THE ROLE OF FRENCH NEOCOLONIALISM IN AFRICAN COUPS 2023

INTRODUCTION

The African continent has witnessed a significant increase in coups in the last three years, most of them led by leading military figures. On August 30, 2023, Gabon became the latest country to experience a military coup [→ Gabon (opposition)], following Niger in July [→ Niger (opposition)]; Burkina Faso in 2022; Chad, Guinea, and Sudan in 2021; and Mali in 2020. While each coup is unique, they do share some common denominators: their past under French colonial rule; the local population's support of the coup; and the root causes for a state of political instability, all of which render the countries vulnerable to military take-overs. Among those causes are democratic deficits, including flawed elections and changes to term limits, and the inability of elected governments to deliver development and effectively address security challenges (Ngima and Kasambala 2023). The latter is particularly relevant for the Sahel region, where Islamist insurgent activity has increased over the years, despite large-scale interventions of the national governments in cooperation with the international community, in particular the region's former colonial power France under Operation Barkhane. The recent coups in Niger and Gabon come at a time when, after decades of French foreign policy and interventions like these, anti-French sentiments have been rising in the countries and the entire region.
This Spotlight text aims to look at the role of these sentiments for the recent political developments in the two countries and in how far they may have contributed to fostering a conducive environment for the military coups in Niger and Gabon. To do this, the text will try to shed light on recent developments in France's relations with its former colonies and implications for the local population's perception of France's role in African politics.

DEVELOPMENTS IN NIGER

On July 26, Niger's government was overthrown by the military, and President Mohamed Bazoum was taken hostage [→ Niger (opposition)]. The coup was not only a blow to democracy in Niger but to stability in the Sahel region. While Niger had been a key strategic partner for the United States and its allies in the fight against militants in West Africa, the coup also brought a shift in alliances to the surface which was a long time coming – away from the West and towards "new" powers, in particular Russia.
For instance, on November 27, 2021, clashes between French forces and protesters who blocked a French military convoy bound for Mali left two people dead. On September 17, 2022, several hundred people demonstrated in the capital of Niamey to protest the French anti-jihadist force Barkhane, while some reportedly were praising Russia. These anti-French sentiments were reflected in a survey conducted by the Afrobarometer Institute in 2022 as well: 64 percent of the population in Niger opposed the use of foreign forces to secure the country and only six percent considered support from French forces or their European Union allies desirable. After France and the European Union refused to recognize the new military government after the coup, simmering resentment at perceived French interference in Niger's internal affairs was exacerbated. This sparked pro-coup demonstrations, involving demonstrators waving Russian flags and chanting anti-French slogans. Reports highlighted that many Nigeriens saw the coup as a chance for a fresh start and to revoke France of its perceived privileged access to the country's political elite and natural resources.

DEVELOPMENTS IN GABON

Just over a month after the coup in Niger, a coup in Gabon followed on August 30. Less than an hour after the electoral commission announced incumbent president Ali Bongo Ondimba had won a third term in the August 26 general elections, the military seized power [→ Gabon (opposition)]. While the international community, including the UN, African Union (AU), and France, condemned the coup, wide public support for the coup reflected a trust in the army that was demonstrated already in a 2021 Afrobarometer survey. According to the survey, two thirds of the respondents agreed that it was "legitimate for the armed forces to take control of the government when elected leaders abuse their power for their own interests" (Afrobarometer Gabon 2021).
At the same time, similarly as in Niger, anti-French sentiments have been widespread for some time. Since they came into power more than five decades ago, the Bongo family was said to have close ties with France – some reports even claim that the French government helped the Bongo dynasty to secure power in 1967. Indeed, Gabon has been one of France's closest allies in Africa, with hundreds of troops being permanently deployed in the country and private sector companies benefitting from economic relations, particularly in the mining industry. But also in everyday life, the former colonial power played a considerable role, from French media channels to fiscal policy.

THE ROLE OF FRANCAFRIQUE IN THE RECENT COUP D'ETATS

After the French colonies on the African continent gained their independence in the 1960s, France continued to engage with African states, most notably its former colonies – a system that was termed as Françafrique. In this context, France is often accused of pursuing "neo-colonial" policies while presenting them as tools for economic and governance stabilization. This refers to its military presence in the former French colonies and financial dependence but also cooperation with African leaders. To join forces to combat jihadist movements in the Sahel region, France has set up bases in its partner countries and deployed a considerable amount of personnel on the ground.
In economic terms, France established the CFA Franc that was used in the former colonies in West and Central Africa. The currency is however more and more contested – while supporters argue that it helps stabilize the region and facilitates trade with France, opponents criticize the lack of possibilities for member countries to pursue their own national monetary policy. Critics indicate that this could lead to France obtaining natural resources at below-market prices, selling them for above average prices for export. For instance, Niger was rich in uranium and was therefore key for France to achieve energy independence with its civil nuclear industry heavily relying on a controlled supply of uranium. However, uranium trade became marginal after the discovery of large oil deposits. Similarly, ISS Africa shows that none of France's former sub-Saharan colonies is among its top five trading partners in Africa, demonstrating a gap between perception and reality. Much rather, China's share in economies of West African countries has exceeded that of France in recent years. Furthermore, until recently, countries using the currency were required to deposit half of their foreign exchange re-

serves in the French treasury – according to critics, stripping them of their sovereignty over their monetary policies.
In addition to that, France's policy of cooperating with African leaders of dynastic succession, such as the military-dominated transitional regime in Chad, while condemning military coups in Mali and Burkina Faso is another point of contention for public perception in its former colonies. Critics often accuse France to prioritize their interests in minerals and cooperation on migration laws at the costs of supporting undemocratic and clientelist regimes that tend to curtail the rights of their citizens rather than expand them. At the same time, France's strong support for ECOWAS contributes to those anti-French sentiments as ECOWAS itself is often considered to be widely unpopular, often portrayed as a means for heads of state to extend their stays in power by turning a blind eye to persisting challenges such as rigged elections and constitutional manipulations.

CONCLUSION

To sum it up, France played and continues to play a role in its former colonies, and while the recent coups seem to have brought challenging relationships between Niger, Gabon, and France to the forefront, the coups themselves rather are the result of a conglomerate of different contribution factors. However, analysts have pointed out that coup leaders might have used the momentum to take advantage of already simmering accusations against the former colonial power to boost their popularity and rally public support for their coup by portraying themselves and their regime as a counter-design to the often-dynastic local political elite that, in many places, has been supported by neo-colonial France.
What becomes apparent from these recent developments is that, for years to come, these coups will have severe impacts on the countries' ties with its former colonial power France, the stability in the whole region of West and Central Africa as well as on French - and to some extent, wider European - economic and military interests in the wider region. How these developments may transform the landscape of foreign influence in Niger and Gabon, but also other former colonies in the region and especially whether this power vacuum created after the withdrawal of French forces further impacts and perhaps enables the expansion of Russian influence in the West and Central African region, remains to be seen.

SABRINA GABEL

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TIME OF UNREST: EXPLORING THE RISE OF CONFLICTS

INTRODUCTION

The Russia-Ukraine war, the Nagorno-Karabakh military operation, tensions in Kosovo, and a full-scale war between Hamas and Israel with related clashes in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. These are just a few examples of escalated conflicts that have occurred in the last two years. In fact, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, the number of conflict events increased by more than 40 percent from 2020-2023. Moreover, there has been a twelve percent rise in 2023 compared to the rates observed in 2022 (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project 2024). Our very own research identified 369 conflicts in 2023, ten more compared to the year before and a total of two more wars. This Spotlight text aims to investigate the main features and causes of the unprecedented increase in violent conflicts in 2022-2023. The first section studies the most prominent of them as autonomous events, while the second section presents a systematic analysis, exploring the conflicts not only as interrelated units but also highlighting some change agents that contribute to the transition from the existing system to a new one.

AUTONOMOUS CONFLICTS

The violent conflicts mentioned in the introduction undoubtedly have their own historical and local background. In fact, the Russia-Ukraine war [→ Russia – Ukraine] has its roots in 2014 with the change of government in Ukraine: Crimea became part of the Russian Federation, and military attacks began in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine. Azerbaijan military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023 [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)] was also a result of a continuous conflict over territory between Azerbaijan and Armenia, lasting three decades. Even if this territory was populated mostly by Armenians, it was part of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, according to the Soviet authorities' decision in 1921. Another conflict with a long history, between Kosovo and Serbia, also escalated in 2023: In May, the municipal elections in the Serb-majority northern part of Kosovo caused tensions between authorities and Kosovo Serbs, while in September, a shootout occurred between both sides [→ Kosovo – Serbia]. However, the most unexpected war that started between Hamas and Israel in October 2023 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)] has its deep historical roots in the middle of the twentieth century. On observing these events, it can be argued that idiosyncratic reasons transformed these conflicts from frozen to active ones in the last two years. From this perspective, they can be studied as separate cases, and this method has its own advantages: each conflict can be investigated deeply and thoroughly considering various factors, e.g., historical, cultural, ethnical, economic, and political. However, this approach does not consider the global context and direct or indirect relations with other international actors.

COMPLEX CONFLICT SYSTEM

Developing the systemic approach, the following theoretical insights can give more comprehension in exploring the abrupt rise of violent conflicts. This phenomenon can be defined as "conflict avalanches", i.e., spatiotemporally proximate events with regularities and interactions between singular units (Lee 2020). Alternatively, these clusters can be viewed as "conflict systems" or "conflict complexes" that highlight conflict interlinkages at various levels: linkage not only by actors, but also by conflict issues (structural dimension) and by diffusion and spillover of conflict measures (processual dimension) (Franz 2022). In addition, it was observed that conflicts per se became more complex in the recent past due to several factors: 1) the increase in number of conflicts with non-state armed groups; 2) the increase in the number of actors involved in the conflicts; 3) prevalence of support relationships and involvement in the coalitions with other states and non-state armed groups. As an example of the complexity, actors of one crisis can become actors of another, creating merged conflict situations. Another example can be the following: support relationships that can be expressed, for instance, by arms transfers, training, and intelligence support, can further escalate and prolong a conflict (International Committee of the Red Cross 2021).

AGENTS AS PART OF THE SYSTEM

The violent conflicts introduced in this text can be viewed as interconnected within a system characterized by the same cause-effect relationships. The main aspects of the existing system are the following. Until recently, the unipolar period constituted at the beginning of the 1990s with the dissolution of the Soviet Union was headed by the United States that actively participated in global affairs by engaging in conflicts all over the world, establishing overseas military bases and providing support to numerous states and non-state actors. In fact, according to the Global Power Index (GPI), measuring power by employing a resource-based approach, in 1980, the US was ranked first and possessed 26.1 percent of global power, while in 2000, its global power increased to 28.6 percent. Moreover, its gross domestic product (GDP) grew from 22.3 percent in 1980 to 24.6 percent in 2000 of global share (Moyer 2018). However, in the 2010s the US was involved in unsuccessful military operations in the WANA region, while simultaneously trying to recover from the financial crisis and deal with domestic issues. Indeed, as reported by GPI, the US global power decreased to 23.6 percent in 2016, while GDP declined to 20.9 percent of the global share in 2016. Another index, Formal Bilateral Influence Capacity (FBIC), using not only data on material capabilities, but also exploring influence and complex interdependence between states at the dyadic level, confirmed the weakening US global influence from 16.1 percent in 2000 to 11.2 percent in 2016 (Moyer 2018).

At the same time, the world was changing and becoming more competitive due to China's economic and strategic rise, increased Russian ambitions, and a more independent Global South. Undoubtedly, China and Russia are not as powerful as the US, however, they can cause unrest at the regional level and influence the international relations system. In fact, both countries are increasing their impact on the Global South, making it more multipolar and less dependent only on the Western countries. As an example, from 2001 to 2020, trade between Sub-Saharan Africa and China grew by 1864 percent, surpassing the US and the European Union. Regarding arms trade, between 2010 and 2021, Russia, the first supplier to Sub-Saharan Africa, accounted for 24 percent, China for 22 percent, meanwhile the US only for 5 percent (Mohseni-Cheraghlou 2023). So, the situation, in which the US role is weakening, and other geopolitical actors become more powerful and compete for a better strategic position, gives rise to numerous potential conflicts on a global scale, connected with each other by common cause-effects rela-

tionships within a system.

AGENTS AS PART OF THE TRANSITION

While the conflicts mentioned above can be viewed as a product of the system, in which agents act according to its inner logic, some singular agents can make a historical alternative or a historical choice, causing a transition from the existing system to a new one. The construction of a new system is chaotic and unpredictable, and even small actions of participants can lead to significant consequences (Wallerstein, 2004). From 2022, actors involved in the Russia-Ukraine war [→ Russia – Ukraine] and in the confrontation between the Western bloc and the Russia-led coalition [→ EU, USA, et al. – Russia], act as change agents and participating in the transition process. Thus, instability intrinsic to the transition can lead to an increase in violent clashes on a global scale. For example, the Azerbaijan military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023 [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)] has been successful for the Azerbaijani forces due to several reasons, one of them was the complete involvement of Russia in the war in Ukraine. Russia was a historical actor and a peacekeeper between Armenia and Azerbaijan, supporting the former, however, in 2023, it could not or did not want to participate in this conflict, and the Azerbaijani forces took advantage of the situation. The absence of the Russian peacekeeping initiative was also observed in Central Asia, i.e., between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in September 2022 on a border dispute [→ Kyrgyzstan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan (border communities / Fergana Valley); 2022]. On the contrary, before the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, in January 2022, Russian-led forces of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) were successfully deployed in the clash between the opposition and the government in Kazakhstan [→ Kazakhstan (opposition); 2022]. So, the Russian engagement in the war in Ukraine can lead to its weakening geopolitical position in the ex-Soviet Union countries and the rise of numerous conflicts in the region. The Russia-Ukraine war can influence other international agents also from the ideological perspective by the anti-Western narratives. For example, most Serb population in the Western Balkan countries approve this discourse: in fact, numerous anti-EU/NATO protests recently occurred in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, one of the conflicts, between Kosovo authorities and Kosovo Serbs, that was unchanged or even improved in 2022 from the intensity point of view, escalated again in 2023 against ongoing negotiations promoted by the Western bloc. This while the US and EU countries themselves, involved in many other conflicts on a global scene, were trying to de-escalate the conflict by pressing not only on Serbia, but also on Kosovo, a historical ally. Indeed, the US ambassador to Kosovo said that the actions of Kosovar authorities "had a negative impact on Kosovo's reputation and reversed efforts to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia" and cited US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who warned that this kind of policy "would affect U.S.-Kosovo relations, and that the cancellation of Kosovo's participation in the military exercise was the first consequence" (RFERL 2023).

The intense involvement of the Western coalition in the Russia-Ukraine war had a significant impact on international conflicts. From 2022, the USA concentrated most of its strategic, military, and financial aid to Ukraine, and Hamas considered it a favorable moment to start their operation in October 2023 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)]. As the deputy head of Hamas, Saleh al-Arouri, told Al Jazeera, "Sensing the importance of the current battle with Russia for global influence, the United States prioritizes preventing further conflicts and maintaining global calm and stability until the battle for Ukraine is over. It is our responsibility to take advantage of this opportunity and escalate our resistance in a real and dangerous way that threatens the calm and stability they want" (Al Jazeera 2023). Moreover, the US security guarantees and obligations given to many other states, along with an increased number of domestic problems, e.g. migration crisis, public debt, social polarization, can trigger other international actors to promote their own geopolitical agenda, creating even more conflicts on a global scale. So, the transformative actions of some prominent agents involved in the Russia-Ukraine war from both sides, Russia-led and Western coalition, were partly responsible for the unrest in other states: Azerbaijan vs Armenia, Kosovo vs Serbia, and Israel vs Hamas.

CONCLUSION

Idiosyncratic, systemic, and transformative approaches in studying violent events contribute not only to international relations research, but also to preventing the escalation of existing conflicts or even the emergence of future ones. In 2024, other conflicts may escalate or begin to merge by having common actors or issues. For example, the Russia-Ukraine war may expand in Moldova, or maybe Iran, not only a supplier of weaponry to Russia, but also a key player in the Israel vs Hamas conflict, may intensify its actions. Moreover, the risks remain very serious also because of high military tensions between the US and China that can lead to wide-ranging consequences.

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TURKISH ELECTIONS 2023: ERDOGAN'S VICTORY AMIDST MIGRATION POLICY AND THE KURDISH QUESTION

INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Türkiye faced one of the most pivotal elections in its history. For the duration of the two-month election period, the global eyes were on the republic; parts of the Western press considered it to be the most important election of the year (Beriş 2023). The outcome was crucial for the democratic state of the country. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the candidate of the incumbent coalition People's Alliance, consisting of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), and three other small parties faced the oppositional presidential candidate, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, leading the Nation Alliance, consisting of six opposition parties. Despite many polls, which had predicted Kilicdaroglu's win, Erdogan was elected as president and continued his 20-year rule for another five-year term (Euronews 2023).

THE WATERSHED ELECTIONS

Erdogan and his AKP have led Türkiye since coming to power in the November elections in 2002. 80 years prior, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk founded the country with the purpose of creating a Western style, modernized, and secular nation - a state philosophy that was coined Kemalism. Since Erdogan assumed power, he has conducted a significant overhaul of Türkiye. Its democratic principles, once upheld by aspirations of an EU membership, have been replaced by a governance characterized by strongman-leadership. Slowly and steadily, values like freedom of press, laicism, or free elections diminished, and the hopes of Türkiye joining the EU stagnated (Christofis 2023).

For the first time in 20 years, the opposition had a real chance in winning the elections. Years of semi-autocratic rule has left Türkiye with a catastrophic economy, sky-high unemployment rates, and a brain drain threatening the future of the country (Ozdogan 2021).

Additionally, three million Syrian refugees have sparked many debates, as the public perceives a crisis surrounding their presence. Then, in February, the deadliest earthquake in Turkish history struck the southwest of Türkiye, killing more than 50,000 people. The high death-toll was partly due to the government's inadequate disaster management.

As the crises accumulated, the sentiments that this might be the election to put an end to autocratic rule reached all over the world. Six parties ranging from leftist to nationalist - the unified stance: the promise of democracy. Yet, in the runoff vote on May 28, Erdogan emerged with 52.18 percent of the votes, while Kilicdaroglu obtained merely 47.8 percent (Balta, Elci and Sert 2023).

MIGRATION POLICY TAKES CENTER STAGE: THE BATTLE OVER REFUGEE POLITICS

In many European states, a stark rise in refugee numbers often leads to the establishment of anti-immigration parties and thus a significant change in voter behavior - prominent examples being the AFD in Germany or the FPÖ in Austria (Fisunoglu and Sert 2018).

While the refugee crisis in Türkiye has in fact led to the establishment of new anti-immigration parties such as the Victory Party (ZP), the anti-immigration propaganda was not enough to lead to an actual power shift. The ruling party of the AKP has had a pro-immigrant stand ever since 2011, when Syrian refugees first came to the country. Migration was not significantly politicized in the years prior to the ZP's emergence in 2021; taking advantage of a thematical cleavage, the ZP profited from anti-immigrant sentiments and built their party on it. Consequently, the other parties integrated solutions against the newly acknowledged refugee crisis. The 2023 election was the first national election in which migration was a salient policy topic; it was also the first time the government's migration policy was openly criticized by the opposition (Balta, Elci and Sert 2023).

As of August 2023, the number of Syrians under temporary protection registered in Türkiye were over three million, making it the country which hosts the largest refugee population in the world. The refugees are free to settle all over the country; merely 7 percent of the total population live in camps (Refugees Association 2023).

The AKP remained on their pro-immigration stand, focusing on topics as stabilizing Syria to ensure a safe return for refugees, campaigns to fight antagonization of Syrians, and reducing high concentrations of refugees and cities. The right-wing alliance partner MHP followed the AKP in their demands, also implementing a pro-immigrant stand.

Kilicdaroglu implemented a harsh anti-migration policy to sway voters who were unsatisfied with Erdogan's liberal policies; harsh rhetoric talks of further securing the borders and more focus on the EU's Readmission Agreements. Especially during the second election round, Kilicdaroglu focused on the refugee question, promising the deportation of the millions of Syrians. The attempt was to sway the ultra-nationalist undecided voters (Balta, Elci and Sert 2023).

During the runoff elections, a kingmaker became apparent: Sinan Ogan, an ultranationalist who garnered 5.2 percent of the votes after the first round. He initially promised to support whichever candidate promised the deportation of refugees. Endorsement by Ogan could have secured an opposition win, however, Kilicdaroglu could not win the right-wing nationalists over, due to his significant connection and reliance on the Kurds (Politico 2023).

KURDISH QUESTION: HDP STRUGGLES AMIDST ACCUSATIONS AND ERDOGAN'S POLITICAL MANEUVERING

The historical experience of the Kurdish population in Türkiye has been characterized by episodes of oppression, pogroms, and massacres. Consequently, in the 1970s, the terrorist organization PKK was founded. The group aimed to establish a separatist Kurdish state through armed struggle. The height of its activity was during the 1980s, when the group conducted outright guerilla warfare against the government and carried out attacks on both state and civilian targets. In the 1990s, the PKK went through a paradigm shift and turned into a democratic and legitimate actor. The focus became political activism, civil disobedience, and community organizing; however, the armed wing was never dissolved. The PKK conducts terrorist attacks to this day after failed peace talks in 2015. Fear in the population is deeply ingrained, stemming from the decades of conflict and violence. For many, it is not just a fear of physical harm, but also a fear of the uncertainty and instability that the PKK's actions bring to their communities and livelihoods. The sporadic attacks, bombings, and clashes between security forces and PKK militants have created a climate of apprehension, where people live with the constant threat of violence lurking in the

shadows. Naturally, the Kurdish question has always been in the heart of political debate (Yegen 2016).
Today, one of the most relevant players in the parliamentary game is the HDP. The party is a pro-Kurdish, democratic socialist party with the agenda to campaign for democracy and the civil rights of all people in Türkiye. However, the HDP has been repeatedly accused of links to the PKK, especially its party leaders. The HDP has denied these accusations, stressing their condemnation of violence and terrorism. HDP supporters argue that the allegations are politically motivated to suppress successful leftist activism. Critics of the HDP, however, see a threat to Türkiye's national security. The accusations have resulted in significant ramifications for the party: despite their ability to garner support from numerous minorities and capture approx. 10 percent of the votes, there remains a pervasive atmosphere of distrust, exacerbated by Erdogan's relentless smear campaigns against the HDP (Kaya and Whiting 2019).

NATIONALISM TRUMPS COALITION: ERDOGAN'S VICTORY AND THE POLITICS OF FEAR

After being unable to secure the first round of elections, the Nation Alliance needed the support of the Labor and Freedom Alliance lead by the HDP. The pro-Kurdish alliance endorsed Kilicdaroglu, but this led to infighting within the alliance, as well as the challenge of having to appease both right-wing and leftist voters. The HDP's stance on immigration aligns with a pro-immigration position, causing their supporters to be deterred by the alliance's harsh anti-immigration rhetoric. On the other hand, nationalist voters, who desired more aggressive policies on both immigration issues and the Kurdish question, were unsatisfied by the links to the HDP. The nationalist, right-wing Good Party (IP), part of the Nation Alliance, was not enough to appease the undecided voters. (Balta, Elci and Sert 2023).
This is where Erdogan found success. His cult of personality, appealing to nationalism and the pledge of a stable future, while emphasizing the importance of state survival, proved decisive in securing victory in the second round (Esen and Gumuscu 2023). He stressed vehemently on the issue of Kurdish terrorism and capitalized the fears that are so deeply rooted within the people. During rallies, a doctored video was shown in which PKK leaders sang Kilicdaroglu's campaign song, demonstrating their support for Kilicdaroglu. This deceitful maneuver aimed to undermine the opposition's credibility. Kilicdaroglu struggled to effectively refute these allegations due to his limited access to the media. Erdogan propagated misleading assertions, suggesting that a victory for Kilicdaroglu would result in the release of Abdullah Öcalan, the imprisoned PKK founder, and grant autonomy to Kurdish-inhabited regions. These distortions significantly influenced the nationalist segment of the population (Yavuz 2023).
In the end, Erdogan's most effective campaign weapon was fearmongering and ethnoreligious Turkish nationalism.

CONCLUSION

The 2023 elections in Türkiye marked a critical juncture, encompassing political, socio-economic, and ethnic tensions. Erdogan's victory reflected enduring themes of nationalism and authority consolidation, despite the considerable anticipation for a potential power shift. Migration policy emerged as a pivotal electoral battleground, with Erdogan's pro-immigration stance contrasting Kilicdaroglu's anti-migration rhetoric. The Kurdish question remained entrenched, resonating with historical grievances and security concerns. Erdogan's exploitation of fears surrounding Kurdish terrorism and alleged ties between the HDP and the PKK underscored the intersection of security discourse and electoral strategy. After all, the promise of hawkish immigration policies was not enough to convince voters of a secure state future. Erdogan's victory underscored the power of nationalist narratives and the politics of fear. The elections revealed not only Erdogan's enduring influence but also Türkiye's enduring political complexities. As Türkiye navigates post-election dynamics, its democratic trajectory and the challenges of pluralism remain central to shaping its future.

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HOW PUBLIC ATTENTION AND INTERNAL ACTORS SHAPE CONFLICT DYNAMICS: MORAVCSIK'S LIBERALISM ON CONFLICTS THROUGH THE EXAMPLES OF THE 2023 ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR AND THE FALL OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH

INTRODUCTION

Academic approaches in peace and conflict research strongly rely on game theory models, emphasizing intergovernmental or inter-group bargaining. Therefore, possible influences of domestic liberal actors – like the opposition, the public or topic-related interest groups – may be underestimated.

This Spotlight aims for presenting evidence that liberal actors can shape conflict dynamics and act as spoilers towards more peaceful means of conflict resolution. Furthermore, it gives a scope to analyze interesting actor constellations and to gain deeper insights into two conflicts that became latent last year: the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh and the Israel-Hamas war.

I will draw on the liberalism of Andrew Moravcsik and the two-level game presented by Robert Putnam. These theories describe state preferences as a domestic cumulative of ideals, financial interests and dominant group interests, moderated by democratic institutions. Government actions must be within these inner-state boundaries as well as within the possible international action frame, creating a – possibly empty – win-set. Putnam's two-level game states that international agreements and actions therefore need to be negotiated in two different arenas, the international and the domestic one and need ratification in both to become effective.

Furthermore, I use Stedman's spoiler theory to describe actors that work domestically against negotiable conflict resolutions for personal reasons. The underlying theoretical idea is to explore if and to which degree (cumulative) liberal actors can be described as spoilers and work accordingly. I theorize that such liberal spoilers can either work actively or passively – through the government's perception of public preferences – in impacting governmental actions.

ARMENIA AND THE CONFLICT AROUND NAGORNO-KARABAKH

The first conflict I want to highlight is the conflict resolving around the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, by international jurisdiction a territory of Azerbaijan but self-governed by the self-proclaimed Armenian populated Republic Artsakh, that officially ceased to exist after a major escalation in September 2023 [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)]. The underlying conflict emerged after the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the creation of Armenia and Azerbaijan as sovereign states in the Alma-Ata declaration in 1991.

Since their independence, both countries have fought two major and several minor wars and escalations against each other. The first major confrontation in 1992-94 resulted in the Armenian occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh, whereas the second Karabakh war in 2020 was won by Azerbaijan, leading to the withdrawal of Armenian troops from that area, leaving only local Artsakhi troops in the remaining parts of the formerly occupied territory. Furthermore, Azerbaijan enforced control over territory in southern Artsakh and obtained large areas surrounding the de-facto state in the following peace deal, leaving only a single street connection between Armenia and Artsakh, the Lachin Corridor, which was subsequently guarded by around 2000 Russian peacekeepers.

To understand the overall challenges for the Armenian-Artsakhi security architecture, the geographical situation is important to consider. Armenia is located between Azerbaijan in the east and its ally Türkiye in the west. The close connection between those countries – sometimes described as "one nation, two states" – posed a significant risk for a two-front war from Armenia's perspective, should a large-scale escalation occur. The Azeri exclave named Nakhchivan is also relevant in this regard. Historically, the Armenia-Turkish relations are already intrinsically strained.

This hazard was further fueled by official statements of the Turkish government, that attacks on Azeri territory would be answered by a "brotherly fist". After the 2020 war, a peace deal was brokered by Russia, which is invested in the local security architecture as the follow up of the USSR and Armenia's main military ally as a local peacekeeper. However, since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022, Russia's resources and focus were largely bound in Ukraine, further destabilizing the situation. Armenian military options can therefore be seen as highly limited.

The situation in the border regions between both states was tense throughout 2021, with many minor incidents taking place, also involving heavy weaponry. In September 2022, more than 280 soldiers were killed and around 7000 civilians evacuated from their homes after an Azeri attack. Armenia alleged Azerbaijan of blocking the Gois-Kapan highway in its southernmost region of Syunik in August 2021, after the withdrawal of Armenian troops positioned in the territory. This would retaliate agreements, to guarantee mutual access between Armenian villages and the regional centers. This blocked the connection between Armenia and Iran. Furthermore, there were frequent allegations of ceasefire violations by both sides, showing the instability of the border situation, following the war.

Trilateral talks between the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azeri President Ilham Aliyev were held, for example, on April 6, 2022, and five more times until the end of 2023 in Brussels under the mediation of the president of the European Council Charles Michel, aiming to find a final resolution for the conflict. The progress was driven by Azerbaijan and was viewed skeptically in Armenia. For example, in September 2022, a small-scale escalation occurred which resulted in further territorial gains for Azerbaijan. Furthermore, talks were held in Sochi, Russia, and Teheran, Iran, at the end of November between Pashinyan, Russian President Putin, Aliyev, and Iranian Prime Minister Raisi. Iran stated that it would not tolerate a conflict on its borders, communicating this in calls with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (Al Jazeera 2022). The conflict is therefore also embedded within the wider regional power architecture, involving opposing regional powers Türkiye and Iran.

On December 12, 2022, members of a pro-governmental Azeri environmental organization blocked the Lachin Corridor, officially styling the event as public protests climate violations by Armenia, leading to humanitarian shortcuts in Nagorno-Karabakh. After an Azeri offensive in September 2023, almost the whole Armenian population, consisting of around 120,000 people, were allowed to leave through Lachin and fled to the Armenian mainland. After the fall of its capital, Stapanakert, Artsakh officially ceased existence by the end of 2023, which was later recalled by the exiled head of state.

RELEVANT GROUPS AND INTERACTIONS

The conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh strongly interacts with the inner Armenian oppositional conflict [→ Armenia (Opposition); 2022]. Since Armenia was the participant of the peace negotiations instead of the de-facto government of Artsakh, both actors are presented as a functional unit here. The relevant actors were the government under prime minister Nikol Pashinyan and the opposition with their followers. Pashinyan came to power in 2018 after the so-called "velvet revolution' that ousted former Premier Minister Robert Kocharyan. The main issue with the opposition was the handling of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with first protests resulting from the ceasefire and its additional loss in territory after the 2020 war. Pashinyan resigned as a reaction but was re-elected with 51 percent of votes, compared to 22 percent by Kocharyan, who came second (Foreign Policy 2021). These experiences with changes in power may alter decisions and the perceived importance of public processes in the Armenian government.

Mass protests organized by the multi-party opposition broke out on April 14, relating to talks between Pashinyan and Azeri Prime Minister Ilham Aliyev, and especially to a statement of Pashinyan in the Armenian parliament that "we may have to lower the bar regarding the status of Artsakh". Oppositional leaders accused him of treason and oppositional parties left the parliament in protest. Notably, on May 11 protesters besieged the presidential residence and tried to access the Yerevan mayor's office. Furthermore, oppositional claims about a democratic backshift by Pashinyan were issued. The protests were attended by several thousand people and accompanied by skirmishes between participants and the police.

Given the liberal approach and the framing of the domestic-international interaction in the definition of a win-set, I assume that the domestic preferences in Armenia led to the rejection of possible outputs of Armenian-Azeri government negotiations. They might have led to a peaceful conflict resolve or a mutually acceptable status quo, given the underlying strategic situation after the 2021 war. Statements from Aliyev rendered the feasibility of options like power-sharing or regional self-rule for Artsakh unlikely.

The parliamentary statement by Pashinyan in temporal proximity to the negotiation talks can be seen as an indicator for possible solutions or more precisely as a domestic proving ground of the boundaries given by the Azeri government for a possible non-empty win set. Therefore, the opposition's negative answer to this proposal probably resulted in the involuntary defection of negotiations by Armenia. Whether a resolution would have been found cannot be determined ex post and without insights into the talks. Nevertheless, there may have been no concession between the Armenian oppositional interests of leaving Artsakh untouched and the Azeri negotiation power, imposed by their strategic advantages.

The dynamics of the resolution process seemingly have been driven by Azerbaijan. Since the resumption of the talks in 2021, a gradient from peaceful negotiations towards more forceful approaches – or rather an interplay of peaceful and forceful actions – can be observed. This appears as a tactical shift by Azerbaijan, probably to create an acceptable resolution at minimum costs, while gaining strategic momentum. The assumed non-ratification therefore contributed to the more violent solution enforced by Azerbaijan. Whereas this can, by no means, be seen as a voluntary decision by Armenia, the Armenian public and opposition can nevertheless be described as contributing liberal spoilers towards the conflict and the emergence of its resolution pattern.

The Azeri focus to terminate the conflict in such a relatively brief period probably originated from the opportunity resulting from the shift in the strategic environment following the 2020 war, which terminated a period of mutual deterrence and armament. Also, the weakening of Russian peacekeeper abilities due to its resource-intensive war in Ukraine and the growing dependence of Europe on Azeri Gas, as substitutes for the Russian supplies, strengthen the strategic position and action space. It is further possible that other factors like domestic processes contributed to this dynamic. One could speculate that Azerbaijan committed to the 2020 ceasefire, in a strategic position of advancing on Stepanakert, to seek out outcomes that guaranteed even more gains.

It is worth mentioning, that in this conflict, negotiations and diplomacy, although stated as progress in the relations of both countries, cannot be seen as a linear path towards a peaceful resolution but as a method working within a broader set of options. This may be a warning example that negotiations, as much as they are desirable, can serve other strategic means than peace. In this case, they may have been used by Azerbaijan to gain strategic information, to seek out the most cost-efficient way to resolve the conflict or to create legitimacy by providing a peaceful approach and therefore to appease international actors.

ISRAEL - HAMAS: THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

The second conflict I want to highlight is the conflict around the issue of territory and sovereignty between Israel and the Palestinians. The conflict reaches back to the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948. Whereas Israel prominently fought against its Muslim neighbors, the main antagonists nowadays are Palestinian factions, most notably Hamas and in the past, Fatah. Hamas was founded in the late 1980s in the wake of the first Intifada – a Palestinian-Arabic term for violent uprising against perceived oppression. Israel's relation with its neighboring states has since been normalized, with Egypt by example often acting as a mediator for ceasefires, which indicates a trust relation towards both sides.

Hamas did not participate in the 1996 Palestinian elections (ECFR n.d.). After the breakout of the second Intifada 2000, several ceasefires were negotiated but were usually unstable. During the first and second Intifada, Israel targeted and killed high-ranking Hamas leaders. A year after the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza strip in 2005 and the consent for Palestinian self-governance involving a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, elections were held in Gaza which resulted in a surprising win for Hamas, ousting their rivalling organization Fatah. The following Gaza war resulted in the partition of the Palestinian-ruled territories between both groups, with Hamas governing the Gaza strip and the Palestinian organization under Fatahs leadership governing the West Bank.

Israel launched many operations against the Gaza strip, mostly following (alleged) Hamas attacks. Such were Operation Cast Lead in 2008 and Operation Pillars of Defense in 2012. A regular modus operandi by Hamas and fellow organizations involves volleys of rockets towards Israel. This notably led to the development of the Iron Dome missile interception system by the latter. A dynamic of exchanges in form of air attacks and rocket fire between the belligerents can be observed, interrupted by ceasefires, often negotiated with the help of Egypt. Apart from military means, Israel has been enforcing a territorial blockade on Gaza since 2008, controlling the movement across its boundaries.

The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) regularly conducts raids in

West Bank settlements and most commonly in refugee camps, with Jenin and Nablus being hotspots. These incursions often target local groups, some of which only recruit themselves from within these camps, but Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic jihad as well. Civilian casualties and the destruction of property and infrastructure have been reported on several occasions.

Hamas is allied with several other organizations under the influence and support of Iran, sometimes described as its proxies. With Hezbollah in Lebanon being one of them and Hamas being also influential in the West Bank, this poses the threat of a multifront conflict to Israel. Through this connection, conflicts with Hamas are embedded in the struggle of Israel and its major enemy, Iran.

The conflict escalated on October 7, 2023, when Hamas launched an attack into southern Israel, killing around 900 civilians and 300 members of the security branch. This event was the deadliest in terms of Israeli casualties in this century. Israel responded by attacking the Gaza strip from air, before launching a ground attack on October 27, with units permanently operating within the area. With Hamas running the Gazan health system and therefore providing the numbers of deaths within the area, it is hard to state exact numbers with the official accounts possibly manipulated for strategic and narrativist reasons. Nevertheless, given the amount of destruction – 45 percent of buildings in the area – the official numbers of around 21,000 casualties as of the end of 2023 are at least plausible.

It is even vague to exactly determine the ratio of Hamas members included in this total amount! The main reason is, that both a clear number of Hamas members is known, with estimates reaching from 15.000 up to 45.000, and that the difference between members of the Gazan civilian public government, Gazan citizens and armed fighters of the al-Qassam brigades may be permeable and not finally to determine. Given our conservative approach, the HIIK estimates up to 5,000 killed Hamas members between October 7 and the end of 2023.

International actors complained about the intensity of the Israeli response and the high number of civilian casualties. Pro-Palestinian protests arose around the world with large numbers of participants. Therefore, the question is why Israel wages a total war against Hamas, with heavy use of resources, while it is uncertain if a military win against a group that is strongly intertwined with the local population is possible (Segell 2021, 88). Therefore, the Israeli strategy and its grounds for continuing the conflict with the current intensity or narrowing it to a limited war are of high interest and are going to be discussed in the following section.

RELEVANT GROUPS

The internal dynamics of the wider Palestinian faction is of minor relevance for the conflict and its development, since Hamas is probably more rational-bounded and far less domestically influenceable than a democracy like Israel. This is made clear by the fact that no elections have been held in Gaza since 2006 (Freedom House n.d.). Therefore, no liberal spoilers are expected to be relevant in Hamas' decision-making, lacking suitable feedback mechanisms. Apart from that, Hamas declared aim is the destruction of Israel, so the strategic goals are rather one-dimensional, compared to a fully-expanded state with a vital economy, resulting in a stronger reputational and ontological bond for Hamas to conflict!

On the Israeli side in contrast, there is a range of different actors that might have different preferences and ways to influence the thinking of the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The current Israeli government consists of an alliance of Netanyahu's Likud party and a faction of ultranationalist-ultraorthodox parties, collectively described as being political hard-liners. Netanyahu, who first came to power in 2009 after a first legislation between 1996 and 1999, was deselected in 2021, but became prime minister once more in 2022, after a brief period as opposition leader (BBC 2022). Political instability can therefore be assumed up to a certain degree.

The first actor I want to shed light on, is the public opinion regarding Netanyahu in relation to legal accusations against him, the backlash against the judiciary reform, and the imminent opinions on his leadership capabilities after the October 2023 attack. Netanyahu faces legal accusations for, among others, corruption (AP News 2013). Internationally and domestically, the issue regarding the planned reform of the judicial system by the government received great attention. The reform aims for a stronger legislative power for the parliament and for decreasing the power of the Supreme Court and minor courts, threatening checks and balances, critics say (BBC 2023). This all led to sarge-scale protests, with up to 100.000 participants (Tagesschau 2023).

The public opinion on Netanyahu after the failure to prevent the attack on October 7, revealed major demands for Netanyahu to step down after the end of the war, as of November 11 (NPR 2023). Another issue regarding the public is the hostage situation, with relatives of the abducted organizing rallies. The fate of the hostages became an important discussion within Israeli society, and the government was forced to emphasize their rescue more. This may have strongly contributed towards the ceasefire at the end of November and the connected deal of prisoner-hostage exchanges. Furthermore, the failure to prevent the attack led to accusations of inability towards the government.

Another relevant domestic liberal actor within Israel is the settlers movement, paired with the political conservative-right. This group is represented in the current government by the ministers Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir. While being rather sidelined socially in the early days of the state, the settlers have since risen in public standing. Like Netanyahu, public broadcasting was used as means of positive reputation building (Guardian 2024). The settlers occasionally act prospectively and violently against Palestinian living in their vicinity. On several occasions, they retaliated to attacks towards Israel, for example by setting houses and cars in Palestinian villages aflame, as can be tracked in the HIIK databases.

Finally, the military is a relevant actor in Israeli society in a rhetorical and structural way, and by socializing civilian actors, many of whom have served at least some amount of time. "There is no evidence that the civilian government seeks military versus political solutions" (Segell 202, 88), but rather consulting with the military and finding the best approach. Israel "s security architecture relies on three pillars, early-warning, deterrence, and decisive defeat. While the former two work preventively on a conflict, the latter can be seen as a resolution method. "Decisive defeat" as a goal, combined with the doctrine of dis-proportionate force – sometimes called the Dahiya doctrine – may lead to an increased latency of military use (Siboni 2008). Defection from these doctrines after an attack like in October would need a stronger justification and therefore poses a greater risk of losing political reputation, than following the typical response path. If we assume the decision to wage war or

more specifically the means, aims and the latency used by an actor as comparable to other policies, we can describe the Israeli attacks as a natural policy response against the October 7 attack.

The public demands against Netanyahu, backed by protests, seemingly changed actions in regard to the hostage situation. As a former member of the military, serving in a special unit, Netanyahu"s operational codes – psychological templates influenced by a person's socialization and experiences – may prefer military actions, especially when a clear strategy is flawed by unclear outcomes. I therefore isolate the social institutions and action plans concerning national security as strong, non-liberal contributors towards the current full-war engagement mode!

In the Israeli case, liberal reputational demands point mostly in the same direction as strategic-realist means, making their impact difficult to evaluate. Furthermore, the influence is more spread-out and therefore more diffuse, with intra-governmental actors being directly connected to relevant interest groups. Additionally, the influence given by the broader public is embedded in reputational dynamics, generating the need for an aggressive response and an interlock in this response pattern. Taking these processes into account, I argue that the liberal demands passively spoiled the conflict, with certain groups – the settler-ultraorthodox connection and partially the military – actively delaying a more peaceful and a less aggressive approach.

Nevertheless, the main reasons for the strong response are probably of realist and habitual nature. I want to mention the demands for the rescue of the hostages, contributing as agents of peace – which I define as the opposite of spoilers. In the end, military social institutions and pre-set action plans are more dominant explanations to decisions. Whether these strategies, that are seemingly influenced by interstate wars, will work out in the current conflict against a diffusely organized group, has to be observed!

CONCLUSION

Both cases highlight the relevance of liberal demands on the way the respective government acted in conflict situations and demonstrate the importance of a full understanding of the international and domestic constellation of actors and their preferences and boundaries. It was shown that such demands can heavily impact the conflict response and war policies of suitable actors, sensitive to public demands and therefore equipped with sufficient feedback mechanisms. Furthermore, the Israeli case emphasizes the importance of (social) institutional and the interplay of actors on an organizational scale.

TILL-SEBASTIAN KRAUSE

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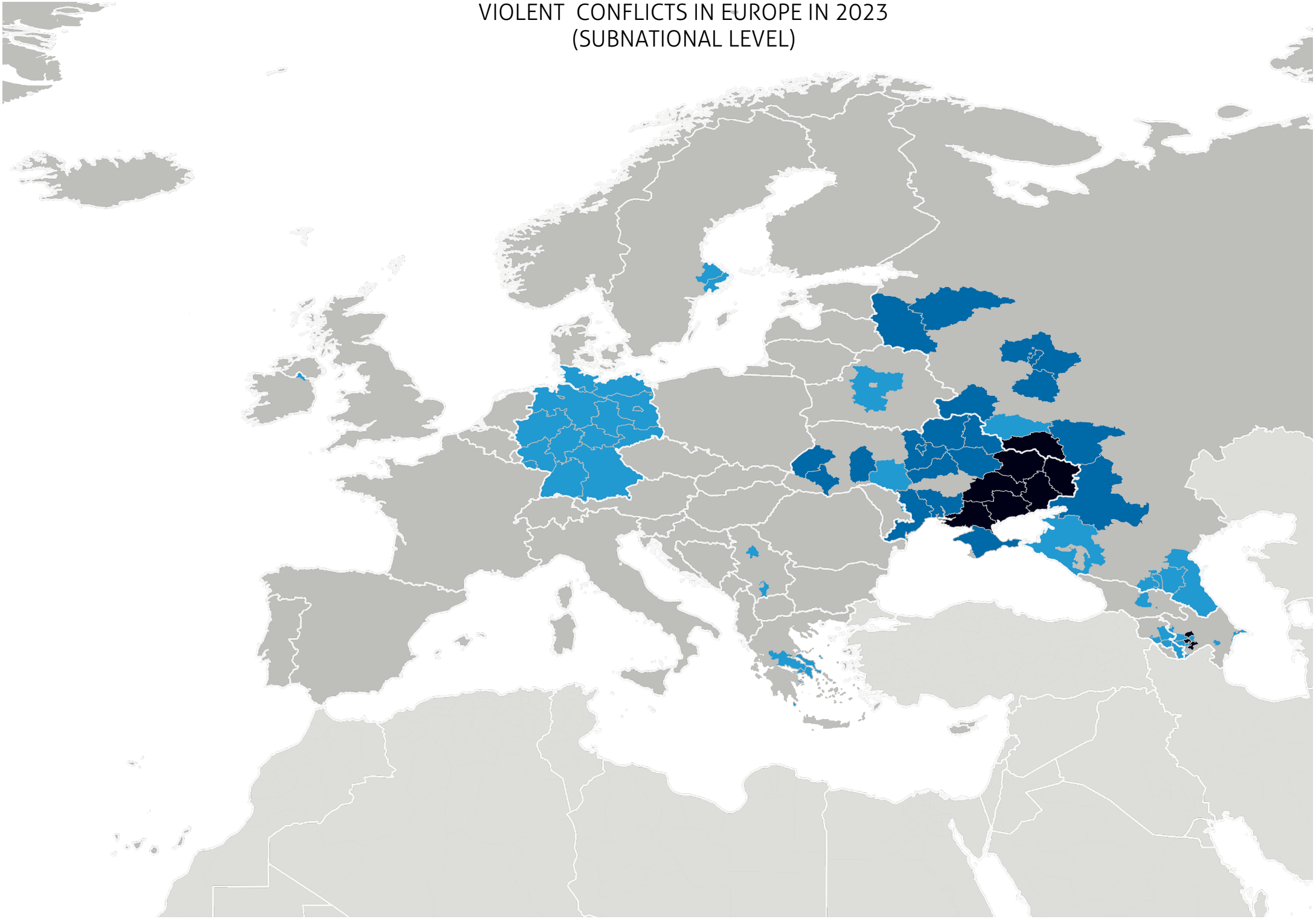
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EUROPE

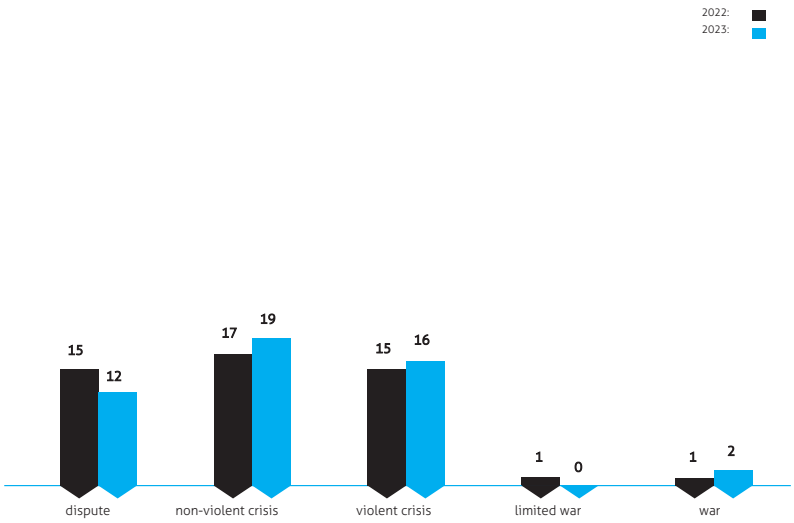
VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN EUROPE IN 2023
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)



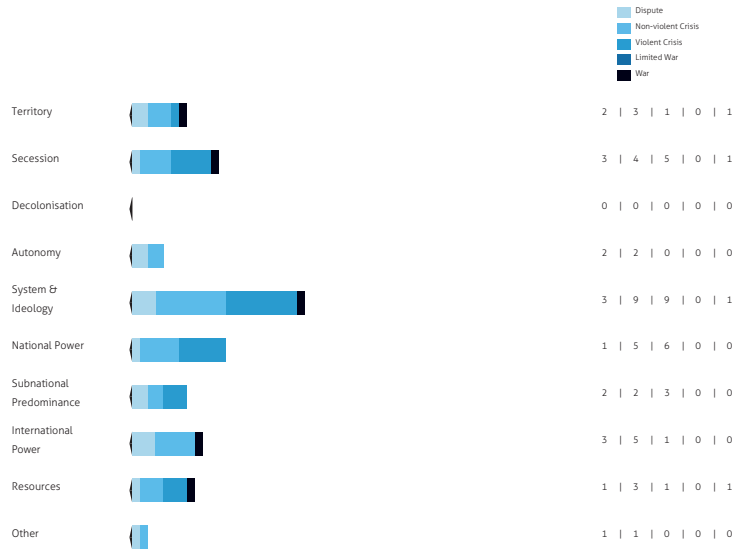
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN EUROPE IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN EUROPE IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN EUROPE IN 2023



Overview: Conflicts in Europe in 2023

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)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2003	•	3
Armenia – Azerbaijan*	Armenia vs. Azerbaijan	territory	1987	↘	3
Armenia – Türkiye*	Armenia vs. Türkiye	international power, other	1991	•	1
Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)*	self-declared Nagorno-Karabakh Republic vs. government	secession	1988	↑	5
Azerbaijan (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2003	↗	3
Belarus (opposition)*	Government vs. opposition parties, opposition movement, civil society activists	system/ideology, national power	1994	•	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska)*	government of Republic of 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)*	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus vs. Government Cyprus	secession, resources	1963	•	2
Cyprus, Greece et al. – Türkiye, Libya (Eastern Mediterranean)*	Cyprus vs. Greece vs. Türkiye vs. Libya	system/ideology, international power, resources	2002	•	2
Estonia – Russia*	Estonia vs. Russia	territory, international power	1991	•	2
EU, USA et al. – Russia*	Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, et al., EU, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA vs. Belarus, et al., Iran, Russia	system/ideology, international power	2007	•	2
France (Corsican nationalists / Corsica)*	Corsican national government, FC, FLNC, various nationalist activists groups vs. government	secession, autonomy	1975	↘	2
France – United Kingdom (fishery)*	France vs. United Kingdom	resources	2021	•	1
Georgia (Abkhazia°)*	Republic of Abkhazia° vs. government	secession	1989	•	2
Georgia (opposition)*	ENM, various opposition groups vs. government	national power	2007	↗	3
Georgia (South Ossetia°)*	Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania° vs. government	secession, subnational predominance	1989	↗	3
Georgia – Russia*	Georgia vs. Russia	international power	1992	•	2
Germany (migration)*	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	↗	3
Greece (right-wing militants)*	right-wing militants vs. government	system/ideology	1985	↗	2
Greece (social protests, left-wing militants)*	left-wing militants , social groups, worker's union, government	system/ideology	2010	•	3
Greece – Türkiye (Aegean Sea)*	Greece vs. Türkiye	territory, other	1973	•	2
Hungary (minorities – right-wings)*	Arrow Cross Party – Hungarist Movement, Carpathian Brigade, Fidesz, Jobbik, Légió Hungária, Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom, Mi Hazánk Mozgalom vs. activists (allies), Jewish community, LGBTQI+ groups, Muslim community, refugees	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° (opposition)*	opposition groups, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power, subnational predominance	2015	↗	2

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
Kosovo° – Serbia*	Kosovar government vs. Serbian government, Serbian minority (in Kosovo°)	secession	1989	↗	3
Latvia – Russia*	Latvia vs. Russia	international power	1991	•	1
Moldova (opposition)*	government vs. opposition parties	system/ideology, national power	2009	•	1
Moldova (Transnistria)*	Transnistria regional government vs. government	secession	1989	↗	3
Montenegro (opposition)*	Opposition groups, Opposition parties vs. Government	system/ideology, national power	2015	↘	2
North Macedonia (Albanian minority – ethnic Macedonians)*	Albanian (minority) vs. Ethnic Macedonians	subnational predominance	1991	↘	2
North Macedonia (opposition) *	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2014	↘	2
Norway et al. – Russia (Arctic)*	Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, USA vs. Russia	territory, international power, resources	2001	•	2
Russia (Islamist militants / Northern Caucasus)*	government vs. IS Caucasus Province, other Islamist militant groups	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	↑	3
Spain (Basque Provinces)*	EH-Bildu, ETA supporters vs. EU, 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	↘	1
Sweden (migration)*	various right-wing groups, xenophobes vs. government	system/ideology	2015	↘	2
Sweden (organized crime)*	Foxtrotnätverket, Serbian-Montenegrin Mafia, various criminal organisations, Zeronätverket vs. Bandidos vs. Black Cobra vs. Dödspatrullen vs. Hells Angels vs. Östberganätverket vs. Södertäljenätverket vs. Satudarah MC vs. 14K vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2002	•	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	↘	2
United Kingdom (nationalists / Northern Ireland)*	DUP, Red Hand Commando, UDA, UVF vs. Army of the Republic, 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 statehhod 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: opposition groups vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between the opposition 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 Armenian lives in the region [→ Armenia – Azerbaijan]. In the first half of the year, frequent protests over Azerbaijani roadblocks on the Goris-Stepanakert highway (Lachin corridor) occurred. The blockade of the Lachin corridor, the sole route connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia, left the population in Nagorno-Karabakh facing acute shortages of essential foodstuffs and goods. For instance, on January 8 and 15, supporters of the National Democratic Pole (NDP) political alliance rallied in Gyumri, Shirak province, over perceived inaction of Russian peacekeepers. From June, an increase in negotiations with Azerbaijan in previous weeks sparked new opposition protests in the capital Yerevan, but they reportedly remained non-violent. For instance, on June 27 and 28, supporters of the opposition Armenian Revolutionary Federation (also known as Dashnaktsutyun) gathered outside the embassies of France, Russia and the USA, as well as the EU Delegation building, demanding the removal of roadblocks on the Goris-Stepanakert highway. From July 31 to August 2, demonstrators gathered near the seat of the government to condemn the reportedly poor humanitarian situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the blockade of humanitarian aid on the Goris-Stepanakert highway. On August 17, 24 and 30, hundreds protested during demonstrations organized by the NDP in Yerevan's Freedom square.
From September, new protests began in Armenia following Azerbaijan's military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, which resulted in the Azerbaijani government demanding the separatist authorities to surrender and begin negotiations regarding their reintegration within Azerbaijan [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)°]. In response, protesters accused Pashinyan of mismanaging the crisis and abandoning Nagorno-Karabakh, demanding his resignation. For instance, on September 19, hundreds of protesters gathered to rally outside government buildings in Yerevan. Protesters clashed with police during an attempt to storm Pashinyan's residence on the central Republic Square. Protesters also surrounded the Russian embassy, criticizing Russia's refusal to intervene. Protesters and police clashed, leaving at least 35 people injured. On September 20, thousands of protesters demonstrated in Yerevan. Clashes between protesters and riot police occurred in Republic Square. Some protestors attacked riot police officers guarding a government building, leaving 26 protesters and 16 police personnel injured. Police detained 30 protesters. Protests continued until the end of the year. For instance, on December 2, security forces detained 13 protesters participating in an anti-government rally, organized by the direct-action group Zang (Bell) in Yerevan. Pashinyan called the protests an attempt to unlawfully remove him from power. tav

ARMENIA – AZERBAIJAN

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1987

Conflict parties: Armenia vs. Azerbaijan
Conflict items: territory

The limited war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh de-escalated to a violent crisis. The conflict dynamic is closely related to the secessionist conflict between the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh and Azerbaijan [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)].
The rift between Armenia and Russia intensified this year. The Armenian government repeatedly expressed its dissatisfaction with the Collective Security Treaty Organization. On February 20, the EU deployed its monitoring mission EUMA on the Armenian side of the border with Azerbaijan, and in March Azerbaijan repeatedly accused Armenia of transporting military equipment to Azerbaijani territory.
Throughout the year, Armenian and Azerbaijani security forces clashed on multiple occasions along their common border, mostly involving gunfire.
For instance, clashes in Ararat and Gegharkunik provinces, Armenia, injured two Armenian security forces on January 19, and one on February 14. On March 20, clashes in the Zangilan district, Azerbaijan, left one Azerbaijani serviceman wounded. Violence escalated on April 11, when clashes between Armenian and Azerbaijani security forces in Syunik province, Armenia, and in Lachin district, Azerbaijan, killed a total of seven and left at least eight injured.
While deadly violence continued throughout May in Gegharkunik and Kalbajar district, leading to two security forces killed and several injured, from June on and throughout the second part of the year, both security forces regularly accused the other of having violated the 2020 ceasefire agreement. Armenian and Azerbaijani forces denounced the accusations as disinformation on several occasions.
On June 14, clashes in Ararat injured two Indian construction workers. The day after, on June 15, Armenia and Azerbaijan each reported one injured security personnel in Syunik and Lachin.
Clashes continued throughout the second half of the year. For instance, on July 11 and 12, a total of three security forces were left injured in Syunik and Lachin. On August 21, in Gegharkunik, border shootings killed one Armenian serviceman. A day later, Azerbaijan reported one serviceman injured along its part of the border. On September 1, a clash involving UAVs left three Armenian security forces dead and two injured in Gegharkunik, and injured one Azerbaijani serviceman in Kalbajar. On October 2, Azerbaijani security forces reportedly attacked a transport vehicle in Gegharkunik, killed one and injured two Armenian security forces.
Less violence occurred in November and December. On November 18, Armenia reported one Armenian serviceman injured in Ararat, and on December 4, another one dead in clashes in Vayots Dzor province, Armenia.
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AZERBAIJAN (NAGORNO-KARABAKH)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1988

Conflict parties: self-declared Nagorno-Karabakh Republic vs. government

Conflict items: secession



The violent crisis over secession of the Nagorno-Karabakh region between the self-declared Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), also known as the Republic of Artsakh, and the government, escalated to a war. The Nagorno-Karabakh region is mostly inhabited by ethnic Armenians and supported by Armenia but is internationally recognized as a territory of Azerbaijan. The conflict dynamic is closely related to the conflict over territory between Armenia and Azerbaijan [→ Armenia – Azerbaijan].

Throughout the first half of the year, the de facto authorities of NKR and the government accused each other of violating the 2020 ceasefire agreement following altercations. Azerbaijani Armed Forces (AAF) attacked several farmers from NKR. The tension between NKR and Azerbaijani authorities increased in March and continued over the next two months. The Russian peacekeepers reported twelve ceasefire violations in March. For instance, on March 5, AAF opened fire on a NKR police vehicle near, Gaybali (Qaybali) village, Stepanakert, along the Khankendi-Khalfali-Turshsu (Khankendi-Khalfali-Tursusu) dirt road, killing three NKR police officers and two Azerbaijani soldiers and wounding one NKR police officer. On April 23, the Lachin corridor, a strategic road connecting Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, which has been blocked since 12/12/2022, was officially closed by Azerbaijani authorities. AAF set up border control posts, leaving NKR abandoned from Armenian territory. On May 18, the NKR Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported that the AAF used small arms and HAN-17 grenade launchers in the northern, eastern and central direction of the Line of Contact (LoC) and of Kasheni mine, Khojavend district. Furthermore, the Azerbaijani MoD accused NKR authorities of installing long-term fortifications and facilities in Chukhurmahla settlement, Aghdam district, Yukhari Veysalli settlement, Fuzuli district, Khirmanlar settlement, Lachin district, and Marjimak settlement, Kalbajar district.

In June, tensions between both sides increased further and incidents were reported on a daily basis. For instance, on June 22, one Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Army (NKDA) soldier was injured in Tartar district. A few days later, on June 27, an AAF soldier was injured in Agdam region. In addition, on June 28, AAF killed four NKDA soldiers in Khojavend and Khojaly regions employing artillery and UAVs, which is the biggest single incident since the Nagorno Karabakh war in 2020. Additionally, the accusations of building long-term fortifications and facilities by NKR authorities continued in Aghdam, Khojavend, Fuzuli, Khojaly, Shusha and Kalbajar districts. Azerbaijan has blocked all humanitarian transit through the Lachin corridor since June 15,.

In September, the conflict escalated to the level of a war. On September 19, AAF started a large-scale offensive with artillery and air strikes on several positions along the LoC, including Stepanakert, Khojaly, Khojavend, and Tartar districts. During the offensive in Stepanakert, the AAF killed 25 NKDA soldiers and two civilians, injured more than 200 people, and destroyed many houses. On September 20, the offensive continued in several districts. AAF claimed control over Harav, Sarushen, Shosh and Khachmach village in Khojaly district, Karmir Shuka, Machkalashen village and Amaras Monastery in Khojavend district as well as Getavan, Dombron, Vaghuhas, Janyatag village, and Kashen mine in Tartar district. Later that day, a ceasefire agreement was reached with the mediation of the Russian peacekeeping command. Both parties agreed on the cessation of hostilities and NKR authorities agreed to Azerbaijan's demand for the complete disarmament of the NKDA. On September 25, a gasoline depot exploded in Nagorno-Karabakh, leaving 212 dead, more than 290 injured, and 105 missing. The attacks occurred in the midst of a humanitarian crisis, due to the ongoing blockade of the Lachin corridor, which resulted in the lack of essential supplies such as food, fuel, and medicine.

The war left at least 180 Azerbaijani soldiers, 180 NKDA soldiers, 20 civilians, and four Russian peacekeepers dead. 360 NKDA soldiers were injured, including 40 civilians. Approx. 12,000 ethnic Armenians from NKR were internally displaced on September 19 and 20. By the end of September, more than 100,000 of a total population of 120,000 ethnic Armenians from NKR had fled to Armenia.

On September 28, NKR authorities announced the dissolution of all state institutions by 01/01/2024, including the NKDA.

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AZERBAIJAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2003

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The non-violent crisis over national power between various opposition groups and the government escalated to a violent crisis.

The conflict historically revolved around clashing ideologies between opposition groups and the government, the latter emphasizing stability and centralized power, while the opposition advocated for political pluralism and increased democratic representation. Opposition leaders, civil society activists, and journalists faced targeted actions, such as arrests and extrajudicial charges, often based on allegedly fabricated grounds.

This year, the country's top three opposition parties were denied official party registration under a new political party law by the government in July, which makes the parties require at least 5000 members. Initially refused parties were later granted state registration, which raised suspicion about the government's intentions among civil society, and also showed judicial vulnerability of oppositional activities.

Following the Azerbaijani offensive to reclaim Nagorno-Karabakh [→ Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)], the government initiated a crackdown on dissenting voices. Anti-war activists and opposition groups were specifically targeted by security forces, resulting in arrests that turned violent on several occasions.

Protests by opposition groups against the government's policies around resource supply and mining projects turned violent on March 16 in several villages in the Saatly district, when

security forces fired rubber bullets into the crowds, injuring at least three. On June 20, protesters against the proposed construction of a new gold mine clashed with security forces in the village of Soyudlu, Gadabay district. Security forces responded with tear gas and injured ten persons, including six journalists.
According to Reporters Without Borders, 36 journalists and two media workers were killed in Azerbaijan this year, while 202 journalists were detained. This includes journalists whose deaths were linked to their journalistic activity.
md

BELARUS (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1994

Conflict parties: Government vs. opposition parties, opposition movement, civil society activists
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.
In 2022 arrests of independent journalists, human rights activists, and oppositional politicians continued. On January 17, a trial began in Minsk in absentia of one of the leaders of the Belarusian opposition, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who declared herself the president of the country after the disputed presidential elections in August 2020. On March 6, the court sentenced Tsikhanouskaya to 15 years in prison on charges including conspiring to overthrow the government.
On the same day, human rights activist Ales Bialiatski, who was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022, was sentenced to ten years in prison. On March 21, political prisoner Ihar Losik attempted suicide while being in detention. He went on hunger strike and then cut his hands and neck in his cell in the Navapolatsk detention center.
On February 10, a Belarusian court sentenced two men to 22 years in prison for their roles in acts of sabotage of the railway network intended to slow the movement of Russian forces through the country. The Belarusian government is providing logistical support to the Russian armed forces in their war against Ukraine [→ Russia - Ukraine].
Nationwide public protests rarely take place due to the ongoing crackdown of civil society. Throughout the year, the Belarusian government liquidated several opposition parties, including the Green Party, the Republican Party, the Social Democratic Party of People's Accord, the Belarusian Social Democratic Party, and the United Civil Party.
On September 4, Alyaksandr Lukashenka ordered the country's embassies to stop issuing passports to Belarusians living abroad. Until then, Belarusians could get new passports at the country's diplomatic missions. According to the new decree, they can only receive a new passport or renew an old one within Belarus. The opposition called the move a "repressive mechanism" because tens of thousands of Belarusians fled the country in the aftermath of the 2020-elections.
The health situation of political prisoners in Belarus continued to decline. The International Federation for Human Rights further stated that the conditions in Belarusian prisons continued to deteriorate. For instance, on May 7, Mykola Klimovich, a 61-year-old blogger and social activist from Pinsk, died in prison. Later that year, on July 11, Belarusian artist and political prisoner Ales Pushkin died under unknown circumstances.
The government launched repeated crackdowns against civil society activists. According to the NGO Viasna, hundreds of individuals were jailed for political reasons in 2023. In total, there are 1420 persons in Belarus considered as political prisoners. nbu

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (REPUBLIKA SRPSKA)

Intensity: 1 | Change: • | Start: 1995

Conflict parties: government of Republic of 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.
As last year, ongoing disagreements centered around the legitimacy of political institutions established by the 1995 Dayton Accords. On February 28, the UN High Representative (OHR) utilized his executive powers, temporarily suspending RS's Law on Immovable Property, which asserted RS's sole ownership of properties used by its political institutions. On June 22, RS National Assembly passed a law preventing the publication of OHR's decisions and later, on June 28, additionally declared Bosnia and Herzegovina Constitutional Court rulings as non-applicable in RS. As a response, OHR annulled these two laws on July 1, stating that they are illegal and could affect the national unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
After RS President Milorad Dodik refused to withdraw the laws, the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina opened criminal proceedings against him. Preliminary hearings began on October 16.
jhb

CROATIA – SLOVENIA (BORDER)

Intensity: 1 | Change: • | Start: 1991

Conflict parties: Croatia vs. Slovenia
Conflict items: territory

The dispute over maritime and land borders between Croatia and Slovenia, which started in 1991, continued.
On January 1, Croatia joined the Schengen area. However, sea border disputes continued. Croatian authorities consistently imposed fees and fines on Slovenian fishermen in the Bay of Piran, which Croatia deems as illegal economic activity, as it does not recognize the 2009 border arbitration tribunal's decision to award most of the Bay to Slovenia. On March 14, Slovenian fishermen turned to the European Court of Human Rights to appeal the imposed fines.
Subsequently, on July 10, a declaration was signed by the foreign ministers of Slovenia, Croatia, and Italy, committing to enhanced cooperation in the management and protection of the North Adriatic region. cap

EU, USA ET AL. – RUSSIA

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2007

Conflict parties: Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, et al., EU, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA vs. Belarus, et al., Iran, Russia

Conflict items: system/ideology, international power

The non-violent crisis over ideology and international power between the EU, USA, and several others, on the one hand, and Russia, supported by states such as Belarus and Iran, on the other, continued.

Both sides employed deterring rhetoric and strategies throughout the year. On March 25, Russia's President Vladimir Putin announced plans to station tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. Later in the year, on October 5, he threatened with nuclear war, after former prime minister Dimitri Medvedev threatened the use of nuclear weapons if Russia was defeated in Ukraine on January 19 and on July 30 [→ Russia – Ukraine].

As in previous years, both sides accused one another of territorial violations. Russian aircraft repeatedly breached NATO and European airspace. For instance, on March 23, two British and German fighter jets of NATO's Baltic air policing mission scrambled a military passenger aircraft and its fighter jet escort near Estonian airspace [→ Estonia – Russia; Latvia – Russia].

Meanwhile, on March 14, Russia intercepted an US UAV over the Black Sea. On May 24, Russia claimed that one of their fighter jets intercepted a US strategic bomber in international airspace over the Baltic Sea. In early October, Russia moved several of its warships of the Black Sea Fleet to the Russian-supported separatist region of Abkhazia in Georgia. A local separatist leader announced Russia's plans to set up a permanent naval base in coastal city Ochamchira, eponymous district, Abkhazia, Georgia [→ Georgia (Abkhazia); Georgia – Russia].

Both sides conducted large-scale collaborative military exercises and nuclear deterrence drills. For instance, in March, Russia held a nuclear deterrence exercise checking its intercontinental ballistic missiles. Russia canceled its yearly large-scale exercise, Zapad-2023,and instead held an exercise together with China in Japanese waters from July 21 to 27 [→ Russia – Japan]. On October 16, NATO held its nuclear drill, Steadfast Noon, involving about 60 nuclear weapons capable aircraft in Italy, Croatia and the Mediterranean Sea.

Cyberattacks were a main concern of both sides. For instance, on December 7, the UK accused Russia's intelligence service FSB of continuous hacking operations throughout the year.

Both sides imposed sanctions, used diplomatic actions, and media strategies against each other. For example, the EU imposed additional economic and individual sanctions, on December 12. On December 11, the EU issued sanctions against Iran over supplying UAVs to Russia in its war against Ukraine.

tcr

FRANCE (CORSICAN NATIONALISTS / CORSICA)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1975

Conflict parties: Corsican national government, FC, FLNC, various nationalist activists groups vs. government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

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

During President Emmanuel Macron's address to the Corsican parliament on September 28 in the city of Ajaccio, Corse-du-Sud Department, Macron announced his plans to grant greater autonomy to the Corsican people in response to the riots that occurred last year. One of his proposals was to enshrine the specific characteristics of the local population in the French constitution. Macron stated that he wanted Corsica to have autonomy, but not in opposition to the French state, nor without it. Approx. ten days later, on October 9, members of the FLNC conducted arson and bomb attacks on 22 properties, partly destroying 20 houses and rendering them uninhabitable. No casualties were reported. The anti-terrorist prosecutor subsequently opened an investigation.

mal

GEORGIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2007

Conflict parties: ENM, various opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The non-violent crisis over national power between the United National Movement (ENM) and various other opposition groups, on the one hand, and the government under the Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia party (KO) and various supporting groups, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

On February 6, following a court's decision to deny the release of former president Mikheil Saakashvili, chair of the ENM, the ENM announced a parliamentary boycott. On the following day, the Strategy Aghmashenebeli party joined the boycott, along with independent parliament members.

In March, the conflict centered around a proposed draft law on the transparency of foreign funding. On March 2 and 6, members of KO and the People's Power movement clashed with members of various opposition groups in parliament after the initial approval of the law, leading to street protests in the capital Tbilisi. The protests turned violent with opposition supporters throwing petrol bombs and stones at security forces, which responded with tear gas, water cannons, and stun grenades. The street protests continued until March 8 and left at least 50 persons injured. 134 opposition supporters were arrested on the same day. Shortly after, on March 14, activists of the Conservative Movement and Alt-Info took down the EU flag from the parliament building and burnt it, demanding a referendum on the draft law as a response to

the withdrawal of the bill. The ENM accused KO of orchestrating the protest.
On April 7, the parliament voted to suspend the accreditation of three journalists as well as three cameramen from independent news channels. On April 30, the organization Here is Utsnobi organized an anti-ENM protest in Tbilisi that was supported by KO.
After the restoration of direct flights between Georgia and Russia, protesters gathered at Tbilisi International Airport on May 18. At least 10 protesters were detained by security forces on the same day, when additional protests broke out in front of the parliament building in Tbilisi. Occasional protest activity continued throughout the second half of the year.
hku

GEORGIA (SOUTH OSSETIA°)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1989

Conflict parties: Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania° vs. government
Conflict items: secession, subnational predominance

The non-violent crisis over the secession of South Ossetia and subnational predominance between the self-proclaimed Republic of South Ossetia – the State of Alania, supported by Russia, on the one hand, and the Georgian government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
The conflict first erupted in 1918 when the Democratic Republic of Georgia was founded and its territory included the area now known as South Ossetia. Ossetians did not recognize the Democratic Republic of Georgia, and their national council passed a resolution on joining Soviet Russia. In November 1989, when Georgians once again strove for independence, the South Ossetians, under the leadership of the Adamon Nikhas group, demanded independence from Georgia. On September 20, 1990, a declaration of state sovereignty was made. In January 1991, the Georgian–South Ossetian conflict escalated into a violent conflict. Two years later, in January 1992, authorities of the Tskhinvali region organized a referendum which supported secession and joining Russia. The fighting was intensified by Russian sporadic involvement in spring 1992. On June 24, 1992, the Sochi Agreement ended the war. On August 7–8, 2008, the conflict escalated into a violent conflict again, a combination of an inter-state conflict between Russia and Georgia, on the one hand, and an intra-state conflict between the Georgian government and South Ossetians, together with Abkhaz fighters on the other. The war ended on August 12, 2008, with Russia remaining an occupying power in the Tskhinvali region. Since then, occasional violence and protest activity erupted between South Ossetia supporter groups and government forces.
Throughout this year, at least 60 Georgian citizens were detained with most of them being accused of illegal crossing of administrative boundary lines. On November 6, tensions between the de-facto authorities of South Ossetia and the Georgian government rose after a Georgian citizen was shot to death and another injured and detained by security forces of the de-facto border near the village of Kirbali, Gori district, which lies in the territory controlled by Georgia. mdo

GEORGIA – RUSSIA

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1992

Conflict parties: Georgia vs. Russia
Conflict items: international power

The non-violent crisis over international power and Russian regional influence in the two breakaway regions of South Ossetia [→ Georgia (South Ossetia°)] and Abkhazia [→ Georgia (Abkhazia°)], between Georgia and Russia. continued. Civilians were frequently arrested near the disputed border between Georgia and South Ossetia, and tensions were highlighted by the ongoing war in Ukraine and subsequent diplomatic rows between Russia and Georgia [→ Russia – Ukraine].
Throughout the year, Russian Armed Forces arrested at least 100 Georgian citizens in South Ossetia. The State Security Service of Georgia stressed the illegality of the arrests, and those arrested were usually released within days.
In two separate rulings by the ECHR on March 7 and April 28, Russia was found liable for human rights abuses and damages during the Russian invasion in 2008 on the territory under Abkhazian control. The court ordered Russia to pay USD 141 million. Since its expulsion from the Council of Europe in 03/22, Russia had viewed ECHR rulings as non-binding, and did not comment on the current rulings.
On July 4, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly urged Russia to withdraw its armed forces from Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
On May 10, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree abolishing the visa regime between Russia and Georgia, which allows Georgian citizens to enter Russia for civilian purposes without applying for a visa. Flights to Georgia from Russian airports also resumed. The decision was harshly criticized by Georgian officials, including President Salome Zourabichvili, as an attempt to foment discord between Georgia's political parties or the country itself and its western partners.
On October 4, Abkhazian President Aslan Bzhania met Putin in Sukhumi city, Abkhazia. They discussed the establishment of a Russian naval base in Abkhazia and the possibility for Abkhazia to accede to a Russia-led union state. On October 11, the foreign minister of South Ossetia also declared his country's accession to the union state a "primary objective".
tda

GERMANY (MIGRATION)

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 October, federal criminal statistics counted 20,970 politically motivated criminal offenses with right-wing background, including several hundred acts of violence of which 439 had a xenophobic background. In total, 323 people were injured.
Over the course of the year, xenophobes attacked and threat-

ened people with alleged migration backgrounds and infrastructure for asylum seekers. For instance, on February 1 and 2, unknown perpetrators conducted two subsequent arson attacks on a tent accommodation for asylum seekers in Marklkofen municipality, Bavaria state. On another occasion, on April 29, two unknown perpetrators attacked two women of Syrian-descent tearing down their headscarfs, pushing them to the ground, and kicking them, in Dessau-Roßlau town, Saxony-Anhalt state.
In June, the right-wing extremist party Alternative for Germany (AfD) supported by the right-wing extremist group Identitary Movement (IB) conducted a large-scale social media campaign propagating anti-LGBTQ and xenophobic sentiments.
On November 25, members of AfD met with conservative politicians and a member of IB, in Potsdam city, Brandenburg state. During the meeting, participants allegedly discussed mass deportations of people with foreign citizenship or perceived not to be ethnic Germans.
Over the course of the year, right-wing extremist groups were banned and police conducted several raids. For instance on November 29, 200 police raided various meeting points of the right-wing extremist group Knockout 51 – who allegedly have links to members of the armed forces – arresting twelve who were suspected of violating gun laws and implicated in violent crimes, in Eisenach town, Thuringia state.
Shortly before this, on November 17, the German parliament had issued a law to accelerate disciplinary measures against people working in state services, police or armed forces with ties to extremism – in particular right-wing extremism.
Following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)] on October 7, mass-protests in support of Palestine erupted across the country. During these protests, people – mostly with Muslim background – used antisemitic, islamist and extremist symbols. For instance, on October 19, when 60 police officers were wounded with stones and flaming liquids, and 174 people were detained of which 65 were charged with criminal offenses during a demonstration in the capital Berlin. Parties and organizations in Germany remained divided not only internally but also between one another over the Israel-Hamas war, echoing both antisemitic and anti-Muslim sentiments.
On November 2, the Vice Chancellor articulated Germany's support for Israel, and stated that people who call for violence against any group, in particular Jews, will face legal consequences. tcr

GREECE – TÜRKIYE (AEGEAN SEA)

Intensity:	2	Change:	•	Start:	1973

Conflict parties:	Greece vs. Türkiye
Conflict items:	territory, other

The non-violent crisis over territory between Türkiye and Greece continued. The first half of the year was marked by national elections in both countries, with mutual interest to ease tensions through dialog and talks shaping the second half.
On January 5, Greek and Turkish coast guard ships exchanged warning shots southeast of the Greek islet of Farmakonissi. While the Greek coast guard claimed that the incident had occurred in Greek waters in pursuit of alleged Turkish fishing vessels, the Turkish coast guard argued that the incident happened in Turkish territory. This incident is part of common clashes in disputed territorial waters in the Aegean Sea. On January 21, Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that Greece violated the Treaty of Lausanne by arming Aegean islands with demilitarized status.
On July 12, Erdogan and Mitsotakis pledged to reset relations at the sidelines of the NATO summit in Vilnius. The two countries met for confidence building measures in Türkiye's capital Ankara, on October 14 and again on December 7. During the last meeting the countries signed several agreements, paving the way for future talks on the disputed waters and resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. tbe

HUNGARY (MINORITIES – RIGHT-WINGS)

Intensity:	1	Change:	•	Start:	2008

Conflict parties:	Arrow Cross Party – Hungarist Movement, Carpathian Brigade, Fidesz, Jobbik, Légió Hungária, Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom, Mi Hazánk Mozgalom vs. activists (allies), Jewish community, LGBTQI+ groups, Muslim community, refugees
Conflict items:	system/ideology, subnational predominance

The dispute 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 - Hungarist Movement, Légió Hungária, and the Carpathian Brigade, on the other, continued.
Tensions erupted after February 18, when Prime Minister and president of the ruling Fidesz party Viktor Orbán made anti-LGBTQI+ comments during a state of the nation address. On February 28, the human rights group European Roma Rights Centre published a report highlighting discrimination against Romani refugees by authorities and reluctance from humanitarian organizations in the country. On March 20, the European Court of Human Rights condemned the country for the racial segregation of Romani children at Jókai Mór primary school.
On April 13, the parliament passed a bill aligned to a European directive on whistleblower protection, but controversy arose due to a provision enabling anonymous reporting on same-sex couples raising children. President Katlin Novák of Fidesz vetoed the bill on April 22. However, the parliament overruled the veto on May 23, reinstating the contentious provision.
On July 15, the European Commission ordered an infringement procedure against the Hungarian government because of discrimination of LGBTQI+ rights and the forced shutdown of Klubrádió, an independent news and radio channel. mzs

KOSOVO° – SERBIA

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1989

Conflict parties: Kosovar government vs. Serbian government, Serbian minority (in Kosovo°)

Conflict items: secession

The non-violent crisis over secession of Kosovo between the Kosovar government, on the one hand, and the Serbian government and the Serbian minority in Kosovo, on the other hand, escalated to a violent crisis.

Serbia has not acknowledged Kosovo as a sovereign state since its unilateral declaration of independence in 2008. In November of last year, ethnic Serb representatives resigned from their posts and local elections were postponed because of tensions in the northern part of Kosovo, which showed continued effects throughout the year. This year, the EU hosted meetings with Kosovo and Serbia concerning the establishment of Serb-majority municipalities in the northern parts of Kosovo. On March 18, Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić and Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti agreed on a EU-backed plan to normalize ties between the two countries in the city of Ohrid, North Macedonia. However, on April 23, tensions increased when Kosovo Serbs boycotted the local elections in the four northern municipalities of the Kosovar district of Mitrovica to demand stronger representation with the establishment of the aforementioned association of Serb-majority municipalities.. Following the resignation of ethnic Serb representatives and the overall election boycott, ethnic Albanians won the elections in Serb-majority towns. Voter turnout was as low as 3.47 percent.

On May 26, protests erupted among Kosovar Serbs when the newly elected officials entered municipal buildings in the municipalities of Zvečan, Leposavić, and Zubin Potok. As a response, Serbia's government alerted the national army and ordered troops to the border with Kosovo. Further protests throughout Zvečan and Leposavić on May 29, which involved the NATO-led international peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR) in support of the Kosovar, led to clashes between Kosovo police forces and the Kosovo Serb minority and left 30 KFOR troops and approx. 50 protesters injured. During May, ethnic Serbs continued protesting the installed mayors. For instance, on May 31, protesters attacked journalists in Zvečan. Tensions increased during the second half of June when Serbia temporarily detained three Kosovar policemen, which prompted tighter border controls for Serbs entering Kosovo.

On September 24, a group of Kosovo Serbs killed one and wounded two police officers during a shootout in the village of Banjske, Zvečan, which also left three of the attackers dead. According to the Serbian government, frustration over the hindrance of the association of Serb-majority municipalities in northern Kosovo motivated the shootout. has

NORWAY ET AL. – RUSSIA (ARCTIC)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2001

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

Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over territory, resources, and international power, as well as economic and military activities in the Arctic region between Norway and its NATO allies, on the one hand, and Russia on the other, continued.

Military exercises and deployment of vessels, some of which are capable of carrying nuclear weapons capable, took place throughout the year. For instance, on April 10, Russia conducted a large-scale military exercise in the region involving 1,800 troops, 40 ships and 15 aircraft. From May 29 to June 9, the Nordic Cooperation held a twelve day exercise Arctic Challenge, involving 3,000 troops and 150 aircraft, including fighter jets and spy planes, near the NATO-Russian border, at the same time the US held an exercise together with Finland involving 7,000 troops from May 22 to June 2 [→ EU, USA et al. – Russia].

Due to the failed transfer of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) presidency from Finland to Russia on September 18, among other reasons, Russia withdrew from the BEAC.

dkl

RUSSIA (ISLAMIST MILITANTS / NORTHERN CAUCASUS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1991

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

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 (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.

In the first half of the year, incidents related to Islamist violence in the North Caucasus increased in intensity, compared to the previous year. Overall, nine people were killed and twelve injured, most of them Russian officials, in security and law enforcement operations against Islamist militants.

For example, on March 28, Islamist militants attacked a police station using firearms on the North Ossetian border with Ingushetia. During the ensuing shootout, two police officers were injured. Although the attackers managed to flee, one of the militants died on March 29 due to his injuries.

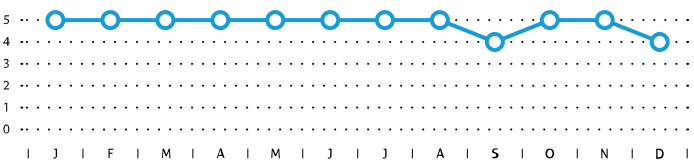
Several days later, on April 3, Russian security forces tracked down a group of suspected Islamist terrorists on a farm in Malgobek city, Ingushetia. While the police attempted to arrest them, the militants opened fire, wounding a policeman, and then fled. According to official data, a new skirmish

between Russian security forces and the suspected perpetrators took place in Zyazikov-Yurt settlement, Ingushetia, in the night between April 5 and 6. In the process, three policemen were killed, eight wounded, and two houses damaged. While one of the terrorists was arrested on April 7, the remaining perpetrators are still at large.
The level of violence decreased significantly in the second half of the year. Apart from one incident on November 22, when local police killed a suspected supporter of the aforementioned Malgobek Islamists in Sunzha town, Ingushetia, no further violent incidents in the North Caucasus were recorded before the end of the year.
bba

RUSSIA – UKRAINE

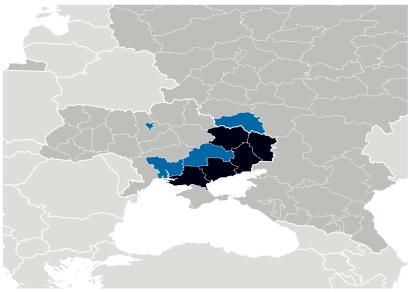
Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2003

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

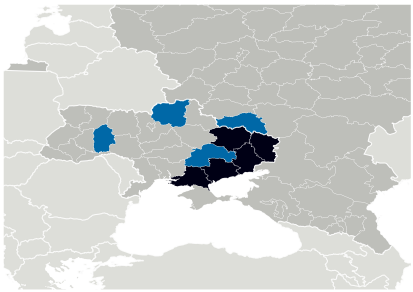


The war over territory, resources, system/ideology, and international power between Russia, supported by Belarus, Iran and North Korea on the one hand and Ukraine, supported by the USA, UK, the EU, and Japan, on the other, continued.
Compared to last year, the war in 2023 turned into a war of attrition, characterized by intense fighting with a high number of military casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and few significant territorial gains in the frontline oblasts of Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya and Kherson. For instance, on January 10, Russian forces captured Soledar, Donetsk Oblast. On May 21, Russia announced the complete capture of the city of Bakhmut, Donetsk. On June 4, Ukraine launched a counteroffensive in Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts, which the Ukrainian commander-in-chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi considered failed on November 1. On October 10, Russia started an offensive to capture the town of Avdiivka, Donetsk. Also, Ukrainian forces raided Russian territory in Belgorod and Bryansk Oblasts. On June 23, the private military company Wagner Group, headed by Yevgeny Prigozhin, revolted against the Russian military due to Prigozhin's claimed incompetence of the Russian Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff in supporting Wagner troops in Ukraine. One day later, Prigozhin and Russian authorities reached an agreement, stopping the mercenaries' so-called "March of Justice" in Lipetsk Oblast, Russia. The rebellion left at least 15 people dead and lead to the loss of at least one helicopter and one airborne command airplane. On August 23, Prigozhin and a Wagner co-founder died after the Russian Armed Forces presumably shot down their aircraft over Tver Oblast.
Throughout the year, Russian and Ukrainian forces conducted numerous drone and missile strikes. For example, on January 1, Ukrainian forces launched HIMARS missiles on Russian troops in the city of Makiivka, Donetsk. Ukrainian officials claimed 400 deaths and up to 300 injured, whereas the Russian Ministry of Defence announced 89 deaths. On July 31, a Russian missile strike killed at least six people and wounded at least 73 in the city of Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. On December 30, Russia fired more than 100 missiles, killing at least 31 and injuring at least 160 throughout Ukraine. Total yearly deaths amount to nearly 22,000 Ukrainian and 27,000 Russian military personnel and 1,931 civilians. The number of refugees in Europe coming from Ukraine decreased from 7,968,510 to 5,931,500. IOM also reported 3,674,000 internal displaced persons down from 5,914,000 during 2023.
Concerning resources, after several Russian blockades and further bilateral extensions of the grain deal, Russia withdrew from the previously extended agreement on July 17, announcing that all Ukrainian vessels in the Black Sea would be considered legitimate military targets. On August 2, drones attacked port infrastructure in the city of Odesa, eponymous Oblast, destroying at least 40,000 tons of grain. Despite the Russian threat of cutting sea lanes through which Ukrainian grain flows, the Ukrainian navy struck six Russian Navy vessels, among them one Kilo-class submarine on September 23 in the city of Sevastopol, Crimea Oblast, and one Yuriy Ivanov-class signals intelligence collection ship by the end of May in an attack with uncrewed surface vessels.
Along with grain, there were also other assets involved in the confrontation. On February 24 and 25, the EU adopted the 10th sanctions package and the US announced an expansion of the existing economic sanctions, export controls, and tariffs targeting Russia and Belarus [→ EU, USA et al. – Russia]. On April 12, the US imposed sanctions on more than 120 entities and individuals. On September 13, the EU prolonged the existing restrictions against 1,800 individuals and entities until March 15, 2024.
The ideological confrontation between Russia and Ukraine remained important during 2023. On October 5, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that Russia had never opposed Ukraine's intention to join the EU, as it presented no threat to Russian security. On November 8, the European Commission and, on December 14, the European Council supported opening accession negotiations with Ukraine, even though Ukraine did not fully implement the recommendations of the European Commission, among them the lifting of discriminatory policies against national minorities [→ Estonia – Russia; Latvia – Russia].
Regarding NATO-Ukraine relations, on July 11 and 12, during the Vilnius summit, member states refused to invite Ukraine to NATO in the middle of a war, although highlighting its long-term support. On May 11, the UK government confirmed that Ukraine had received the first supply of long-range cruise missiles Storm Shadow. On May 23 the EU and the USA agreed on the delivery of F-16 fighter jets. On July 7, the USA announced the transfer of cluster munitions due to alleged artillery ammunition shortages. On March 23, the UK, and on September 1, the USA announced that they would provide Ukraine with tank ammunition containing depleted uranium.
Concerning Russian supporters among Belarus, China, Iran, and countries from the so-called Global South, Russia sustained military collaboration also with North Korea following a meeting between the two countries' leaders on September 15.
Furthermore, international organizations played a role in shaping the conflict's trajectory. On March 16, the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine reported war crimes committed by Russian and Ukrainian authorities and stated that there was no direct evidence of genocide within Ukraine. On March 17, the ICC issued an arrest warrant against Putin for his alleged responsibility for the war crime of unlawful deportation and transfer of at least 2,000 children from Ukraine to Russia.

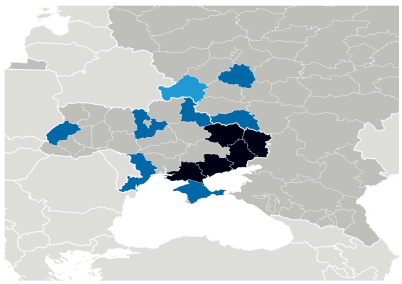
RUSSIA – UKRAINE



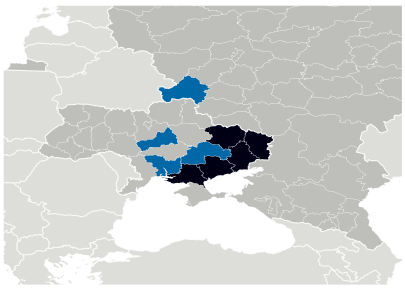
January



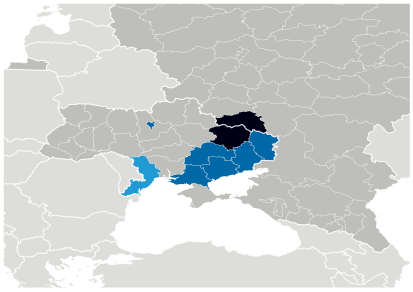
February



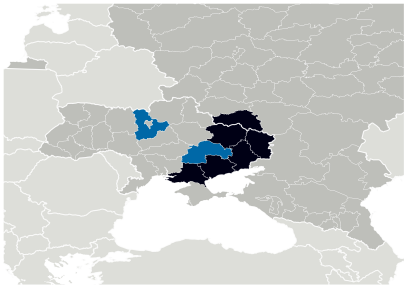
March



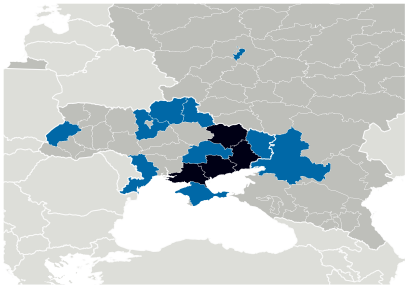
April



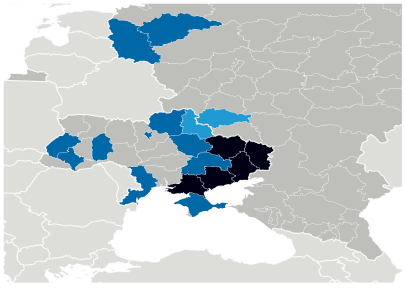
May



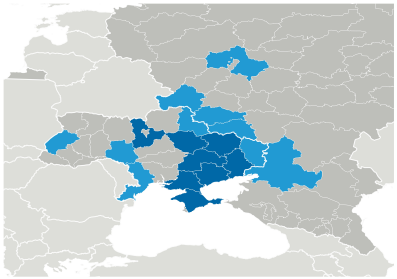
June



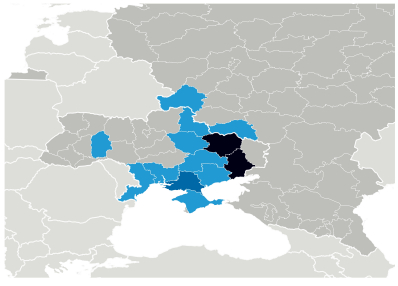
July



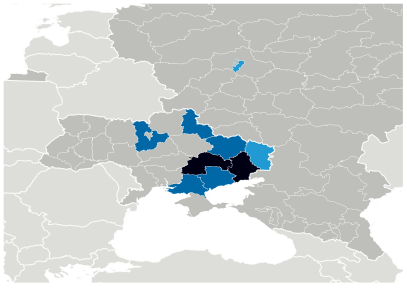
August



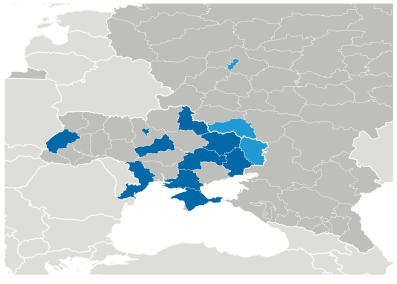
September



October



November



December

NO VIOLENT CONFLICT MEASURES
VIOLENT CRISIS
LIMITED WAR
WAR

Also this year, the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) in the city of Enerhodar, Zaporizhzhia, remained a source of tensions. On April 19, drone attacks hit the top floor of the Unit 4 turbine hall, breaking the windows. On April 22, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on-site observers reported nearly daily shelling near the plant. On July 24, IAEA experts confirmed the presence of minefields, but not of heavy military equipment, in a buffer zone that would not affect the site's nuclear safety. On September 29, IAEA adopted a resolution calling for the immediate return of the ZNPP to Ukrainian control. Moreover, on June 6, a breach in the Kakhovka Dam, Kherson Oblast, controlled as well by the Russian military, lowered the level of water used to cool the ZNPP reactors, flooded around 600 square kilometers and 14,000 buildings, leaving at least 59 deaths and forcing 12,000 thousands of people to flee. The flooding negatively impacted flora and fauna of the Black Sea Biosphere Reserve, a protected environmental area.
agl, elb, tcr, alj, tzo

SERBIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	↑	Start:	2018

Conflict parties:	Alliance for Serbia et al., Opposition movement vs. Government
Conflict items:	system/ideology, national power

The dispute over the orientation of the political system and national power between the opposition movement United Opposition of Serbia and the government escalated to a violent crisis.
On March 24, Serbian right-wing opposition supporters protested over a plan to normalize relations with Kosovo, demanding the resignation of President Aleksandar Vučić and his government in the capital Belgrade.
In May, the conflict mainly centered around the government's handling of two mass shootings. On May 19, 26, and 27, thousands of protesters joined the opposition in demanding the revocation of broadcasting licenses for two TV networks for allegedly promoting violence. The President's party organized a counter-protest attended by thousands of his supporters. Following this, the opposition organized a demonstration in the capital on June 3, which was again met with rebuttals from the presidential side.
On November 1, Vučić dissolved the National Assembly and announced early parliamentary elections, which were held on December 17. The government's Serbian Progressive Party won the elections. However, an international monitoring mission detected election fraud. As a result, beginning on December 18, thousands of protesters gathered in anti-government demonstrations in Belgrade demanding the annulment of the elections. On December 24, security forces arrested at least 35 people. While the opposition coalition Serbia Against Violence attempted to storm City Hall, at least two police officers were injured. cap

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 political parties, on the other, continued.
The cooperation between the central government and the Catalan independence movement sparked protests across the country, particularly in the capital Madrid.
Especially, the issue of amnesty for Catalan politicians involved in the 2017 independence-referendum, in return for political support for Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's government, led to tensions between the Spanish government and Spanish civil society groups, supporting Spanish unity.
For instance, on November 12, between 80,000 and 500,000 people protested against this trade-off in the capital Madrid. Furthermore, protests and clashes, including those by far-right activists, erupted in November. For instance, on November 8, violent protests took place in Madrid, resulting in detention of protesters and approx. 30 injured officers.
Throughout the year, demonstrations in favor of Catalan independence were held. Most importantly, on September 11, the Catalan national holiday, between 115,000 and 800,000 people participated in a demonstration in Barcelona city, eponymous community.
som

SWEDEN (MIGRATION)

Intensity:	2	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 liberal activists as well the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
Throughout the year, right-wing extremist groups conducted several Qu'ran burnings. For instance on July 31, two men burned a Qu'ran in front of the parliamentary building in the capital Stockholm. On September 3, a right-wing extremist staged another Qu'ran burning, leading to an eruption of violence during which counter-protesters clashed with the police in Malmö city, Skåne county. After some of the 200 counter-protesters had thrown stones at the police and set vehicles ablaze, twelve of counter-protestors were detained. On October 12, the Linköping district court found a man guilty of agitation against an ethnic group after he had burned a Qu'ran in 09/20. The verdict emphasized that the context of the burning went beyond the protection of free speech as the perpetrator had put the Qu'ran on a barbecue next to bacon,

recording and publishing it. the

SWEDEN (ORGANIZED CRIME)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	2002

Conflict parties:	Foxtrotnätverket, Serbian-Montenegrin Mafia, various criminal organisations, Zeronätverket vs. Bandidos vs. Black Cobra vs. Dödspatrullen vs. Hells Angels vs. Östberganätverket vs. Södertäljenätverket vs. Satudarah MC vs. 14K vs. government
Conflict items:	subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources and subnational predominance between and within criminal organizations such as several rival gangs, clans and motor-cycle clubs, as well as the government against those continued.
The government announced changes in security policies and raised concerns about the internationality of operations of criminal organizations, as well as migration and underage perpetrators. For instance, on September 29, Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson remarked, on the topic of gang members, that Swedish citizens would be locked up while foreign citizens would be expelled, also linking to the wider migration situation in Sweden [→ Sweden (migration)]. Furthermore, the police raised concerns of minors being recruited into or wanting to join criminal organizations. On October 11, the government discussed paving the way to utilize the armed forces to assist the police. Furthermore, a politician of a major far-right party proposed that the police should be able to hold any gang member, independent of suspicion.
Criminal organizations regularly committed acts of extortion as well as drugs, arms, and human trafficking. For instance, on October 4, Finnish authorities arrested 30 people with ties to Swedish criminal organizations, presumably Dödspatrullen, in a crackdown on drug trafficking in Finland's capital Helsinki. On October 27, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation announced the arrest of a Swedish national in Serbia on suspicion of drugs and arms trafficking.
The Police stated that until October at least 42 people had died and many were injured in approx. 290 shootings that happened in direct connection to organized crime and gang violence. For instance, on January 4, rival gang members shot at two people, killing one of them in Jordbro locality, Stockholm county. On October 13, an underage assailant armed with an assault rifle, shot and killed two women in a villa, linked to a member of Zeronätverket, in the capital Stockholm. During September and October an internal power struggle within the Foxtrotnätverket, a mostly Kurdish-Turkish criminal network, erupted. This resulted in assassination attempts and revenge actions, leading to the destruction of infrastructure, including, in the context of an arson attack, destroyed buildings and a damaged heating line affecting several households in Stockholm, on October 15.
According to the Swedish Bomb Data Center, 149 explosions occurred throughout the year. For instance, on September 28, an IED targeting relatives of the Foxtrotnätverket leader exploded in Storvreta, Uppsala county, killing one. On October 10, police seized 200kg of explosives outside Uppsala municipality. Meanwhile, NATO's IED Center offered Swedish Police assistance in counter-IED training, on October 5. tcr

UNITED KINGDOM (NATIONALISTS / NORTHERN IRELAND)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1968

Conflict parties:	DUP, Red Hand Commando, UDA, UVF vs. Army of the Republic, 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.
The post-Brexit debate between the EU and the UK, over several contentious issues, in particular a hard border with checks, continued, leading to tensions between Ireland and Northern Ireland, and within the Northern Ireland Assembly. Some of these tensions were alleviated by developing the North Ireland Protocol further into the Windsor Framework, which allowed for easier border crossings.
On May 13, dissident republican paramilitary group Óglaigh na hÉireann announced that they would transform themselves into a political party and turn toward peace, but only after they had conducted an operation against criminals, such as drug dealers, and the rival dissident republican paramilitary group Arm na Poblachta.
Throughout the year, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and dissident republican groups continued to clash and antagonistic communities continued their rivalries. PSNI reported several security related attacks such as 19 paramilitary shootings and 31 physical assaults, resulting in a total of 50 injured persons over the course of the year. Relatedly, on February 23, a high-ranking police officer of PSNI was shot and injured at a sports complex in Omagh city, Tyrone county. The New Irish Republican Army (NIRA) claimed the attempted assassination three days later. On April 4, PSNI announced the recovery of four pipe bombs linked to dissident republicans, presumably NIRA, in Creggan housing estate, Derry/Londonderry city. On April 10, during an illegal Easter Monday parade organized by dissident republicans, nationalist youths threw petrol bombs and molotov cocktails at a PSNI vehicle, setting it on fire, in Creggan housing estate. This coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, a symbolic date within this context.
On August 8, following a request under the Freedom of Information Law, PSNI erroneously released a document containing personal data of between 3,000 and 10,000 PSNI officers and civilian employees. About a week later, on August 14, a Sinn Féin politician said that dissidents proved to be in possession of the data, as they had sprayed some of its contents on a wall of a library in the west of the Northern Irish capital Belfast.
On March 28, the UK government raised the so-called terrorism threat level from "substantial" to "severe", according to the Security Service MI5, indicating that an approx. 80 percent probability of a terrorist attack. It is assumed that they feared escalating levels of violence on the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday agreement.
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 Humza Yousaf, 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.

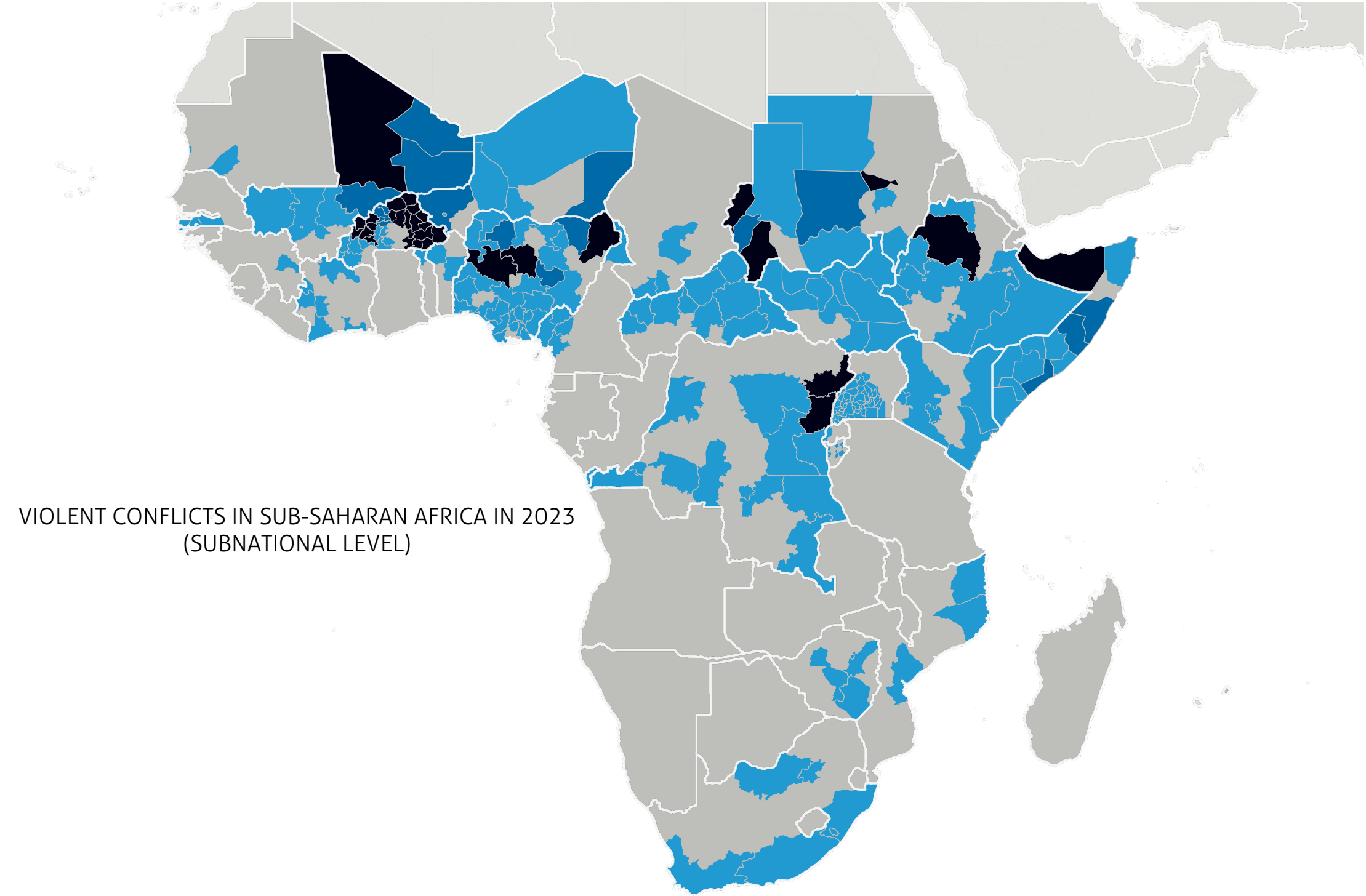
Following last year's negative ruling of the supreme court of the UK on the Scottish independence referendum, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak reaffirmed the UK's rejection of Scottish independence and a new referendum on independence that Yousaf had proposed earlier in the year, on March 27.

Throughout the year several protests for independence from the UK and subsequent EU-membership were conducted. For instance on May 6, a symbolic date due to the coronation of King Charles III, thousands gathered in Glasgow city, eponymous council area, for a march organized by AUOB that called for the abolition of monarchy and independence, brandishing Scottish flags and nationalist insignia. On another occasion, on August 26, rural communities called for a "free union" on a march from Kyle of Lochalsh village to Kyleakin village, Highland Council area. On September 2, in the city center of the Scottish capital Edinburgh, protesters demanded independence from the UK but to remain within the EU. Yousaf took part in the protests as a speaker.

On October 17, Yousaf stated that the dream of independence was still alive even if the SNP was in turmoil. His remarks appeared in the wider context of internal tensions and last year's allegations that the party was betraying the cause.

Furthermore, having formed in 2022, the pro-independence group Salvo claimed Scotland to be an "annexed territory" and victim English "subjugation", calling for "Scottish Liberation". tcr

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

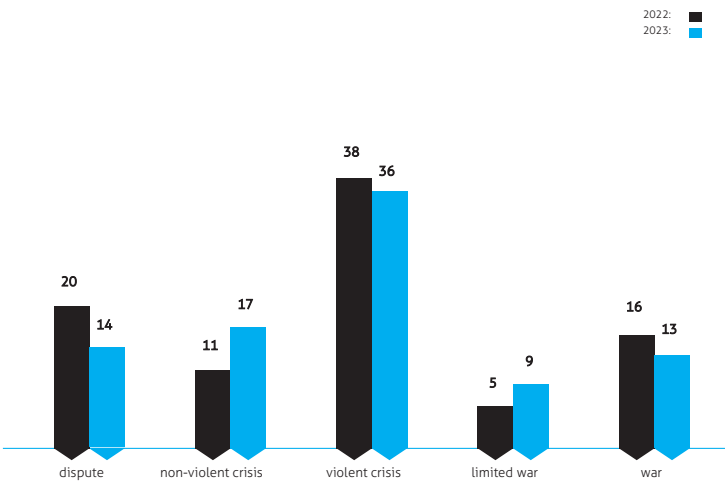


VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2023
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

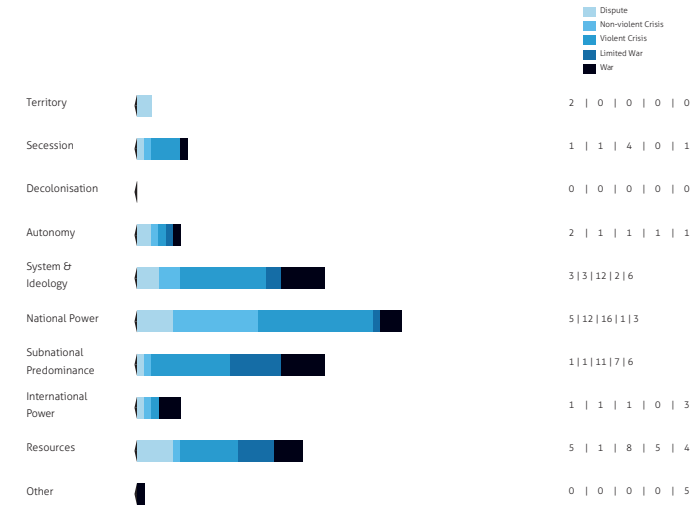
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN SUB˜SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN SUB˜SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN SUB˜SAHARAN AFRICA IN 2023



Overview: Conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa in 2023

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	↘	2
Burkina Faso (inter-communal rivalry)*	Gourmantché, Koglweogo et al., Mossi vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups	subnational predominance, resources	2016	•	4
Burkina Faso (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government vs. military	national power	2014	↘	2
Burundi (opposition)*	ADC-Ikibiri, CNL, RED-Tabara, UPRONA vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	3
Burundi – Rwanda*	Burundi vs. Rwanda	international power	2015	↘	2
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	↘	4
Central African Republic, DR Congo, South Sudan (LRA)*	Central African Republic, DR Congo, South Sudan vs. LRA	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	↘	2
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-Armé vs. Government	system/ideology, national power	1991	↓	1
Djibouti (opposition)*	Lamuka vs. FCC vs. Government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	1
DR Congo (Bantu – Batwa)*	Bantu militias vs. Batwa militias	subnational predominance	2013	•	3
DR Congo (Ituri militias)*	CODECO, FPIC, FRPI, Zaire militia vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	1999	↗	5
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. Bafuliiro militias vs. Babembe militias vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2003	↓	3
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	↗	3
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	↘	2
Ethiopia (Fano militias / Amhara)*	Fano militias vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	2023	NEW	4
Ethiopia (inter-communal rivalry)*	vs. Oromo vs. Amhara vs. Konso vs. Ale vs. Issa vs. Afar vs. other ethnic groups	subnational predominance, resources	2017	↓	3
Ethiopia (OLA / Oromia)*	OLA vs. government	subnational predominance	1992	↓	3
Ethiopia (opposition)*	vs. opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2005	↘	2
Ethiopia, Eritrea (TPLF / Tigray)*	Eritrea, Ethiopia vs. TPLF	system/ideology	2020	↓	3
Gabon (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2009	↗	2

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
Gambia (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2016	•	2
Ghana (HSGF et al. / Western Togoland)*	HSFG et al. vs. government	secession	2017	•	2
Guinea (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2006	•	3
Guinea-Bissau (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	1998	•	3
Kenya (inter-communal rivalry)*	Pokot vs. Turkana vs. Toposa vs. Borana vs. Rendille vs. Akamba vs. Orma vs. various other tribes	subnational predominance, resources	1963	•	3
Kenya (opposition)*	Azimio la Umajo One-Kenya Coalition vs. government	national power	1999	•	3
Kenya – Somalia*	Kenya vs. Somalia	territory, resources	2015	•	1
Mali (CSP-PSD, CMA et al. / Azawad)*	CMA et al., CSP-PSD vs. government	autonomy	1989	↑	4
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)*,*	CSP-PSD, CMA et al. vs. Platform vs. Islamist Groups	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2012	↘	3
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.)*	USA vs. Al-Mourabitoun,, Ansar Dine, Ansaroul Islam, AQIM, JNIM, Macina Liberation Front vs. Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire,, Chad, France, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Togo	system/ideology, international power	1998	•	5
Mozambique (ASWJ)*	ASWJ vs. government	system/ideology	2017	↘	3
Mozambique (RENAMO)*	RENAMO, RENAMO Military Junta vs. government	national power	2012	↑	3
Niger (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2009	↗	3
Nigeria (Ansaru)*	Ansaru vs. government	system/ideology	2012	↘	2
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	↗	4
Nigeria (Ijaw groups / Niger Delta)*	CEND, DSF, Force of Egbesu, Ijaw groups, NDA, RNDA 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	↗	4
Nigeria (pro-Biafra groups / Biafra)*	pro-Biafra groups vs. Cameroon, Nigeria	secession	1967	•	3
Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)*	ISWAP vs. Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	system/ideology, international power	2016	•	5
Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)*	JAS vs. Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria	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
Senegal (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	2023	NEW	3
Sierra Leone (opposition)*	APC vs. government	national power	2007	•	3
Somalia (ISS)*	government vs. ISS vs. al-Shabaab	system/ideology, national power	2015	•	3
Somalia (Puntland – Somaliland)*	government vs. Puntland vs. Somaliland vs. Khatumo State	subnational predominance	1998	↗	4
Somalia (Somaliland)*	regional government of Somaliland vs. government	secession	1991	•	1
Somalia (subclan rivalry)*	Hawiye vs. Rahanweyn subclan vs. Darod vs. Dir vs. Isaaq vs. various other clans	subnational predominance, resources	1991	↗	4
Somalia, Kenya (Al-Shabaab)*	al-Shabaab vs. Kenya, Somalia	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	5

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 setttlements vs. government	system/ideology	2018	•	3
South Africa (xenophobes)*	immigrants vs. xenophobes	system/ideology	1994	•	3
South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)*	Murle vs. Dinka	subnational predominance, resources	2011	•	5
South Sudan (opposition)*	SPLM/A-IO-RM vs. NAS, SPLM/A-IO-Kitwang vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
South Sudan – Sudan*	South Sudan vs. Sudan	territory, resources	2011	•	1
Sudan (Darfur)*	'non-Arab' communities vs. RSF, 'Arab' militias	subnational predominance, resources	2003	•	5
Sudan (inter-communal rivalry)*	Fulani et al., Fur, Masala vs. Hawazma et al., Misseriya, Taisha	subnational predominance, resources	2007	•	4
Sudan (opposition)*	RSF vs. SAF	national power	2011	↑	5
Sudan (SPLM/A-North / South Kordofan, Blue Nile)*	SPLM/A-North vs. government	autonomy, resources	2011	↑	3
Sudan, South Sudan (inter-communal rivalry / Abyei)*	Balanda vs. Murle vs. Dinka vs. Nuer vs. Azande	subnational predominance, resources	2011	•	3
Tanzania (opposition)*	ACT-Wazalendo, CUF, CHADEMA 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, Basongora, Banyabind	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 statehhod 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. / CABINDA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1975

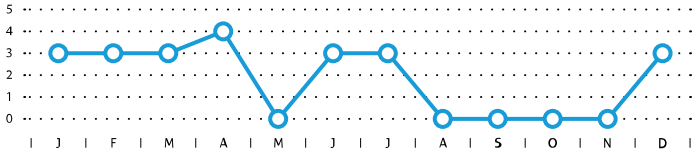
Conflict parties: FLEC, MIC vs. government
Conflict items: secession

The violent crisis over the secession of Cabinda between the Front for the Liberation of 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. All violent incidents took place in the Angolan region of Cabinda.
FLEC-FAC claims ongoing violent events as part of their armed struggle for independence. However, specific details on the clashes remained scarce and casualties reported by FLEC-FAC were often not confirmed by a third party. For instance, FLEC-FAC claims to have killed three Angolan soldiers and two Brazilian miners in the Miconje area, Buco Zau region, on May 5. On August 8, FLEC-FAC spokesperson Jean Claude Nzita in a press release called on the citizens of Cabinda to join an armed uprising against government forces. The appeal was in line with the FLEC-FAC's new strategic military plan.The government has refused to recognize or confirm any actions or events by FLEC-FAC forces.
In a statement on November 9, the commander in chief for the Angolan forces in Cabinda, Tukikebi Tussen dos Santos, described the current situation in the enclave as calm and stable. However, former Angolan army general and member of the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola party, José Sumbo, is preparing a conference to resolve the "Caso Cabinda" through dialog with the independent political movements.
The government also continued to act against non-violent activists. For instance, on March 25, during a human rights workshop, police detained at least 45 people without providing any specific reason. vho

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, resources



The limited war over subnational predominance and resources between various ethnic groups, such as Mossi, Gourmantche, Dogon et al., 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, a rise in inter-communal rivalry between the Fulani ethnic group - accused of association with Islamist groups - and agrarian communities, particularly the Mossi, Dogon, and Gourmantché, could be observed. The latter have been the targets of armed Islamist attacks, are perceived to be pro-government, and make up the majority of VDP militia members. Throughout the years, a large number of Fulani and suspected Islamist militants have allegedly been kidnapped and killed by self-defense militias involved in counterterrorism operations, specifically the VDP, allegedly supported by the government.
During the first four months of this year, several attacks, especially by VDP militias, left at least 250 dead, occurring within the context of major anti-terrorism operations and specifically targeted towards Fulani communities suspected to be cooperating with terrorists. Attacks especially happened in the north of the country, close to the border with Mali. For instance, on March 8, Burkina Armed Forces and the VDP killed at least 20 civilians in Toessin-Foulbé, Bam province, Centre-Nord region. On April 3, elements of the Armed Forces of Burkina Faso allegedly killed at least seven people in Dori town, Séno province, Sahel region. On April 20, suspected elements of the 3rd Battalion of the Rapid Intervention Brigade entered the village of Karma, Yatenga province, Nord region, in the morning in what villagers believed to be a routine patrol. The soldiers rounded the inhabitants up, collected their identity documents, and then shot the villagers at point-blank range, killing at least 147 people. The military accused the residents of failing to denounce elements of armed groups that had allegedly passed through the village to attack army and VDP positions in the nearby village of Aourema.
VDP militias also conducted kidnapping of civilians, for instance, on June 3, when elements of the VDP abducted at least 19 civilians from a bus in Yargatenga commune in Centre-Est region. A week later, on June 10, VDP kidnapped at least four civilians in Kompienga province, Est region, and executed them afterwards. Attacks of rebel groups continued, while reports about the killings of civilians by the Armed Forces and VDP after the first half of the year decreased. However, on December 8, violence escalated again when gunmen allegedly belonging to VDP killed at least 30 civilians in the Fulani village of Dongounani, Hauts-Bassins region. mha

BURKINA FASO (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2014

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

The violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties and the overthrown military government led by Paul-Henri Damiba de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. Last year, the country witnessed two coups d'état, of which the latest led to Capt. Ibrahim Traoré becoming the youngest head of state in the world.
This year, the political situation stayed stable with no change in government. Security authorities continued to limit civil rights of the opposition, including arrests of civil society members as well as a former member of parliament. A coalition of over 50 opposition parties expressed their concerns about actions against the opposition. In several opposition and civil society protests throughout the year, various groups expressed the wish for a new constitution.
On September 26, a suspected coup attempt was prevented, which led to several high-ranking officers, including army

forces and Defence of the Fatherland forces arrested. Spontaneous pro-junta protests erupted in major cities, while protests against the government of Capt. Traoré in the capital Ouagadougou were quickly dissolved. mha

BURUNDI (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2006

Conflict parties: ADC-Ikibiri, CNL, RED-Tabara, UPRONA vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between various members of the opposition coalition ADC-Ikibiri, especially the National Freedom Council (CNL), on the one hand, and the government, led by the National Council for Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), supported by its armed youth wing Imbonerakure on the other hand, continued.
Human rights violations, including attacks on LGBTIQ* rights, arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, assassinations, and torture of opposition and human rights activists, committed by the National Intelligence Service and Imbonerakure, continued.
Throughout the year, Imbonerakure killed at least four CNL members. Moreover, the National Intelligence Service tortured at least four CNL members while being detained. Furthermore, four CNL party offices were damaged or destroyed. In addition to physical attacks, the government restricted the opposition's right to assembly. On February 18, for instance, the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security announced to ban the CNL's anniversary meeting allegedly due to security reasons. Furthermore,on April 10, authorities denied giving the CNL permission to hold its party congress. In June, the government banned all CNL activities due to alleged irregularities in internal party affairs. After his arrest on October 17, Council for Democracy and Sustainable Development in Burundi (CODEBU) president Kefa Nibizi was accused of undermining national security. He was released on October 21.
Besides restrictions to opposition members, the government and security forces occasionally arrested and imprisoned human rights activists. For example, on January 2, the High Court of Mukaza in the capital Bujumbura announced the conviction of an online journalist for ten years for allegedly undermining the integrity of the national territory. On February 14, security forces arrested five human rights activists in Bujumbura Mairie province and Ngozi province, claiming that they have used foreign funds to support terrorism after the government banned a range of foreign organizations from working in Burundi in 2018. The five activists were released from prison in late April.
Throughout the year, repressions of LGBTIQ* rights continued. On February 23, police forces arrested 24 people attending a seminar at a local NGO that promotes AIDS prevention, in Gitega, Gitega province, and accused them of homosexuality. Having refused medical treatment during his imprisonment, one member of the NGO died on August 25, several days after his acquittal.
spa

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

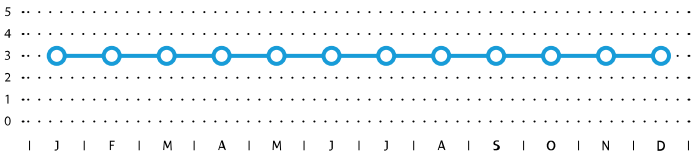
The violent crisis over national power in Burundi between the Resistance for Rule of Law in Burundi (RED-Tabara), the Popular Forces of Burundi (Forebu/FPB), and a militant faction of the National Forces of Liberation (FNL), on the one hand, and the governments of Burundi and the DR Congo, on the other, continued. Violent clashes mainly affected the South Kivu province, DR Congo, particularly the Mwenga territory, as well as the Buringa and Gatumba zones in the provinces of Bubanza and Bujumbura Rural, Burundi, on the border with the DR Congo.
Between January and March, the Armed Defense Forces of Burundi (FDNB) and the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) repeatedly clashed with FNL in Itombwe sector, Mwenga territory, South Kivu province, DR Congo.
Additonally, RED-Tabara attacked civillians and clashed with the FDNB and FARDC. For example, on May 31, according to local civil society representatives, RED-Tabara and the Mayi Mayi militia Biloze Bishambuke [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)] killed two civilians and injured another three in Fizi territory, South Kivu province, DR Congo. Furthermore, they stole around 100 cows. On September 2, RED-Tabara attacked a car in Buringa zone, Bubanza Province, Burundi, killing two civilians and injuring one. Subsequently, on the same day, RED-Tabara rebels clashed with the FDNB and the Imbonerakure, a Burundian ruling party affiliated youth militia, leaving at least 60 people dead, particularly among Imbonerakure. On December 9, FARDC clashed with RED-Tabara and their allied militias Yakutumba and Bilozebishambuke across several villages in Minembwe, Fizi territory, South Kivu province, DR Congo. FARDC killed seven and injured another four members of the militias. On December 22, RED-Tabara attacked a border post in Vugizo town, Gatumba province, Burundi, at the border to the DR Congo killing 20, including 19 civilians, and injuring nine.
bgo

CAMEROON (ENGLISH-SPEAKING-MINORITY)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2016

Conflict parties: English-speaking minority vs. government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy



upgraded (> 360,000 IDPs / refugees)

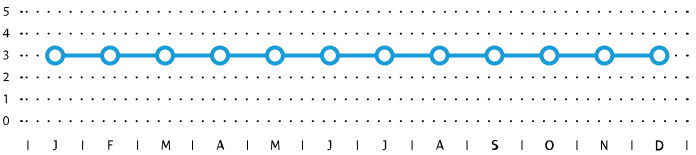
The war over autonomy or secession of the Southern Cameroons region between various groups of the English-speaking minority, such as the Ambazonia Defense Forces (ADF), the Ambazonia Self-Defense Council (ASC), and the Bui

Unity Warriors, on the one hand, and the French-speaking Cameroonian government, on the other, continued.
The ASC and ADF were attached to the main political wings of the self-declared Federal Republic of Ambazonia, the Interim Government of the Federal Republic of Ambazonia, and the Ambazonia Governing Council, respectively. The government was led by President Paul Biya and his Cameroon People's Democratic Movement.
Throughout the year, violent clashes between government forces and separatists resulted in at least 346 deaths. In November, there were 638,421 IDPs, an increase of 41,421 persons within this year. At least 63,204 people were registered as refugees in Nigeria.
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 and the Nigerian border region. For instance, on December 5, Ambazonian separatists attacked the Belegete community in Obanliku, Cross River State, Nigeria, abducting at least 30 people, including the traditional leader. During a rescue mission by the Nigerian army two days later, the leader and one separatist were killed.
As in previous years, separatists repeatedly ambushed government forces in NW and SW. For instance, on July 24, separatist forces shot dead three police officers in Ekok, SW. On September 6, ADF and Bui Unity Warriors took control over a military border post in Lus, NW. On November 12, separatist fighters used an RPG to ambush soldiers on patrol in Belo, NW, killing three.
On January 1 and 2, following Biya's New Year speech in which he threatened separatists to be 'crushed', Cameroon Armed Forces (FAC) were deployed to Oku, Kumbo and Kakiri, NW, to enforce local curfews and lockdowns. This led to clashes between FAC and separatist fighters in these areas. FAC claimed to have killed eleven separatists, while the separatists claimed to have enlarged their territorial influence in the region. On August 28, security forces launched a military operation on a separatist checkpoint in Akwaya, SW, killing one and injuring five separatists.
Both sides continued to target civilians. For example, on September 7, separatists killed three people, injured several and burned down two cars while imposing their two-week lockdown to thwart the resumption of the new school year in Buea, SW. On June 16, FAC arrested and then executed six civilians in Kedjom Keku (Big Babanki), NW, accusing them of ties with separatist fighters. Furthermore, FAC shot dead twelve other civilians fleeing the town.
The increased violence on both sides was met with protests by the population. For instance, on May 19, at least 30 women protested in Kedjom Keku, against an illegal levy imposed on them by separatists. Separatists responded with violence, injuring several people. On May 22, separatists abducted 30 of the protesters and released them two days later, severely injured.
Throughout the year, at least 20 separatists, including senior leaders, surrendered to Cameroonian authorities, and proceeded to Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) centers. On May 16, for instance, 18 separatist fighters, including two commanders, surrendered in Mundemba, SW. On May 29, another self-proclaimed General surrendered in Ndop, NW. It is assumed that he conveyed information leading to the liberation of a traditional leader on June 1 who had been abducted in December 2021. ast

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2012

Conflict parties: Militant groups vs. Government
Conflict items: national power, resources



upgraded (> 18,000 IDPs / refugees)

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, de-escalated to a limited war. 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 Mokom and Ndomaté anti-Balaka wings had formed the CPC with the aim of disrupting national security and capturing the capital of Bangui.
The security situation remained volatile, especially in western and central parts of the country, particularly in Nana-Mambéré, Haut-Mbomou, Haute-Konto, Ouaka, Ouham, and Ouham-Pendé prefectures. Over the course of the year, in total 274 people were killed and 103 injured.
Throughout the year, PMCs supporting the government clashed with CPC rebels on several occasions. For instance, on January 3, PMCs clashed with CPC in Goya, Ouaka prefecture, leaving three CPC rebels dead. On January 15, CPC and PMCs clashed in Yidéré, Nana-Mambéré prefecture, leaving three rebels and two PMCs dead and three people injured. On February 14, CPC rebels attacked army positions in the town of Ndah, Vakaga prefecture, killing at least 16 FACA soldiers and taking 24 others hostage, injuring 13 of them. Furthermore, one CPC was killed and four others injured. Following that, PMCs were deployed to monitor the area with helicopters. Starting on February 17, PMC helicopters bombarded CPC positions in Gordile town, Vakaga prefecture, for two days, leading the local population and most of the rebels to abandon the town and retreat into outlying areas. On July 10, MINUSCA clashed with the Party of the Rally of the Central African Nation in Sam-Ouandja, Haute-Kotto prefecture, killing three rebels and one MINUSCA security personnel. On October 22, PMCs carried out an operation into the mining sites of Kouki and Markounda, Ouham prefecture, leaving at least twelve civilians and four MPC rebels dead. On December 21, 23 people were killed during a clash between 3R and FACA, after FACA soldiers were accused of stealing livestock from a farmer in Paoua, Ouham-Pendé prefecture.
During the year, Azande Ani Kpo Gbe, a rebel group of self-defence militiamen (AAK Zande), emerged as a new actor. For instance, on May 7, clashes between the militia and the UPC in Mboki, Haut-Mbomou prefecture, left at least 19 AAK Zande fighters dead. On June 20, clashes between AAK Zande and the UPC in the same area left 44 people dead, including four civilians, and displaced more than 5,000 people from Mboki to the town of Zémio in the same prefecture.

At the end of November, there were a total of 543,819 IDPs, mainly in the prefectures Haute-Kotto, Ouaka, and Bangui. 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 (herders) 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 farmer agricultural land.
Throughout the year, farmers and pastoralists continued to clash on multiple occasions. For instance, on April 17 and 18, farmers and herders clashed in Monts de Lam district, Logone Oriental Region, leaving 22 people dead and six injured. During this incident, a group of Kodos farmers attacked pastoralists, killing two of them. Subsequently, two farmers were killed and six people injured. The farmers then went to another village, killing four civilians. Upon deployment of police, security forces killed 14 of the farmers. On May 25, after farmers killed a young herder who let his cattle graze on farmland in Bahr Sara department, Mandoul Region, the herder's parents killed 9 farmers. Subsequently, security forces arrested five herders and one farmer. Acts of revenge such as these between herder and farmer communities and family members are common but details and casualties are often hard to verify. From August 18 to 19, at least ten people were killed in clashes between herders and farmers in Abkhoura village, Guéra Region. twe

CHAD (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	2	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 de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. After the death of former President Idriss Déby on 04/20/2021 [→ Chad (militant groups)] and the dissolution of the government, a Transitional Military Council (CMT) was formed, headed by Déby's son Mahamat Idriss Déby. The CMT was replaced with the National Transitional Council (CNT) on 10/10/2022, headed by Déby.
On September 10, after Succès Masra, leader of the Transformateur Party, announced his intention to return from exile, at least 50 party supporters were arrested in the capital of N'Djamena, eponymous province, at the party's headquarters. On October 31, under mediation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a representative of the Economic Community of Central African States, the government and the Transformateur party signed a reconciliation agreement. On November 24, as part of the agreement, the government issued an amnesty for all civilians and security personnel involved in the violent protests on 10/20/22.
In January, the government set up a National Commission for the Organisation of the Constitutional Referendum to draft a new constitution. In a referendum on the constitution that took place on December 17, 86 percent of the voters approved its adoption. However, questioning the independence of the election commission and rejecting the constitution for its lack of federalisation, some opposition parties called for a "No" vote in the run-up to the referendum.
Furthermore, on December 1, citing fears of French involvement in the transitional process, opposition parties and civil society groups asked France to withdraw its troops, which had arrived in Chad after being ordered to depart neighboring Niger. sag

CÔTE D'IVOIRE (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1999

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

The 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 (PDCI-RDA), and the African People's Party Cote d'Ivoire (PPA-CI), led by former president Laurent Gbagbo, on the other, continued.
Former president and opposition leader Henri Konan Bédié (PDCI-RDA) passed away at age 89 on August 1. Laurent Gbagbo was removed from the electoral list ahead of the local and municipal elections.
On June 3, a violent group clashed with the current mayor and municipal candidate for the RHDP and her independent competitor in the town of Guibéroua, Gôh-Djiboua region, leaving one person injured and one vehicle damaged. Similar Incidents of violence surrounding the local and municipal elections on September 2 were reported from at least nine locations across the country. They included confrontations between the supporters of local candidates, the destruction of ballot boxes, and occasional injuries. For instance, on September 2, one opposition candidate of the PDCI-RDA was attacked in the town of Guitry, Gôh-Djiboua, and injured. On September 16, the ruling party won the elections in 61 percent of municipalities and 81 percent of the regions as well as 88 percent of the seats in the senate.
On September 30, PPA-CI declared that they would not recognize the election results due violence and allegations of fraud in the context of the voting.
In October, the president restructured the government, declaring Robert Beugré Mambé as the new prime minister. In November, former premier minister Guillaume Soro alleged that government forces had tried to arrest him at an airport in Turkey's capital Istanbul.
By-elections for the municipalities and regions were held on December 2. Subsequent violence broke out on the same evening, when unidentified individuals set fire to the local offices of the independent electoral commission in the city of Ferkessédougou, Savanes region. On December 22, the PDCI-RDA elected a new leader after the congress was cancelled by a court on December 16. mti

DR CONGO (BANTU – BATWA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2013

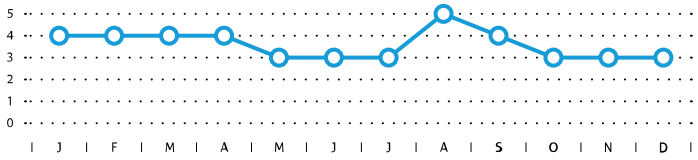
Conflict parties: Bantu militias vs. Batwa militias
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between Bantu and Batwa people in Tanganyika province continued. Violent incidents occurred primarily in the first half of the year.
On March 3, Batwa militiamen attacked Katolo village with arrows, injuring at least one civilian. Similarly, from the night of March 4 to 5, a Batwa militia raided Kanje-Africa village with firearms and arrows, injuring nine civilians and killing four. Between December 2022 and March 2023, several villages on the Kalemie-Moba axis were abandoned due to activities led by Batwa and Bantu militiamen. For example, the militias burned down all villages between Fatuma and Masini villages, displacing inhabitants. On April 8, following a Bantu attack on a Twa over a disagreement, clashes occurred between Bantu und Twa villagers near Tembwe village, Tanganyika, leaving three people dead and several injured. On April 27, in a fight between Batwa and Bantu militiamen in Kasoro village, two people were killed and three injured. As a consequence, the local population fled to the villages of Maseba, Mwindi, Kirungu and Mpala. On May 5, the displaced returned to Kasoro.
In the second half of the year, the conflict de-escalated. This was due to several peace-building efforts in the region, partly facilitated by the UNDP's Peacebuilding Fund. For instance, beginning on July 21, provincial peace councils brought together community representatives, the provincial government, and local authorities in order to build lasting peaceful relations between both communities. On December 7, Tanganyika's vice-governor stated that the Batwa and Bantu communities allegedly lived together peacefully. agr

DR CONGO (ITURI MILITIAS)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1999

Conflict parties: CODECO, FPIC, FRPI, Zaire militia vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



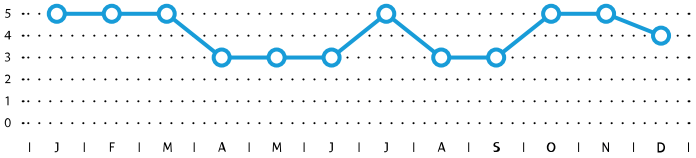
The limited war over subnational predominance and resources, especially gold, between the militant groups Cooperative for the Development of Congo (CODECO), Patriotic and Integrationist Force of Congo (FPIC), Zaïre militia, and Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI), on the one hand, and the government, supported by MONUSCO, on the other, escalated to a war in the Ituri province, eastern DR Congo.
Throughout the year, the security situation in Djugu and Mahagi territories, as well as in the north of Irumu territory, remained critical. The security situation in Aru territory worsened, although for the past years this territory has been largely untouched by attacks and clashes of militias.
Although in April the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS) peace process officially started at the pilot site of Diango, Irumu territory, where at least 100 militiamen surrendered and gave up their weapons, the security situation did not notably change. Various Ituri militias, armed with rifles and machetes, attacked and abducted civilians, looted livestock, burned down houses, fought over the control of goldmines, and clashed with the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) and MONUSCO throughout the year, leading to at least 600 deaths.
The militant group of CODECO was considered an umbrella association subsuming different factions of militants primarily from the Lendu community. Its Union of Revolutionaries for the Defense of the Congolese People (URDPC) faction was the largest. Although CODECO officially promised to end the attacks on civilians and approved only retaliative attacks on other militias, they continued to attack civilians. For instance, on January 13, CODECO attacked the villages of Nyamamba and Mbogi in Djugu territory with machetes and rifles, killing at least 31 people. On January 19, CODECO attacked the IDP site Savo in Djugu territory, killing seven civilians. On April 14, CODECO attacked at least twelve villages in the Banyari Kilo chiefdom in Djugu territory, killing at least 40 civilians and burning down 150 houses. Subsequently, the FARDC clashed with CODECO close to Itendey village in Djugu territory and drove the militiamen away, leading to at least ten deaths. The fights and attacks that day led to at least 16,600 IDPs. On August 28, CODECO attacked the mining site of Shaba in Aru territory, killing at least 15 civilians. The attack led to an estimated destruction of USD 100,000.
CODECO also clashed with other militias on multiple occasions. For instance, on April 11, CODECO clashed with Zaïre militia at the village Lisey in Djugu territory, leading to at least twelve CODECO militiamen being killed. Zaïre militia, comprising mainly members of the Hema community, was formed in 2020 as a self-defense group following persistent attacks against their communities. The Zaïre militia has not declared itself to the P-DDRCS process. As a consequence, some members of the Zaïre militia formed a new militia called Popular Self-Defense Movement of the Ituri (MAPI). The Zaïre/MAPI faction declared itself part of the P-DDRCS peace process. On June 1, it signed an agreement to work together and stop the use of violence, together with FRPI, FPIC and CODECO/URDPC, under observation of MONUSCO.
FPIC and CODECO clashed for several days from April 23 to 25 in the chiefdoms of Bebe-Lebe and Baboa-Bokoe in Irumu territory, leaving at least 18 militiamen dead, around 500 houses burned down and 1,000 families internally displaced. Between mid-September and the beginning of October, the FARDC and MONUSCO launched several offensives against CODECO. The clashes took place at the national road RN27 between the towns of Bunia and Mahagi, but mainly around the village of Mbidjo, all in Djugu territory. The clashes led to more than 3,000 IDPs and at least 40 deaths.
Despite the commitment to the P-DDRCS peace process by all militias, except for Zaïre militia, and the ongoing declaration of a state of siege by the government, attacks on civilians by the various militias in the Ituri province and clashes between militias and the FARDC and MONUSCO persisted. lha

DR CONGO (M23 FACTIONS)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2004

Conflict parties: M23 factions vs. government, other militias

Conflict items: national power, subnational predominance



The war 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, continued.

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.

Despite the ceasefire agreement of 11/23/2022, under which M23 were supposed to withdraw from their positions by January 15, the group continued attempts to extend its influence in North Kivu province. On January 26, M23 seized control of the strategically important town of Kitchanga, which links North Kivu's main economic hubs Goma and Butembo. As a result, travel between the two cities was cut off and at least 30,000 civilians were displaced.

On February 6, M23 attacked positions of the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) in Karenga village, in order to cut off the road between the cities of Goma and Sake. Subsequently, on February 12 and 13, FARDC launched a counter-offensive against M23 positions in the nearby Ruvunda Hills, employing bombs and heavy artillery. The clashes caused a "massive" displacement of the local population to surrounding towns.

On March 7, government forces and M23 representatives reached another ceasefire agreement, brokered by the Angolan President Joao Lourenco. Nevertheless, the peace efforts proved to be unsuccessful as fighting between FARD and M23 continued on at least four fronts during the month of March.

The conflict quietened down between April and June, when M23 reportedly withdrew many of its members from previously occupied terrain in North Kivu. For instance, at least 60 bodies were found between April 20 and 26, when M23 fighters retreated from Kashali and Kazaroho villages.

In July, the focus of M23 activities shifted towards fighting with the Wazalendo, a coalition of local self-defense groups supporting the government. Between July 2 and 6, M23 clashed with the coalition in several villages of the Bashali and Bwito chiefdom, resulting in approx. ten deaths and several injured. Between July 11 and 14, the groups clashed again in Bukombo city, using unspecified heavy weapons. On August 11, Radio Okapi reported that fighting between M23 and other armed groups was responsible for the displacement of at least 78,000 civilians during the months of June and July.

In October, the Wazalendo launched a series of attacks against M23 along two fronts: the Mweso-Kitchanga-Kirolirwe road in Masisi territory, and the roads linking Kiwanja with Mabenga and Ishasha in Rutshuru territory. In retaliation, M23 launched counterattacks against Wazalendo and FARDC fighters in towns it had previously lost, including Kitchanga, Bambu, Butare, Kibarizo, and Kinyandonyi. For instance, on October 6, M23 dropped two mortar bombs on FARDC positions in Kibumba village, only 20 km away from the provincial capital of Goma. In the aftermath of the offensive, at least 63 deaths, 15 injured and 84,000 IDPs were reported.

On November 3, MONUSCO and FARDC announced the launch of their joint operation Springbok. On November 9, they began shelling Kilolirwe town and its surrounding areas with planes, where M23 was believed to hold positions. These attacks and counterattacks continued throughout the year, despite renewed ceasefire attempts.

Overall, the conflict accounted for at least 278 casualties and 125 injured. mge, agr, ttu

DR CONGO (MAYI-MAYI ET AL.)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↓ | Start: 2003

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

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The war over subnational predominance and resources, such as gold and rare earths, between various local armed groups, as well as the Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC), supported by MONUSCO, in the eastern provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu, Ituri, Maniema, and Tanganyika de-escalated into a violent crisis.

While the war between the M23 and government forces continued in eastern Congo [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)], incidents involving Mayi-Mayi groups occurred much more sporadically than in the previous year and continued to be restricted primarily to North and South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.

Several Mayi-Mayi groups, most notably the Nyatura Collective of Movements for Change (CMC), engaged in fights against the M23 and affiliated groups throughout the year. For example, on May 3, an attack on the IDP camp of Kizimba, Rutshuru territory, North Kivu, resulted in at least 13 civilian deaths and left at least five people injured. While it is certain that Nyatura CMC militants attacked the IDP site, there are conflicting reports on whether M23 affiliated militants fought back.

Furthermore, Mayi-Mayi groups targeted civilians to obtain territory or resources. For example, on March 25, armed members of the Nyatura Abazungu attacked the villages of Busumba and Rugogwe, North Kivu, killing at least 13 civilians and injuring 14. In another instance, on September 7, at least 18 civilians were killed and ten wounded in an attack by the Kabidon group on Balingina village, Irumu territory, Ituri.

Moreover, Mayi-Mayi groups targeted employees of the Virunga National Park, North Kivu. On May 18, they attacked a convoy of rangers of the national park, killing four and wounding six. Just ten days later, on May 28, militants of a Mayi-Mayi group attacked guards of the national park in the Nyamusengera area, killing two and injuring six. The Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation and authorities

blamed the same Mayi-Mayi group that was responsible for the attack on May 18 for this incident.
In total, at least 71 people were killed and 60 injured in Mayi-Mayi related incidents, most of whom were civilians. lgf

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.
Throughout the year, the role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the preparation of the national elections remained the main point of contention between the conflict parties. Opposition members, alongside church groups, repeatedly criticized the CENI for its lack of transparency and alleged irregularities in voter registration.
Growing tensions sparked multiple protests, some of which escalated into violence. For instance, on May 20, police dispersed a protest by opposition supporters in the capital Kinshasa over improved transparency in the electoral process, among other things, using tear gas, arresting dozens of protesters, and injuring at least 30. Similarly, on July 29, police used tear gas against supporters of the Lamuka coalition attending a meeting in Kinshasa organized by Martin Fayulu, Lamuka's presidential candidate. Lamuka also claimed that supporters of a ruling party armed with machetes attacked its members on July 29, injuring 22.
Over the course of the year, security agents arrested several opposition members. For example, on May 30, the advisor of Moïse Katumbi (Ensemble pour la République) was arrested for alleged collusion with Rwandan officials and M23 rebels. Furthermore, Katumbi's spokesman was found shot dead in his car in Kinshasa on July 13. The circumstances of his death were still unclear by the end of the year. On August 31, the French news magazine Jeune Afrique published an article implying the involvement of military intelligence in the spokesman's death. Consequently, security agents arrested Jeune Afrique's correspondent in the DR Congo on September 8 for allegedly spreading false information, even though the article did not carry his name.
Tensions continued to rise during the election campaign. For instance, on November 28, during an election rally organized by Katumbi in Kindu, Maniema province, violent clashes broke out between Ensemble pour la République members and supporters of President Félix Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress. One person was killed and several were injured. Furthermore, several journalists were intimidated and attacked while reporting on the elections. Finally, the elections were scheduled for December 20, but had to be extended for several days due to logistical difficulties. Voting was accompanied by a number of violent incidents across the country and ongoing conflicts in the eastern provinces. The delays and irregularities were denounced by church groups and opposition members, with the latter announcing that they would not accept the election results and calling on their supporters to protest. On December 27, a banned demonstration by Fayulu supporters in Kinshasa was violently dispersed by the police, leaving at least eleven people injured. On December 31, the CENI published the provisional results of the presidential elections, declaring President Tshisekedi the winner. cwi

DR CONGO, RWANDA (FDLR, CNRD)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1994

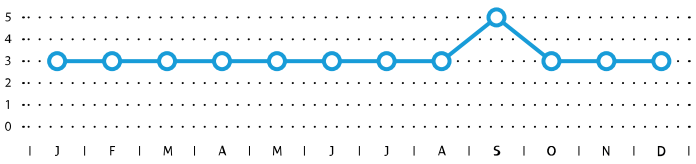
Conflict parties: FDLR vs. CNRD vs. DR Congo, Rwanda
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

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, on the one hand, and the governments of the DR Congo, supported by MONUSCO, and Rwanda, on the other, continued.
According to a statement released by MONUSCO on May 6, the mission had repatriated more than 30,000 FDLR fighters to Rwanda over the last nine years, leaving less than 1,000 constituents in the DR Congo.
Nevertheless, the ethnic Hutu group continued to attack civilians and clash with other armed groups in North Kivu province throughout the year. For instance, FDLR attacked two farmers near Kalengera village on May 2. On October 27, FDLR raped ten women who were hiding from M23 near Rugari village [→ DR Congo (M23 factions)]. On August 3, FDLR clashed with the umbrella organization Nyatura Collective of Movements for Change, subsuming several Mayi-Mayi groups, in the Kiseguro agglomeration, leaving one civilian dead and two injured [→ DR Congo (Mayi-Mayi et al.)]. The majority of FDLR activities however focused on combating the ethnic Tutsi group M23. For instance, on January 22, FDLR attacked M23 on the road between Kazaroho village and Kiwanja town, North Kivu, who were driving a truck containing looted food. Upon criticism by the international community, the spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the DR Congo prohibited all soldiers from cooperating with FDLR on November 21. On December 30, the commander of the 34th military region of North Kivu was taken in for questioning in the capital Kinshasa due to allegations of affiliations with FDLR.
ttu

DR CONGO, UGANDA (ADF)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 1995

Conflict parties: ADF vs. DR Congo, Uganda
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources



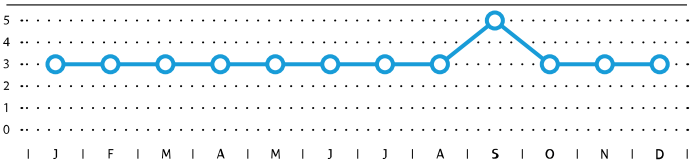
The war over the orientation of the political system, subnational predominance, and resources between the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) on the one hand, and the governments of DR Congo and Uganda, supported by MONUSCO, on the other, continued. ADF is also referred to as the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU), Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen (MTM), or the Congolese branch

of Islamic State's Central Africa Province (ISCAP-DRC).
The Islamist militant group mainly operated in DR Congo's eastern regions, particularly in Beni territory, North Kivu province, and Irumu and Mambasa territories, Ituri province, and to a lesser extent in Uganda, where it operated predominantly in the Western Region. ADF mostly attacked civilians through raids on villages, ambushes on the road, assaults on farmers, and IEDs. The USA labeled the group as a terrorist organization on 03/10/21 and on March 2 declared a USD 5 million reward in exchange for information leading to ADF's leader Seka Musa Baluku. The UN Group of Experts on the DR Congo established in their June 13 report that Islamic State (IS) has been providing ADF with financial support since at least 2019. IS claimed responsibility for several ADF attacks over the year, but ADF often refrained from claiming their assaults. This year, the conflict accounted for at least 1,154 deaths and 143 injured people.
In DR Congo, Beni was especially affected by violence from ADF and saw at least 456 civilian deaths. For instance, on January 15, ADF detonated an IED in a church in Kasindi town, killing 14 civilians and injuring 62. On the evening of March 8, ADF attacked the village of Mukondi, leaving at least 38 people dead, 17 wounded, and 30 houses burnt. IS claimed responsibility for both attacks. On November 12, ADF killed 42 civilians and burned at least seven houses in the village of Kitshanga. In the days following the incursion, at least 1,200 people fled to Uganda. ADF also regularly operated in Irumu and Mambasa territories, resulting in at least 287 civilian fatalities. For example, on May 18 in Irumu, the ADF carried out a series of attacks in the villages of Sesa, Mungamba, and Bwanasura, killing a total of 13 people. In an assault on cocoa farmers on November 1 in Mambasa, ADF killed at least five people close to the villages of Apesiko and Makumbo.
In Uganda, ADF assaults accounted for at least 62 civilian deaths. Late in the evening on June 17, a group of around ten alleged ADF combatants attacked Lhubiriha Secondary School in Mpondwe town, Western Region, killing 42 people using knives, machetes, guns, and fire, and abducting approx. six students. In the aftermath of the attack, the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) deployed combat helicopters to search for the perpetrators and the abductees, arrested 20 suspected ADF collaborators, and claimed to have killed six ADF militants and freed three of the six abducted students. In another attack on October 17, ADF killed two tourists and their guide in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Western Region, for which IS claimed responsibility.
Fighting between security forces and the ADF accounted for at least 338 deaths on ADF's side, including reportedly ten commanders, along with at least one soldier and one Armed Forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) officer. In efforts to counter the ADF, the FARDC and UPDF carried out joint operations under the name of Operation Shujaa. For example, on March 24, the coalition claimed to have killed 20 ADF militants during a military operation in Mwalika Valley, Beni. On September 16, UPDF-led airstrikes killed 200 ADF members in DR Congo, which was confirmed by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni on December 13. The FARDC cooperated with MONUSCO. For instance, on April 29, FARDC claimed that an attack in coalition with MONUSCO on ADF strongholds in Apetina-Sana town, Beni, had killed another 20 ADF militants. Furthermore, FARDC operated independently, for example when it intervened in an ADF attack in Luna village, on the border of North Kivu and Ituri, killing three ADF militants on August 19.
Civil society regularly asked the security forces to intensify operations and strengthen their presence to guarantee security. For example, on February 11, the civil society of Beni called upon the UPDF-FARDC coalition to expand operations to the western part of the road RN 4. esc

ETHIOPIA (FANO MILITIAS / AMHARA)

Intensity: 4 | Change: NEW | Start: 2023

Conflict parties: Fano militias vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance



downgraded (< 360 deaths)

A new limited war over autonomy and subnational predominance between the Amhara Fano militias, and the government, including the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), supported by regional security forces, erupted.
Fano is a loosely coordinated coalition of regional militias, formed in the Amhara region in 2018, aiming to avert threats from the Amharan people. Since 2021, Fano has supported ENDF forces in the war against the Tigray People's Liberation Front in the Tigray region [→ Ethiopia, Eritrea (TPLF / Tigray)]. The war in Tigray region calmed down at the beginning of the year, after conflict parties signed a cessation of hostilities in November 2022. Following these developments, the government announced the integration of all Regional Special Forces, which were previously formed by the national government, to face regional security threats, into the ENDF on April 6. Following this announcement, protests arose in various cities throughout Amhara region. The protests were joined by members of the Regional Special Forces and Fano militiamen, fearing the loss of sovereignty.
In the following days, the protests escalated, eventually resulting in the death of multiple aid workers in Kobo town, Amhara region, on April 11. On the same day, heavy fighting between Regional Special Forces and the ENDF occurred outside of Debre Birhan city, Amhara region, resulting in the death of at least five people. Clashes continued throughout the month. On May 26, heavy fighting broke out between Fano and ENDF forces at the Holy Trinity monastery in Debre Elias district, Amhara region. Fano militants raided the monastery, killing practitioners and religious leaders in the process. It was then repurposed, serving as a logistics centre and training facility. ENDF forces deployed heavy artillery, shelling the monastery. At least 200 people died and dozens were injured.
The attacks on and destruction of religious sites sparked protests, which turned violent. For example, on June 14, protesters clashed with security forces in Dembecha and Fenote Selam town, Amhara region, resulting in three people death and several injured, as well as buildings being destroyed.
This incident was followed by several smaller attacks and murders throughout the months of June and July. For example, on July 27, high-ranking ENDF officials were ambushed when Fano fighters blocked a road near Gordora town, Amhara region, resulting in ten people dead.
Another clash between Fano and ENDF forces on August 2 near Debre Tabor city, Amhara region, resulted in the government declaring a state of emergency for six months in

the region. This would allow ENDF and security forces to use roadblocks, curfews, and disruption of transport services, as well as declaring martial law in the region. However, fighting continued throughout August.
Clashes erupted again on November 8 around the grounds of the rock-hewn churches near Lalibela town, Amhara region. After losing control over the area to Fano militants, ENDF forces and Republican Guards deployed artillery, shelling the area heavily. This resulted in the death of at least 20 people and substantial damages to these historic sites. ahe

ETHIOPIA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↓ | Start: 2017

Conflict parties: vs. Oromo vs. Amhara vs. Konso vs. Ale vs. Issa vs. Afar vs. other ethnic groups
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The war between various ethnic groups over subnational predominance and resources, such as arable land, de-escalated to a violent crisis.
The Somali Region witnessed tensions mostly at the beginning of the year at the Oromia- and Afar-Somali border. On January 13, Oromo militiamen attacked Somali civilians, killing three and leaving twelve injured at the Oromian-Somali border in Tulu Guled District, Fafan Zone, Somali Region, due to a dispute over the construction of a dam. Furthermore, Oromia Regional Special forces and Oromo militias killed seven civilians and injured 14 in Tulu Guled District, Fafan Zone, between March 14 and 17. On March 29, Afar militants attacked and killed an unknown number of Somali civilians in the neighboring Sitti Zone, Somali Region. Violence at the Oromian-Somali border continued on September 15, when Oromia Regional Special Forces clashed with Somali Regional State Forces in Babile District, Fafan Zone, killing six and injuring 20 civilians.
In the Oromia Region, violence flared up throughout the year, mostly directed at ethnic Oromo civilians. Between February 2 and 4, fighters of the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) attacked and killed at least 50 Amhara IDPs at an IDP camp in Gobu Seyu, East Walega Zone, Oromia Region (Link Ethiopia (OLF/Oromia). On March 12, Amhara militias clashed with Oromo civilians , in Fentale, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region, leaving a senior OLF leader dead. In June, violence surged in the Oromia Region due to multiple attacks by Fano militiamen. On June 7, Fano militiamen attacked Oromo farmers in Amuru, Horo Guduru Welega Zone, Oromia Region, killing five farmers and injuring at least ten. This was followed on June 16, with an attack by Fano militia men on Oromo civilians killing eight and injuring 13 in Kiremu, East Welega Zone, Oromia Region. Attacks by Fano militants continued in September and November in East Welega Zone, Oromia Region, and Oromia Special Zone, and West Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region, killing at least 48 Oromo civilians in three separate attacks. In November and December, several groups of unidentified armed men targeted Christian worshippers in Kelam Welega zone, Arsi zone, and East Shewa zone, killing at least 44 in four separate attacks.
Between May and July, the regions of Gambela and Benishangul-Gumuz also saw several violent attacks. In Itang zone, Gambela region, residents of neighboring Pingwa and Ler kebeles clashed on May 25, killing nine people. In an attack on public buses on July 13 in Itang zone, Gambela region, Angwa militants killed three and injured at least 23 Nuer civilians. Between June 13 and 15, clashes between Berta and Oromo people around Asosa city, Benishangul-Gumuz region, killed ten people. Militants of the Gumuz People's Democratic Movement attacked and killed eight civilians in Metekel Zone, Benishangul Gumuz region, on July 7. fzi

ETHIOPIA (OLA / OROMIA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↓ | Start: 1992

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

The war over subnational predominance between the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), and the Ethiopian federal government, including the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), de-escalated to a violent crisis. Violent clashes were recorded mainly at the beginning of the year and peaked again after failed peace negotiations in May.
On January 7, OLA forces attacked a prison in Bule Hora town, Oromo region, freeing approx. 480 prisoners. Five prison guards were killed during the attack. On January 23, OLA forces attacked the ENDF and regional security forces in Jewaha town, Amhara region, killing 23 people. In the following, approx. 1,000 people fled from Jewaha town. The following day, the OLA attacked Ataye town, Amhara region, killed dozens of civilians and destroyed hundreds of houses before being stopped by ENDF troops. In the aftermath of the attack, approx. 1,000 people fled. In March and again in May, the federal government and the OLA began peace talks but failed to reach an agreement. On May 16, OLA attacked a prison in Olanchiti town, Oromia region. Eight persons were killed during the attack. On October 14, ENDF and OLA killed eleven civilians during a fight in Oromia region. On November 14, a third round of peace negotiations was launched, again without reaching an agreement. On November 20, OLA forces clashed with the ENDF in the Sulula Fincha district, Oromia region. Five civilians were killed during the clash. On December 28, an ENDF drone strike hit the grounds of Baro Full Gospel Church in Kombolcha district, Oromia region, killing eight people and injuring five.
jfg

ETHIOPIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2005

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

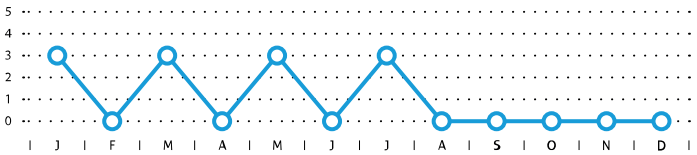
The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system, between various opposition groups, such as Enat Party (Enat), Balderas For True Democracy Party (Balderas) and Gurage Unity and Justice Party (GOGOT), and the government, headed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. Throughout the year, opposition parties suffered restrictions and detentions but no cases of violence were observed.
On February 24, the founder of Balderas was detained by security forces without having a criminal charge against him. He was released two days later. On March 13, GOGOT announced

the detention of twelve of their party officials. Two days later, on March 15, the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) condemned the government for unduly pressuring opposition parties Enat, Balderas, and GOGOT. The NEBE stated that the government had prevented them from holding their general assemblies. In May, the umbrella organization Caucus of Opposition Parties, criticized the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission as unilateral and non-inclusive. On June 5, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission released a report, criticizing the disappearances of members of the Ethiopian National Defence Force and opposition parties across Amhara and Oromia regions. The commission claimed the arrests or abductions of at least twelve people in unclear circumstances. On August 8, the prominent Oromo Liberation Front affiliated political activist of the Oromo Federalist Congress Bekele Gerba, applied for political asylum in the USA. On September 21, five opposition parties published a joint statement, calling for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the violent clashes in Amhara Region [→ Ethiopia (Fano Militias/Amhara)).
ann

ETHIOPIA, ERITREA (TPLF / TIGRAY)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↓ | Start: 2020

Conflict parties: Eritrea, Ethiopia vs. TPLF
Conflict items: system/ideology



The war over the orientation of the political system in northern Ethiopia between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), including its armed wing, the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF), on the one hand, and the Ethiopian government, including the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), as well as the Eritrean government, supported by Amhara militias and Afar regional forces, on the other, de-escalated to a violent crisis.
In the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA), signed by TPLF and government officials on 11/2/2022, both parties agreed to the disarmament of TDF forces under the condition that all non-ENDF forces withdraw from the Tigray region. On January 10, TDF fighters handed over heavy weaponry near Agulae town, Tigray region, in the presence of the African Union Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (MVCM). However, by the end of the year, Eritrean and Amhara regional forces still controlled parts of the Tigray region.
Amnesty International reported that Eritrean soldiers committed at least 116 cases of sexual violence against civilians in the districts of Kokob Tsibah, Irob and Gulomakeda, Tigray region during the first half of the year.
In March, at least 47.000 people fled from Western Tigray region, which was occupied by Amhara regional forces.
On November 6, the government announced their ongoing commitment to the implementation of the CoHA, including their intention to hold referenda in the contested areas to decide their status. Tigray opposition group Assimba Democratic Party opposed the plan to hold referenda and urged the government to a complete and comprehensive implementation of the CoHA, highlighting complete withdrawal of non-ENDF forces and the inability of IDPs to return to their homes.
ahe

GABON (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2009

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

The dispute over national power between the government on the one hand and the Committee for the Transition and the Restoration of Institutions (CTRI) and opposition parties on the other escalated to a non-violent crisis.
On August 26, presidential elections took place. Six opposition parties had joined forces under an alliance called Alternance 2023 with Albert Ondo Ossa as their joint candidate. Prior to the election, the electoral commission announced that any vote for a local deputy would automatically be a vote for that deputy's presidential candidate. Opposition parties criticized this change for favoring the ruling party and putting candidates at a disadvantage who are not backed by any party. Citing the risk of violence, the government cut off the internet and put a curfew in place, starting on election day. On August 30, the electoral commission announced that incumbent president Ali Bongo Ondimba, who has been in power for 14 years, has won a third term. Ondo Ossa accused the government of election fraud and claimed he was the rightful winner.
Less than an hour after the announcement of results on August 30, the military, led by General Brice Oligui Nguema, declared that they had ousted President Bongo, election results were canceled, borders closed, and state institutions dissolved. Accusing him of misappropriation of public funds, Bongo and severl of his family members were put under house arrest, and five other officials from the office of the former president were arrested. In a video statement, Bongo appealed to foreign allies for support on August 31. On September 20, Bongo's eldest son and several members of the deposed president's cabinet were charged with high treason and corruption. On September 28, Bongo's wife was charged with money laundering, forgery, and falsification of records.
After the coup, the military junta formed the Committee for the Transition and the Restoration of Institutions (CTRI). On September 4, Nguema was sworn in as Gabon's transitional president in Libreville and a transition charter was put in place. While Nguema claimed the CTRI's intention to return power to the people, the charter did not specify the duration of the transition period or a time frame for elections. On September 6, the junta stated it had freed several people held without trial by the former government. On September 7, the junta announced the creation of a transitional constitutional council and appointed a civilian magistrate as president. Civilians were also appointed to govern the nine regions of Gabon. On October 9, the CTRI announced plans to invest more than USD 10 million from confiscated assets of the former government to provide public social amenities. On November 13, the CTRI published a timeline for the political transition which foresees the transformation of parliament into a Constituent Assembly in June 2024, a referendum to adopt the new constitution in December 2024, and general elections in August 2025.

While the international community, including the UN, African Union (AU) and France, condemned the coup, the public largely supported the coup. For instance, in September, the opposition, activists and civil society groups marched in several towns, including Libreville, Franceville and Port-Gentil in support of the arrests of former government officials. The AU and the Economic Community of Central African States suspended Gabon's membership, and the USA halted its non-humanitarian foreign assistance. sag

GAMBIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2016

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

The non-violent crisis over national power between various opposition groups and the government continued. Mohammed Jallow replaced Badara Alieu Joof as vice-president after his death in January. Arrests of journalists and government critics continued throughout the year, with the imprisonment and sentence of prominent human rights activists between October and November. Protests activity from oppositional parties increased compared to the previous years. On March 10, the United Democratic Party called for civil society protests in the capital Banjul against alleged corruption in the government, which remained peaceful. On November 3, prominent opposition members staged a walkout in the National Assembly to protest against an administrative bill of the former president, which among other things, would grant former high-ranking members of the government higher salaries and pensions. mib

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 the coup d'état in 2021, the military junta proposed a 36-month timeline to general elections, which was approved by the interim legislative body, the National Transitional Council. ECOWAS demanded a shorter timeline for the transition in 2022 and pressured the transition government with sanctions. They agreed on a 24-month transition timeline, starting in January this year. Subsequently, the junta banned all public demonstrations.
On February 16, protesters demanded a return to civilian rule and the release of arrested civilians and oppositional figures. Opposition supporters blocked roads in the capital Conakry and threw stones at police security forces. The police reported seven security forces wounded, the FNDC reported two civilians killed and more than 50 injured.
On May 10, protesters demanded a dialogue for the return to civilian rule, the release of political detainees as well as the lifting of the ban on all demonstrations, introduced by the junta last year. Violent clashes between protesters and security forces left at least two civilians killed and 32 injured. Opposition activist sources reported seven deaths in the context of the protests. On the same day, three prominent civil society figures, who were imprisoned over the course of the last 12 months, were released.
On the two-year anniversary of the military coup, on September 4-5, a coalition of political parties and civil society organisations, held further demonstrations in Conakry. Clashes broke out between demonstrators and security forces attempting to enforce the ban on protests, and led to four protesters dead. Three days later, on September 8, renewed clashes with security forces erupted during protesters' funerals in Conakry, leaving 12 civilians injured.
On October 16, a Conakry protest of a journalist union organisation was violently cracked down by authorities. Security forces arrested at least twelve and injured three journalists.
On November 4, armed men freed imprisoned former president and military leader Moussa Dadis Camara in a rare prison raid, which left nine people, including two civilians, killed. Camara was captured by security forces later that same day. ssc

KENYA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1963

Conflict parties: Pokot vs. Turkana vs. Toposa vs. Borana vs. Rendille vs. Akamba vs. Orma vs. various other tribes
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over resources and subnational predominance between various ethnic groups continued. Clashes primarily took place between the Pokot and the Turkana ethnic groups. Overall, the conflict accounted for at least 36 deaths.
For instance, on February 11, Pokot herdsmen attacked a bus in Kakong, Turkana county, which is mainly inhabited by ethnic Turkana people. At least three policemen were shot dead, while seven others sustained gunshot injuries. Pokot herdsmen had been grazing their cattle on the disputed Turkana South territory. On April 5, five people were shot dead when unknown assailants raided Lami Nyeusi village, West Pokot county. 18 goats were stolen during the raid. On May 25, one person was killed by suspected herdsmen in Takaiywa village, West Pokot county. Two people were injured and more than 100 goats were stolen. On February 5, at least eight people were killed in a clash over border demarcations between the Turkana people and the Toposa tribe of South Sudan in Nadapal, Kapoeta East county, which remains disputed by the Kenyan and South Sudanese government. Preceding the incident, Turkana people allegedly attacked the Toposa in Nadapal, accusing them of encroaching on their territory. The two communities routinely cross their borders while looking for pasture for livestock. On July 27, a peace agreement was signed by the Borana and Rendille tribes who reside in Songa and Badasa, Marsabit county. The communities were in conflict over cattle rustling, inadequate pastures, and water. On September 12, clashes between unknown clansmen along the border of Kitui county and Tana River county resulted in at least twelve people dead. During the clashes, a primary school and a police station were destroyed in the village Voo, Kitui county. At least 500 families fled the area. Residents of Kitui county, which is primarily inhabited by Christian Akamba

people, and Tana River county, which is primarily inhabited by pastoralist and Muslim Orma people, frequently clash over access to resources, such as pastures and water. lav

KENYA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1999

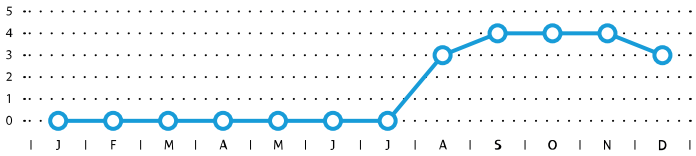
Conflict parties: Azimio la Umoja One-Kenya Coalition vs. government
Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between the opposition coalition Azimio la Umoja One-Kenya Coalition (Azimio), on the one hand, and the newly-formed government of the Kenya Kwanza Alliance (KKA), on the other, continued.
On February 22, Azimio, under the leadership of Raila Odinga, called for protests against the high cost of living, an audit of the 2022 general elections, and electoral reforms. As a result, nationwide anti-government protests took place until August.
From March 20 to 30, thousands of people took part in a series of protests in several cities across the country. The police responded using firearms and teargas, killing at least twelve protestors in separate incidents. For instance, in Kisumu county, police killed one student in Maseno town on March 20 and in Kisumu town on March 27, respectively. According to the government, more than 70 police officers and over 85 civilians were injured during the protests. Following riots and looting, at least 200 people were arrested, including at least ten high-ranking opposition figures.
Following an appeal for dialog by the government on April 2, Odinga called off further demonstrations in April and May.
In July, large protests re-erupted in over 100 different locations, including the capital Nairobi, after Odinga called on his supporters to engage in civil disobedience. The move came after the government raised taxes in a new Finance Bill in June, increasing the cost of living and raising fears of increased economic hardship. The police violently responded to the protests, using rubber bullets, gunfire, and tear gas, as well as arresting protesters. For instance, on July 12, at least nine protesters were killed by police forces in Mlonlongo and Emali, Machakos county and Kitengela, Kajiado county. In addition, several protestors were injured and at least 50 primary school children were hospitalized following the use of tear gas in Nairobi. At least 317 people were arrested.
In early August, the government and the opposition alliance agreed to resume talks and formed a National Dialogue Committee (NADCO), which published its final report on November 26. The report was met with a split response by the opposition coalition, with Odinga cautiously welcoming it while others, including the formerly governing Jubilee Party, refused to sign it. The high costs of living and the reforms of the electoral process remained key points of contention, leading to Odinga calling for new protests on December 30.
lav, lob

MALI (CSP-PSD, CMA ET AL. / AZAWAD)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1989

Conflict parties: CMA et al., CSP-PSD vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy



The dispute over autonomy of an independent state of Azawad between the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), various other signatory rebel groups of the 2015 Algiers Accords, and the Permanent Strategic Framework for the Defense of the People of Azawad (CSP-PSD), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a limited war.
Since the 1960s, ethnic Tuareg groups thrived for the independent state of Azawad and staged several rebellions throughout the years. After many returned to Mali in 2000s after having left to Libya in the 1970s, Tuareg groups formed the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) as a political-military platform to continue their strive for self-rule in 2011, which occasionally allied with al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamist groups in the broader Sahel region. In March 2012, MNLA violently declared an independent state of Azawad against the government, although several factions and Islamist supporting groups favored the introduction of Sharia law over independence, leading to clashes between MNLA, various splinter groups, and al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamist groups [→ Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)]. Government forces, supported by French military forces and later MINUSMA, started peace talks in 2013 and 2015, leading to the 2015 Algiers Peace Accords between the 2014 newly formed CMA, the pro-government Platform, and the government. Although violence decreased and largely remained within the effort to end inter-militant fighting in recent years [→ Mali (inter-militant rivalry / northern Mali)], the conflict and militant groups remained active and the negotiated ceasefire and accords never fully implemented. Since 2021, the still independently operating CMA, along with former pro-government militia factions of the Imghad Tuareg and Allies Self-Defense Group (GATIA) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), have been grouped together as the CSP-PSD.
Tensions in the conflict intensified this year, when CSP-PSD met in the context of international mediation efforts, led by Algeria, on February 1, and warned that its armed groups would "take action" if the government continues to block the accord's implementation. On February 10, a member of the transitional government claimed that a new "war" between the government and the signatory groups would be "inevitable", which was quickly denounced by CMA members. On February 24, government authorities accused CMA of collaborating with Jihadist groups. The conflict escalated on April 5, when a Malian Armed Forces (MAFa) aircraft flew over the CMA headquarters in the town of Kidal, eponymous region. CMA responded with gunfire and described it as a violation of the so-far stabile ceasefire. After a number of diplomatic efforts between international mediators, the signatory groups, and the government, the official end of

the MINUSMA mandate in June resulted in the first flare up of violence since the 2015 Peace Accords: On August 1, after CSP-PSD warned about the handover from MINUSMA to MAFa in formerly MINUSMA-controlled camps of the signatory armed groups, violent clashes erupted between CMA members and MAFa. Between August 4 and 29, CMA and government forces, supported by Wagner troops, clashed in several MINUSMA camps within Timbuktu and Kidal regions, leaving at least a dozen dead. Reportedly, MAFa launched airstrikes on various CMA positions in Kidal. On September 11, CMA announced it would consider itself "at war" with the government and violently seized several military camps in the town of Bourem, Gao region, (September 11), the town of Léré, Timbuktu, (September 17), and the village of Dioura, Mopti region, (September 28), during the three weeks after. CMA declared that it killed at least 97 MAFa during the takeover of Bourem, while MAFa claimed to have killed at least 46 CMA members. Clashes between government forces, Wagner troops, and CSP-PSD affiliated groups continued in October, mostly in former MINUSMA and MAFa camps in Kidal and Gao regions, which CSP-PSD partly took over. MAFa responded with airstrikes on several occasions. Fighting especially focused on the town of Kidal, with several deadly clashed throughout October, November, and December. On November 14, the government announced having gained full control over Kidal again and, on November 16, allegedly discovered a mass grave it attributed to CSP-PSD activity, who rejected the allegations.
Already in late September, Movement of the Salvation of Azawad (MSA) and Platform leaders announced the departure from the CSP-PSD coalition, citing CMA's too bellicose stance against the government. pad

MALI (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY / CENTRAL MALI)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2012

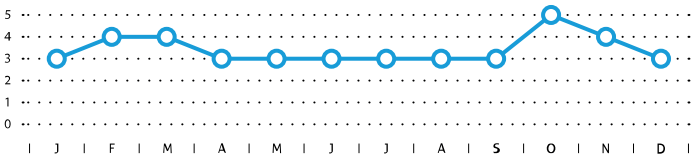
Conflict parties: Bambara, Dogon, Dozo vs. Fulani vs. Islamist Groups
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between the Dogon and Bambara ethnic communities and their Dozo and Donso self-defense militias, on the one hand, the Fulani ethnic community, on the other hand, and Islamist groups continued.
Since the 2012 Tuareg rebellion in Mali and the subsequent expansion of various Islamist groups [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.); Mali et al. (IS Sahel)], 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. 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 in 2021 and a relatively quiet last year, fighting between the two communities intensified this year again. Inter-communal clashes between Dogon, Fulani, and allegedly supporting Islamist groups continued during the first half of the year, before political tensions and violence moved to the north-eastern regions, with less involvement of inter-communal groups [→ Mali (CSP-PSD, CMA et al. / Azawad)]. For instance, on June 3, Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) militants killed 15 pastoralists in the Dogon village of Teberemt, Mopti region. Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wa al-Muslimeen (JNIM) fighters killed at least ten Dogon Dan Na Ambassagou militiamen in an ambush in the village of Korn'Ga, Mopti, on June 6. Similarly, on July 2, JNIM, with alleged support of Fulani, clashed with Dan Na Ambassagou in the villages of Nouh-Bozo and Bangassi, Mopti, leaving ast least 30 people dead, predominantly ethnic Dogon. On August 6, hundreds of JNIM fighters riding motorbikes and vehicles and armed with assault rifles led an attack on the Dogon village of Bodio, Mapti, killing 15 community members.
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 over the course of the year. The Russian paramilitary Wagner Group continued to be involved in MAFa-operations [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)]. For instance, on March 6, when MAFa and Wagner troops killed five civilians and arrested at least a dozen during operation in the village of Sossobe-Togoro, Mopti. One day later, on March 7, MAFa conducted airstrikes on suspected Fulani villages, specifically Kilimpo and Koko, Mopti, killing at least twelve civilians. On July 27, MAFa killed four Fulani men and one child in a targeted Fulani village raid in Gadougou, Kayes region. On July 30, three more were killed by MAFa, immediately after they helped to bury the three killed villagers from three days before. While the second half of the year remained largely quiet, on November 2, Dan Na Ambassagou militiamen killed four four Fulani pastoralists in the town of Sévaré, Mopti. On November 7, Wagner troops allegedly killed twelve Fulani civilians near the towns of Molodo and Diabaly, Ségou. pad

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) [→ Mali, Nigeria et al. (ISAWP/ISWAP-GS) (2021)] and the governments of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso continued.
ISGS had emerged from a split of the jihadist group al-Mourabitoun in 2015. The following year, the group pledged allegiance to the Islamic State. In 2019, the group was subordinated to Islamic State West Africa Province [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISWAP)]. This was reversed, when in March of last year, IS declared the group as an independent province within IS structure, referring to the group as Islamic State

Sahel Province (IS Sahel).
In order to fight IS Sahel, amongst other Islamist groups in the region, the Sahel countries were supported by various military alliances, regional, and international forces over the past years, of which many announced their withdrawal this year [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)]. According to a UN Security Council report, IS Sahel had almost doubled its areas of control in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger from 2022 to August of this year. Although the total number of attacks decreased compared to last year, IS Sahel shifted its focus to fewer and complex large-scale operations, leading to high death tolls during these attacks. While Mali saw less killings compared to previous years in the conflict, at least 154, the total death tolls increased in Burkina Faso and Niger. In Burkina Faso, clashes between IS Sahel militants and military forces and civilian killings left at least 322 persons dead, while in Niger, 592 persons were killed in the context of the conflict.
Most notably, on December 3, in a parallel attack, IS Sahel militants attacked the Malian town of Ménaka, eponymous region, and the Labbezanga army base, Gao region, leaving at least 33 Malian soldiers and three civilians dead. In counter attacks by Malian Armed Forces and Wagner troops on the same day, at least 14 militants were killed. In Burkina Faso, on February 17, IS Sahel militants attacked a military convoy in the Sahel region, and killed at least 51 soldiers. A counter-attack by military forces on the same day killed at least 160 IS Sahel militants. In Niger, suspected IS Sahel militants clashed with military personnel in the Nigerien Tissilatane area, Tillabéri Department, leading to at least 153 soldiers dead, 34 injured, 71 missing, and 23 vehicles taken.

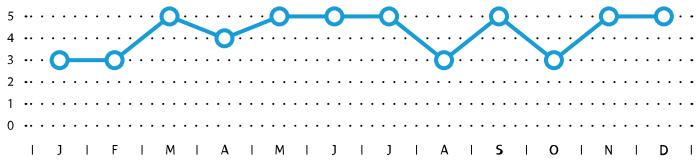
pad, jak, aja

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

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 1998

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

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, Mauretania, and Niger (G5 Sahel), Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, and France, as well as other international government alliances, on the other hand, continued.
Regional, and national efforts to combat Islamist militants in the Sahel zone continued, while international involvement came to an end. Among international efforts to intervene in the region, only MINUSMA stayed regularly active in the conflict until June first, and then after an extension, until December this year. French forces under Operation Barkhane, German army's involvement in Mali, and European partnership involvements under the Takuba Task Force, as well as US military contingents announced their withdrawal last year, and were occasionally involved in continuing withdrawal missions. The formerly in this conflict influential G5 Sahel Force, pooling military, financial, and logistical resources of their members to combat jihadist militant groups, saw Burkina Faso and Niger leave the alliance this year, after Mali already left in 2022. 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, and played an increased role in the conflict.
While hundreds of troops of Russian paramilitary Wagner Group already fought together with the Malian Armed Forces (MAFa) during the previous years, Burkina Faso and Niger allegedly started to cooperate with the group this year. Throughout the year, several reports by international NGOs criticized Wagner's human rights abuses and violence against civilians in the Sahel.
Throughout the affected countries, JNIM continued to be the Islamist group involved in most violent attacks. While the so-called Islamic State Sahel Province (IS Sahel) and its factions have operated individually and as a rival to JNIM in the region since 2019 [→ Mali et al. (IS Sahel)], the two Islamist groups continued to clash this year, in however lesser intensity compared to the previous years of conflict. For instance, in the Malian Ménaka region, JNIM militants clashed on March 1, near the town of Agare Mbaou, and reportedly killed dozens on both sides. On June 3, JNIM attacked IS Sahel militants in the Malian Tatakarat area, Gao region, killing eight militants. On the next day, an IS Sahel unit killed ten JNIM militants in the Malian Timatalwayene area, Timbuktu region.
This year, fighting continued to target large numbers of civilians, ethnic self-defense militias, and government security forces in especially Mali's Mopti and Timbuktu regions, Burkina Faso's Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre Est, Centre Nord, Est, and Sahel regions, and in Niger's Tillabéri Department. While JNIM's influence decreased slightly in Mali and Niger, Burkina Faso saw the deadliest year of its conflict history so far. During their withdrawal, UN peacekeepers regularly became victim of violent attacks against them. Jihadist presence also further increased in Togo and Benin. Over the course of the year, at least 3,305 deaths and at least 500,000 IDPs were reported for the whole conflict, an increase of almost 1,000 deaths compared to the previous year, which already had been the deadliest in the conflict's history.
On December 13, JNIM leader Iyad Ag Ghaly announced a "new phase of jihad" for Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, highlighting potential weaknesses in the countries' security structures after the soon full withdrawal of international troops across the region.

Mali

Throughout the year, military operations and jihadist insurgencies led to at least 833 people killed on 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 mercenary troops, however, in lower intensity compared to previous years. For instance, on February 7, when MAFa killed 37 JNIM members in an operation in the village of Korientzé, Mopti.

Between July 1-5, MAFa and Wagner troops conducted air strikes on several JNIM bases near Sévéri village, Mopti, killing at least least 7 militants and destroying JNIM infrastructure. During similar operations, civilians continued to pay heavy toll. For instance, on October 8, Wagner mercenaries allegedly killed seven civilians in the village of Takoukate, Kidal region, while Wagner and MAFa reportedly killed six civilians and committed sexual abuse in the villages of Agumeimin and Tichilit villages, Timbuktu region, on October 15 [→ Mali (inter-communal rivalry / central Mali)].
JNIM attacks remained high this year. The deadliest attack occurred on September 7, when JNIM militants maintained a blockade on the city of Timbuktu, eponymous region, in protest at army deployment in region, creating food and aid shortages. In a related operation, on the same day, JNIM militants attacked a river boat near the village of Abakoira, Timbuktu, as well as a ethnic Bamba military camp, Gao region, killing at least 179 people, including 154 civilians. One day later, JNIM launched an additional attack targeting a MAFa and Wagner base near Gao airport, eponymous region, reportedly killing at least 30.

Burkina Faso

Jihadist presence drastically 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 at least 2,384 killings in total, the highest in the conflict. For instance, on May 31, JNIM militants attacked a food convoy in the Loroum province, Nord region, reportedly killing 52 persons. Most notably, on November 26, around 3,000 JNIM militants attacked military positions and IDP camps in and around the town of Djibo, Sahel. At least 40 civilians and dozens of military personnel died in the attack. Repelling the JNIM militants, military forces killed up to 400 JNIM members shortly after that day, also using air strikes.

Niger, Togo, and Benin

Total jihadist violence decreased significantly in Niger this year. JNIM fighters were responsible for at least 48 persons killed, predominantly in the Tillabéry Department. For instance, on November 10, JNIM members killed six civilians and abducted eleven more in the village of Kakou, Tillabéry.
In Togo, JNIM-related killings amounted to in total at least 54, a slight decrease from last year's sudden rise in violence. For instance, in the deadliest jihadist attack on Togo yet, on February 10, JNIM militants attacked the villages of Tola and Gningou, Savanes region, killing at least 31 civilians.
After JNIM attacks were already reported in Benin since 2021, at least 44 al-Qaeda-related killings occurred this year. For instance, on May 1, JNIM militants killed at least 15 civilians and kidnapped another twelve in the town of Kérou, Atakora department, and killed three civilians and kidnapped one more in the town of Banikoara, Alibori department, on day later.
pad, jak, aja

MOZAMBIQUE (ASWJ)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2017

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

The limited war over the orientation of the political system between the Islamist militia Ahlu Sunna Wal Jammaa (ASWJ), locally also referred to as "al-Shabaab", and the government, de-escalated to a violent crisis.
All recorded incidents occurred in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. Throughout the year at least 143 people died, and 18 were injured. As in previous years, 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, as well as locally formed self-defense militias. SAMIM's mandate was extended by twelve months, starting on July 16, during an extraordinary online summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community Organ Troika. In addition, Tanzania deployed forces of the Tanzanian People's Defence Force (TPDF) unilaterally to Nangade district in the province.
Although the Mozambican army (FADM) claimed in December to have re-established security to 90 percent of the province, ASWJ continued to attack civilians and clashed with FADM, RDF, SAMIM and TPDF throughout the year. Compared to previous years, however, there has been a significant decrease in deaths since the start of the conflict in 2017, particularly between January and April.
On January 1, the FADM launched Operation Vulcão IV with the support of the RDF and SAMIM on the border between the districts of Macomia and Muidumbe along the Messalo river. According to the FADM, it killed 14 ASWJ members, whereas ASWJ claims to have killed four FADM soldiers and injured another four. For example, on January 8, ASWJ members attacked FADM and SAMIM soldiers near Litandacua village, Macomia district. ASWJ claimed to have injured several soldiers. The next day, on January 9, FADM and ASWJ clashed in Mandava village, Muidumbe district, with an unspecified number of deaths. On January 10, ASWJ attacked the FADM near the village of Xitaxi, Muidumbe district, and killed at least three soldiers.
Between February 12 and 13, approx. 80 ASWJ members attacked a FADM outpost in Nairoto village, Montepuez district. ASWJ killed five people, stole weapons and supplies, and burned vehicles. On March 13, in Xitaxi village, ASWJ clashed with FADM during which four members of ASWJ and two FADM soldiers were killed. In Mandela village, Muidumbe district, local militias and FADM killed six ASWJ members on May 3. Between June 30 and July 1, ASWJ claimed to have killed at least ten soldiers from RDF, SAMIM and FADM between Mocímboa da Praia and Macomia districts. ASWJ claims to have killed at least nine SAMIM soldiers near Ilala village, Macomia district, on August 1. During a counterattack later that day, SAMIM claims to have killed an unspecified number of ASWJ members. On December 7, ASWJ members allegedly killed five FADM soldiers near Manhiça village, Muidumbe district.
Throughout the year, ASWJ killed and beheaded civilians in various districts across Cabo Delgado. For example, on January 4, alleged ASWJ members beheaded one person and kidnapped at least three more in Chacamba village, Nangade

district. On February 4, in Chapa village, Mueda district, ASWJ beheaded at least two civilians and kidnapped several others. Similarly, ASWJ beheaded three civilians in the village of Mitope, Mocimboa da Praia district, on March 14. On July 11, ASWJ beheaded two civilians in Litamanda village, Macomia district. In the village of Naquitengue, Mocimboa da Praia district, ASWJ members shot dead at least eleven civilians and wounded several others on September 15. On November 12, ASWJ members killed at least four civilians in Muidumbe district. ebe

NIGER (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2009

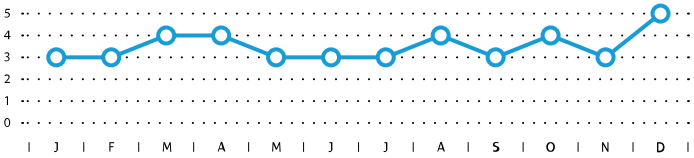
Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government
Conflict items: national power

The non-violent crisis over national power between opposition groups and the government of President Mohamed Bazoum from the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism (PNDS-Tarayya) escalated to a violent crisis. A coup d'état with the new involvement of the military occurred on July 26, after soldiers of the Presidential Guard detained Bazoum in the Presidential Palace in the capital Niamey. During a pro-democracy demonstration, the Presidential Guard dispersed demonstrators with warning shots, leaving at least one person injured. One day later on July 27, the army sided with the coup members. On the same day, the PNDS-Tarayya headquarters were set on fire during a pro-coup demonstration. According to PNDS-Tarayya, at least 180 party members, including ministers, were arrested by the junta throughout July. On July 28, Abdourahamane Tiani, the Commander of the Presidential Guard, declared himself the leader of the new National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP). He suspended the constitution and dissolved all constitutional institutions.
On July 30, ECOWAS issued an ultimatum of seven days for a return to constitutional order. When the ultimatum expired on August 6, the junta closed the airspace due to threats of a military intervention by ECOWAS. On August 9, former rebel leader Rhissa Ag Boula announced the creation of the movement Council of Resistance for the Republic, which opposes the CNSP and supports ECOWAS. On August 10, ECOWAS announced a standby force ready to intervene in Niger. On August 19, Tiani and an ECOWAS delegation met for the first time in Niamey. Later that day, Tiani announced a three-year transition plan, which ECOWAS rejected. On August 25, the junta put its armed forces on highest alert, citing an increased threat of attack. On September 16, Niger signed a mutual defense pact with Burkina Faso and Mali, establishing the Alliance of Sahel States.
During frequent pro-coup demonstrations with thousands of participants, demonstrators waved Russian flags and chanted anti-French slogans, demanding the deployment of all 1,500 French soldiers stationed in Niger. During a demonstration on July 30, the French embassy's walls and gates were set ablaze. Six persons were injured after the embassy's security forces fired tear gas grenades. French President Emmanuel Macron announced the withdrawal of French soldiers from Niger on September 24. On December 22, the French withdrawal was completed. Many pro-coup demonstrations were organized by the M62 movement, an anti-French civil society umbrella organization set up in 2022, and the Pan-African Network for Peace, Democracy and Development (REPPAD). Abdoulaye Seydou, coordinator of M62 and president of REPPAD, was arrested by police on January 23 and sentenced to nine months in prison for disseminating data likely to disturb public order on April 14. On August 14, the Nigerien Court of Appeal canceled his sentence. lie

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 groups, predominantly consisting of ethnic Fulani pastoralists and referred to as bandits, had emerged as a consequence of the conflict over land and water resources between the mainly Hausa farmers and the predominantly Fulani pastoralists, exacerbated by political and environmental factors [→ Nigeria (farmers - pastoralists)]. Organized armed groups had formed on both sides, including vigilante groups, Fulani militias, and criminal gangs. The latter increasingly merged, giving rise to the term bandits. Violent clashes sometimes arose between the various bandit groups while they also occasionally collaborated. The bandit groups were primarily economically motivated. Subnational predominance continued to be challenged by bandits, resulting in frequent violent clashes between bandit groups and vigilantes or security forces. The Nigerian Air Force also frequently conducted airstrikes against the bandits. As in the previous year, the bandits' activities included violent raids on villages, cattle rustling, and kidnapping for ransom.
This year, at least 2,000 people have been killed in the conflict, mainly in Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, and Plateau states. Bandit groups frequently committed violent attacks on civilians and destroyed villages and markets throughout the year. For instance, on January 9, bandits attacked a mining site in Birnin-Gwari Local Government Area (LGA), Kaduna State. Twelve people died as a result. On February 11, security forces repelled an attack by bandits on a market in Chibani village in Niger State, resulting in the deaths of five people. On January 15, an attack occurred in Kafin-Koro municipality, Niger State, when bandits burnt a priest alive while trying to gain entry to his residence. Violence continued in February when Katsina State witnessing several clashes between bandits and local vigilantes, leading to approx. 100 casualties. On March 17, security forces carried out an airstrike against bandits in Munya LGA, Niger State, leaving 28 bandits dead. A few days prior, on March 11, bandits had attacked a wedding in Majifa municipality, Katsina State, killing 22 people.
On April 15, bandits reportedly attacked Runji village, Kaduna State, killing 33 residents and setting fire to 40 houses. On May 20, another attack occurred in Kachia LGA, Kaduna State, when bandits reportedly attacked farmers, resulting in two deaths and the theft of 1,000 cattle. Attacks on farmers continued with a similar incident on June 9, in Rafi LGA, Niger State, that accounted for the death of 50 farmers and rustled cattle. Security forces reacted to the targeting of farming

communities and villages by launching clearance operations and airstrikes. For example, in July, the Nigerian Air Force carried out airstrikes to crack down on bandits' hideouts in Batsari and Jibia LGA, Katsina State, killing 22 bandits.
On August 13, a clash between bandits and security forces along the Zungeru-Tegina road, Niger State, left 63 people dead, including 13 soldiers. The following day, an Air Force helicopter crashed in Chukuba area, Shiroro LGA, while trying to evacuate casualties. The bandit group led by Dogo Gide claimed to have shot it down. Meanwhile, on the same day, eight soldiers were killed by bandits when they ambushed security forces on a rescue mission to the area.
On September 21, security forces, along with vigilantes, successfully foiled an attack by bandits in Danko Wasagu LGA, Kebbi State, leaving 21 bandits dead. The following day, bandits stormed the Federal University in Gusau city, Zamfara State, abducting more than 30 people, including at least 24 female students. Following the attack, security forces and bandits engaged in a shootout. Although no casualties were reported, the incident drew significant public attention via the media and prompted an intensified response by the security forces in their efforts against the bandits.
For instance, on October 13, the Nigerian Air Force conducted an airstrike against a gathering of bandit groups in Zamfara State, leaving around 100 bandits dead. On October 24, security forces and bandits clashed in Kanzanna Forest, Kebbi State, following a spate of attacks by bandits in several LGAs of Kebbi State. As a result, security forces rescued three abducted persons, while one bandit was killed. On November 7, bandits attacked a school in Kusa village, Katsina State, killing 13 students. On November 30, security forces and bandits engaged in a clash in Bali LGA, Taraba State, which left over 50 bandits dead.
On December 3, the Nigerian Air Force erroneously launched an airstrike on a religious gathering in Tudun Biri village, Kaduna State. The attack killed many civilians with reports indicating a toll of at least 120 fatalities and at least 60 individuals sustaining injuries. An initial statement from the Nigerian army called the attack a mistake, but a subsequent statement asserted that bandits had embedded themselves with civilians.
On December 11, the Nigerian army reportedly killed the bandit leader who had been responsible for the attack on the Federal University in Zamfara State earlier in September.
Violence spiked between December 23 and 25, when suspected bandits carried out coordinated attacks on at least 20 communities in Bokkos and Barkin Ladi LGAs, Plateau State. The attacks resulted in at least 160 deaths, and left over 300 people injured and at least 10,000 people displaced. The incident prompted international responses from the United Nations, African Union, USA, and European Union, all of which condemned the killing of civilians. frs

NIGERIA (ISLAMIC MOVEMENT)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1991

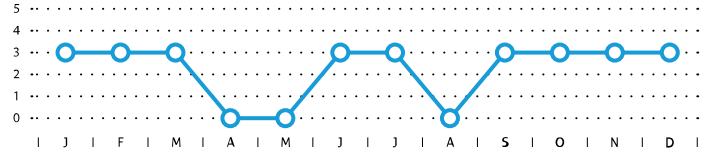
Conflict parties: IMN vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Islamic Movement Nigeria (IMN) and the government continued. The IMN intends to form an Islamic State in the country while repudiating the government's authority. In 2015, IMN's leader Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky was arrested following a heavy-handed government crackdown against the movement in Kaduna State that killed at least 348 members. The event sparked a series of protests across the country in the following years, demanding El-Zakzaky's release.
In 2019, the government designated the IMN as a terrorist organization and issued a ban on its activities. El-Zakzaky was released in 2021 but authorities refused to return his passport. On March 30, police dispersed a protest of IMN members in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, demanding the release of El-Zakzaky's passport. The police arrested at least 19 IMN members involved in the protest, which was initially sparked by the Federal High Court's decision to reject El-Zakzaky's appeal for the release of his travel document.
On May 21, IMN raised alarm over the supposed plan by the Kaduna State administration to demolish 48 targets of IMN infrastructure, including houses, schools, and hospitals. On the same day, the demolition was partially carried out, affecting six targets in Kawo, Rigasa, Tudun Wada, and Ungwan Rimi areas.
On June 3, during a press conference in Abuja, IMN called on the new government under President Bola Tinubu, elected on May 29, to release its members, the so-called "Free-Zakzaky protesters' who had been imprisoned in 2019. The movement further demanded the release of El-Zakzaky's travel document and alleged the persecution and maltreatment of its members by previous governments.
On October 14, shortly after President Tinubu returned his passport, El-Zakzaky met Iran's religious leader Ali Khamenei in Tehran to discuss the continued expansion of the Islamic movement in Africa and the Western world.
On November 16, police used gunshots and teargas to disperse a rally of hundreds of IMN members in Kaduna city, eponymous state, condemning Israel's military offensive in Gaza and expressing support for the Palestinian civil society. [→ Israel (Hamas et al.); Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)]. Two people were killed and several others injured. pca

NIGERIA (ISWAP - JAS)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2016

Conflict parties: ISWAP vs. JAS
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance



The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predominance between the two Islamist insurgent groups Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal- Jihad (JAS), also known as Boko Haram, escalated to a limited war.
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 [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (ISAWP)] and recognized it as an official affiliate. However, Shekau rejected al-Barnawi's leadership and renewed his pledge of allegiance to IS. 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 the JAS stronghold in Sambisa Forest, resulting in Shekau's death on May 19. In June 2021, Bakura Modu was declared the new leader of JAS [→ Nigeria, Chad et al. (JAS-Boko Haram)].
ISWAP operated mostly on the southern shores of Lake Chad and near the border to Niger and Chad. 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 in the border area between Nigeria and Cameroon. The Bakura-led JAS faction was based on the islands in northwestern Lake Chad. Overall, clashes throughout the year accounted for at least 400 deaths.
Fighters from ISWAP and the Bakura faction clashed several times throughout the year in Borno State with JAS launching several offensives. For instance, on January 1, the two groups engaged in a clash northeast of Lake Chad. JAS members killed at least 35 ISWAP fighters, conquered two of their strongholds and seized their weapons. On October 6, JAS fighters killed two high-level ISWAP commanders in Mobar Local Government Area (LGA). On November 9, JAS attacked an ISWAP camp again in Mobar LGA, killing scores of ISWAP members. Nine days later, on November 18, at least 40 fighters from both sides including their commanders were killed in a clash between the two groups on Tumbum Ali Island, Marte LGA. In another clash on the same island on December 17, at least 40 combatants were killed, with ISWAP reportedly being victorious.
ISWAP and JAS also clashed in and around Sambisa Forest in Borno State. For example, on February 9, JAS killed six ISWAP members near Bumari village, Konduga LGA. On March 1, ISWAP killed more than 200 JAS fighters and their families near Gudumbali municipality, Bama LGA. On July 5, ISWAP killed at least 50 JAS members and their families in Bama LGA.
mbr

NIGERIA (PRO-BIAFRA GROUPS / BIAFRA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1967

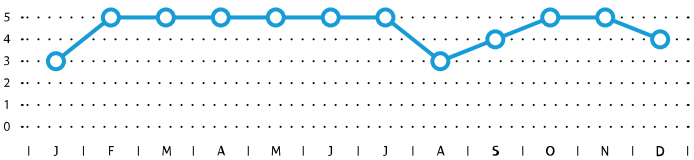
Conflict parties: pro-Biafra groups vs. Cameroon, Nigeria
Conflict items: secession

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 its affiliated militias, Black Marine and Dragon Fighter Marine, on the one hand, and the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon, on the other, continued. Members of pro-Biafra groups reiterated their demand for an independent Biafra state in the context of the presidential elections.
Despite an overall decrease in violence compared to the previous year, at least 136 people were killed in clashes between pro-Biafra groups and Nigerian security forces, and in attacks on civilians. For instance, three suspected members of IPOB/ESN were killed by security forces during an attack on a local vigilante group in Oguta Local Government Area (LGA), Imo State, on January 18. On May 16, Suspected IPOB/ESN members attacked a US diplomatic convoy, killing four and kidnapping three people in Ogbaru LGA, Anambra State. Separatist militants also increased their use of IEDs this year, while the Nigerian government carried out air strikes on several occasions. For instance, on August 11, the Nigerian air force targeted IPOB/ESN camps in Ihiala LGA, Anambra State, killing an unidentified number of militants.
This year, violence increasingly spilled over to adjacent Cameroon. At least 80 people were killed during clashes between pro-Biafra militias and Cameroon's Rapid d'intervention Battalion (BIR) and police forces, marking a significant increase compared to last year. For example, on January 5, BNL militants exchanged fire with the BIR in Ikang, Bakassi Peninsula, leaving three soldiers dead. On June 16, five soldiers guarding an oil facility in Abana community, in Bakassi Peninsula, South West Region were killed by suspected members of BNL. During a suicide bombing on September 22, a suspected BNL member killed seven BIR soldiers at an army checkpoint at Abana Community. On December 24, Black Marine targeted Joint Border Forces in an IED attack on the maritime border area to Bakassi Peninsula, killing eleven people. On November 2, in an effort to dislodge Dragon Fighter Marine militants from the Bakassi peninsula, BIR soldiers conducted airstrikes on a BNL camp in Akpankanya village.
Internal disagreements within IPOB over the suspension of the sit-at-home orders continued this year. On July 28, incarcerated IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu, called on the leader of IPOBs suspended Autopilot faction, to end the weekly IPOB sit-at-home orders. The IPOB Autopilot Faction, however, continued to enforce the orders, often with violence. For instance, on July 4, separatists enforcing a sit-at-home order in Abakiliki City of Ebonyi State killed three civilians. A protest against the sit-at-home order in Enugu city, eponymous state, turned violent on July 26 when unidentified gunmen killed at least two people.
Kanu remained imprisoned this year, as Nigeria's Supreme Court reinstated terrorism charges against him on December 15. This overruled a lower court decision that had dismissed terrorism charges against Kanu on 13/10/2022.
yme

NIGERIA, CHAD ET AL. (ISWAP)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2016

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 eighth consecutive year.

The group's main area of operation was the Lake Chad Basin, comprising parts of northeast Nigeria, namely Borno State and Yobe State, as well as Cameroon's Far-North Region, Niger's Diffa Department, and Chad's Lac Region.
The group, previously known by the names Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (JAS) and Boko Haram, pledged allegiance to IS in 2015 [→ Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger (JAS-Boko Haram)]. After the pledge, the group was acknowledged by IS as a province. However, internal disputes over strategy and leader Abubakar Shekau's leadership style split the group. Following the divide, ISWAP remained the sole affiliate of IS in the Lake Chad Basin.
Following intensified fighting in late 2020 and early 2021, an ISWAP operation in a former stronghold of JAS, the Sambisa Forest, Borno State, resulted in the death of Shekau. While some JAS cells stayed vigilant and continued fighting ISWAP [→ Nigeria (ISAWP - JAS)], 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 approx. 5,000 members, making it one of the largest IS affiliates. IS media publications continued to highlight the group's activities, stating the importance of African IS affiliates for the organization and urged members to relocate to Africa.
ISWAP had a diversified command structure with various regional operationally independent subgroups. The regional subgroups were headed by a Shura council which has overall strategic command.
The group controlled large areas of northern Borno State as well as the shoreline and islands notably in the southern area of Lake Chad. ISWAP also had 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, securing significant revenue for the group. In January this year, ISWAP members distributed money to the local population in Borno State in an attempt to garner support. Throughout the year, the conflict accounted for at least 1,200 deaths, with some sources reporting significantly higher casualties. As a consequence of the ongoing violence, approx. 2.67 million people were displaced in the northeast of Nigeria and the adjacent states of the Lake Chad basin.
This year, the frequency of ISWAP attacks decreased compared to the previous year, while their lethality remained lower. ISWAP also continued to carry out small-scale attacks, often targeting military patrols with IEDs, ambushing and firing mortars at military installations, continuously striking throughout large parts of northeast Nigeria. A high frequency of ambushes occurred in the months from March to June. While most attacks targeted security forces, ISWAP also continued to attack towns and villages for medical and other supplies. Furthermore, ISWAP continued attacks on the Christian population, notably in the last quarter of the year. In 2022, ISWAP attacks, initially concentrated in north-eastern Nigeria, expanded its reach to encompass other states, including Kogi, Oyo and Taraba.
This year, on April 13, ISWAP claimed its first attack in Jigawa State, reportedly killing three people in an IED attack in Dutse, eponymous LGA, that took place on April 11. On March 5, ISWAP fighters launched an attack on Monguno town, Borno State, but were repelled by fighters from the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). Later that month, on March 19, the group attacked a collation center in Mafa LGA, Borno State, during the governorship and state assembly elections. The attack was repelled by Operation Hadin Kai troops, leaving approx. 60 insurgents dead. On June 2, ISWAP attacked a Nigerian army convoy in Guzamala LGA, Borno State, in an SVIED attack that left at least 20 soldiers dead.
On June 30, ISWAP insurgents attacked a Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) location in the town of Damboa, Borno State. After being impeded from entering the town by civilians and the CJTF, ISWAP fired a mortar bomb, killing six people and injuring more than 20.
On July 25, ISWAP members invaded Kukawa village in Borno State on motorcycles, beheading 18 pastoralists and injuring seven. On September 27, ISWAP abducted and later shot dead two christian civilians in Doutchi, Borno State. On November 23, in Gagamari, Diffa Department, ISWAP killed an alleged military informant in his house, claiming the attack three days later, on November 26.
ISWAP also continued its attacks in Cameroon's Far-North Region, although less reported. For instance, on November 12, ISWAP launched an attack on a Cameroonian Army base in Kangaleri, Mayo-Sava Department leaving two soldiers dead and two injured, forcing the rest to retreat. The group also claimed to have seized ammunition and other unspecified items. On November 15, ISWAP attacked another Army base in Sagme, Logone-et-Chari Department. The attack left four soldiers dead, seven injured, and others forced to withdraw. Five ISWAP members were also killed.
Throughout the year, security forces carried out major operations against ISWAP. For example, from January 18 to 29, the MNJTF conducted a series of operations in the Lake Chad Basin, reportedly resulting in the killing of 40 insurgents, including members from both ISWAP and JAS, and the destruction of several of the group's camps. Another operation was conducted by soldiers of the Nigerian Operation Hadin Kai and members of the CJTF on March 26 in Dikwa LGA, Borno State. Security forces killed 41 insurgents in the offensive, including one of ISWAP's top commanders, and also seized a gun truck, three motorcycles, and military equipment. Between April 17 and 20, a further 35 insurgents were killed by the Nigerian Army and CJTF in Bama LGA, Borno State, in response to a repelled attack by ISWAP. Beginning on April 27, troops of Operation Desert-Lake-Mountain II launched an offensive in the Sambisa Forest and Lake Chad area, targeting ISWAP and JAS strongholds. Dozens of insurgents were killed during the offensive. On May 13, as part of operation Desert Sanity II, security forces raided ISWAP's Ukuba camp in Bama LGA, seizing large amounts of arms and ammunition. During a weeks-long operation from May 6 to 28 targeting ISWAP's stronghold in Arege, on Nigeria's border with Niger, members of the MNJTF killed at least 55 ISWAP fighters, including several senior commanders. At least two soldiers were killed and three injured. On June 3, 82 ISWAP members and their family members drowned while trying to cross a river in Borno State. The incident occurred as they sought to flee from the Nigerian Army and reach Niger. On November 17, the Nigerian army killed an unspecified number of ISWAP fighters in Abadam Faransa, Diffa department. Two soldiers were killed and five others injured in the clashes.
Throughout the year, the Nigerian Air Force conducted airstrikes against ISWAP hideouts in Borno State. For instance, in a series of air strikes on June 8, 16, 21 and 26, targeting Gwoza, Bama, and Marte LGA, an unspecified number of insurgents were killed, including two ISWAP commanders. A further series of airstrikes on July 9, 10 and 15, targeting the north-east of Marte LGA, killed scores of militants. The Nigerian Air Force conducted another major airstrike in Marte LGA on October 13, which reportedly killed more than 100 insurgents. On October 26, another airstrike

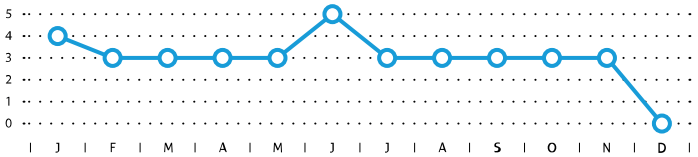
was conducted in Marte LGA, leaving several ISWAP members dead. jel

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

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2003

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

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 13th 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, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), by Abu Musab al-Barnawi, in 2016. In May 2021, ISWAP members invaded a JAS stronghold in Sambisa Forest, Borno State, Nigeria, resulting in Shekau's death on 05/19/21 [→ Nigeria (ISWAP – JAS)]. In June 2021, Bakura Modu was declared the new leader of JAS.
This year, the conflict accounted for at least 520 deaths. As a consequence of the ongoing violence, approx. 2.67 million people were displaced in the northeast of Nigeria and the adjacent states of the Lake Chad basin.
This year, 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's Yobe and Borno State and Cameroon. In Cameroon, JAS operated in the Far North Region. The faction led by Bakura was based on the islands of Lake Chad.
Overall, JAS continued to be weakened following Shekau's death and remains under pressure from both ISWAP and regional governments. However, contrary to claims made by the government, JAS remains operationally effective, reportedly counting several thousand members. Alongside troops of the affected countries in the Lake Chad Basin, comprising Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, forces from Benin contributed to the AU-mandated Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). To fight Boko Haram locally, in 2013, the Nigerian government had authorized a Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), comprising approx. 26,000 local vigilantes.
As in previous years, JAS fighters and commanders continued to surrender to the Nigerian Army, following Shekau's death, albeit at a lower rate. Exact figures could not be obtained.
Throughout the year, JAS indiscriminately attacked civilians. For instance, on June 15, JAS fighters killed at least 15 civilians in an attack on Kofa village, Borno State. On October 30, JAS members killed at least 17 people in an attack on Gurokayeya village, Yobe State. The next day, at least 20 people returning from the funeral were killed when a landmine planted by JAS went off. The incident marked the first major attack by JAS in Yobe State in 18 months.
This year, Boko Haram notably increased its attacks in Cameroon's Far North Region, mainly to seize supplies, but also occasionally targeting security forces. According to Cameroonian officials, in April and May, JAS militants destroyed and raided hundreds of homes in large-scale attacks that killed at least six villagers and two soldiers, and left thousands displaced. The most affected Departments were Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga.
Throughout the year, the Nigerian Army continued to conduct airstrikes against the group. For instance, on January 2, airstrikes in Bama Local Government Area (LGA), Borno State, killed at least 40 members. On January 16, airstrikes in Shiroro LGA, Niger State, killed at least 40 fighters and two commanders. In an airstrike on February 10, scores of insurgents were killed in Bama LGA, Borno State. In several airstrikes between June 9 and 11, at least 100 members were killed in the Mandara Mountains in Borno State while on September 11, scores of fighters were killed in Kala Balga LGA, Borno State.
Nigerian security forces continued to conduct operations against JAS, raiding camps and clashing with members. The number of offensives decreased around December. For instance, on April 4 and 17, security forces raided several JAS camps in Sambisa forest, killing at least 18 and 35 insurgents respectively. On August 12, JAS fighters attacked a military base in Wulari village, Borno State, killing three soldiers. In Niger Republic, on November 29, in Bilabrine municipality, N'Guimi Department, Nigerien soldiers repelled an ambush from the Bakura faction, killing seven. mbr

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). After last year's peace agreement between the government and MFDC units, violence decreased significantly this year.
Still, on January 16, suspected MFDC members killed one soldier and injured five in an operation in the Kolda region that was started by military forces against an alleged plan of one MFDC unit to build a new base at the border to the Gambia, where MFDC allegedly continues the trafficking of wood from rosewood trees.
On May 10, local media reported a clash between government forces and a MFDC unit during a combing operation near the village of Sindian, Ziguinchor region, leaving five government security personnel injured.
On December 14, four government forces were killed and three injured near the town of Bignona, Ziguinchor, when their vehicle hit an anti-tank mine during a military operation against MFDC units in the region.
jom

SENEGAL (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: NEW | Start: 2023

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

A new violent crisis over national power between various opposition groups and the government of President Macky Sall erupted.
After the court of appeal extended a suspended prison sentence of the prominent opposition leader Ousmane Sonko from two to six months on May 8, preventing him from running in presidential elections scheduled for February 2024, opposition protesters took to the streets on May 15 in the city of Ziguinchor, eponymous region, and in the capital Dakar, and violently clashed with police forces, leaving two civilians dead and several injured. Sonko's call for civil disobedience led to further clashes on May 29 in Dakar.
On June 1, Sonko was sentenced for a new charge of "corrupting the youth" to two years in prison, which led to further violent protests by opposition supporters in Ziguinchor and Dakar. On June 2, government forces brought in support of the national army and shut down internet access on June 4. Clashes on the same day left at least 16 protesters dead, while other sources claimed the toll to have been as high as 30.
On July 30, government authorities formally dissolved Sonko's opposition party African Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics and Fraternity, leading to another string of protests in Ziguinchor and Dakar and two civilians dead.
Sonko went on a hunger strike from mid-October until November 17, when the Supreme Court overturned the Ziguinchor lower court's ruling, and ordered that Sonko should be reinstated in the voter roll.
jom

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.
The first months of the year were characterized by opposition protests and strikes by doctors, teachers, and other professional group demanding higher pay to cope with rising inflation. On several occasions, the government accused the opposition of orchestrating protests and labeled them as an attempted coup. Investigations were launched into alleged organizers, further fueling civil society tensions. April 27, on Independence Day, saw large anti-government protests across the country, ahead of which government forces announced heightened security measures due to the risk of violent clashes with protestors.
On June 24, general elections were held. Incumbent President Julius Maada Bio was re-elected with 56 percent of the vote and the SLPP won 81 seats in parliament, compared to APC with 54 seats. The elections led to continued opposition protests throughout the country during the second half of the year.
On November 26, unidentified gunmen attacked the capital Freetown's main military barracks, triggering violent clashes with security forces and the release of 1,890 inmates. The government accused oppositional forces for the attack and responded with a nationwide curfew, detentions, and further accusations of involvement by renegade soldiers, with support allegedly expressed by a West African regional bloc. The clashes resulted in the death of at least 20 civilians. In connection to the attack, the government continued to make arrests throughout December. On December 4, government forces arrested 43, predominantly military personnel and former politicians, because of which the attack was seen as an attempted coup by government reports. During December, several ECOWAS leaders condemned the attempted coup, preparing for a stabilizing mission.
aja

SOMALIA (ISS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2015

Conflict parties: government vs. ISS vs. al-Shabaab
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

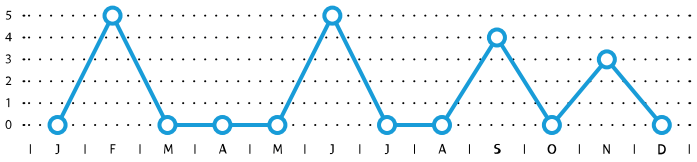
The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between the Islamic State in Somalia (ISS), the Islamist militant group al-Shabaab, and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), which is supported by the Puntland Security Force (PSF) of the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, and the USA, continued.
Throughout the year, ISS mainly operated in the region of Puntland, leading to repeated violent clashes between ISS fighters and the PSF. For instance, on January 12, a senior PSF commander was killed in an ISS attack on a military base in Bari region. With support of US special forces, ISS leader Bilal al-Sudani and ten other ISS fighters were killed in the Iskushuban area in the Cal Miskaad Mountains, Puntland, on January 26. On March 20, ISS fighters killed at least 40 al-Shabaab militants during clashes in the Golis Mountains, Bari region, Puntland.
Furthermore, security forces arrested and convicted suspected ISS fighters on multiple occasions. For example, in early March, 13 ISS and al-Shabaab militants were executed by firing squad. On June 26, several foreign ISS fighters were arrested in Amano, Bulidhidin District, Bari region. On December 16, two ISS fighters were sentenced to eight years in prison.
ISS operates a regional office and financial center for the Islamic State (IS) in East Africa, collecting revenues by imposing illegal taxes under the threat of violence on regional businesses and the shipping industry, for instance in Bosaso town, Bari region. On July 27, the US imposed sanctions against a suspected IS financier of ISS.
lob

SOMALIA (PUNTLAND – SOMALILAND)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1998

Conflict parties: government vs. Puntland vs. Somaliland vs. Khatumo State

Conflict items: subnational predominance



downgraded (< 360 deaths)

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between the self-declared state of Somaliland and its security force, the Somaliland Armed Forces (SAF), the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, and the self-declared state of SSC-Khatumo (Khatumo) escalated to a limited war. The border region between Somaliland and Puntland, comprising the regions Sool, Sanaag, and Cayn, had been subject to recurrent and opposing territorial claims by Somaliland and Puntland, as well as by various ethnic groups inhabiting the region.

Following civil unrest in Somaliland in late 2022, a committee of regional leaders declared the independence of SSC-Khatumo on February 6, claiming the regions of Sanaag, Sool and Cayn as its territory. This marks the re-establishment of a third, state-like actor in the region, since the former Khatumo State was disbanded in 2017. In their declaration of independence, Khatumo leaders also declared their allegiance to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS).

On the same day, clashes between SAF and Khatumo forces broke out in the city of Lasanod, Sool region, and the SAF retreated from the city. Throughout the year, mutual shelling took place in and around the city of Lasanod, displacing close to 200,000 people and destroying 300 buildings, including parts of a hospital. On August 25, Khatumo forces took control of the regions of Sanaag and Sool, seizing heavy weaponry, such as tanks and other military equipment. Between February 6 and September 1,341 people were killed and 2,023 injured during the clashes. On October 10, the FGS officially recognized the transitional government of SSC-Khatumo. Somaliland objected to this decision. On November 8, SAF and Khatumo forces clashed in Buqdharkayn town, Togdheer region, during which Khatumo forces captured a high ranking SAFcommander and twelve others. SAF and Khatumo forces again clashed in Yeyle town, Togdheer region, on November 22. Puntland allowed Khatumo leaders to convene in their capital city of Garowe, Nugaal region.

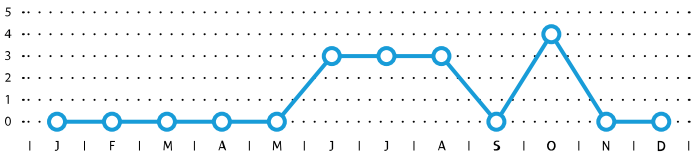
mmp

SOMALIA (SUBCLAN RIVALRY)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1991

Conflict parties: Hawiye vs. Rahanweyn subclan vs. Darod vs. Dir vs. Isaaq vs. various other clans

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various Somali clans escalated to a limited war. Somali society is structured into various clans, with various militias fighting each other over local influence. Measures mostly centered around military groups associated with specific clans.

Resources and territory repeatedly played a key role in clashes. For instance, on June 8, Shan Alemod and Gaalje'el clansmen clashed over resources and territorial control in Yaaqbiri Weyne town, Lower Shabelle region, leaving 15 people dead and several injured. Hundreds of families fled the area. Between June 25 and 28, fighting broke out near Dhursamareb town, Galguduud region, when Habar-Gidir-Ayr-Subclan and Saleban clansmen clashed over a land dispute, leaving eight people dead and ten injured.

On June 8, fighting erupted between clansmen, after the Somali National Army (SNA), comprising mostly members of the Darod subclan in this area, accused the Darwish police force, comprising mostly members of the Rahanweyn subclan, of killing one soldier. The fighting in Elbarde town, Bakool region, left ten people dead and multiple injured. A similar incident occurred on June 12, when Somali national army servicemen from the Hawiye subclan clashed with Darwish police forces in Barawe town, Lower Shabelle region, resulting in ten people dead and multiple injured.

On July 19, unidentified clansmen clashed near Geyfo village, Middle Shabelle region. During the clashes, ten people died, dozens were injured and several houses torched.

Clan violence was sparked again in October, with multiple clashes occurring throughout the country. On October 1, SNA servicemen shot dead a member of the Hawadle subclan in Marxaas town, Hiraan region. This incident caused a group of Hawadle clansmen to attack a local camp of the SNA on the same day. They captured several soldiers and seized mortars, which were immediately directed at army positions, resulting in the SNA retreating from the town. Three SNA servicemen were killed and several injured during the fighting.

On October 2, pastoralist Lelkase and Habar-Gidirclansmen clashed near Farta Cadayga village, Mudug region, leaving 20 people dead and 30 injured.

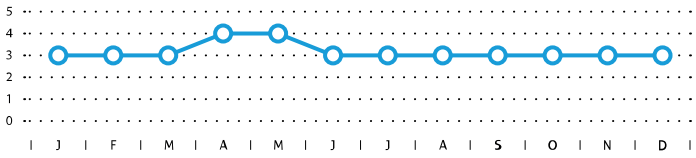
jfg

SOMALIA, KENYA (AL-SHABAAB)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2006

Conflict parties: al-Shabaab vs. Kenya, Somalia

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



upgraded (> 1,080 deaths)

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 is supported by local security forces, the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), and by US forces. At least 703 people died throughout the year.

On January 1, the Somali National Army (SNA), backed by local clans, launched a military operation, successfully re-capturing Masagawaay town, Galgaduud region, from al-Shabaab. In the following days, al-Shabaab responded by launching a series of counterattacks. On January 4, two car bombings at a government facility in Maxaas town, Hiran region, leaving 35 people dead and 40 injured. Two days later, on January 6, al-Shabaab attacked Hilowle Gaab village, Hiran region, by using three SVBIEDsand engaging in gunfights, leaving at least six people dead and several injured. On March 7, al-Shabaab used SVBIEDs to overrun SNA Janay Abdall military base in Lower Juba region. On March 14, another VBIED attack targeted government officials in Bardheere town, Jubaland state, leaving several people dead. On April 7, SNA forces re-captured Galcad town, Galgaduud region. Al-Shabaab responded by conducting a VBIED attack on a military base near Galcad on April 19, resulting in an unknown number of casualties. Three days later, on April 22, al-Shabaab attacked positions of SNA forces and allied Habar Gedir clansmen near Masagawaay village, Galgaduud region, causing 23 deaths. Additionally, on May 30, al-Shabaab attacked SNA near Massagaweyne village, Galguduud region, causing at least 17 deaths. On May 26, al-Shabaab launched an attack on an ATMIS base in Buulo Mareer, Lower Shabelle region, resulting in the death of 54 peacekeepers.

In June, al-Shabaab launched multiple attacks in Garissa county and Lamu county, Kenya. On June 13, al-Shabaab targeted Kenyan police in an attack along the KenyaSomalia border. Eight police officers died when their vehicle was destroyed by an IED planted by the militants. On June 19, al-Shabaab targeted KDF forces in two separate incidents. Three Kenyan soldiers were killed in an attack on their APC in Lamu county. A joint operation of SNA and US forces on June 15 resulted in the elimination of 43 al-Shabaab fighters through an airstrike in the Lower Juba region.

In the second half of the year, fighting was mostly concentrated in Somali territory. For example, on August 23, al-Shabaab militants raided the Kahda district of the Somali capital Mogadishu, attacking a police station, a SNAdistrict headquarter, and two military police outposts, using small arms, SVBIEDs, and RPGs. At least three police officers were killed and several wounded. On October 15, Ma'awisley militiamen were ambushed by al-Shabaab militants in Bur Ujeed, Galgaduud region. The attack left at least 32 Ma'awisley fighters dead and al-Shabaab seized five military vehicles in the process.

Given the high number of attacks by al-Shabaab and the lack of success of the Somali counteroffensive, the Somali government requested to postpone the withdrawal of 3,000 ATMIS troops, which was scheduled for September. On December 1, the UNSC voted to end the arms embargo on Somalia which had been in place since 01/23/1992, to allow the SNA to boost their capabilities.

roc, lgf

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 violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between antagonistic factions within the ruling African National Congress (ANC), political opposition parties such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and Democratic Alliance (DA) and civil rights groups against the ruling faction of the ANC and President Ramaphosa, continued.

As in previous years, opposition leaders disrupted ANC council, budgetary, and parliamentary meetings. For example, on February 2, EFF members interrupted President Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address in Cape Town, Western Cape province. On February 20, Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) members violently disrupted a municipal council meeting in Nongoma, KwaZulu-Natal province, after the EFF broke with the IFP and a new coalition of the ANC and National Freedom Party was set to take over the local government.

Persistent load shedding and constant power cuts led to nationwide protests against the state-owned electricity supplier Eskom. For example, on March 20, the EFF called for a nationwide "stayaway' shutdown of all businesses to protest against the constant power cuts. This involved blocking roads with cars and tires and blocking access to stores in the provinces of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo. EFF members threw stones at government vehicles, and police used rubber bullets on protestors. Police arrested 87 members of the EFF.

Throughout August and September, labor unions and taxi drivers, joined by EFF members, staged protests for higher wages, which on occasion turned violent, in Tshwane, Gauteng province. For example, on August 9, EFF and South African National Taxi Council members protested against the DA-led provincial government in Tshwane, blocking roads and throwing stones. During the protest, police fired rubber bullets, five protestors were killed and at least 120 arrested. Similarly, on September 12, EFF members marched to Tshwane House, the municipal building in Pretoria, Gauteng province, to disrupt a council meeting. Police arrested five EFF members after protests became violent.

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 system between residents of informal settlements and the government continued.
As in previous years, the conflict was marked by decentralised and spontaneous protests over the provision of basic public services, such as housing, electricity, water, sanitation, and infrastructure. Protests were held across most provinces of the country. Throughout the year, residents of informal settlements blocked major roads to disrupt traffic and increase visibility of their demands. For example, on January 16, amidst persistent power outages, protesters blocked roads between Dawn Park and Klippoortjie in Boksburg, Gauteng province, with debris and burning tires causing traffic delays. On January 17, members of the All Truck Drivers' Foundation blocked the N2 highway between Pongola and Piet Rief, KwaZulu-Natal province, causing a backlog of coal trucks. On January 25, protesters blocked the N14 highway with burning tires and rocks between Centurion and Pretoria, Gauteng province. On February 13, protestors set fire to the civic centre and blocked the entrance with burning tires and stones in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng province. Between February 24 and May 11, there were numerous protests and blockades of highways and roads, which led to traffic jams in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Mpumalanga. Between May 10 and 12, a group of protestors vandalised the radio station of FM eMalahleni, looted four laptops, two desktop computers, burned tires and cars to object to ongoing power shortages in the country. On May 25, during a service delivery protest, approx. 750 people blocked the R26 road, Free State province, with burning tires and threw stones at police vehicles. A month later, on 24 July, five civilians were shot and wounded in the village of Inchanga in KwaZulu-Natal Province during a protest for the provision of water and electricity services. On August 16, protestors set fire to a municipal office and looted other buildings and stores in the municipality of Swellendam, Western Cape province. On October 2, residents of an informal settlement in the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal province, blocked the M19 highway with burning tires and debris. They protested the limited availability of sanitation facilities and electricity. SSC

SOUTH AFRICA (XENOPHOBES)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1994

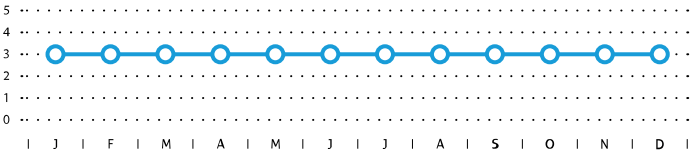
Conflict parties: immigrants vs. xenophobes
Conflict items: system/ideology

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.
Throughout the year, xenophobic South African nationals continued to accuse immigrants of taking jobs away from locals and being involved in criminal activities. As in previous years, the Movement Dudula organised xenophobically motivated protests all over the country. For example, on January 17, members of the movement protested outside the offices of the Department of Basic Education in Cape Town, Western Cape Province, demanding priority for South African pupils in school enrolment. On January 26, members of Movement Dudula gathered in Diepsloot township, Johannesburg, Gauteng province, calling to remove non-South African children from school.
At the same time, xenophobic violence was also directed against individual foreign nationals. On January 9, police officers beat up and severely injured a Nigerian man in Boksberg, Gauteng province, after he failed to show his ID. Furthermore, on January 28, xenophobes shot dead two men from Nigeria in Johannesburg. Between July 9 and 12, twelve xenophobes attacked, looted, and set fire to at least 21 trucks in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga to protest the employment of foreign truck drivers. In two individual incidents in Rustenburg, North West Province, on September 19 and December 6, xenophobic South Africans killed two Somali citizens respectively. Between November 5 and 9, as accusations of rape led to days of targeted attacks, xenophobic individuals beat Congolese citizens with sticks, stones, and bricks in Zeerust, North West province, injuring twelve. During another xenophobic attack on November 9, xenophobes shot dead two Somali citizens in Philippi area, Cape Town. One month later, on December 5, xenophobes stoned and burned to death two Zimbabweans in Diepsloot township.
SSC

SOUTH SUDAN (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: Murle vs. Dinka
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



upgraded (> 360,000 IDPs / refugees)

The war between various local communities over subnational predominance and resources, especially cattle and land, continued. In total, more than 12,000 heads of cattle were raided during the year. Overall, violent confrontations between and within local communities such as Dinka, Nuer, and Murle communities, as well as their various sections, decreased in number. In total, at least 724 people were reportedly killed.
The Abyei region recorded the highest fatalities, with 140 people dead and 91 persons injured, mainly as a result of violent tensions between Twic Dinka communities, on the one hand, and Ngok Dinka communities, on the other. In the regions of Abyei and Warrap state, respectively, violence incidents by armed attackers reportedly aligned with the South Sudan People's Movement increased and their areas of operations expanded in Warrap State [→ South Sudan (opposition)].
The disputed Abyei area, claimed by both Sudan and South Sudan and assigned to the Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, experienced frequent bouts of tension and violence during

the year. This area borders the South Sudanese states Warrap (north), Unity (northwest) and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (east). The area had the highest fatality record, mainly resulting from violent tensions between Twic Dinka communities, on the one hand, and Ngok Dinka communities on the other hand, which is commonly triggered by territorial and resource-sharing disputes. Although representatives from Dinka Ngok and Dinka Twic communities participated in an Inter-Communal Peace Conference in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal, from April 3 to 6, there were violent clashes throughout the year. UNISFA welcomed efforts by the Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka communities to find a peaceful resolution to the intercommunal violence that has threatened the peace and security in the southern part of the Abyei Area and northern Warrap State of South Sudan. Between January and March, intercommunal fighting left at least 30 dead and more than 15 people injured. On January 2, a combined armed group of Nuer and Twic Dinka launched an attack on the Rumamier village, in the sector south of the Abyei area, killing at least 14 persons and injuring four others, while some 37 houses in the village were burnt down. According to UNISFA, the attack was coordinated by approximately 200 well-armed herders from the Bul Nuer and Twic Dinka communities. In the light of these events, the UNISFA mission published a statement on January 5, strongly condemning the attack, saying it can only contribute to tensions and chances of renewed violence in the area. Furthermore, UNISFA launched an investigation to uncover the circumstances that led to the attack.
Violence erupted again at the end of January. On January 28, armed youths from Ngok Dinka, Abyei area, and Unity State attacked a cattle camp in Turalei Payam, Twic County in Warrap State. The fighting left at least 16 people dead and eight injured. Violence reached another new peak in the last quarter of the year. On October 13, armed Twic youth attacked Athonyi village in Abyei region, killing four people and injuring three others. In November, cross-border clashes erupted as a revenge attack on Ngok Dinka in the Wuncuei and Nyiel areas of the Abyei area by armed Twic youth. On November 13, border skirmishes erupted between Twic Dinka and Ngok Dinka. Armed elements from the Ngok Dinka from the Abyei Administrative Area and Nuer youth from Unity State attacked a SSPDF military base in the Ayuok area on the border of Abyei and Twic County. 23 people were reported dead and nine others injured, among them soldiers, family members, and assailants. Abyei officials accused the national army, which is prohibited from entering Abyei (a demilitarized zone), of fighting alongside Twic youth, though the army denied allegations. Due to this escalation, the UN Security Council unanimously extended the mandate of UNISFA (Resolution 2708 (2023)). Violence intensified again on November 19, when armed Twic youths entered the villages Angot, Wincuei, and Nyiel in the Abyei area in attacks. The Twic youth ("Titweng") were backed by SSPDF soldiers and a militia group. According to the United Nations recent violence left 75 people dead and at least 20 others injured. It is indicated that an estimated 2,000 people were displaced due to fighting in the villages in the Abyei Administrative Area. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, called upon the government to investigate these attacks and killings, and to do what is necessary to reduce the tension between affected communities. The fighting between Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka continued in December. Between December 2 and 3, the set-up of checkpoints in Athony-Ayuok village in the Abyei region, prompted clashes between both groups that killed at least six persons and wounded 35. A second incident took place on December 13. After the Twic youth erected another illegal checkpoint in the Athony area near Malual Aleu village, armed youth of the Ngok Dinka clashed with armed youth of the Twic Dinka, leaving one person dead and four wounded. On December 31, an Abyei deputy chief administrator was killed, along with five others, in an ambush by gunmen along the Abyei-Aneet town road in Rummamer County in the Abyei region. emr

SOUTH SUDAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	2011

Conflict parties:	SPLM/A-IO-RM vs. NAS, SPLM/A-IO-Kitwang vs. government
Conflict items:	system/ideology, national power

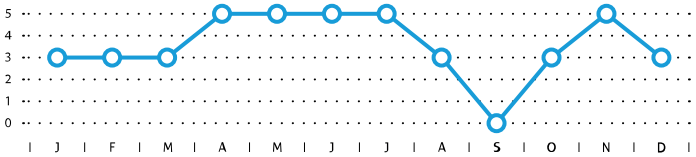
The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between the government of Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), led by President Salva Kiir, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO-RM), led by Vice President Riek Machar, on the one hand, and various opposition groups, mainly associated with the splinter group SPLM/A-IO Kitwang, on the other, continued.
The formation of the splinter group SPLM/A-IO Kitwang contributed to a further weakening of Vice President Machar's SPLM/A-IO's influence. In yet another setback for the SPLM/A-IO-RM, the Unity State Commander defected to the government and South Sudan's People Defence Forces (SSPDF) on October 10, along with several division commanders. On October 19, the Jonglei State sector commander also defected, diminishing SPLM/A-IO-RM's military capacity in Unity and Jonglei states.
The year was also marked by ongoing clashes between government and opposition forces. On July 1, SPLM and SPLA-IO clashed in Wunkur county in the Greater Upper Nile region, killing two civilians and injuring one. Violent incidents also persisted within the opposition movements. SPLA-IO Kitwang Faction and the SPLA-IO clashed in Tonga of Panyikang county, Upper Nile state, on October 22. The attack resulted in the killing of two soldiers, one from the SPLM/A-IO-RM and another from the SPLA-IO Kitwang faction.
In light of the elections to be held in December 2024, which will be the first election since the country gained independence in 2011, President Kiir announced his candidacy on July 4. Furthermore, progress in regards to the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was made. On November 3, President Kii announced the commencement of the reconstitution of South Sudan's National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC), the Political Parties' Council, and the National Elections Commission. Peace efforts were also marked by the deployment of the Necessary Unified Forces (NUF), stipulated in the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement. tzi

SUDAN (DARFUR)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2003

Conflict parties: "non-Arab' communities vs. RSF, 'Arab' militias

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



The war over subnational predominance and resources of the Darfur region between "Arab' militias, regularly described as Janjaweed and affiliated with or backed by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) deployed by the government, on the one hand, and "non-Arab' communities, on the other hand, continued. The RSF grew out of, and is primarily composed of former Janjaweed members.

Over the course of the year, at least 4,145 people died, 3,945 injured, and 265,718 internally displaced, while 308,584 people fled to Chad. Actual numbers are likely to be higher, due to poor information. Sources also noted a sharp increase in gender based violence and, especially in West Darfur, repeatedly described the situation as genocide or ethnic cleansing by RSF backed "Arab' militias, allegedly Janjaweed, against "non-Arab' populations, mainly the Masalit.

From April 24 to July 30 RSF backed "Arab' militias carried out several attacks on El Geneina and neighboring areas in West Darfur. Clashes erupted on April 24 between RSF and SAF [→ Sudan (opposition)]. The events triggered aggravated violence until April 26 between RSF supported "Arab' militias, allegedly Janjaweed, and members from the ethnic Masalit ("non-Arab'), allegedly supported by the SAF and the Joint Darfur Force, which also comprised the SLM-MM. Further attacks occurred frequently throughout May and June, overall leaving at least 3,200 dead and 3,500 injured.

Violence between members of Masalit and RSF-backed "Arab' militias, allegedly affiliated with Janjaweed, also erupted in Tandulit and Foro Baranga town, West Darfur. On April 10, large groups of "Arab' militiamen attacked Foro Baranga and burnt down 50 homes, killing at least 24 people and injuring at least four. Similar attacks between July 24 and 30 also targeted members of the "African' Eringa tribe in Sirba, West Darfur. Subsequently, from May 26 to 28, the cities of Foro Baranga, Misterei, and Jebel Darandi in West Darfur were attacked by "Arab' militias, allegedly Janjaweed, killing at least 97 and injuring at least 14 people in Misterei and an unknown number in the other locations.

Between April 24 and May 15, roadblocks were set up on main arteries to control movement in the city of El Geneina. The attackers destroyed and burnt down the city, which is also a symbol of Masalit power, and surrounding areas, including all 86 camps for the displaced and official buildings. Subsequently, the water, food, electricity, and medical goods and services supply was cut off, causing a complete collapse of the communication and health system. According to sources, there were also more than ten militia checkpoints within 30 kilometers on the way to the Chadian border asking for tribal affiliation and preventing Masalit from entering Chad. Since July 3, RSF-backed "Arab' militias, allegedly affiliated with Janjaweed, also targeted other "African' tribes such as the Eringa, the Gimir, and the Zaghawa as well as the "Arab' Misseriya Jebel, who reportedly did not join the Janjaweed, in El-Geneina. On August 12, community leaders in West Darfur discovered 30 hidden mass graves containing around 1,000 bodies of victims in the El Geneina attacks, strengthening accusations that the RSF deliberately concealed evidence of war crimes and demolished camps for displaced people. In total, the events in and around El Geneina caused at least 235,382 people to flee to neighboring Chad and 265,448 people to be internally displaced.

Attacks also occurred in Kutum, North Darfur, in Zalingei, Central Darfur, and in Nyala, South Darfur. For example, the RSF invaded Kutum on June 3 and 4, cutting off communication, killing at least 40 people and displacing at least 270 people to the Naivasha camp for the displaced. Between May 17 and June 27, armed militias described as affiliated with the RSF and/or Janjaweed, attacked Zalingei several times, reportedly killing at least 180 and injuring at least 220 people. Government buildings were destroyed and hospitals targeted. On June 3, 4 and 26, large numbers of masked and RSF-backed militias attacked Nyala and neighboring areas. Infrastructure and homes were destroyed and an unknown number of people killed and injured. Violent clashes between the RSF and the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM-AW) killed and wounded dozens of people on December 23 and 24 in the area of Nierteti, Central Darfur.

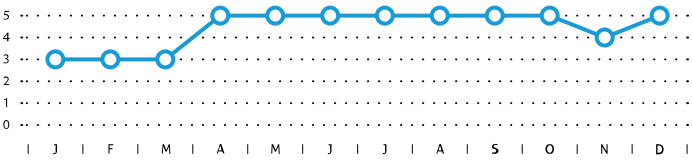
fwe

SUDAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↑ | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: RSF vs. SAF

Conflict items: national power

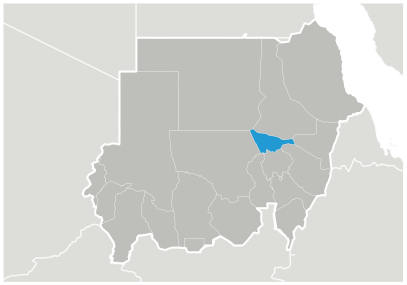


The violent crisis over national power between the de-facto military government of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary groups over national power in Sudan escalated to a war.

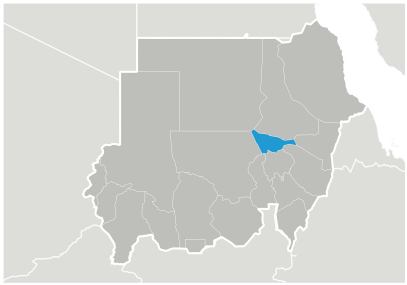
At the beginning of the year, civil demonstrations against the October 2021 coup d'état de facto ruling military government continued. Security forces violently suppressed the demonstrations, for instance on February 28, when security forces used stones and live ammunition against protesters, injuring 71 and killing one person. On February 13, a speech by the Commander of the paramilitary RSF General Mohamed "Hemeti" Dagalo sparked widespread speculations about animosities between the RSF and the SAF. On April 15, the tensions between the SAF and the RSF escalated when RSF forces attacked an SAF military base in Khartoum and Khartoum International Airport, leading to a violent conflict that is ongoing in Khartoum and other parts of Sudan.

Since the beginning of the war, Khartoum has been a regional

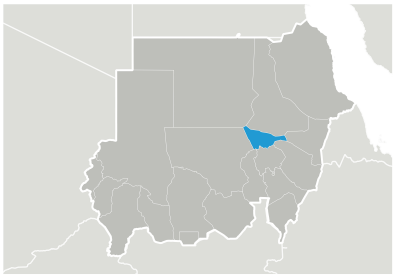
SUDAN (OPPOSITION)



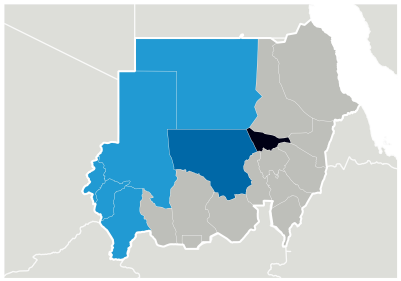
January



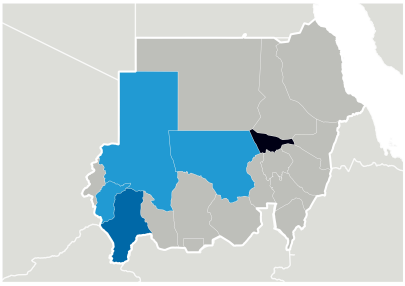
February



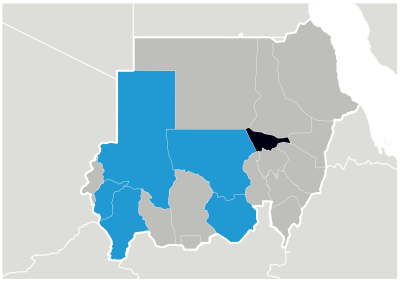
March



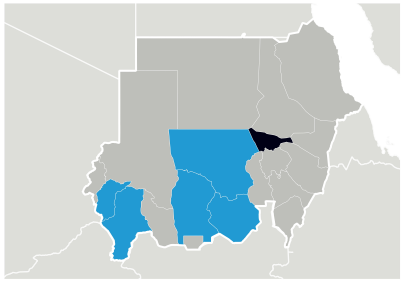
April



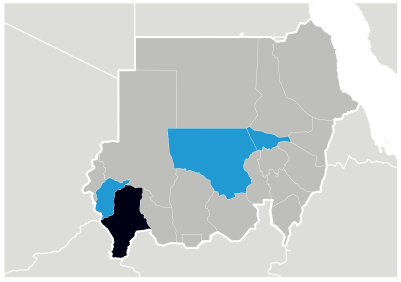
May



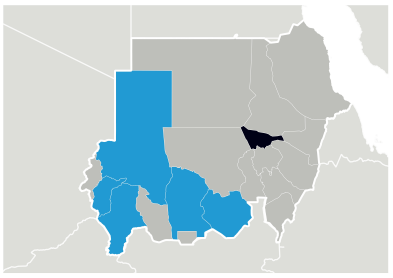
June



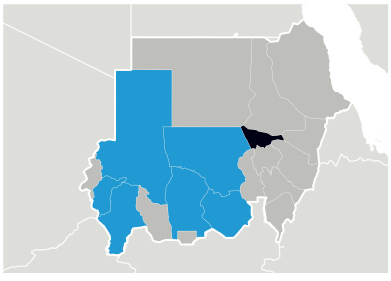
July



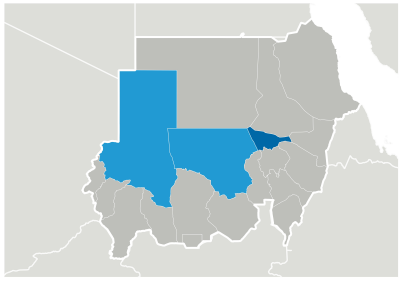
August



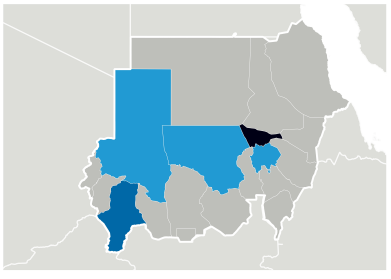
September



October



November



December

NO VIOLENT CONFLICT MEASURES
VIOLENT CRISIS
LIMITED WAR
WAR

center of the fighting between SAF and RSF forces with both sides trying to gain military control over the capital. Mutual shelling of the SAF and the RSF led to the destruction of public institutions and residential buildings in the Sudanese capital. In August 2023, the fighting intensified in Khartoum. Between August 5 and August 10, missiles killed 20 people in Khartoum's twin city Omdurman. Between August 20 and August 25, the RSF launched an attack on army positions in Omdurman and the SAF conducted airstrikes in Khartoum on RSF bases, leading to the destruction of a mosque's health center and residential buildings and the death of more than 14 civilians. On December 6, an SAF airstrike on a livestock market in Khartoum killed 97 people.
Besides the cities of Khartoum, Nyala, Zalingei, El Geneina, the states of South Darfur, Central Darfur, West Darfur, and South Kordofan are regional centers of the conflict with the RSF which now controls most of the Darfur states. In South Kordofan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLMN) aligned with the RSF and attacked SAF forces [→ Sudan (SPLM/A-North / South Kordofan, Blue Nile)]. With reports of ethnic cleansing in El Geneina, West Darfur, the SAF and RSF conflict overlapped with ongoing tribal conflict [→ Sudan (Darfur)]. The conflict also spread to South and Central Darfur. On August 11, the RSF renewed their attacks on Army bases in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur. The mutual attacks led to further civilian casualties. For example, on August 23, missiles killed 42 people in Nyala. The RSF brought Nyala under siege on September 21, and, on October 26, they took control of the city. Between mid-August and mid-September, in Central Darfur's capital Zalingei, missiles killed 32 people in the nearby Khamsa Dagayeg refugee camp. On December 18, RSF forces took control over Wad Madani, the capital of El Gezira state. Following the RSF attack, 300,000 people fled the region.
The clashes between the RSF and the SAF ignited a humanitarian crisis in Sudan. Air strikes and ground attacks have targeted key infrastructure such as hospitals, destroying state capacity and leading to a health and economic crisis. The collapsing health system has perpetuated the spread of cholera with 5,178 suspected cholera cases as of the beginning of December. As of the end of the year, 24.7 million people in Sudan currently require humanitarian aid.
Beginning in May, Saudi Arabia and the US made attempts toward resolution talks, but facilitation efforts ended on June 1, after the RSF and SAF violated a ceasefire agreement. On July 15, negotiations resumed, but quickly fell apart later that month after allegations of further ceasefire violations. On December 3, talks were indefinitely suspended.
As of December 31, more than 12,000 people have died, including victims of the Darfur conflict [→ Sudan (Darfur)]. More than 5.68 million Sudanese people have been internally displaced, making Sudan the country with the highest number of internally displaced people worldwide. More than 1.45 million people have left Sudan since the beginning of the war. Since the beginning of the conflict, reports of gender-based violence (GBV) by SAF and RSF forces significantly increased. Between mid-April and the end of July, the Combatting Violence Against Women Unit documented 108 cases of GBV in Khartoum, El Geneina, and Nyala, most of them related to the RSF. The RSF has also been accused of recruiting child soldiers in Khartoum and Darfur. emr

SUDAN, SOUTH SUDAN (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY / ABYEI)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: Balanda vs. Murle vs. Dinka vs. Nuer vs. Azande
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources in the disputed border region Abyei between Ngok Dinka community and the pastoralist Misseriya community, on the one hand, and between the Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka, on the other, continued. The substantial oil reserves in the region are of strategic interest to the governments of Sudan and South Sudan, both laying claim to Abyei as part of their own territory.
The security situation in the Abyei region remained tense throughout 2023. On January 3, approx. 200 armed herders from the Twic and Nuer Dinka community attacked Ngok Dinka civilians. 13 people were killed, three injured, and 27 houses burnt down. On September 30, armed youth from Twic County attacked Nyinkuec market, killing eleven civilians and wounding 14. Additionally, armed youth from Abyei, with the support from Unity State youth in Buombil village, attacked a military camp and civilian settlement. Violence escalated in November after armed youth from Twic County killed at least 32 civilians and wounded at least 20 people in Rumamer and Alel counties.
Despite ongoing hostilities, there was an effort to revive reconciliation efforts. Communities from both Sudan and South Sudan held a peace conference from March 20 to 23 in Todach, Ameth-Aguok County. The main objectives included the revival and adherence to the Agreement signed by both communities in 2016. Both agreed on important resolutions to stop killing and ambushes, the retreat of militias and other armed groups out of the Abyei Box, and ensuring freedom of movement. From April 3 to 6, a further peace conference between the Ngok Dinka and Twic Dinka communities took place in the Western Bahr el-Ghazal State Capital Wau. The discussion points included the end of hostilities, withdrawal of armed youth, the establishment of a buffer zone, and free movement of people.

tzi

UGANDA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2001

Conflict parties: DP, FDC, Jeema, NEED, NUP, PFT, UPC vs. Government
Conflict items: national power

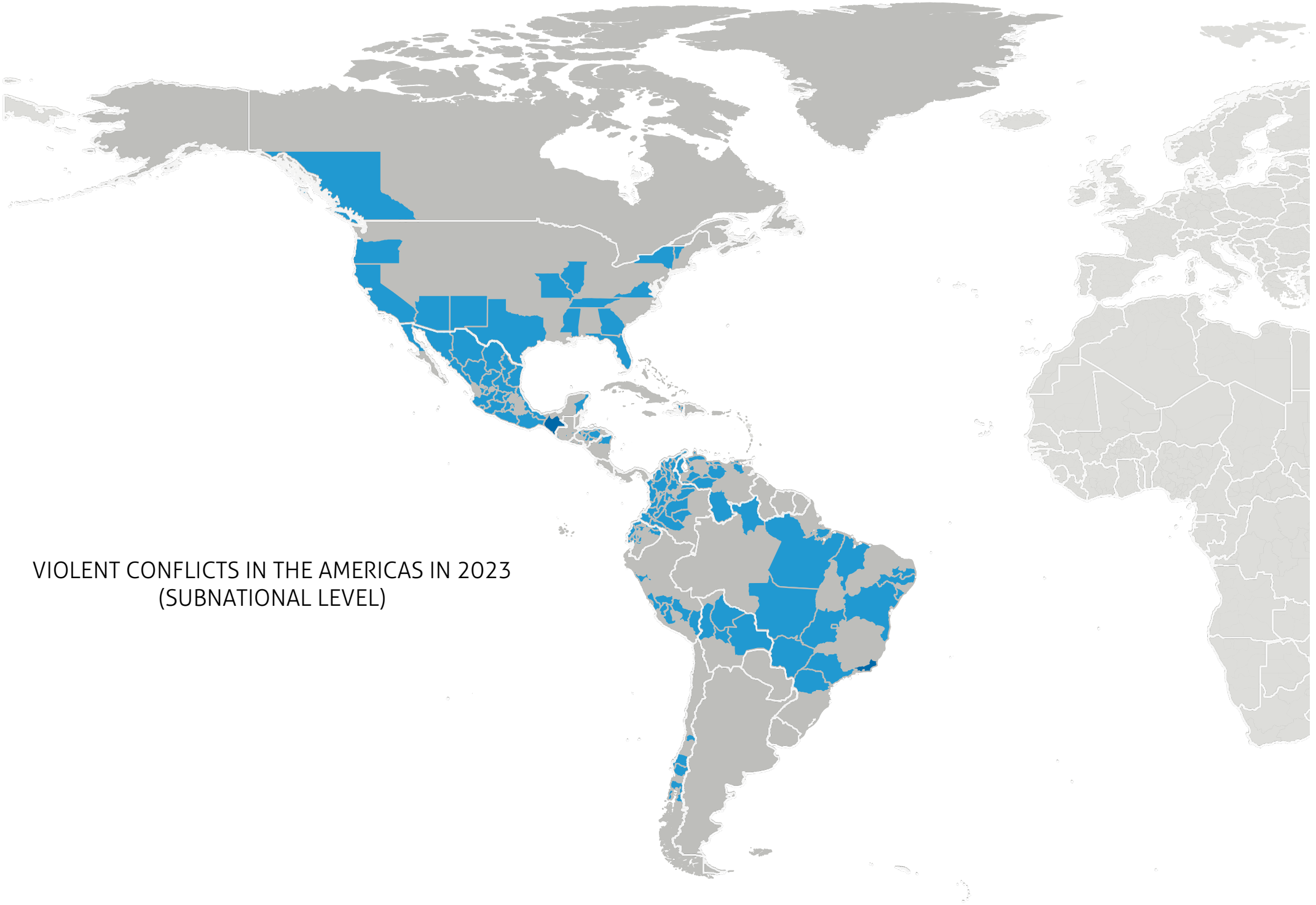
The non-violent crisis over national power between various opposition parties and the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party continued. Different opposition parties, such as the National Unity Platform (NUP), the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda People's 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 continued to target opposition parties. Leading up to the return of the NUP leader Bobi Wine, security forces threatened to arrest anyone participating in a march of support rallied for by the NUP. Upon disembarking a plane on October 5 at Entebbe airport, Central region, Wine was arrested and driven home. He later said that security forces had surrounded his house, leaving him effectively under house arrest. On October 6, security forces arrested at least 40 NUP supporters in the capital of Kampala. On October 9, security forces arrested 14 NUP supporters, including two functionaries, at the NUP headquarters in Kampala, Central region, where the party had organized an event marking its independence day. All 14 supporters were released without charges. Demanding that the government to apologize for its actions, on October 10, representatives of seven opposition parties in the Parliament began boycotting plenary sittings for at least three weeks.

The government was also accused of targeted action against civilians and journalists. For instance, on July 11, at least 200 people accused government officials, including Museveni and his son, Muhoozi Kainerugaba, a former General in the army, of torture, killings, and other crimes against humanity and have submitted their claims to the International Criminal Court. The government rejected the claims. On July 20, unidentified persons attacked and injured at least six journalists at the FDC headquarters in Kampala. sag

THE AMERICAS

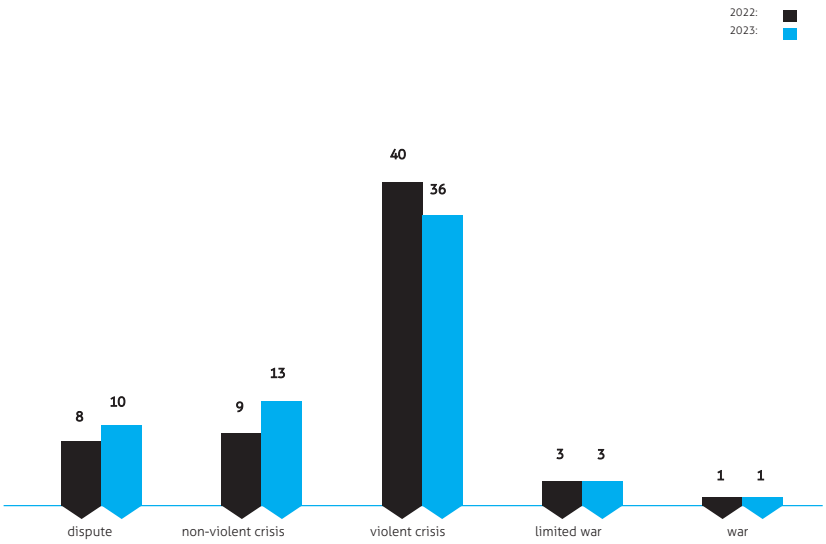


VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN THE AMERICAS IN 2023
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

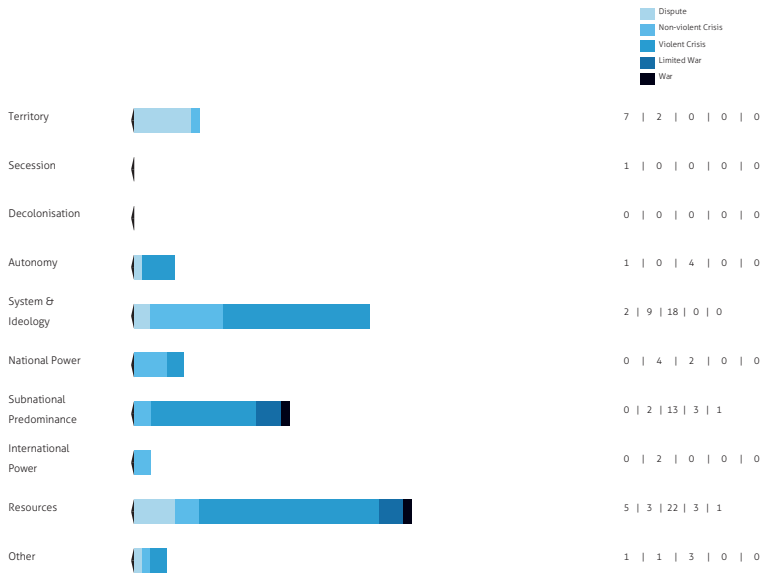
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN THE AMERICAS IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN THE AMERICAS IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN THE AMERICAS IN 2023



Overview: Conflicts in the Americas in 2023

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	↘	1
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. agribusiness, government, landowners, loggers, miners	autonomy, resources	1985	•	3
Brazil (MST, MTST)*	MST, MTST vs. agribusiness, government, landowners	resources	1996	↗	3
Brazil (social protests)*	Bolsonaro supporters vs. Lula supporters	system/ideology	2014	•	3
Chile (anarchist groups)*	Chile vs. Anarchist Groups	system/ideology	2014	•	3
Chile (Mapuche / Araucania)*	Chile vs. CAM, Mapuche, RML, WAM	autonomy, resources	2008	•	3
Chile (social protests)*	Government vs. ACES, CONES, CONFECH	system/ideology	2006	•	3
Chile – United Kingdom (Antarctica)*	Chile vs. United Kingdom	territory	2007	•	1
Colombia (artisanal miners / Antioquia)*	Colombia vs. artisanal miners	resources	2017	NEW	3
Colombia (ASCAMCAT / Catatumbo)*	ASCAMCAT vs. Colombia	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	2013	↘	1
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 vs. 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 vs. Primera Línea 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	↘	2
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	resources, 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. groups	system/ideology, resources	1980	•	3
El Salvador (inter-gang rivalry)*	Barrio 18 vs. MS-13 vs. MS-503	subnational predominance	2003	↘	2
El Salvador (Maras)*	Barrio 18 vs. MS-13 vs. government	subnational predominance	2003	•	3
El Salvador (opposition)*	civil society groups, vs. opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2020	•	2
Guatemala (drug cartels)*	drug cartels vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2009	•	3
Guatemala (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	1985	•	3
Guyana – Venezuela*	Guyana vs. Venezuela	territory, resources	2015	↗	2
Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)*	G9 Alliance vs. Gpèp	subnational predominance, resources	2020	•	5

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	↘	2
Honduras (Bajo Aguán) *	peasants, peasants 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	↗	3
Honduras – El Salvador (Isla Conejo)*	El Salvador vs. Honduras	territory	2013	•	1
Jamaica (drug gangs) *	drug gangs vs. government	subnational predominance	2010	•	3
Mexico (CNTE)*	CNTE vs. government	system/ideology	2006	↘	2
Mexico (drug cartels) *	drug cartels vs. vigilante groups vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2006	•	4
Mexico (EZLN / Chiapas) *	EZLN vs. ORCAO 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	↘	2
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	↘	2
Paraguay (EPP, agrarian movements)*	agrarian movement vs. EPP, government	system/ideology, resources	1989	↓	1
Peru (opposition) *	opposition movements vs. government	system/ideology, resources	2008	•	3
Peru (Shining Path)*	government vs. SL	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	1980	•	3
USA (racial tensions) *	anti-discrimination protesters vs. right-wing extremist groups vs. government	system/ideology	2014	•	3
USA (right-wing extremists) *	right-wing extremist groups 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	↘	2
Venezuela (indigenous groups) *	indigenous groups vs. government, miners	subnational predominance, resources	1988	•	3
Venezuela (mega-gangs) *	Carlos Capa vs. Tren de Aragua vs. Tren de Guyana vs. El Wilexis vs. Yeico Masacre vs. various gangs vs. government	subnational predominance, resources	2014	•	3
Venezuela (mining) *	El Perú vs. 3R vs. Tren de Guyana vs. El Talao vs. Sindicato de Barrancas vs. Juancho / Las Claritas Sindicate vs. ELN, government, various gangs	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 statehhod 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 ideological orientation of the political system and national power between various opposition parties and groups, on the one hand, and the government of President Luis Arce and his Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, on the other, continued.
From January 1 to 18, opposition activists affiliated with the Creemos party held protests and road blockades mainly in and around the city of Santa Cruz as well as the capital La Paz in response to the arrest of Creemos party leader and Governor of Santa Cruz, Luis Fernando Camacho, on 2022/12/28. During the protests, police forces used tear gas, while demonstrators set fire to public buildings and vehicles. On January 10, journalists were physically attacked while documenting the protests. The government issued a response on January 11, condemning the violence against the journalists and calling for an investigation.
From January 11 to 12, activists and social groups in support of the government held rallies in La Paz capital, city of Oruro, Oruro province, city of Tarija and Trinidad, Beni province, advocating for justice for the victims of the violence during the Pitita Revolution in 2019. After a week-long break, the nationwide opposition protesters returned on January 25. Camacho sought approval for his continued legitimacy as Governor of Santa Cruz by sending a letter from prison, which was read during the protests in Santa Cruz. Camacho left prison on September 6 to undergo medical examinations due to his declining health.
On October 23, the Bolivian Prosecutor's Office indicted former president Jeanine Añez, along with former ministers and military leaders, for their role in the 2019 massacres of Sacaba and Senkata, seeking a maximum sentence of 30 years imprisonment.
On October 3 and 4, MAS congress confirmed Evo Morales as party leader as well as the presidential candidate for 2025. Moreover, they excluded Arce from the party. On October 31, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal disallowed the congress and, on December 29, the Plurinational Constitutional Tribunal ruled against the possibility of indefinite re-election, effectively prohibiting Morales from running for presidency in 2025.
jas

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 the education and health sector, between various social groups and the government, and supported by the Central Bolivian Union, continued. Demonstrations and confrontations primarily focused on educational reforms, opposition to a government law package, and calls for healthcare system reforms.
In March and April, thousands of teachers across Bolivia, supported by federations and the Confederation of Bolivian Urban Education Workers, engaged in an extensive eight-week protest. The campaign featured hunger strikes, protest marches, labor strikes, and road blockades, with protestors demanding increased education budgets, higher salaries, one hundred percent pension, and more job opportunities. They resisted the curriculum imposed by the Ministry of Education, resulting in confrontations with the police. On March 6, urban teachers marched from the city of El Alto to the Ministry of Education, clashing with the police and damaging the ministry building. Another clash occurred on April 25 when urban teachers, armed with high-powered firecrackers in La Paz, encountered police opposition injuring a few officers.
Protests also targeted Law Proposal 280, part of a legislative package introduced by the government. This bill raised concerns of labor income in the informal economy. Various groups, including the trade unions, health professionals, civic and university institutions, participated in nationwide protest marches and road blockades in April and May. Notable events included protest marches in Santa Cruz, La Paz, and Cochabamba, Cochabamba province, on April 18 and 19, along with a 24-hour strike by the National Confederation of Bolivian Trade Unions on April 27.
Throughout the year, the health sector in Bolivia experienced national strikes organized by various organizations, such as the National Health Fund, the Oil Workers Health Fund, the Medical Association, and the Federation of Medical Unions. Protesters demanded improved hospital access to medications, supplies, equipment, and human resources, as well as better working conditions. For example, on August 1, more than 1,200 health workers initiated a 24-hour strike, providing only emergency services at various medical centers in La Paz.
Furthermore, workers in the transportation sector and residents conducted multiple road blockades, demanding better infrastructure
Peasants, activists, and citizens protested against the exploitation and destruction of natural resources on various occasions. For instance, on May 2, inhabitants of the municipality of El Torno, Santa Cruz province staged a road blockade to protest water pollution caused by the operations of 67 mining companies. Conversely, members of the National Federation of Bolivian Mining Cooperatives (Fencomin) and the Federation of Bolivian Gold Mining Cooperatives (Fecmabol) protested in La Paz, advocating for simplifying activities related to the extraction of minerals, metals, and non-metals.
laf

BRAZIL (DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2008

Conflict parties: drug trafficking organizations, militias vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between the main drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) – Comando Vermelho (CV), Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), Familía do Norte (FDN) – and various militias, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Throughout the year, at least 136 people were killed and eight were injured during clashes between security forces and DTOs.

In 2023, police targeted hotspots of DTO activity in the states of Bahia and São Paulo. In the state of São Paulo, the military police launched Operation Shield between July 28 and September 5, following the killing of a police officer on patrol in Guarujá municipality on July 27. The large-scale operation caused the deaths of 21 people in the Baixada Santista region. During the first five days, a total of 600 security forces killed at least 14 people in the coastal municipalities of Guarujá and Santos.
Between July 28 and August 2, shootouts with military police in Salvador, Itatim and Camaçari municipalities, Bahia state, left 19 people dead. On September 15, security forces launched Operation Fauda against drug and arms trafficking. One police officer and four gang members were killed. On September 22, police killed six people during operation Saigon in the municipalities of Salvador and Feira de Santana, Bahia state. The Brazilian justice minister dismissed any intervention by federal authorities on September 24, on the grounds thatstate authorities were already taking action.
On August 2, the security forces killed nine people in a shootout in the Complexo da Penha area of Rio de Janeiro. One police officer was injured. On October 9, military police carried out an operation in Complexo da Maré, Vila Cruzeiro, and Cidade de Deus, the biggest favelas of Rio de Janeiro, which is considered to be CV territory. Approximately 1,000 police officers were deployed, supported by helicopters, drones, facial recognition software and license plate cameras. The Special Police Operations Battalion (BOPE) killed two suspects during a confrontation on October 13 and 16. On October 23, DTO-members torched 35 buses of public transport in response to the killing of their leader.
Human rights organizations criticized military police operations, alleging a failure to investigate killings within the framework of police operations. On November 7, for example, Human Rights Watch stated that police killings intensified by 45% between January and September, compared to the previous year. It also denounced irregularities in the investigation of killings by members of the military police during Operation Shield.
On November 3, President Lula da Silva ordered military intervention in the ports and airports of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to combat organized crime as well as drug and arms trafficking. The intervention is set to end by May 2024.
sw

BRAZIL (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1985

Conflict parties:	indigenous groups vs. agribusiness, government, landowners, loggers, 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 and loggers, on the other, continued. Several indigenous communities urged the government to delimitate indigenous lands, to ensure their rights, and to stop illegal mining, logging, and farming. The most prominent groups were the Guarani-Kaiowá, Guajarara, Pataxó, Yanomami, Munduruku, Tembé, Kraho, and Tabajara.
On September 21, indigenous people across the country celebrated a crucial decision by the Supreme Court regarding a discriminatory reform on a land-property verification law, the so-called time marker thesis, which would restrict the land rights of indigenous peoples. The judges voted against the case, which had been on trial since 2019. The thesis, supported by agrobusiness lobbyist groups, stated that indigenous peoples can only claim land they physically occupied since the enactment of the Constitution in October 1988. On December 14, the Congress overturned President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's veto against parts of this new bill.
Throughout the year, indigenous people faced threats from invasions by loggers, farmers, and, above all, miners. On April 29, approx. 15 heavily armed miners opened fire on the Yanomami indigenes of the Uxiu community in Roraima state, killing three people including an indigenous health worker. Three months later, on July 3, unknown men hired by miners attacked a community in the Parima region, Roraima, killing a five-year-old Yanomami girl and wounding five indigenous people.
In other regions, for instance the palm oil region, indigenous people and land activists were attacked. For example, on May 14, gunmen shot and injured a prominent indigenous Tembé leader in the head on his way back to the Turé-Mariquita indigenous Territory in northern Pará state. On August 4, gunmen shot and wounded a Tembé indigenous man in the Bananal village, another area claimed by indigenous people and in dispute with Brasil Bio Fuels, a self-described renewable energy company, On August 7, private security guards of the Brasil Bio Fuels shot and seriously injured three Tembé indigenous people during preparations for the arrival of a delegation from the National Human Rights Council in the municipality of Tomé-Açú, Pará.
mvo

BRAZIL (MST, MTST)

Intensity:	3	Change:	↗	Start:	1996

Conflict parties:	MST, MTST vs. agribusiness, government, landowners
Conflict items:	resources

The non-violent crisis over resources, mainly 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 hand, escalated to a violent crisis.
In November, unidentified actors killed MST-members. On November 5, armed individuals killed one activist in Vitória de Santo Antão municipality, Pernambuco state. On November 11, two men killed two other MST activists in Princesa Isabel municipality, Paraiba state.
On March 6 and March 13, armed individuals threatened occupants in Bahia state. On March 19, armed individuals entered an MST settlement with bulldozers, burnt down houses, and killed animals in São Benedito do Rio Preto, Maranhão state. In reaction to MST's Red April campaigns, farmers and producers in Bahia state organized themselves into a Zero Invasions movement in April. On August 17, two armed individuals killed a quilombo community leader in El Salvador municipality, Bahia state.
On April 26, the president of the Chamber of Deputies read out the request that allowed the creation of the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (CPI) to investigate the Landless Workers' Movement (MST). Ricardo Salles, former minister of the environment of the Bolsonaro government, is accused of

having used the CPI in order to criminalize MST and to boost his candidacy for mayor of São Paulo. The CPI was closed on September 27 without a final vote report.
The MST intensified its occupation activities and settled in allegedly unused land in eleven of 26 federal states, leading to non-violent clashes with landowners and corporate agribusinesses. Media reported that, by August, the number of occupations had risen to 62, three times larger when compared to 2022. In contrast, fewer threats against MST and MTST activists were registered compared to 2022.
cs

BRAZIL (SOCIAL PROTESTS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: Bolsonaro supporters vs. Lula supporters
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between former president Jair Messias Bolsonaro supporters and followers of current president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva continued with the Brazilian government acting as an intervener.
On January 8, 3,000 supporters of former president Jair Bolsonaro stormed and vandalized the congress building in Brasília because they did not accept the results of the elections on 10/2/2022. At least 40 people were injured. In two separate court rulings on June 30 and October 31, the Superior Electoral Court deprived Bolsonaro of his right to stand for election until 2030.
Two people were killed as a result of a political dispute. On March 19, a Lula supporter killed a Bolsonaro supporter in Jaciara municipality, Mato Grosso state. On May 27, a Bolsonaro supporter killed his cousin and Lula voter after a political dispute in São João do Rio do Peixe municipality, Paraíba state.
cs

CHILE (ANARCHIST GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: Chile vs. Anarchist Groups
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Chilean anarchist groups on the one hand, and the government on the other, continued.
As in previous years, the conflict was marked by sporadic bomb attacks by anarchist groups. For instance, on May 22, the organization Luis Ramírez Olaechea Anarchic Brigades claimed responsibility for placing an explosive device at the headquarters of the Citizen Peace Foundation in Providencia, Santiago, Metropolitan region. The bomb was defused by the Chilean police, after receiving an alert from the foundation's employees .
Furthermore, on June 13, the anti-capitalist organization October 18th Movement detonated a bomb on a railway bridge in the city of Chillán, Ñuble region, damaging the bridge.
Another incident took place on September 11. A series of anarchist groups took to the streets, set up burning barricades and threw objects at police during the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1973 coup d'état, in Santiago, Metropolitan region. The groups were identified but the government did not reveal their names. A television cameraman was wounded by a gunshot and 14 police officers were also injured.

mvd

CHILE (MAPUCHE / ARAUCANIA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2008

Conflict parties: Chile 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 Weichan Auka Mapu (WAM), Resistencia Mapuche Lavkenche (RML) and the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco (CAM) organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, the Mapuche continued to claim ancestral land, which is currently owned by forestry companies. This resulted in several clashes with forestry and agricultural companies as well as with the Chilean authorities. For instance, on February 16, armed assailants torched five machines at an industry site in Temuco, Araucanía. On April 24, in Región de los Ríos, armed men attacked the Panguipulli company, setting 18 machines on fire. On the same night, in Araucanía, the house of a former council member, six trucks and an excavator were set on fire. On May 10, the Chilean government declared a red alert in Araucanía due to the increase in violence.
Attacks continued throughout the year, despite the government announcing a peace commission on June 19. For example, on August 2, a Mapuche group set fire to a school, a church, and a medical center in Traiguen, Araucanía, injuring one doctor. Two days later, the Chilean government announced the establishment of a military outpost in the area as a response. The government extended the state of emergency in the southern regions, on October 4.
The attacks continued in November including the burning of a restaurant and event center on November 20, in Capitán Pastene, Araucanía. On December 3, nine members of the Mapuche national liberation movement attacked a property in Vilcún, Araucanía, setting nine working machines on fire and leaving the owner and guard of the property injured. On December 23, a church and a community hall were torched in an arson attack in Contulmo, Biobío, where five houses had been torched two days earlier.
smo

COLOMBIA (ARTISANAL MINERS / ANTIOQUIA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: NEW | Start: 2017

Conflict parties: Colombia vs. artisanal miners
Conflict items: resources

The violent crisis over resources between artisanal miners and the government escalated after years of inactivity. At the beginning of the year, artisanal miners in Nechí, Antioquia, declared they would strike following a dispute over mining rights with the company Mineros S.A.

On March 2, the government started a large operation against illegal mining and environmental damage in El Bagre, Antioquia, destroying 75 dredges, two excavators and 70 pumping stations in the area. Miners demonstrated throughout March against the operations, blocking roads and setting vehicles on fire. For instance, on the road between Valdivia and Caucasia, Antioquia, miners set six vehicles on fire. On March 21, the government promised to regulate artisanal mining in order to end the strike. It also accused the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia of instrumentalizing the strike for criminal means. The miners announced the suspension of the strike on April 4 and, on April 21, the first formalization agreement was signed with miners in Marmato, Caldas.
During the latter half of the year, incidents between miners, mining companies, and the government contined. For instance, on July 6, the government, police, and other actors met to solve a crisis which occurred when informal miners entered the tunnels adjudicated to a Chinese mining company in Buritica, Antioquia. On December 12, the inhabitants of Ginebra, Valle del Cauca, blocked the roads to protest the detention of nine artisanal miners that were charged by the authorities with illegal enrichment.
smo

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.
Throughout the year, peace talks between the government and the ELN continued. On February 13, a second round of peace talks began in Mexico with the main goal of setting an agenda for the subsequent negotiations. An agreement was reached on a 180-day ceasefire beginning on August 3. On September 4, the government and ELN announced the establishment of several humanitarian zones in critical territories.
On November 12, the government stated that at least 32 people have been kidnapped by the ELN since the start of the peace negotiations and that these kidnaps had taken place during the ceasefire. For instance, on October 28, The peace talks came to a crisis after the parents of a Colombian soccer player were kidnapped in Barrancas, La Guajira department. The UN mission reported that, in the first month since the ceasefire began, there had been repeated violations by the ELN, most notably the kidnapping of a soldier on August 20 in the Caranal district, municipality of Fortul, Arauca. The ELN also accused the state authorities of violations.
Due to the crisis, the fifth round of peace negotiations ended on December 17 with the ELN agreeing to end kidnappings until the end of the ceasefire. At the same time, the government declared their willingness to finance the guerrillas' peace activities. The sixth round of peace negotiations is planned for January 22, 2024 in Cuba.
Despite the peace negotiations, violent clashes, attacks against oil pipelines, and kidnappings continued. For instance on March 27, the Caño Limón-Coveñas pipeline was bombed by the ELN in Campo Alicia, Arauca department. The largest clashes between the military and the ELN took place on March 29 in El Carmen, Norte de Santander department, when nine soldiers were killed by explosive devices. In a similar incident, on May 24 in Tibú, Norte de Santander, the ELN attacked a police patrol using an explosive device. Two police officers and one civilian died and ten people were injured.
There were 31 incidents on the 59th anniversary of the ELN, on July 4. For instance, the ELN attacked a coal processing plant with explosives in San Faustino, Cúcuta, Norte de Santander, causing damage to infrastructure and the death of a company worker. On the same day, the National Urban War Front carried out a bomb attack on a police station in Bucaramanga, Santander department, injuring nine police officers and damaging five police and two private vehicles.
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, Caquetá, Huila, and Nariño.
As in previous years, the conflict was dominated by disputes 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.
On 12/31/2022, the Colombian government, headed by President Gustavo Petro, announced a ceasefire with the country's five main illegal armed groups, including Segunda Marquetalia and Estado Mayor Central of the FARC dissidents, in support of peace talks. On May 23, the ceasefire between the Colombian government and FARC dissidents was partially suspended after members of the FARC dissident groups violated the agreement by forcibly recruiting and then killing four minors in Putumayo department.
Throughout the year, security forces arrested several prominent FARC dissident leaders. On April 29, for example, Colombian authorities arrested the second in command of the Carlos Patiño column of FARC dissidents, in Paicol municipality, Huila.
Fighting between FARC dissident groups and the government continued throughout the year. For instance, on July 31, there was a confrontation between FARC dissidents and the Armed Forces of Colombia in Argelia municipality, Cauca. One soldier and twelve FARC dissidents were killed in the fighting, and several soldiers were injured. In a joint military operation called Trueno, troops of the Armed Forces moved by land, rivers, and air, to different areas of the department of Cauca, in order to forcefully affect the different structures of the dissidents. As a result, the Armed Forces killed 20 members of the dissidents and another 34 were arrested.
Violent clashes caused further internal displacement

throughout the year. On February 9, after fighting between two subgroups of the FARC dissidents in Argelia, the Colombian Army intervened, and over 900 civilians were displaced. FARC dissident groups continued to target communal leaders; a strategy commonly used by different armed groups in Colombia. According to the Instituto de estudios para el desarrollo y la paz, the number of community leaders assassinated in 2023 was 188 as of December 20, many in areas controlled either by FARC dissidents or other illegal armed groups. cja

COLOMBIA (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2005

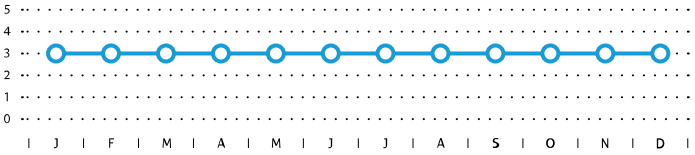
Conflict parties: indigenous groups vs. government
Conflict items: resources

The violent crisis over resources, particularly the use of land, between various indigenous groups on one hand and the government on the other continued. Throughout the year, indigenous groups repeatedly protested with a view to improving their living conditions, urging the government to act against the negative consequences of industrial utilization of their homelands.
Between February 7 and 9, approx. 1,000 indigenous people protested in front of the Congress building in Bogotá, Capital District, for improved working conditions and better access to health care. There were minor clashes with police when some protesters tried to forcibly enter the Congress building. No injuries were reported.
On March 2, in San Vicente del Caguan, Caqueta department, a violent clash occurred between the police and about 4,000, mainly indigenous protesters, who demanded the energy company Emerald Energy invest in local infrastructure and compensate them for environmental damages. The protesters initially blocked access to one of the company's oil fields and set fire to company property. The subsequent clash with police resulted in the death of one police officer and one protester and ended with 79 police officers and nine Emerald Energy employees being captured by the protesters. After a conversation with the Minister of Defense and a video message from President Gustavo Petro, all prisoners were released.
On April 12, in the village of La Pila, in the municipality of Toribio, Cauca department, several hundred indigenous people detained 15 soldiers who had previously attempted to arrest a man on allegedly false charges, injuring him in the process. On the same day, protests were held in Bogotá by at least 400 members of various indigenous organizations, including the Human Rights Council of the Nasa People, the Cauca Valley Regional Organization, and the Association of Indigenous Councils of the Pacific, following insecurity and violence in the Cauca Valley department.
On September 27, more than 15,000 members of various indigenous groups from ten departments came together for a protest march in Bogota, demanding the government stop the violence against indigenous communities and respect their right to territorial self-determination. On September 29, several dozen members of the Misak, Nasa, and Pijao peoples protested in front of the building of the media company Semana in Bogota, accusing it of false reporting. Several windows of the building were damaged during the protest, but no injuries were reported.
ls

COLOMBIA (INTER-CARTEL RIVALRY, NEO-PARAMILITARY GROUPS, LEFT-WING MILITANTS)

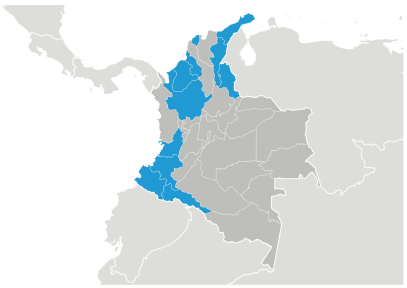
Intensity: 4 | Change: • | Start: 2013

Conflict parties: AGC vs. CDF vs. Los Caparros vs. ELN vs. FARC Dissidents vs. EPL vs. Los Rastrojos vs. ASCN
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

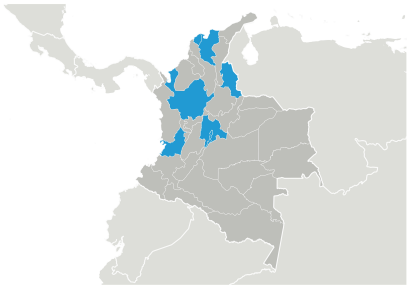


The limited war over subnational predominance and resources between several neo-paramilitary groups, drug cartels, including Aguilas Negras, the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC), also known as Gulf Clan, Los Caparros, Border Command (CDF), the Self-Defense Conquerors of Sierra Nevada (ASCN) 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 lucrative 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 particular, the departments of Valle del Cauca, Nariño, La Guajira, Putumayo, Antioquia, Cauca and Atlántico were regularly affected by violence. In many cases, the perpetrators could not be identified.
For example, on January 5, as a result of the previous clashes between the AGC and the ELN, part of a corpse was found in the Calima River, near Buenaventura, Valle de Cauca department. A triple murder on April 14 at Nueva Granada, Magdalena department, was attributed to the Gulf Clan trying to intimidate the local population. Three days later, on May 20, two armed men on motorcycles shot three men in the Uribe Uribe neighbourhood of Sincelejo, Sucre department. Authorities recognized the incident in the context of the confrontation between the criminal gangs of the AGC and the criminal gang Los Norteños for control of drug trafficking in the city.
The civilian population was affected by armed clashes, resulting in forced displacements and confinements as well as forced recruitment. For example, on January 1, there was a displacement of approx. 979 people from Afro-descendant communities in the Calabazal and Zapotal villages, Nariño department. In the first half of June, around 1,000 people were displaced in the municipality of Ricaurte in the department of Nariño due to clashes between FARC dissidents and the ELN. The clashes resulted not only in the displacement but also the confinement of families in the region. The civilian population was intimidated by messages on corpses and crime scenes and pamphlets. For example, on January 25, the Gulf Clan sent a message to WhatsApp groups asking certain people to leave La Esperanza, Norte de Santander department, within 72 hours.
Confrontations between the ELN and the AGC resulted in

COLOMBIA (INTER-CARTEL RIVALRY, NEO-PARAMILITARY GROUPS, LEFT-WING MILITANTS)



January



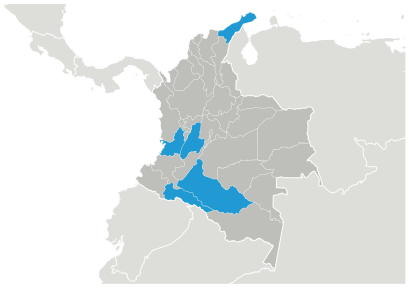
February



March



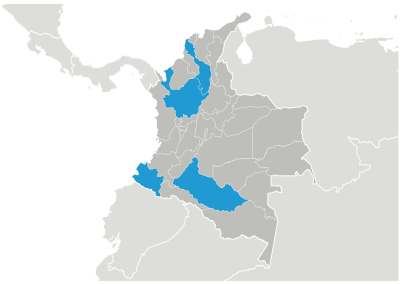
April



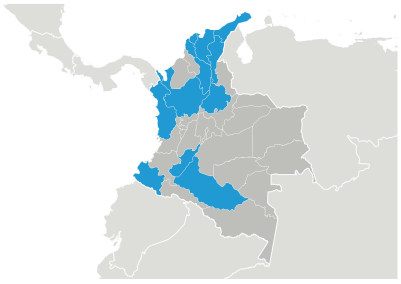
May



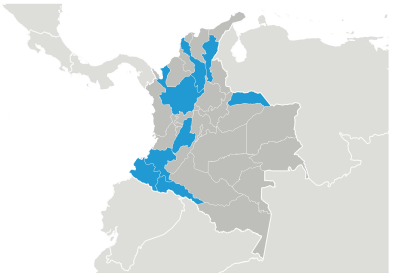
June



July



August



September



October



November



December

NO VIOLENT CONFLICT MEASURES
VIOLENT CRISIS
LIMITED WAR
WAR

the confinement and restriction of movement of more than 3,000 and 5,000 people respectively in Novita, Chocó, in January and May. Starting on June 10, clashes broke out between the ELN and FARC dissidents on one hand and the AGC in Segovia, Antioquia department, on the other. Over 150 people were displaced as a consequence. On August 14, the ELN and the AGC clashed in San Miguel, Chocó department. Four members of the AGC were killed and four more were injured. The following day, there were clashes between armed groups in Lopez municipality, department of Cauca, resulting in the displacement of 190 families.
On August 20, there was a shooting between the AGC and the ASCN in Comojones, La Guajira department. Two members of the AGC were killed. On September 13, in Samaniego and Santa Cruz in Nariño, fighting between the ELN and the Urias Rondón FARC dissident group led to the displacement of 2,800 residents, mostly farmers and indigenous people from the Awa community. On September 14, threats by the ELN led to the displacement of 700 indigenous people from the Embera community in the rural area around Pueblo Rico, Risaralda department.
msa

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 Caparrapos, also called Caparros, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. On 12/31/22, President Gustavo Petro announced a six-month bilateral ceasefire between the security forces and the AGC, which would initially be subject to an extension as the government's Total Peace security policy advanced.
Throughout March, the government accused the AGC of escalating violence during the mining strike in the municipalities of Caucasia, Cáceres, Nechí, Tarazá, El Bagre and Zaragoza, Antioquia department. The AGC supposedly sabotaged the strike to hinder the formalization and recognition of ancestral mining, given their involvement in illegal mining. Food and medicine supplies were restricted during the strike; infrastructure, including water supply pipes in Tarazá, was destroyed; and at least two people were killed [→ Colombia (Artisanal Miners)]. Following these events, the president suspended the bilateral ceasefire and ordered security forces to reactivate all military operations against the AGC, on March 19. One day later, the National Army reported the killing of two AGC members during clashes in the municipality of Arenal, Bolivar department. On May 14, during a joint army and police operation in Medio Baudó, Chocó department, at least three members of the AGC were killed, two wounded and one captured.
According to the records of the Ombudsman's Office, in the first four months of the year, the AGC recruited at least 45 minors in Antioquia department. Child recruitment continued to increase in other departments such as Chocó, Cauca, and Nariño. Throughout the year, intimidating messages targeting social leaders, human rights defenders, journalists, and teachers, as well as threats of "social cleansing" remained a regular issue in the departments of Norte de Santander, Santander, Bolivar, Sucre, Córdoba and Chocó. In San Jacinto del Cauca, Bolivar department, the AGC reportedly intimidated voters during regional elections on October 29. During 2023, the AGC maintained control over migratory routes. Estimates suggest the AGC earned nearly $57 million between January and October through extortion and robbery of asylum seekers crossing the Darien Gap towards Panama.
The government continued to target cartel leaders, neo-paramilitary groups, and their finances. On March 1, for instance, national authorities reported the killing of the second in command of the Gulf Clan, in Dabeiba, Antioquia department. On April 4, the army dismantled three coca paste laboratories in Dabeiba and Turbo, Antioquia, and in Unguia, Chocó.
dfn

COLOMBIA (SOCIAL PROTESTS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2019

Conflict parties: Comité Nacional de Paro vs. Primera Línea vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between Primera Linea and the Comité Nacional de Paro (CNP), supported by student groups, workers associations, and indigenous communities [→ Colombia (indigenous groups)], on the one hand, and the government, on the other hand, continued. During President Gustavo Petro's first year and a half in office, demonstrations underwent a notable shift in actors and demands compared to prior administrations. These generally occurred without disruptions or violence. The participants in social protests have thus expanded beyond the Primera Linea, now encompassing opposition factions.
On February 15 and June 20, leading opposition figures called for massive mobilizations across the country. On both occasions, over 45,000 people opposing the government took to the streets of major cities to express their disagreement with government labor, pension, and health reforms. The protestors also voiced criticism related to the limitation of freedom of the press and the challenges posed to territorial peace under the government's Total Peace security policy, which aims to demobilize the majority of illegal armed actors in Colombia. On May 10, July 19 and October 18, veterans and reservists of the Armed Forces and the National Police demonstrated against the government across major cities, calling for the authority of the security forces to be respected.
Over the course of the year, Petro called upon the population to support his government's reforms. For instance, on February 14, June 7, and September 27, government sympathisers demonstrated in favor of Petro's political agenda. In the first two protests, the opposition organized larger counter-demonstrations. However, during the last demonstration, the government rallied approximately 32,000 people in the capital, Bogotá to show support for its political program.
More mobilizations, especially among peasant communities,

took place in the departments of Sucre and Caquetá. During the first quarter of the year, the peasant guard of Caquetá demonstrated against the government and an oil company for 43 days. On March 2, following confrontations between the peasant communities and the public forces, one police officer and one peasant were killed. The peasant guard allegedly set fire to the company's facilities and detained 79 police officers for more than 24 hours. dfn

COLOMBIA – NICARAGUA (SEA BORDER)

Intensity: 1 | Change: • | Start: 1825

Conflict parties: Colombia vs. Nicaragua
Conflict items: territory, resources

The non-violent dispute over territory and resources between Nicaragua and Colombia continued. The disputed area, namely the San Andrés Archipelago, is rich in fishing and mineral deposits, as well as includes gas and oil reserves. 2023 was a significant year for the development of this dispute, which began in 2013 when Nicaragua filed an application against Colombia, asking the Court to determine the continental shelf boundary between the two countries. On July 13, ICJ, decided that Nicaragua's claim to 200 additional nautical miles of sea territory had no legal basis.
On July 14, Nicaragua accepted the ruling and asked Colombia to accept the 2012 ICJ ruling as well, which traced the maritime border between the countries. In the second half of the year, the local Raizal people also demanded to be heard in the negotiations between the two countries over fishing rights and the ICJ decisions concerning the area. smo

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – HAITI

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2009

Conflict parties: Dominican Republic vs. Haiti
Conflict items: resources, other

The non-violent crisis over immigration, racist sentiments and resources between the Dominican Republic (DR) on the one hand and Haiti, on the other, continued.
Tensions intensified over the construction of a canal by Haiti, that targets shared waters from the Dajabón/Massacre river. The Dominican government argued that the construction violated the treaty of Peace, Friendship and Arbitration, signed on February 20, 1929, and should be halted. Subsequently, the Dominican President Luis Abinader announced the suspension of visas to Haitian citizens on September 11. On September 15, the DR shut borders with Haiti.
On October 11, the Dominican president partially reopened the border for limited commercial activity. DR, however, did not issue Haitians visas for work, education, medical issues or other purposes. On October 12, Haiti declined to open one of the major border crossings on the Haitian side, at Ouanaminthe commune, Nord-Est department, demanding an apology from the Dominican government and the resumption of full border activities.
Following this, Haitian citizens broke down the border to access the Dajabón market. First, on November 28, they broke down the border by sawing the chains that held the border shut. In another incident on December 14, a container truck driver broke down the border.
On November 7, a confrontation between Haitians and Dominican soldiers ensued at the northern border wall near the Dajabón/Massacre River. Both sides reported a different course of the events, accusing each other of border violations. The following day, the foreign ministers of both countries met to calm the rising tensions. eth

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. The criminal groups are 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)] and rival to the R7, an Ecuadorian gang. Prisons continued to be a hotspot for violence. They were plagued by shootings and violent confrontations, with 442 prisoners killed in various violent incidents since January 2021, attributed by the government to drug trafficking gangs. Human rights organizations point to issues like overcrowding and negligence as fundamental causes.
Between April 12 and 15, at least 19 inmates and three prison officers were killed in separate incidents. For instance, on April 14, a riot between gangs killed twelve and injured three inmates in the Litoral Penitentiary in Guayaquil, the country's largest prison.
On August 31, inmates retained 57 police and prison guards in six detention centers. The incident followed a prison riot against state interventions to disarm criminal gangs controlling the prisons. The unrest, sparked by a police and military operation in the Latacunga prison, was part of ongoing efforts to disarm criminal factions controlling Ecuador's prisons. It addressed the series of deadly clashes.
Throughout the year, confrontations between gangs continued. For instance, on March 16, a violent confrontation between Los Lobos and Los Choneros took place in El Triunfo, Guayas province, leaving at least two people dead, one of whom was a civilian, and five injured. On August 20, a shootout between gangs in the 24 de Mayo and La Gatazo sectors in the southern part of Esmeraldas, left five dead and ten injured. The shooting was the result of a gang power struggle to maintain control of the neighborhood.
lle

ECUADOR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1980

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. groups
Conflict items: system/ideology, resources

The violent crisis over resources, such as oil extraction, and the orientation of the political system between various op-

position 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 and led to an early re-election.
Between January 10 and 12, the A'i Cofán de Dureno community mobilized to prevent oil exploitation by Petroecuador, in the province of Sucumbíos. On January 12, armed forces arrived in the region to support the oil company against the community's resistance. At least six people were injured. On February 26, unknown suspects killed the leader of the A'i Cofán Dureno community in northeastern Ecuador in his home farm in the A'i Cofán de Dureno community, i province of Sucumbíos. On February 11, Petroecuador reported repeated acts of destruction against the company's properties Orellana province. According to Petroecuador, the indigenous Waorani community of Dikaro, located in the region of the properties, intentionally closed the valve of an oil pipeline, causing an interruption in the pumping and transportation of crude oil.
On Febraury 24, the CONAIE president demanded the resignation of Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso and withdrew from national dialog, which was installed after the national strike in June 2022. The organization claimed that the regime had not complied with the agreements signed after the national strike of June 2022.
On May 17, Lasso implemented the constitutional mechanism muerte cruzada, and dissolved the opposition-dominated parliament which was preparing for an impeachment against him due to formwork reproaches. Muerte cruzada gives the president the right to rule by decree for the next six months. Both the president and congress have been newly elected. On August 9, eleven days before the first round elections, a group of suspects killed presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio in Quito. Villavicencio received threats from a criminal group linked to the Sinaloa Cartel days before the attack. The six arrested suspects were Colombian nationals. On October 15, Daniel Noboa, who is considered right-wing and economically liberal, won the second ballot.
lle

EL SALVADOR (MARAS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2003

Conflict parties: Barrio 18 vs. 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.
The government continued to enforce strong measures to fight gang violence, such as continuing its state of emergency and a large numbers of arrests. Throughout the year, the number of people arrested for alleged gang affiliations rose to approx. 74,861. However, gang members continued to move between El Salvador and neighboring countries, namely Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Mexico. For example, Guatemala's National Civil Police arrested 112 Salvadoran gang members in 2023 [→ Honduras (drug trafficking organizations, organized crime)].
Additionally, several clashes between gang members and security forces were reported throughout the year, resulting in the death of at least 22 alleged gang members and one police officer. For instance, on July 30, several MS-13 gang members ambushed a PNC patrol in Ilobasco, Cabañas department, injuring two police officers. On August 31, several MS-13 gang members attempted an attack on a National Civil Police (PNC) patrol in Nepaja municipality, San Salvador department, resulting in the death of two gang members. NGOs continued to report various human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrests and abuses of authority [→ El Salvador (opposition)], with 3,516 official reports against PNC and FAES officers (Cristósal) under the state of exception. 946 people were forced into internal displacement due to abuses of authority.
nas

EL SALVADOR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2020

Conflict parties: civil society groups, vs. 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 oppositional parties and civil society groups on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, opposition and civil society groups held several protests against the government under Nayib Bukele. For instance, on January 20, 250 civil society groups called on the government to drop charges following the arrest of five environmental defenders on January 11.
On April 13, the Salvadorian news outlet El Faro announced the relocation of their administrative operations out of the country due to frequent physical surveillance and threats from the government. On September 15, civil society groups and unions staged protests against the adoption of Bitcoin as national currency, the implementation of the exception regime and the planned re-election of Bukele. In September 2021, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court had ruled that Bukele must take a six-month break between the current and future term of office in order to stand for re-election in 2024.
On November 11, the leader of the opposition party ARENA filed a constitutional complaint with the country's Supreme Electoral Tribunal to prevent President Bukele from running for re-election in 2024. On December 1, Bukele commenced a six-month leave of absence which will allow him to circumvent the prohibition on direct re-election. His secretary Claudia Juana Rodríguez de Guevara will represent him until May 31, 2024.
On November 18, at least 300 people protested in the capital San Salvador, denouncing the mass arrests of alleged gang members linked to the state of emergency that has been in place since March 2022.
ido

GUATEMALA (DRUG CARTELS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2009

Conflict parties: drug cartels vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various drug cartels and the government continued.
On March 17 and 18, national police forces arrested three drug traffickers with connections to the Sinaloa Cartel in the capital Guatemala City. On March 23, the government seized four shipments containing fentanyl at a port terminal in the Izabal department.
In May, a fight over the control of drug trafficking routes between the Jalisco Nueva Generación Cartel and the Sinaloa Cartel broke out in Chiapas state, Mexico, near the Guatemalan-Mexican border [→ Mexico (drug cartels)]. The fighting, which lasted several weeks, affected civilians and migrants near the border. For instance, over 3,000 residents of the Mexican village Frontera Compala, Chiapas, were displaced, and approximately 60 people were killed within the two weeks following May 25. On September 25, the army mobilized 2,000 troops to protect the border near Chiapas in response to ongoing violence caused by drug trafficking in the region.
On October 7, two suspected members of the Barrio-18 cartel killed eight civilians in a liquor shop in Guatemala City. Police forces arrested the suspects afterwards. Furthermore, on November 1, an assassin linked to Barrio-18 killed a Guatemalan police officer in Zacapa, eponymous department. elb

GUATEMALA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1985

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

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between various opposition groups, including university students, feminist organizations, labor unions, and indigenous people, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Opposition groups continued to protest against widespread corruption, gender-based violence, and indigenous land rights. Tensions rose also due to the detention of members of civil society groups and controversies around the general elections.
On May 26, the Guatemalan police arrested the former top prosecutor against corruption. On June 15, a national court sentenced a journalist to six years in prison, having already been detained for eleven months.
During the electoral campaigns, the attorney general for the Public Prosecution Service allegedly attempted to ban candidates from the presidential election. On February 21, the electoral tribunal effectively barred an indigenous left-wing leader from running for president. Thousands of protesters gathered in the capital Guatemala City and blocked at least 15 local highways.
On election day, on June 25, opposition groups supporters demonstrated in at least 24 municipalities throughout the country. Protesters threatened members of electoral bodies. For instance, in the city of Chinautla, Guatemala department, protesters attempted to rob ballots and destroyed poll booths. National police forces responded with tear gas to disperse the protesters.
After the elections, demonstrations demanding the resignation of government officials continued. For example, on October 13, the national police forces used tear gas to disperse a road blockade in the capital Guatemala City, leaving several protesters injured. On October 16, protesters used rocks, machetes, and guns to clear a road blockade in San Marcos, eponymous department, killing one person and injuring four. On November 16, protesters clashed with national police forces close to congress, where more than 2,300 members of the police were deployed, leaving several protesters injured.
lop

GUYANA – VENEZUELA

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2015

Conflict parties: Guyana vs. Venezuela
Conflict items: territory, resources

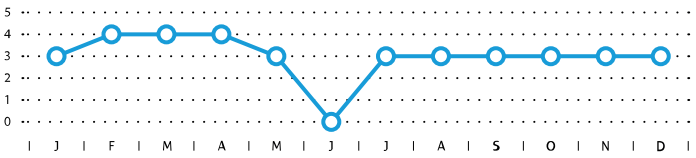
The dispute over resources and territory between the Venezuelan and the Guyanese governments escalated to a non-violent crisis.
On April 6, the ICJ dismissed Venezuela's preliminary objection to include the UK as a third party and objecting the court's jurisdiction on the Arbitral Award of 10/03/1889 in the UK's absence.
On September 21, Venezuela announced a public referendum to vote on the creation of a new Venezuelan state in the oil-rich Essequibo region, which is currently administered by Guyana and was previously colonized by the British. On October 30, Guyana requested ICJ to ask Venezuela not to proceed with the Consultative Referendum. On December 1, ICJ compelled Venezuela to refrain from taking any action. However, on December 3, Venezuela held a public referendum in which over 95% of voters approved a territorial claim to Essequibo. On December 5, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro ordered the immediate exploration of resources in the annexed territory.
The rising tensions were accompanied by military exercises. On December 7, the US Southern Command conducted flight operations with Guyana. On December 24, the UK MoD announced the deployment of an offshore patrol vessel to Guyana. Following this, President Nicolás Maduro announced a 6,000-strong military exercise near the border with Guyana on December 28.
On December 14, within the framework of talks facilitated by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and CARICOM, both countries issued a joint declaration in Saint Vincent and The Grenadines in which they committed to a peaceful solution to border issues within international law, including the Geneva Agreement, signed between Venezuela and the UK on 02/17/1966. The agreement stipulated that the 1899 declaration by the Paris Tribunal of Arbitration awarding the territory to former British Guiana was null and void. tbs, run

HAITI (INTER-GANG RIVALRY)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 2020

Conflict parties: G9 Alliance vs. Gpèp

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



upgraded (> 1,080 deaths)

The war over sub-national predominance and resources between rival gangs continued.

In 2023, around 100 gangs operated in the capital Port-au-Prince and controlled at least 75 percent of the city's territory. The two most influential gang alliances, G9, led by former police officer Jimmy "Barbecue" Chérizier, and the Gpèp, led by Gabriel "Ti Gabriel" Jean-Pierre, continued to fight for control in the capital.

In addition to clashes between gangs in 2023, gangs increasingly targeted police officers and stations. On January 25, the Baz Gran Grif gang killed seven officers in the police office of Liancourt, Artibonite department. On January 26, police officers and members of the group Fantom 509, an armed group of current and former police officers, demonstrated in different cities and accused the government of supporting gang activities. On February 22, the de Kokorat San Ras gang forced police officers to leave their station in Estère commune, Artibonite, by shooting at them with machine guns. The police officers fled the town.

In response to gang-violence and the lack of coherent government response, citizens organized vigilante groups. For instance, on April 24, police confiscated weapons and other equipment during a search of a minibus with more than a dozen armed passengers in the Canapé Vert quarter in Port-au-Prince. A mob, witnessing the police operation, stoned and burned alive at least twelve passengers, assuming they were gang members. This incident set a precedent for the emegence of the Bwa Kale movement, a citizen group that aims at self-justice and tracks down and kills gang members. From April 24 to June 24, the Bwa Kale movement killed 204 alleged gang members in eight of the ten departments of the country. On May 2, members of the Bwa Kale movement alleged killed six gang members in the Pétion-Ville quarter in Port-au-Prince

The international community continued to be concerned with the security situation in Haiti. On February 16, Canada announced the deployment of two navy patrol vessels to Haiti in response to the country's request for assistance. On June 8 the IOM counted 165,000 internally displaced persons due to gang violence in Haiti. According to a UNHCR report from November 28 a total of 3,960 people have been killed, 1,432 injured and 2,951 kidnapped in gang-related violence in 2023. On September 22, Prime Minister Ariel Henry reiterated his appeal from October 2022 for international support at the UNGA. On October 2, the UNSC voted in favor of an international intervention force led by Kenya to combat armed gang violence in Haiti. On November 16, the Kenyan parliament approved the deployment of 1,000 police officers as part of the UNSC-approved multinational security support mission.

CS

HAITI (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | 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 Petit Dessalines, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.

On January 9, the remaining ten remaining senators left office, officially leaving Haiti without a functioning parliament. On January 11, the National Consensus Agreement was published. The agreement was signed between the acting PM and representatives of several political parties, civil society organizations, and the private sector on 12/21/22, and established the High Council of the Transition (HCT) and a Supervisory Body for Government Action. The HCT was formally installed on February 6. On October 25, the Haitian opposition officially launched a new political alliance called United Front for an Effective and Sustainable Way Out of the Crisis to achieve the set-up of a transnational executive in accordance with the constitution. The oppositional Fanmi Lavalas and Petit Dessalines are neither part of the coalition nor signed the agreement. On January 1, the acting PM Ariel Henry declared that the electoral process would take place this year, but as of December 31, they had not.

On October 10, a former Haitian senator pleaded guilty to providing vehicles and firearms to assassinate President Jovenel Moïse on 7/7/21. On December 19, the US federal court in Miami sentenced him to life in prison. The socio-economic, institutional, and security situation in Haiti further deteriorated throughout 2023. The country continued to experience widespread gang violence [→ Haiti (inter-gang rivalry)]. According to the World Freedom Index, Haiti fell 29 places compared to the previous year, ranking 99 of 180 countries.

SW

HONDURAS (BAJO AGUÁN)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2009

Conflict parties: peasants, peasants unions vs. government, land-owning companies

Conflict items: resources

The violent crisis over resources between private landowners and companies on the one hand, and local farmers' communities and environmental activists on the other, continued. Throughout the year at least 24 people, mostly environmental activists, and leaders of farmers organizations, who had denounced threats by private corporations, were killed by paramilitary groups or in clashes with the national police.

There were mostly targeted attacks on leaders of Farmers' Cooperatives. For instance, on January 18, the President of Los Laureles Agricultural Cooperative was killed in the Los Laureles neighborhood in Tocoa, Colón. On March 25, a representative of the same cooperative was killed in the Los

Laureles neighborhood in Tocoa. On June 15, members of a paramilitary group killed a member of the Municipal Committee for the Defense of Common and Public Property of Tocoa. On September 24, a member of a paramilitary group killed the secretary general of the Cooperativa Agropecuaria Campesina Tarros Limitada.
Moreover, confrontations between corporations' security guards and the national police on the one hand, and farmers' families on the other, left several injured. For example, on January 9, private security guards of the agro-industry company Dinant and Honduran Police injured two people during an eviction attempt of 190 families from the El Chile Agricultural Cooperative in Colón province.
On October 14, members of the National Police confronted families of the Empresa Asociativa Campesina Isletas as these families attempted to recover part of the land assigned to them in agrarian reform processes in Sonaguera town, Colón. The police shot the families and killed a farmer, also detaining and torturing a member of the Cooperative. On November 24, the police and special forces evicted at least 100 farmers families in Sonaguera, under court order. cap

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, such as Barrio18 and MS-13, as well as international drug trafficking organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
The official homicide rate decreased by 16.5 percent compared to the previous year, Honduras still had the second highest murder rate in Latin America with a rate of 35 per 100,000 inhabitants. National police reports state that 2023 rivalries between gangs and drug trafficking groups have led to 37 massacres, in which 185 people have been killed.
On March 31, President Xiomara Castro announced the second stage of the national plan to combat gang violence in the country, which ordered the suspension of constitutional freedoms and extended the state of emergency declared at the end of 2022 for up to six months. During this period, the elite gang task force (DIPAMPCO) captured and detained more than 1,000 gang members of Mara Salvatrucha MS-13 and Barrio18.
On June 20, a confrontation between members of the MS-13 and Barrio18 gangs in the CEFAS female penitentiary center in the state of Támara left 48 women dead. On June 24, heavily armed men entered a billiard hall in the city of Choloma, killing 13 people and injuring another. As a result of both instances, the military police of public order (PMOP) assumed command of all penitentiary centers of the country and the government imposed curfews in several places in the north of the country.
Throughout the year, various prison riots led to numerous casualties. For instance, on July 15, inmate gang members tried to take control of the Danlí prison in the state of El Paraíso. In this riot, one person was killed and two were injured. The Honduran government increased measures to regain control in prisons. For instance, On July 11 the PMOP transferred more than 1,600 gang members between prisons.
Honduran authorities have evidenced transformations in the dynamics of drug-trafficking. Accordingly, national and international drug trafficking organizations planted coca fields near processing laboratories and transport hubs. PMOP reports indicated a shift from cocaine transit to production in the country. The proliferation of coca leaf plantations and clandestine laboratories increased in the states of Olancho, La Mosquita, Atlántida and Colón. Between January and May 2023, the PMOP destroyed at least 3 million coca plants and shut down 16 drug laboratories, significantly exceeding the total amount of seizures made during the same period in the previous year.
On August 8, the national police apprehended a drug trafficker sought for extradition by the United States in Limón, Colón state. Hours later, suspected members of the trafficking organization set fire to the Limón police station in retaliation for the arrest.
dll

HONDURAS (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	↗	Start:	2009

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

The non-violent crisis over orientation of the system and national power between the government of President Xiomara Castro and various opposition groups and parties escalated to a violent crisis.
Beginning on January 25, the government and opposition disagreed over the nominations of the Supreme Court, which was resolved on February 16, after Libre lowered their number of nominated judges from eight to six.
On August 16, the Vice President Salvador Nasralla established the Bloque Ciudadano de Oposición (BOC), a platform intended to facilitate the articulation of opposition parties' interests. From August to December, BOC called for at least six opposition protests in various regions. For example on August 19, 20,000 participants gathered in the capital Tegucigalpa.
On May 31, the congress announced the Nomination Board for the selection of a new Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General. The congress failed to meet consensus before September 1, the beginning of the terms of the prosecutors
On October 31, the President of the National Congress called for an extraordinary meeting of the board of directors to establish a permanent commission to appoint an interim prosecutor despite of oppositional voices against the proposal. At the same time, clashes took place inside and outside the national congress, as Libre supporters attacked deputies of the National Party as well as police officers, injuring at least three people.
jas

JAMAICA (DRUG GANGS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2010

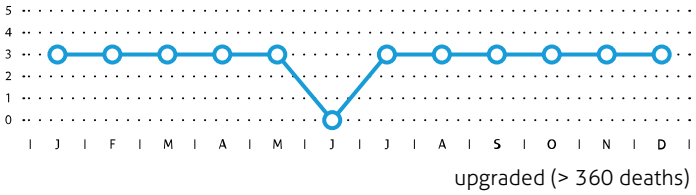
Conflict parties: drug gangs vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance between various drug gangs and the government continued.
Several violent clashes between police forces and gang members occurred. On February 6, the police killed two alleged members of the Blue Window gang in a shootout in Saint Andrew parish, Surrey county. On February 8, the security forces killed the alleged gang leader of the Tankwell Hill gang in a clash in Longville Park, Clarendon parish, Middlesex county. On July 11, security forces killed a leading member of Alliance Gang in Crawford Street, Montego Bay City, Saint James parish.
On October 8, the Klansman Gang Trial, which had started on 09/20/21, was concluded. It ended with the conviction of 15 members of the One Don gang, including their leader. This was the largest conviction of gang members since the introduction of the Anti-gang Criminal Justice Act in 2014, although it did not end the violent confrontations between the gangs and the government.
The end of the year saw an increase in violence. On November 6, a gunman killed three people, among them two schoolchildren, in Flower Hill main road, which the Jamaican National Security Minister coined as a "terrorist" act. On November 8, Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced a state of emergency in Saint James parish. On November 11, the police shot and killed a man, who was previously acquitted in the Klansman-One Don Gang trial, in a raid in Wynter's Pen area, Spanish Town, Saint Catherine parish, Middlesex county. On December 28, security forces conducted an operation in Spanish town, Saint Catherine parish, in search of members of the Klansman gang. During this, the police shot one member of the Tesha Miller faction of the Klansman gang.
In total there were 1101 shooting incidents this year, according to the Jamaica Constabulary Force, marking a 6 percent decrease compared to 2022. The independent commission of investigations reported 235 fatal shootings in which security forces were involved.
eth

MEXICO (DRUG CARTELS)

Intensity: 4 | Change: • | Start: 2006

Conflict parties: drug cartels vs. vigilante groups vs. government
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



upgraded (> 360 deaths)

The limited war over subnational predominance and the production, trade, and trafficking of illegal drugs and other illicit activities between various drug cartels and vigilante groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. The most active drug cartels were the Gulf Cartel, Northeastern Cartel (CDN), Sinaloa Cartel (CDS), Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), and their respective splinter groups.
The government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador continued its counter drug strategy better known for the anti-war slogan "hugs not bullets", while deploying the military against drug cartels. Furthermore, heavy fighting over local predominance between drug cartels continued [→ Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. Mexico's homicide rate remained high.
2023 began with the high level arrest of the son of Joaquín Archivaldo Guzmán Loera alias El Chapo Guzmán on January 5 in Culiacán city, Sinaloa state. This triggered several blockages and confrontations between soldiers and members of CDS on the same day that 10 soldiers and 19 cartel members were killed, 35 people were injured, and 21 arrests were made by the military.
On March 17, an operation led by the municipal police and public security secretariat raided a home and freed four hostages in Cuauhtémoc neighborhood, San Antonio la Isla town, State of Mexico. The confrontation left three police officers and one CJNG member dead. On September 2, in Teocaltiche city, Jalisco state, CJNG members attacked the mayor. The cartel members killed two police officers protecting the mayor in the shootout.
As in the previous year CJNG members continued to heavily attack police officers on numerous occasions. For instance, on April 4, CJNG members attacked police officers investigating a series of homicides in the border area between Morelia and Tarímbaro municipalities, Michoacán state, leaving two officers dead. Furthermore, CJNG members threatened police officers on October 14 in Reforma city, Chiapas state. They left two severed heads and a note at the local police station. On November 25, the National Guard arrested the head of CJNG in Tapalpa city, Jalisco state, for allegedly authoring the kidnapping of an army colonel on 12/10/2022 in Nuevo Laredo city, eponymous municipality, Tamaulipas state
CDN members also conducted a large number of attacks on security forces. For instance, on July 26, CDN members shot at police officers while on patrol in Hidalgo city, Coahuila state, leaving two dead and four injured. On October 15, a confrontation between Nuevo León Civil Force officers and CDN members arose after the seizure of a shipment with alleged drug supplies belonging to the cartel in Anáhuac town, Nuevo León state. The shootout left three officers injured. bho

MEXICO (EZLN / CHIAPAS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1994

Conflict parties: EZLN vs. ORCAO vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources, other

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, autonomy and resources between the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), on the one hand, and the paramilitary group Organization of Coffee Growers of Ocosingo (ORCAO) and the government, on the other, continued. EZLN continued to express their grievances towards the government regarding the treatment of indigenous communities in Chiapas state.

In recent years, EZLN had taken a strong stance against President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's plans for economic development, as they argue that his megaprojects, such as the Maya Train project in Chiapas, would damage indigenous land through deforestation, negatively impacting local communities.
Interactions between EZLN and the government remained non-violent. On October 6 and 12, EZLN's demonstrators and their supporters criticized López Obrador for remaining silent as they argued that increased violence in the region meant Chiapas was on the verge of civil war. Chiapas had experienced an increase in violence related to the presence of drug cartels and paramilitary groups [→ Mexico (drug cartels)]. This caused tensions in the area to rise, as violence towards indigenous communities resulted in large-scale displacement. On October 10, an armed group kidnapped 20 members of the Tzeltal indigenous community, who were then released five days later. In this context, residents of Chicomuselo community, Chiapas, organised a march for peace in the region on October 12.
Clashes over indigenous land and resources occurred between Zapatista communities and ORCAO. Human rights and indigenous groups reported that, on May 23, an indigenous Tzeltal member and EZLN supporter was shot and taken to the hospital. Between June 19 and 22, ORCAO carried out attacks against Zapatista communities, which included the burning of plots of land. nab

MEXICO (PUBLIC SECURITY)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: normalistas, social movements vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and the handling of public security between trainee teachers, so-called normalistas, and associated social movements, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
On February 3, a group of around 100 normalistas demonstrated at San Cristobal de las Casas municipality, Chiapas state, to demand the hiring of workers at Mactumactzá Rural Normal School. Police fired tear gas during the demonstration. An unknown person set fire to a platform that the normalistas had installed at the demonstration, injuring one person.
As in previous years, normalistas regularly occupied toll booths to charge money from people crossing, as for example on January 6 done by a group of normalistas from Ayotzinapa town, Guerrero state. When the National Guard arrived, attempting to evict them, the normalistas utilized a trailer to defend themselves and attacked them with glass bottles and stones. This incident left 25 injured, including both normalistas and National Guard. On September 23, a group of 30 normalistas seized public transportation buses to drive to the San Pablo Huitzo toll booth, Oaxaca state. On October 6, normalistas from Jacinto Canek Indigenous Intercultural Normal School occupied a toll booth at San Cristobal de las Casas municipality. The police tried to evict them by using tear gas. The normalistas defended their position by throwing sticks and stones at them. As a result, four policemen were injured.
In the last months of the year normalista protests concentrated on Tuxtla Gutierrez city, Chiapas. For example, on November 10, normalistas from Mactumactzá Rural Normal School attacked the local government headquarters. They broke down its fence and set fire to the main entrance of the building to demand the closure of 95 investigations against them. They were repelled by riot police, who fired tear gas. On December 6, normalistas from the same school threw molotov cocktails and firecrackers at a company's workshop area located next to their campus. Shortly after, riot police clashed with them, leaving three normalistas and one officer injured. fza

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 the orientation of the political system between women and human rights activists, indigenous groups, and feminist organizations, on the one hand, and the Mexican government, on the other, continued. Women's groups continued to protest in support of a wide range of issues, including reproductive rights, femicides, economic inequality, and indigenous rights.
Up until October, the government reported 694 femicide cases, in comparison to the 858 cases documented the previous year. Throughout the year, several nationwide and municipal protests occurred, of which most remained peaceful. However, on March 8, protesters and police forces clashed during International Women's Day marches in the capital, Mexico City, and in the city of Monterrey, Nuevo León state. Police forces used tear gas against the protesters, injuring 37 in Mexico City. Additionally, protesters damaged vehicles and infrastructure in both cities.
Women demanded abortion rights, as only eleven of the 32 Mexican states had legalized the procedure by the end of last year. On September 5, the Supreme Court decriminalized abortion at the federal level, requiring medical institutions to provide the service for free, whilst ensuring that medical personnel would not be criminalized.
On October 9, the feminist collective No Es Una Somos Todas blocked the entrances and exits of the attorney general's office in Mexico City. They demanded that there would be no exceptions from punishment for femicides or incidences of gender-based violence, and clashed with the police. abd

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.
Border security used force against migrants. For instance, on January 6, a border patrol agent slammed a migrant into a wall before throwing him to the ground in El Paso city,

Texas state, USA. On March 27, 39 migrants died and dozens were injured in a fire in an immigration detention facility in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua state, Mexico. UNHCR called for an investigation into potential mishandling of the situation by center staff.
Increases in migration were reportedly connected to increases in Mexican cartel violence [→ Mexico (inter-cartel rivalry, paramilitary groups)]. For instance, on December 30 or 31, armed gunmen kidnapped 31 migrants traveling by bus in the municipality of Reynosa, Tamaulipas state, Mexico. As groups like Doctors Without Borders report, women face an especially high risk of sexual violence around migration hotspots.
On May 11, new strict migration policies in the US led to a drop in migration numbers. However, they rose again from September onwards. In December, more than 300,000 people were on track to cross the border, setting a record monthly high.
The US Congress adjourned on December 21 with a potential government shut down on the horizon as spending had not been agreed upon yet as some Republicans tied aid to Ukraine in its ongoing fight against Russia [→ Russia-Ukraine] to tighter border and migration measures.
Further, the state of Texas clashed with the US government over its handling of the border. From July 7, Texas deployed floating barriers on the Rio Grande close to Eagle Pass, as well as wire fences and border troops. On July 24, the US justice department sued Texas over the floating barriers, while on October 24, Texas' attorney general in turn sued federal agents to prevent them from cutting razor wire along the border.
On August 31, the New York Times reported that more than 500 people had already died in 2023. In September, an IOM report based on data from 2022 found that the border between Mexico and the US is the deadliest land migration route. For 2023, the IOM listed 562 migrants as missing in connection with the US-Mexico border.
Many of the deaths were in connection to extreme heat exposure, drowning, falls from border walls or other migration route obstacles, rather than from violent encounters with border security forces. For instance, in the fiscal year 2023, more than 100 of 148 reported deaths in the El Paso region were recorded in the hottest period between May and September. Further, between July 1 and 4, four people drowned in the Rio Grande/Río Bravo river, Texas state, USA, along the border.
swe

NICARAGUA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	2	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 and ideology in Nicaragua between various opposition groups and anti-government protestors, on the one hand, and the government of President Daniel Ortega's Sandista National Liberation Front (FSLN) on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
The government targeted increasingly oppositional figures and persecuted NGOs. Many opponents had to abandon Nicaragua and faced arbitrary deprivation of their nationality and assets. For instance, on February 9, 222 Nicaraguan political prisoners were released from prison but had to leave the country and lost their citizenship. Seven of the released prisoners were former presidential candidates who were excluded from the 2021 elections. On June 9, the government confiscated the property of various expelled opposition members. On August 22, the government declared the Jesuit order illegal and confiscated their property. The government continued to restrict the work of NGOs. For instance, on May 10, the government voted to disband the Nicaraguan Red Cross, accusing it of "attacks on peace and stability" during demonstrations in 2018.
On October 24, one of Ortega's top advisers took possession of Nicaragua's Supreme Court. The government fired and arrested high-profile judges and civil servants.
At the end of the year, the Nicaraguan government arrested an increasing number of important church representatives, for instance, a priest in Matagalpa on December 20. Relations between the Ortega regime and the Catholic Church are under tension, marked by the expulsion and imprisonment of priests, the prohibition of religious activities, and the suspension of diplomatic relations with the Vatican.
The repression of oppositional figures, the press and religious freedom continued to raise international attention. Dozens of member states of the Organization of American States and the UN condemned the repression and systematic human rights violations of the Ortega government.
spy

PERU (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	2008

Conflict parties:	opposition movements vs. government
Conflict items:	system/ideology, resources

The 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, continued. In December 2022, the ousting and arrest of former President Castillo and assumption of presidency by Dina Boularte had sparked large protests in several cities. Socio-ecological issues played a lesser role this year.
Throughout the year, anti-government-protests continued, mostly in the south of the country, often including roadblocks. Protesters called for the resignation of President Boularte, the closure of Congress, changes to the constitution and the release of Castillo from custody. More than 20,000 people took part and over 30,000 police officers were deployed with frequent clashes erupting between protesters and the police. Protests were particularly frequent in the first quarter of the year. For example, on January 9, approx. 9,000 anti-government protesters attempted to enter the airport and the local police station in Juliaca, Puno region. The police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. During the event, security forces killed 17 protesters, while the latter attacked and burned a police officer to death. Approx. 70 people were injured during the clash.
Two days later, on January 11, protestors attempted to enter the airport in Cusco, Cusco province. The police used tear gas to disperse the crowd while protesters threw stones. During the protest, police killed one protester while 37 others as well as six police officers were injured. Following the clash, the government declared a state of emergency in the capital

of Lima and the regions of Cusco and Puno as well as the constitutional province of Callo. In separate protests over the following days, police killed at least one protester in Macusani, Puno region, and one in the La Libertad region. On January 28, police killed one and injured dozens of demonstrators during a protest march in Lima. On February 3, Congress declared that the presidential election would not be moved to an earlier date, from 2026 to 2024, citing a procedural error. During clashes between law enforcement and anti-government protesters 50 people, about 25 demonstrators and 25 officers, were injured in the city of Jualica, Puno region. On February 9, 16 people, ten protestors and 6 police officers, were injured in serious confrontations in the province of Chucuito, Puno region, on March 4. On July 19, six civilians and two police officers were injured during demonstrations in Lima and various other parts of the country.
mgm

USA (RACIAL TENSIONS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: anti-discrimination protesters vs. right-wing extremist groups vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over structural racism in society and in particular in the justice system and law enforcement between civil society groups and predominantly anti-discrimination protesters, on the one hand, and right-wing groups as well as government actors, especially law enforcement, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, on-duty police officers used excessive and sometimes fatal levels of violence when interacting with Black men on multiple occasions. The incidents often occurred during house searches or traffic stops and frequently resulted in severe injuries. For instance, on January 7, during a traffic stop, police officers in Memphis, Tennessee state, repeatedly beat and tasered a Black person, who died of his injuries three days later. Further, on September 29, police in Jacksonville, Florida state, beat and tasered another Black man when he attempted to flee from a traffic stop, causing severe physical injuries. Some of these incidents prompted protests against police violence, involving several dozen to several hundred participants, which took place in various locations throughout the US. Overall these protests remained peaceful. For example, the release of the bodycam footage from the former incident resulted in protests all over the country, with more than a hundred protesters in Memphis on January 27.
Moreover, tensions remained high between law enforcement as well as parts of the Republican Party, on the one hand, and anti-discrimination protesters and activists, on the other. In April, on two separate occasions in the states of Oklahoma and California, racist text messages were discovered to have been circulated widely among members of the police force. Furthermore, Republican lawmakers campaigned for or signed legislation limiting access to race-related education, as well as voting access. For instance, on June 15, the governor of Texas banned diversity and inclusion offices in universities statewide. These incidents also caused protests in several locations and were cited by anti-discrimination activists as further grounds for mistrusting law enforcement, as well as parts of the political system.
Additionally, several xenophobic incidents among civilians occurred. They included threats and verbal or physical assault against members of ethnic minority groups, such as the Asian and Black community, as well as members or ostensible members of religious minority communities [→ USA (right-wing extremists)]. For instance, on June 17, a Japanese diplomat was injured in an attack in Portland, Oregon state.
sob

USA (RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1990

Conflict parties: right-wing extremist groups vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over ideology and the orientation of the political system between various right-wing extremist groups, as well as far-right Christian nationalist groups, and those within the Republican Party who question the legitimacy of the government, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Several members and supporters of right-wing and Christian nationalist groups, including prominent Republican Party candidates running for office, called for an overthrow of the government, as well as extrajudicial arrests and executions of supporters and members of the Democrat Party, other political figures, and medical personnel. For instance, right-wing groups called for civil war online throughout March. They also condoned violence against, or incited attacks on, minority groups, particularly LGBTIQ+ persons.
Furthermore, numerous political candidates within the Republican Party, including former president Donald Trump, questioned the legitimacy of the Democrat-led government, called for the disruption of democratic proceedings and the rule of law, threatened violence against political opponents, and advocated for or implemented legislation restricting the rights of Black voters, LGBTIQ+ persons, and women. For instance, in January, Texas state lawmakers worked on legislation against gender-affirming care for trans individuals. Further, on September 22, Trump stated on social media that the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be sentenced to death for actions during Trump's presidency. Christian nationalist activists and lawmakers additionally espoused the abolition of the separation of church and state, and in some cases campaigned for legislation weakening it.
Moreover, right-wing activists attempted or carried out various attacks on members of minority groups or political opponents. For instance, on May 6, a man wearing neo-Nazi insignia opened fire with an AR-15 assault rifle at a shopping mall in Dallas, Texas state, killing eight people and wounding seven others before being shot dead by police officers. Furthermore, several attacks on political figures were prevented. For example, on May 22, an alleged neo-Nazi drove a car into a security barrier near the White House in the capital Washington, D.C. in a suspected attempted attack on President Joe Biden. Throughout the year, both anti-Muslim and antisemitic incidents occurred, intensifying in the wake of the Israel-Palestinian conflict that escalated in October [→ Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)]. For example, on October 14, a landlord assaulted a Palestinian-American family with

a knife near Chicago, Illinois state, in an alleged hate crime, killing an underage person and critically injuring another. On November 25, three Palestinian students were shot and injured in Burlington, Vermont state, allegedly for wearing traditional Palestinian scarves, which student groups, several politicians and a UN spokesperson condemned. Moreover, the Anti-Defamation League reported a rise of about 400 percent in antisemitic incidents between October 7 and 23.
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 1, US President Joe Biden declared that Venezuela continued to pose a threat to US national security and foreign policy and consequently extended the duration of Executive Order 13692. The order has provided a foundation for sanctions against Venezuela since 03/08/2015. However, in the ongoing negotiations between the government and the opposition [→ Venezuela (opposition)], the US Office of Foreign Assets Control issued a license that allowed transactions for the negotiation of settlement agreements with the opposition-controlled National Assembly of Venezuela on May 1.
On October 18, both parties signed an electoral roadmap in Barbados and the US Embassy in Venezuela, subsequently granted relief of sanctions regarding the oil and gas sector, gold mining, and the secondary trading ban. The US further informed the Venezuelan government that electoral bans on oppositional candidates must be lifted by November 30 for more sanctions to be eased. On October 30, the Venezuelan Supreme Court suspended the election of María Corina Machado, the candidate from the Democratic Unity Roundtable for the 2024 presidential elections, and banned her from running for office. Machado appealed her ban in December after the Venezuelan government announced, on November 30, that opposition candidates barred from public office could appeal their ban to the Supreme Court.
On December 1, the US announced its intention to pause sanctions relief if there was no further progress in agreeing on the release of political prisoners. Mediated by Qatar, both governments agreed on a prisoner swap deal on December 20, exchanging ten American citizens imprisoned in Venezuela for a Colombian businessman, who was accused of money laundering and imprisoned in the US. The deal included the release of at least 20 political prisoners in Venezuela.
krz

VENEZUELA (FARC DISSIDENTS)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2020

Conflict parties: ELN, government, Segunda Marquetalia vs. FARC dissidents
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources, such as the trade and trafficking of illegal drugs and gold between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army (FARC-EP) dissidents, especially the 10th and 28th Front on the one hand, and the Venezuelan state, with the support of the FARC dissidents of the Segunda Marquetalia and the National Liberation Army (ELN) on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
While in Arauca province, on the Colombian side of the border, violent confrontations between the dissidents and the ELN continued [→ Colombia (FARC dissidents)], no clashes were reported in Venezuela. On June 4, however, the ELN announced that the group's fight against the FARC dissidents in the border region would continue.
Since the beginning of the year, the National Bolivarian Armed Forces of Venezuela (FANB) targeted in several operations the economic base of the FARC dissidents. Through these operations, the FANB seized several tons of drugs in various Venezuelan states, as well as aircrafts associated with drug smuggling, and shut down clandestine landing strips and camps used for illegal mining.
On July 6, reports emerged about the death of Luciano Marín Arango alias Iván Márquez, the leader of the dissident group Segunda Marquetalia, who had allegedly died from injuries sustained in an attack on 6/29/2022. On August 2, Segunda Marquetalia released an audio recording of Márquez, suggesting the death reports to be false. On October 16, a bilateral ceasefire was agreed between the dissidents of the Central General Staff (EMC) and the Colombian government. The negotiations in Colombia are relevant for the Venezuelan government, FARC-dissidents and ELN in Venezuela, due to the presence of the dissidents on both sides of the border.
dlz

VENEZUELA (INDIGENOUS GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1988

Conflict parties: indigenous groups vs. government, miners
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between indigenous groups, on the one hand, and the government and miners, on the other, continued.
On February 7, unknown actors entered the Uwottüja people's territory and attacked them in Autana municipality, Amazonas state. Following the incident, the Uwottüja people publicly asked the state authorities for support. On April 3, miners shot at indigenous groups that entered the area to stop mining activities at the Iguapo river, Alto Orinoco municipality, Amazonas state. At least one person was injured.
Further, indigenous people clashed with the National Bolivar-

ian Armed Forces of Venezuela (FANB) executing Operation Autana 2023 in Amazonas state. Operation Autana was launched on 08/18/2022 with the stated goal of "voluntarily evacuating" illegal mining camps [→ Venezuela (mining)]. On May 26, the military seized over five tons of logistical supplies from a vessel that arrived from Colombia to Yapacana National Park, Amazonas state. On May 28, a group of indigenous people presented themselves with bows and arrows in front of the FANB military base in Yapacana National Park. FANB met the group by shooting in the air. The FANB chief of the Strategic Operations Command stated the group was in a state of "mental disturbance" and was allegedly hired by foreign miners to recover the supplies. On July 4, one indigenous person of the Cubeo ethnic group stated in a video message that he had requested the military stop the eviction of the Cubeo people. The video message further stated that the request was met by the military commander with threats. During a FANB evacuation in Yapacana National Park that was met with resistance, one Yekuana person was injured, on September 6. On December 17, the Pemon people denounced a raid conducted by at least 70 FANB troops saying they were threatened with weapons and pushed into the ZODI operational area, Bolivar state. krz

VENEZUELA (MEGA-GANGS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: Carlos Capa vs. Tren de Aragua vs. Tren de Guyana vs. El Wilexis vs. Yeico Masacre vs. various gangs vs. government

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources between various so-called mega-gangs and the government continued.

Throughout the year, Venezuelan security forces launched 18 mass operations across 16 federal states.

Gang violence in José Felix Ribas neighborhood in Sucre municipality, Miranda state, continued. For instance, on January 5, a clash between Los Chicorrios and El Pelón gangs left four people dead in zone 10. On April 23, Los Chicorrios and El Wilexis clashed and killed six. On July 28, authorities killed three gang members, including Wilexis' second-in-command. Furthermore, authorities targeted the Tren del Llano gang. In Guárico state, Operation Pedro Zaraza targeted the gang's logistical infrastructure and left at least three dead in different encounters throughout March. On April 14, a raid against a Tren del Llano-stash in La Reforma sector, José Félix Ribas municipality, left two soldiers dead. On November 18, Guárico police killed three members of the Tren del Llano-affiliated Negro Azul gang in José Félix Ribas municipality.

Security forces also pursued the Huérfano Masacre gang. On April 15 and 22, special forces killed gang members in Agua Fría, Zulia state, and in El Papayal sector, Falcón state. On June 15, a designated unit shot dead another member in Cabimas city, Zulia state.

Government forces intensified operations against Tren de Aragua leaders. On February 2, nearly a hundred gang members attacked an army and police outpost in Santos Michelena municipality, Aragua state. On March 23, the Directorate of Strategic and Tactical Actions (DAET) police unit killed one of the presumed leading attackers, in Mariño municipality, Sucre state, as part of the operation Cacique Maracay-Jabalí. On September 20, 11,000 troops and police personnel seized control of Tocorón prison facility in Aragua. As a result, authorities killed at least eleven inmates and two fugitive Tren de Aragua-members the following day and on October 3.

Security forces took over at least eight major gang-controlled prison centers. For instance, on October 24, the takeover of Tocuyito Penitentiary Center, Carabobo state, left five inmates dead. On October 30, a leading member of Pata'e Queso gang fled after authorities overtook Puente Ayala prison in Anzoátegui state. Despite the number of casualties, the Venezuelan Prison Centers Observatory claimed that prison takeovers were in fact negotiated surrenders of local gang groups to state authorities.

A UNHRC fact-finding mission reported on September 18 that DAET maintained the modus operandi of the disbanded Special Action Forces and committed human rights violations. The report claimed that DAET had participated in at least five operations between May and September 2022, supposedly targeting criminal groups. However, the operations did not lead to the killing or capture of gang leaders as relatives of most of the victims of these operations insisted they had not been involved in criminal activities. run

VENEZUELA (MINING)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2006

Conflict parties: El Perú vs. 3R vs. Tren de Guyana vs. El Talao vs. Sindicato de Barrancas vs. Juancho / Las Claritas Sindicate vs. ELN, government, various gangs

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over subnational predominance and resources – gold and rare earths – between mining gangs, such as El Perú, 3R, Tren de Guayana, El Talao, as well as Sindicato de Barrancas, and the Venezuelan government, alongside the National Liberation Army (ELN) and former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army guerrillas, now dissidents, as well as various other gangs in Southern Venezuela, continued.

Throughout the year, Venezuelan security forces continued the targeting of mining gangs' logistical infrastructure in Amazonas and Bolivar states. For instance, the Venezuelan security forces displaced informal miners in Yapacana National Park, Amazonas state throughout July. The seizing of mining camps in the protected park led to clashes among informal miners and indigenous communities [→ Venezuela (indigenous groups)]. On September 13, the National Bolivarian Armed Forces of Venezuela (FANB) killed at least three people in a confrontation with informal miners which left at least another six injured on both sides.

In Bolivar state, troops seized mining camps of the Juancho gang, in Sifontes municipality on behalf of Operation Roraima, which started on 08/18/22. On June 2 and 6, the military reported the seizing of mines in Serranía del Imataca, the first located to the south of Cuyuní river and the second in Dalla Costa parish. On July 12, FANB reported the displacement of 850 allegedly illegal miners from Imataca Forest Reserve, stretching in both Bolivar and Delta Amacuro states. On September 2, security forces dismantled a logistical camp attributed to 3R in the reserve. On February 1, the military destroyed a mining camp attributed to Tren de Guyana.

The seizing of mining camps often led to protests among the civil population. For instance, on August 27, informal miners denounced the heavy presence of troops in Tumeremo, Sifontes municipality, and the blocking of mining camps in El Bochinche and Corregente sector. On February 24, miners blocked Troncal 10 highway, Bolivar, and protested the capture of 49 miners of the Venezuelan state mining company by military counterintelligence.
run, krz

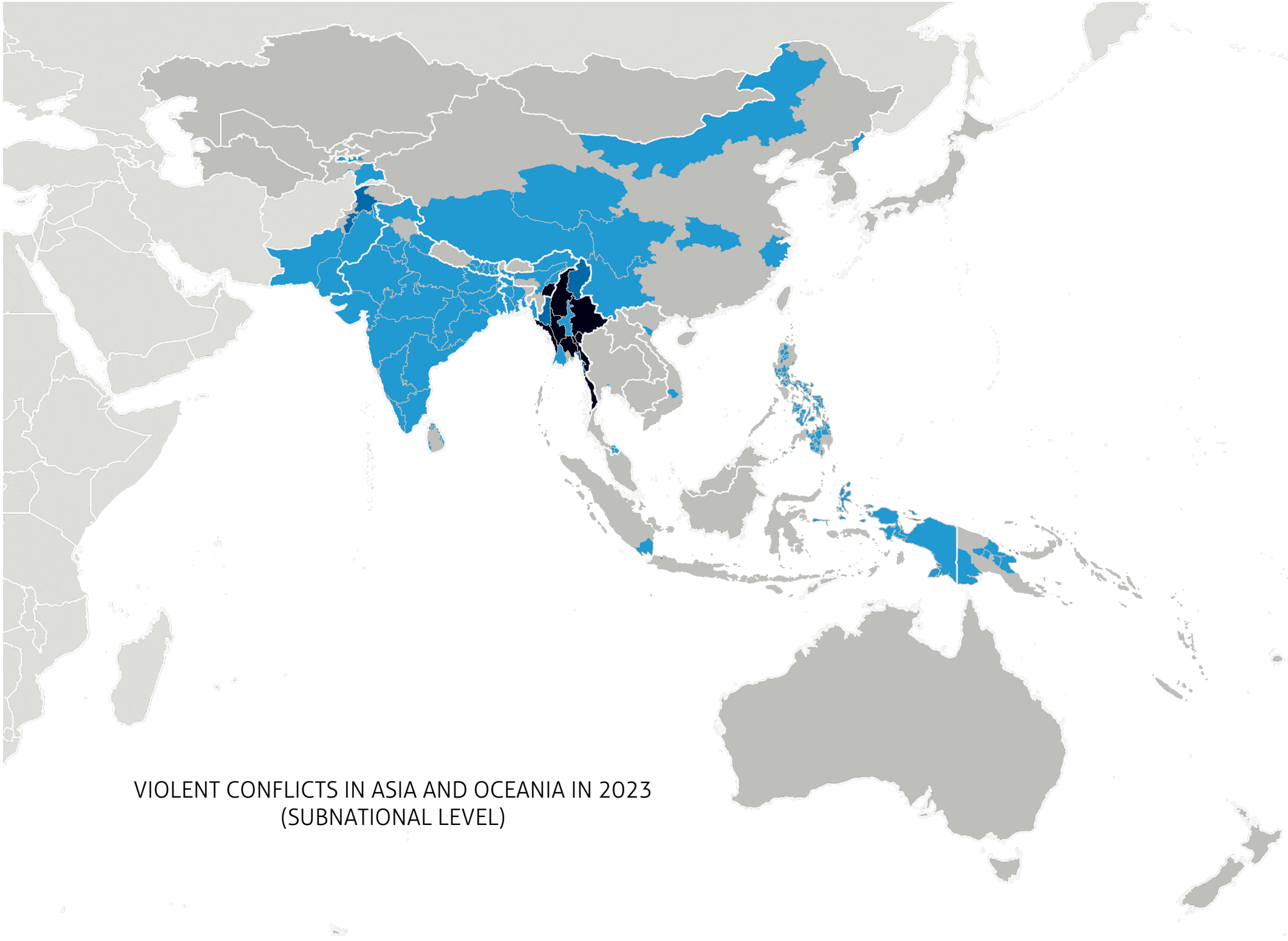
VENEZUELA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	2	Change:	•	Start:	1992

Conflict parties:	opposition parties vs. government, pro-government militias
Conflict items:	system/ideology, national power

The non-violent crisis over national power and subnational predominance between the Venezuelan government and pro-government militias on the one hand and members of the opposition, which operate under the name Unitary Platform (PUD) and various oppositional parties on the other hand, continued.
Several opposition parties jointly held primary elections on October 23 to determine a candidate against incumbent president Nicolás Maduro in the expected 2024 presidential election. During the electoral campaigns, government supporters disrupted the election rallies of opposition candidates in at least seven Venezuelan federal states. For instance, on August 15, supporters of the Chavista government attacked the election rally of opposition candidate Henrique Capriles in San Fernando de Apure, Apure state. This attack resulted in at least one injured person.
In the run-up to the primaries, leading opposition politicians received various types of threats. For instance on July 22, María Corina Machado received death threats at her party office in the municipality of García de Hevia, Táchira state. On June 30, the Comptroller's Office barred a number of oppositional leaders from holding public office for 15 years, among them, Machado, the winner of the opposition primaries on October 23.
During joint negotiations, facilitated by Norway in Barbados on October 17, the Venezuelan government and the PUD agreed to guidelines in order to enable free, independent elections in the coming year. Subsequently, the US temporarily lifted sanctions against the Venezuelan economy [→ Venezuela – USA].
One result of the agreements was the possibility for the barred opposition candidates to appeal their ban in court, of which Machado, among others, made use on December 15. In addition, Maduro's government and the US government continued bilateral negotiations, resulting in a prisoner swap deal and release of political prisoners on December 20. dlz

ASIA AND OCEANIA

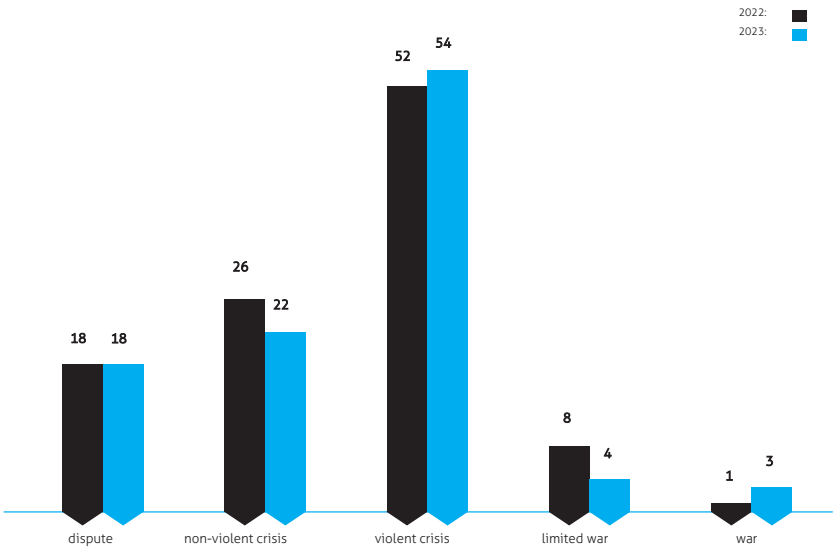


VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2023
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)

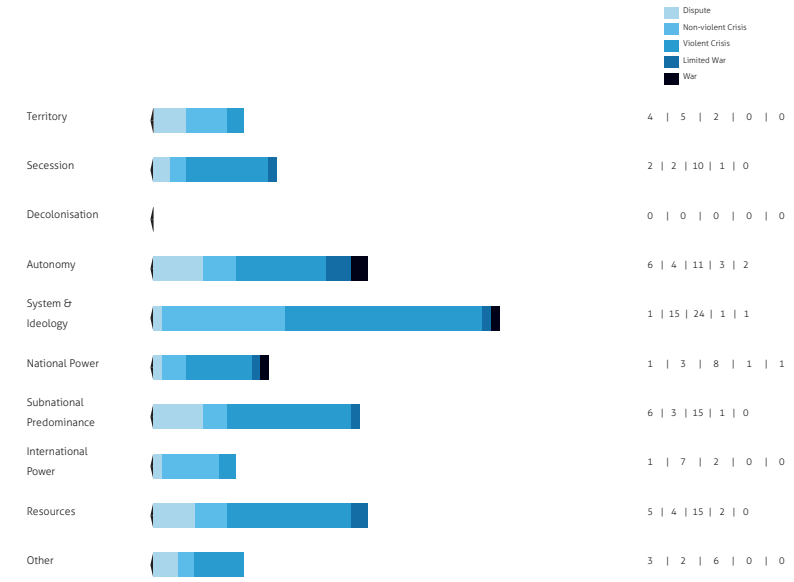
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

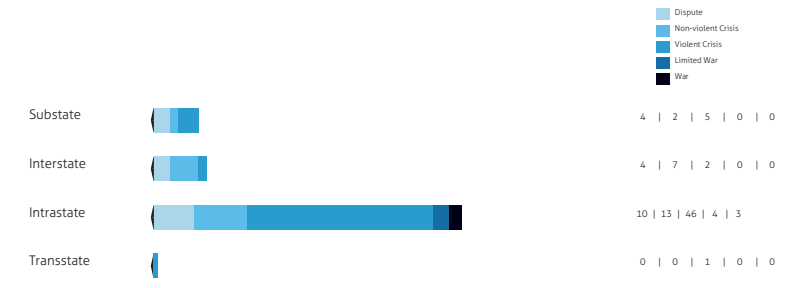
CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN ASIA AND OCEANIA IN 2023



Overview: Conflicts in Asia and Oceania in 2023

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts)*	PCJSS, UPDF, UPDF-Democratic vs. KNF, MNP vs. Bengali settlers vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	1971	•	3
Bangladesh (Islamist groups)*	AAI, Allah'r Dal], HuJI, HuT, JAFHS, JMB vs. government, Hindus	system/ideology, subnational predominance	1971	•	2
Bangladesh (opposition)*	BNP, HeI, ICS, JeI 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)*	ARSA vs. RSO vs. various gangs	subnational predominance	2018	•	3
Cambodia (opposition)*	CNRM, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1997	•	2
China (Christians)*	Christians vs. government	system/ideology	1949	•	3
China (Falun Gong et al.)*	Falun Gong vs. government	system/ideology	1999	↗	2
China (Hong Kong)*	pro-democracy groups, pro-independence groups vs. HKSAR government, PRC government	secession, autonomy, system/ideology	1997	•	2
China (Hui)*	government vs. Hui	system/ideology	1949	•	3
China (Inner Mongolia)*	Mongolian ethnic minorities vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1981	↗	3
China (Taiwan°)*	ROC vs. PRC	secession, system/ideology	1949	•	2
China (Tibet)*	CTA, ethnic Tibetans vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1950	↗	3
China (Uyghurs / Xinjiang)*	government vs. Uyghur, WUC	autonomy, system/ideology	1949	•	2
China – India*	India, PRC	territory, international power, resources	1954	↘	2
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, 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)*	opposition groups vs. government	national power	1987	↘	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. AAMSU, ABYSO, Bangladeshi immigrants vs. Adivasis et al. vs. government	subnational predominance, other	1979	•	3
India (Islamist militant groups)*	IS, JeM, JMB, LeT, PFI, SIMI vs. government	system/ideology	2000	↘	2
India (Kashmir)*	Al Badr, APHC, HM, JeM, LeT vs. government	secession, autonomy	1947	•	3
India (Kukis – Nagas)*	KIM, KLA, KNA, KNO, Kukis vs. Nagas, NNGP, NSCN-IM	subnational predominance	1992	↘	1
India (Mafia Raj)*	Sand Mafia, Timber Mafia vs. civil society actors, government	subnational predominance, resources, other	1986	•	3
India (Manipur)*	JCILPS, KCP, KNF, Kukis, KYKL, PLA, PREPAK, PREPAK-Pro, UNLF, ZRO vs. government vs. Meiteis	secession, autonomy, system/ideology, subnational predominance	1964	↗	4
India (Meghalaya)*	ANSC, HNLC vs. government	autonomy	1992	•	2
India (Nagalim)*	NSCN-IM, NSCN-K, NSCN-K-Khango, NSCN-K-NS, NSCN-KK, NSCN-KYA, NSCN-NK, 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)*	NLFT, NLFT-BM, NLFT-PD vs. government	secession, autonomy	1978	↓	1

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
India (Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes et al.)*	Gujjars, Jats, Marathas, Rajputs vs. government	system/ideology	1981	↗	3
India (Sikhs)*	Khalistan supporters, KTF, SFJ vs. Government	secession	1947	↗	3
India (ULFA-I et al. / Assam)*	AANLA, APLA, BLA, DNLA, KLO, KLO-KN, NLFB, ULFA, ULFA-I vs. government	secession, autonomy	1979	•	3
India - Pakistan*	India vs. Pakistan	territory, international power, resources	1947	↗	3
Indonesia (Aceh regional government – opposition / Aceh)*	opposition vs. Aceh regional government	subnational predominance, resources	2006	•	1
Indonesia (Aceh)*	Aceh regional government, KPA, PA vs. government	autonomy, resources	1953	•	1
Indonesia (Ahmadi)*	Ahmadi vs. Muslims	subnational predominance	1980	•	1
Indonesia (Christians – Muslims)*	Muslims vs. Christians	subnational predominance	1998	•	2
Indonesia (Islamist militants groups)*	JAD, JI et al. vs. government	system/ideology	1981	•	3
Indonesia (Papua)*	OPM, ULMWP et al. vs. government	secession, resources	1961	•	3
Indonesia – Timor-Leste*	Indonesia, Timor-Leste	territory, other	2002	NEW	1
Japan – Russia*	Russia vs. Japan	territory, international power, resources	1945	•	2
Japan – South Korea*	ROK vs. Japan	territory, other	1951	•	1
Japan, South Korea, USA – North Korea*	Japan, ROK, USA vs. DPRK	system/ideology, international power, other	1993	•	2
Kazakhstan (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2004	↓	2
Kyrgyzstan (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2005	↗	3
Kyrgyzstan – Tajikistan – Uzbekistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)*	Kyrgyz border communities, Kyrgyzstan vs. Uzbek border communities, Uzbekistan vs. Tajik border communities, Tajikistan	territory, international power	2000	↘	3
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 – Singapore*	Malaysia vs. Singapore	territory	1963	•	1
Maldives (opposition)*	government vs. opposition	national power	2003	•	3
Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)*	AA vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	2015	↗	5
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)*	Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), Karen National Defense Organisation (KNDO), Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), Karen National Union (KNU), Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), People's Revolution Alliance (Magway) vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	1948	↗	5
Myanmar (MNDAA / Shan State)*	MNDAA vs. Myanmar Army	subnational predominance, resources	1989	↗	4
Myanmar (opposition)*	Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), National League of Democracy (NLD), National Unity Government (NUG), People's Defense Forces (PDF) vs. Myanmar Army, Pyu Saw Htee militia	system/ideology, national power	1962	•	5
Myanmar (Rohingya)*	ARSA, Rohingya, RSO vs. Myanmar Army	subnational predominance, other	2012	↘	2
Myanmar (socioeconomic protests)*	Kachin Independence Army (KIA), local protesters vs. Myanmar Army, resource companies	resources	2007	↗	3
Myanmar (SSA / Shan State)*	RCSS (SSA-S), SSPP (SSA-N) vs. Myanmar Army	autonomy	1952	•	3

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
Myanmar (TNLA / Shan State)*	Myanmar Army vs. TNLA	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, various indigenous groups vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	1992	↑	3
Nepal (Madhesis, Tharus / Terai)*	Janamat Party, JSPN, JTMM vs. government	autonomy	2004	↓	1
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, BLF, BLT, BNA (militant group), BNA (political party), BNP-M, BRG vs. government	secession, resources	1948	•	3
Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)*	al-Qaeda, et al., IS-K, LeJ, TTP vs. government, political parties	autonomy, system/ideology, national power	2001	↗	4
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)*	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)*	Aiyala vs. Hulis vs. Engans vs. Nomali vs. Min vs. Punano vs. Yauna vs. various other tribes	subnational predominance, resources	1975	↘	3
Papua New Guinea (opposition)*	opposition vs. government vs. various electoral supporters	system/ideology, national power	2011	↓	2
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	↘	3
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	↓	1
Philippines (MILF)*	MILF vs. Philippine Government	autonomy, system/ideology, resources	1977	•	3
Philippines (MNLF)*	MNLF vs. government	secession, system/ideology, resources	1969	↑	3
Sri Lanka (interreligious tensions)*	Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists vs. Muslims vs. Christians vs. Hindus	system/ideology	1948	•	3
Sri Lanka (Northern Province, Eastern Province)*	BBS, JHU, JVP, Sinhalese nationalists vs. Tamils, TNA vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	2009	•	2
Sri Lanka (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2022	•	3
Tajikistan (Gorno-Badakhshan)*	drug traffickers, Pamiris vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance	1992	•	3
Tajikistan (Islamist groups)*	Islamist groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1997	↗	3
Thailand (Islamist separatists / southern border provinces)*	BRN, PULO vs. government	secession, system/ideology	1902	•	3

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
Thailand (opposition)*	pro-democracy activists vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2006	•	3
Uzbekistan (Karakalpakstan)*	Karakalpaks vs. government	autonomy	2022	↓	1
Vietnam (Montagnards)*	Montagnards vs. government	system/ideology	1958	↗	3
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 statehhod 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: PCJSS, 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 into 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.

KNF activities increased significantly this year. Most attacks were directed against state security forces. For instance, in May and June, KNF conducted a series of IED attacks against state security forces in Ruma upazila, leaving four people dead and three injured. For instance, on May 16, KNF killed two members of the army and injured two using an IED and guns.

Indigenous groups and their affiliated political and militant groups continued to fight each other. On January 25, one PCJSS member was shot dead in a clash between MNP and PCJSS in Kaptai upazila. On April 6, eight members of the Bawn community were shot and killed in Rowangchhari upazila. State sources and newspapers reported the incident as a gunfight between members of KNF and UPDF-Democratic (UPDF-D), a faction of UPDF, with the deceased being members of KNF. Several CHT based human rights organizations as well as UPDF and KNF alleged state security forces to be the source of violence and claimed the dead individuals were civilians. At least 200 locals temporarily fled to neighboring regions.

The Bangladeshi army and the anti-terrorism unit of the Bangladeshi police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), continued their joint operation against militant groups in CHT which started in 2022/10. On February 7, RAB and KNF were involved in a gunfight when RAB conducted a raid in Thanchi upazila. The incident left eight RAB personnel injured. On the same day, also in Thanchi, RAB arrested three personnel of KNF and 17 members of the Islamist group Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya (JAFHS). According to several reports, KNF supports JAFHS through training of its members [→ Bangladesh (Islamist groups)]. On December 11, at least 15 unknown militants attacked members of UPDF with guns in Panchhari upazila. Four high-ranking UPDF members died and three members went missing. Several indigenous rights groups claimed the attackers were affiliates of the Bangladeshi army.

Despite ongoing violence, several peace talks were held. On May 29, 18 leaders of several indigenous groups founded a peace committee in Bandarban district. On November 5, the peace committee, members of KNF and state security forces agreed on a temporary ceasefire in Munlaipara village, Ruma.

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BANGLADESH (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1991

Conflict parties: BNP, HeI, ICS, JeI vs. AL, government

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition parties, such as Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), on the one hand, and the government, led by Awami League (AL), on the other, continued.

Opposition parties organized a large number of protests throughout the year. BNP mainly demanded the resignation of the AL government and a fair election under the supervision of a caretaker government. On April 1, BNP called for nationwide protests against price hikes. On several occasions, security forces clashed with protesters. For instance, in Rajshahi city, eponymous division, physical altercations led to ten injured members of BNP and police arrested at least 100 individuals. On September 1, BNP held rallies in various districts to celebrate the party's 45th anniversary resulting in clashes of AL, BNP and security forces. At least 100 individuals, including 13 police personnel were injured during the clashes. On June 9, police approved a request of JeI to hold a rally on June 10 in the capital Dhaka. The protest was the first in over ten years and reportedly comprised several thousands of people. On August 14, a top JeI leader died in jail. 50,000 people attended his funeral in Pirojpur district, Barisal division. In several districts throughout the country, clashes between security forces, and members of JeI and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) occurred, leaving one dead and 68 injured.

Starting on October 23, RMG workers went on strike and held massive protests demanding a significant increase of the minimum wage [→ Bangladesh (RMG workers)]. After the initial uprising, opposition parties increasingly took over the protests in November and December, supporting the demands of the RMG workers and criticizing the general course of the government. Security forces and protesters frequently clashed during protests. For instance, on October 28, police shot dead a leader of the youth organization of BNP during a protest in Dhaka city. On October 29, over 100,000 protesters affiliated with labor unions and opposition parties gathered in Dhaka city. One policeman died and at least 100 people were injured.

Throughout the year, security forces reportedly arrested several thousand opposition members. Moreover, from August until the end of the year, 1,742 opposition leaders and activists, mostly BNP members, were sentenced to jail terms by courts in Dhaka division, according to court officials and lawyers. On December 10, family members and BNP leaders stated that at least five members of BNP had died in prison in the two weeks prior due to alleged police brutality. Over the course of the protests, BNP and several other smaller parties continuously announced their boycott of the upcoming election on 01/07/24 in case their demand for a caregiver government overseeing the election process would not be met.

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BANGLADESH (RMG WORKERS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2006

Conflict parties: RMG workers vs. factory owners, government
Conflict items: other

The violent crisis over social security, working conditions, and pending payments between ready-made garment (RMG) workers on the one hand, and factory owners and the government on the other, continued.

During the first half of the year, few incidents occurred compared to previous years. On May 23, RMG workers blocked a highway and clashed with security forces in the Ashulia area of Savar upazila, Dhaka division. Ten individuals were injured in the incident. Furthermore, on June 19, workers blocked a highway in Gazipur city, Dhaka, calling on the factory owners to pay their pending salaries and bonuses.

The second half of the year was characterized by mass protests of RMG workers, predominantly in the Dhaka division. In total, at least six people died and 40 were injured. The wave of protests started when RMG workers went on strike in the cities of Gazipur, Ashulia and Hemayetpur, Dhaka, on October 23, demanding a tripling of the minimum wage after its expiry on October 9. After the initial uprising of RMG workers, the protests were increasingly dominated by opposition parties and their demands [→ Bangladesh (opposition)]. At least 7,000 workers protested in the areas of Ashulia and Hemayetpur, Dhaka, respectively. In Gazipur, police spoke of 10,000 protesters while union leaders claimed at least 100,000. During the protests, RMG workers threw stones while law enforcement deployed tear gas and sound grenades. Two RMG workers died and some police personnel were injured. On November 1, at least 15,000 people protested in Gazipur and the areas of Konabari, Bason, Mouchak and Kashimpur, Dhaka, in response to the closure of 300 factories due to the uprisings. Furthermore, on November 4, RMG workers and labor union members gathered in Gazipur and Ashulia. In Gazipur, police used tear gas and sound grenades while protesters threw bricks, injuring two policemen. In Ashulia, three persons were injured in clashes between RMG workers and police. On November 8, one day after an announced minimum wage increase from USD 73 to USD 113 per month, RMG workers protested again, criticizing the proposal as insufficient. In Gazipur, police shot rubber bullets in a crowd of approx. 400 RMG workers, killing one and injuring ten others. Furthermore, on November 9, security forces stormed a factory in Gazipur in connection with a strike and injured ten RMG workers. lih

BANGLADESH (ROHINGYA / COX'S BAZAR)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2018

Conflict parties: ARSA vs. RSO vs. various gangs
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance in Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar District, Chittagong Division, between the main militant groups Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO), as well as various rivaling gangs, continued.
Throughout the year, at least 52 Rohingya, many of them members of ARSA or community leaders (Majhis), were killed in different clashes, concentrating in the Rohingya's largest campsite in Ukhiya.
The APBn, responsible for the security in the Rohingya camps, was regularly involved in the conflict, intervening in clashes or being targeted by ARSA. For instance, on April 14, at least 20 ARSA members opened fire on the APBn next to a mosque in Ukhiya campsite, leaving one Rohingya dead.
On March 5, after a gunfight between the ARSA and RSO, a massive fire broke out across the Balukhali camp, which destroyed at least 2,000 shelters and rendered 12,000 Rohingya homeless. On July 7, ARSA and RSO clashed in Ukhiya campsite, after the killing of a local Majhi. During the gunfight, five ARSA members were killed. On July 12, another clash between ARSA and RSO in Ukhiya campsite resulted in four more casualties.
The months of November and December saw a renewed rise in violence between ARSA and RSO in Ukhiya campsite. On November 27, a clash between ARSA and RSO led to one person being killed and five injured. On December 5, three Rohingya were killed and at least four injured in two clashes between ARSA and RSO.
During the year, the WFP's assistance for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar gradually decreased. The Myanmar Army and the Bangladeshi government continued their efforts to repatriate Rohingya to Myanmar. To that end, on April 18 and May 5, negotiations were held over the return of at least 1,140 Rohingyas to Rakhine State. However, the Rohingya refugees were reluctant to repatriate without guarantees for safety, rights and the recuperation of their homes. On June 18, in Ukhya, the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights mobilized at least 5,000 Rohingya to protest against the inadequate living conditions in the camps while also demanding safe conditions for repatriation.
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CAMBODIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1997

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

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Cambodia National Rescue Movement (CNRM), and the government continued.
Power rivalry persisted between the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the Candlelight Party, comprising many former members of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), which was formed by CNRM members. Furthermore, issues concerning labor rights and environmental matters also came to the forefront.
Throughout the year, 23 CNRP members were imprisoned, including top opposition leaders. On May 31, Malaysia acceded to Cambodian President Hun Sen's request to expel the prominent opposition leader, Sam Rainsy. On June 13, the Cambodian Parliament approved a new law stating that anyone who failed to vote in the July national poll will be ineligible to run for office in the next four consecutive elections. After introducing the law, it prevented de facto most opposition leaders from running for office. On July 23, CPP

won 120 out of 125 seats in the Parliament. The Candlelight Party won no seats, with its members either on trial or in jail. The international community also expressed concern over the political developments. Both the USA and the UN criticized the election and human rights situation on July 23 and August 2, respectively. cth

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 multiple unregistered Christian groups and the government continued.
The regulations restricting religious activities persisted. On September 9, a new set of regulations for religious worship sites came into effect, tightening the existing regulations. For instance, management is required to actively work towards Sinicization of the religious groups and establish study systems for the lecture of Chinese Communist Party guidelines and "Chinese excellent traditional culture".
Local Civil Affairs Bureaus shut down unregistered house churches. Raids and demolitions of Christian house churches continued throughout the year, often paired with the arrests of local preachers. For instance, on March 12, police entered a Sunday service of a church in Chengdu city, Sichuan province, where they injured the local priest and two attendees who tried to film the incident and arrested six people. On May 7, police raided five locations of the Guangzhou Bible Reformed Church, taking in at least five preachers and staff for questioning. In a large-scale crackdown on the Church of the Almighty on June 15, police arrested over 1,000 church members across provinces of Zhejiang, Fujian and Jiangsu. On January 11, authorities demolished the Nangang Church in Wenzhou city, Zhejiang province.
In violation of the 09/21/18 agreement with the Vatican, the government unilaterally appointed a new bishop to Shanghai on April 4, who was only retrospectively recognized by the Vatican on July 17. On an overflight to Mongolia on September 1, Pope Francis greeted China and his relationship with the country positive. ◦

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, and political orientation in Hong Kong (HK) between pro-democracy/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.
Throughout the year there were numerous trials, convictions, and arrests, primarily targeting individuals who participated in protests during 2019 and 2020. On February 2, the Hong Kong 47 trial commenced, marking one of the largest National Security Law trials.
On June 4, individuals displayed small gestures of remembrance of the Tiananmen crackdown, which is prohibited in the PRC. The police arrested at least four people and took 23 others to a police station for interrogation.
Instances of groups, and unions ceasing their operations due to legal risks or external pressure continued, albeit at a lower scale and pace. For instance, on February 16, Hong Kong White Collar Connect Union announced their deregistration and on June 30 the pro-democracy radio station Citizens' Radio also ceased operations.
On July 24, the HKSAR Secretary for Security warned against stirring up negative emotions among citizens against the government through "soft resistance", describing it as a threat to national security. The number and turnout of protests continued to decrease and the strict enforcement of the NSL was noted as a concurrent development. spi

CHINA (HUI)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1949

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

The violent crisis over the practice of Islam between the Hui minority and the government continued. Throughout the year, the Han majority government continued its Sinicization policies and tightened control over religious practices and worship places for the Hui minority.
The forced remodeling of mosques by authorities in various locations continued. For instance, in March, the authorities finished the remodeling of the Doudian Mosque and in June of Songyu Mosque in June, both in the capital Beijing. Such remodels usually featured the removal of Arabic script prayers on facades, demolition of minarets and rebuilds of roofs, from so-called Arabic architecture to a more Chinese architecture. On May 27, protest against a remodel in Najiaying village, Nagu Autonomous Ethnic Town, Yunnan province, turned violent, with clashes between several hundreds of protesters and riot policemen in the streets and in front of the local Najiaying Mosque, before a remodel of its minarets. Protesters threw objects at policemen, while the police dissolved groups with batons. Consequently, several people were injured, and police arrested at least 30 protesters. Without official acknowledgement of the incident, protesters were only later summoned to report to the city authorities, while the remodel continued. Reportedly, after the protest, the government shut down the internet and deployed surveillance drones in neighborhoods near the protest site.
On November 22, Human Rights Watch published a report, stating that approx. one third of 4,200 mosques in China, at least 400 in the provinces of Ningxia and Gansu, had been closed or remodelled since 2020.

CHINA (INNER MONGOLIA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1981

Conflict parties: Mongolian ethnic minorities vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology, resources

The non-violent crisis over autonomy, subnational predominance, resources, and cultural repression in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR) between Mongolian ethnic minorities and the government, as well as the Han Chinese majority, escalated to a violent crisis. Language policies, cultural identity, and land expropriations remained points of contention.
On April 11, the central government ordered various teaching institutions to switch to educational material in Mandarin, including IMAR as well as Kardze Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, and removed all Mongolian language classes by September 1 [→ China (Tibet)]. In August, the IMAR Book and Periodical Distribution Industry Association released a notice that the distribution of Mongolian history books was to be prohibited, and also banned all books which deviate from the central government's official perspective on history and values of Chinese society.
On June 12, approx. 20 Mongolian herders protested against the land expropriation of their collectively used grazing land near Ar-Hundelen township, Zarrud banner, IMAR, which was sold by the local government to a government-backed mining company. The protesters blocked access to the pasture] to prevent workers of the mining company from entering. Several Han Chinese workers attacked the road blockade with a bulldozer, destroying approx. five motorbikes and injuring at least one protester. lto

CHINA (TAIWAN°)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1949

Conflict parties: ROC vs. PRC
Conflict items: secession, system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and secession between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC), also referred to as Taiwan, continued.
Throughout the year, the 2024 presidential elections in Taiwan were a point of contention, with ROC officials accusing the PRC of asserting influence during the election campaigns. For instance, on August 28, Terry Gou, founder of Foxconn, the largest manufacturing company of iPhones, announced his candidacy for the president's office. On October 22, the PRC launched tax audits and land-use investigations in four Mainland provinces with Foxconn operations. Later, on November 24, Gou withdrew from the presidential race.
High level visits between ROC and US officials and Taiwan's role in the international system also remained as core disputes in cross-strait relations. Most notably, on April 5, ROC President Tsai Ing-wen met US house speaker Kevin McCarthy in Simi Valley, California. McCarthy was the highest-ranking US official to meet a ROC president on US soil since 1979 [→ China – USA]. As a response, the PRC launched military drills including eight ships and 42 warplanes in the Taiwan strait on April 8.
Furthermore, on March 26, Honduras ended diplomatic ties with the ROC and established diplomatic relations with the PRC. Honduras is the ninth diplomatic ally that cut ties with the ROC in favor of the PRC since Tsai took power in 2016, leaving the ROC officially recognized by 13 states.
The PRC continued to advocate for the economic integration of Taiwan into the mainland's economy. On September 12, PRC officials unveiled a plan of turning the Mainland's Fujian Province into an economic demonstration zone, allowing for closer ties to the ROC-controlled Kinmen and Matsu Islands. lja

CHINA (TIBET)

Intensity: 3 | 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 (CTA) and Tibetans, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
The government continued its Sinicization policy in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Tibetans who did not conform were arrested in at least four cases for possessing or posting pictures of the Dalai Lama on social media. On August 1, during a protest for the release of a political prisoner in Lhasa city, capital of TAR, policemen arrested and injured a protester. On October 17, a Tibetan language activist was beaten and arrested by police in Yushu city, Yushu county, Qinghai province.
This year, the Chinese authorities further tightened surveillance and information restriction, and urged Tibetans not to communicate with the outside. For instance, throughout January, police checked smartphones of Tibetans in public and prohibited contact with the outside. In Kardze Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, and from March until June in Lhasa. Throughout August, police in TAR confiscated satellite equipment from homes of Tibetans that could receive foreign television programs.
Particularly religious and cultural freedoms of Tibetan Buddhists were targeted by the government. For instance, on July 14 in Tsoe town, Gannan county, Gansu province, the government irregularly canceled and prohibited the Buddhist Kalachakra teaching. On July 18, police cleared tents and religious symbols from a site of worship without warning in Tsolho town, Guinan county, Qinghai. On December 12, Yushu police arrested four Tibetan Buddhists for organizing an exhibition displaying stones with religious scripture.
The government further restricted the use of the Tibetan language in schools in various places. For instance, from September 1, all schools in Kardze Autonomous Prefecture were forced to teach all mandatory subjects exclusively in Mandarin [→ China (Inner Mongolia)]. Controversy over the translated name of Tibet also arose, as an official government report on October 10 named Tibet as Xizang, an uncommon and literary translation from Mandarin. Two days later, the CTA criticized the recommended translation that implied Sinicization and urged the international community not to adopt the previously uncommon romanization.

In response to cultural assimilation and Sinicization at school, on August 22, the USA enacted sanctions against officials involved in past and present policy-making. On December 14, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning China's education policy in Tibet as well, voicing support for the US sanctions.

CHINA – INDIA

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1954

Conflict parties: India, PRC
Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The violent crisis over territory, resources, such as water, and international power between China and India de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
Throughout the year, activities carried out by both parties along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which demarcates the de-facto zones of influence of both countries, remained a point of contention.
For instance, on April 10, the Indian government authorized the launch of a USD 625 million infrastructure project, aiming at developing villages and infrastructure along the LAC.
On April 2, the Chinese government released a list of standardized names of eleven places in Pinyin, Chinese characters and Tibetan, including villages and mountain peaks within the disputed area along the de-facto border. On April 4, the Indian foreign ministry rejected the renaming and reiterated the integration of Indian territory which included the places the Chinese government renamed.
Sino-Pakistani joint military drills also remained a point of contention. Most notably, from November 11 to 17, the Chinese and Pakistani Navies held a military drill in the Northern Arabian Sea, including anti-submarine operations and their very first joint maritime patrols [→ India – Pakistan].
Militarization on both sides continued. By August, the Indian Armed Forces had airlifted over 68,000 soldiers, 90 tanks, 330 infantry combat vehicles, aircraft, artillery guns, and long-range rocket systems in Ladakh union territory, India / Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), China, along LAC, shortly before holding military talks with the Chinese government. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) continuously deployed several combined-arms brigades in the western, eastern and central sector of the LAC, and further constructed military border infrastructure, such as model integrated villages across Uttarakhand, underground storage facilities, and a central dual-purpose airport. An Indian media report released in May showed satellite images of 30 new aircraft shelters in airbases in Hotan, XUAR, Ngari Gunsa, Sichuan province, and Lhasa, Tibetan Autonomous Region, China. Moreover, the PLA reportedly purchased 2,600 maces in February, hand-combat weapons that had been used in the border conflict before.
China and India continued to hold both military and diplomatic talks on the territorial disputes. Most notably, the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination met several times throughout the year, including delegations of senior military commanders.
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 (ROC), also known as Taiwan, and Japan continued. On several occasions throughout the year, for instance on October 17, the PRC and Japan accused each other of illegally entering the waters around the disputed islands Senkaku/Diaoyu in the East China Sea. For instance, from April 2 to 30, the PRC conducted a series of military exercises encircling Taiwan, particularly around these islands.
On June 8, two PRC Coast Guard vessels entered Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and attempted to approach a Japanese fishing vessel. On July 14, Chinese Coast Guard authorities took action against a Japanese fishing vessel that had allegedly entered the waters around Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. On March 31, both countries established a direct line of communication for information exchange and crisis management between the two countries' defense authorities, which came into effect on May 16. Despite the ongoing crisis, Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs went to Beijing for the first time in three years, consequently continuing close communication at all levels, including at the high level, on April 1-2. mzu

CHINA – USA

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1949

Conflict parties: PRC, 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 tensions regarding regional security, increasing international power competition and economic disputes.
The US continued its opposing approach to the PRC, through its "Freedom of Navigation Operations" and naval exercises in the South China Sea [→ China – Vietnam et al. (South China Sea)]. Economic tensions remained, as both countries continued their confrontational trade and commerce policies. On February 16, the PRC placed US arms manufacturers on its list of unreliable entities for supplying arms to the Republic of China. Similarly, the US added several Chinese companies on the Entity List throughout the year. On August 9, US President Joe Biden issued an executive order to block and regulate high-tech US investments in the PRC.
Between January 28 and February 4, a Chinese surveillance balloon was spotted over the US. On February 4, the US Air Force shot down the balloon near its Atlantic coastline.
Throughout the year, diplomatic meetings and visits between representatives of both countries continued. For instance, from July 16 to 19, the US Treasury Secretary visited the capital of PRC, Beijing, aiming at establishing better communication in economic affairs. Between June 18 and 19, as US

Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, met with the PRC foreign minister, Qin Gang, former foreign minister, Wang Yi, and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. This was the first such visit by a US Secretary of State in five years. In the meetings, Qin stressed that PRC-US relations were at their lowest point. On November 15, Biden met with Xi at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit, discussing cooperation in areas like artificial intelligence governance, counternarcotics and defense. 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 (ROC), Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, and the USA, supported by Australia, continued.

PRC maintained its position of territorial assertions and tensions with the Philippines continued. From April 18 to 24, more than 100 Chinese vessels were spotted in the waters around the Spratly Islands, SCS. Starting in August, tensions began to rise around a vessel used as a military outpost by the Philippines, at Scarborough Shoal. Chinese vessels repeatedly blocked Philippine resupply missions to the vessel. The first collision between Chinese and Philippine vessels occurred near Scarborough Shoal on October 22, and vessels of the two countries collided near Second Thomas Shoal again on December 10.

Tensions among other countries continued. For instance, on June 8, Vietnam accused ROC of violating its sovereignty, as ROC conducted live-fire drills on Itu Aba, Spratly Islands. On October 24, a Chinese fighter jet came within 10 feet of a US bomber.

Throughout the year, several multilateral talks on the SCS took place. During a meeting in Ha Long, Qung Ninh province, Vietnam, members of Association of Southeast Asian Nations and PRC discussed the Code of Conduct in SCS. On June 13, Malaysia and the Philippines signed several treaties to resolve an 18-year-long maritime border dispute in the Sulawesi Sea and the waters off the coast of Borneo.

Several joint military exercises took place throughout the year. For instance, between April 11 and 28, the largest ever annual Balikatan Exercise was held, with more than 17 thousands US and Philippine personnel. From June 5 to 7, Indonesia held its routine Komodo Drills Naval Exercise off the coast of South Sulawesi together with participants from 36 nations, including the US and PRC. The US held Freedom of Navigation Operations on November 3 in the SCS. cni

FIJI (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	1	Change:	↘	Start:	1987

Conflict parties: opposition groups vs. government

Conflict items: national power

The non-violent crisis over national power in Fiji between the incumbent coalition government consisting of The People's Alliance Party, the National Federation Party and the Social Liberal Democratic Party, on the one hand, and the opposition party FijiFirst, on the other, de-escalated to a dispute.

On February 15, former prime minister Frank Bainimarama received a three-year suspension from Parliament after he gave a speech which criticised President Sitiveni Rabuka. On March 10, Bainimarama was arrested over allegations that he subverted the course of justice during his time in office. On October 12, however, Bainimarama was acquitted of his charges and released. Throughout the year, tensions remained between the opposing parties. cho

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 Vishwa Hindu Parisha (VHP) and Bajrang Dal (BD), on the one hand, and the Christian minority, on the other, continued.

In the first half of the year, Hindu groups attacked Christians and their property on various occasions in Chhattisgarh state. For instance, on January 1, homes and properties of Christians were attacked in Gadhbengal village, resulting in approx. 200 IDPs. On January 2, the local Hindu group Janjati Suraksha Mach, destroyed catholic statues in Narayanour town. On January 12, a Hindu mob damaged two Catholic churches and threatened the Christian community in Chimmdi village. On April 30, BD surrounded the home of Christians, barged in, prevented 50 Christians from praying, and had them arrested for disturbing the peace of Chhattisgarh, in Amleshwar village. The arrest of Christians as well as the destruction of property, due to allegations of forced conversions to christianity, continued. For example, on March 1, the Hindu United Front and the VHP vandalized a bible stall set up at the New Delhi World Book Fair, claiming that the distribution of free books would trap Hindus into Christianity, in the capital New Delhi. On March 19, at least 19 Christians were taken into police custody, for being accused of forced conversions across Uttar Pradesh state. The police allegedly beat and injured five of the arrested Christians. On August 6, BD beat up a Christian pastor for allegedly converting people to Christianity in Nawada district, Bihar state. On August 20, BD vandalized a church and injured five of the churchgoers, in New Delhi. On November 21, a Hindu mob attacked four Christians, in Garhwa district, Jharkhand state, after they had spotted a cross inside their car. 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.

Throughout the year, members of the upper castes regularly denied Dalits access to locations as well as the practice of customs they deemed reserved for upper-caste members. For instance, on January 12, a group of 15 upper-caste members attacked a Dalit family with stones and sticks in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh state, claiming their wedding procession crossed through an upper caste neighborhood. On February 18, protests held by Dalits after they were prevented by upper caste members from entering a temple turned into a violent clash, which left 14 injured, in Chhapra city, Madhya Pradesh state. On May 4 in Agra city, Uttar Pradesh, a group of approx. 20 upper caste members assaulted Dalits at a wedding with fists and sticks, allegedly due to a Dalit riding on a horse during the ceremony.

Upper-caste members frequently attacked Dalits over the expropriation of land owned by them. On March 17, an upper-caste family attacked a Dalit family over a land dispute in Indore city, Madhya Pradesh, killing one Dalit man and injuring six. On April 13, 16 upper-caste members killed a Dalit man with sharp weapons and threatened his family in Barmer district, Rajasthan state.

Dalit students continued to face discrimination and violence within the educational system. For example, on February 9, four upper-caste students assaulted a Dalit student in Rajkot city, Gujarat state. On October 17, the Allahabad University's chief proctor assaulted a Dalit student, who demanded the release of three students incarcerated for protesting against tuition fee hikes, in Prayagraj city, Uttar Pradesh.

On multiple occasions, Dalits clashed with upper-caste members and security forces. For instance, on April 21, Dalit inhabitants of Kaliaganj city, West Bengal state, protested after the murder of a Dalit member, demanding a more thorough inquiry into the case. The protesters clashed with security forces, leaving 27 injured.

Adivasis continued to protest for more rights, while facing continued discrimination by upper-caste groups. On January 4, Adivasi activist groups organized multiple road blockades in West Bengal to demand better access to education. On December 24, a group of five people burned an Adivasi woman alive for alleged witchcraft in Sonitpur district, Assam state.

nkl

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 various Hindu groups, such as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), on the one hand, and the Muslim minority, such as the Popular Front of India (PFI), on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, both communities carried out violent attacks. For instance, on February 15, a verbal argument over the installation of decorations for Mahashivaratria, a Hindu celebration, escalated into a violent clash between Muslims and Hindus in Palamu district, Jharkhand state. The Muslim mob used sticks and threw stones as well as petrol bombs. Twelve people were injured and some houses as well as two police vehicles were set on fire. On February 18, Muslims stopped a Mahashivaratri procession and threw stones at the crowd injuring five, when the Hindu organizers refused to turn off the religious music, in Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh state.

On March 7, a Hindu mob killed a Muslim, because they suspected him of carrying beef, in Rasulpur village, Bihar state. On March 31, a Hindu mob set a Muslim school on fire in Biharsharif city, Bihar. 4,500 books were burned during the attack. On April 8, an argument between two students turned into a violent clash between the Muslim and the Hindu community, in Bemetara district, Chhattisgarh state. One person was killed and at least ten were injured. On July 31, Bajrang Dal (BD) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) clashed with a Muslim group following a Hindu procession by nationalists, Nuh town, Haryana state. During the clash BD and VHP set a mosque, some cars and shops on fire. A Muslim cleric was killed and 20 people were injured. The clash continued on August 1, leaving six dead and twelve injured. Subsequently, the Haryana government suspended internet services and imposed a curfew for two weeks in Nuh.

On September 10, a Hindu group attacked a Muslim group over a faked anti-Hindu instagram post, in Satara district, Maharashtra state. One person was killed and ten people were injured. Qurans and other religious books and the lights of a mosque were destroyed. On September 26, a Hindu mob tied a Muslim to a pole accusing him of stealing fruit that were part of a religious offering, in capital New Delhi. The mob beat the Muslim to death. On November 28, a police officer shot and killed a Muslim who was suspected of cow slaughter during a car chase in Uttar Pradesh state. Another person was also injured. Following the protests of BD and VHP members, police arrested four Muslim men on December 25 for allegedly killing an ox in Agar Malwa district, Madhya Pradesh.

dju

INDIA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY / ASSAM)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1979

Conflict parties: *	AASU, AJYCP, Assamese vs. AAMSU, ABYSO, 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, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, the government carried out multiple eviction drives. For instance, on January 10, an eviction drive was initiated to clear hundreds of hectares of land occupied by alleged illegal settlers, most of them Bengali-speaking Muslims, in Lakhimpur district. Hundreds of families were left homeless. On February 14, an eviction drive was launched in Sonitpur district, leaving nearly 12,000 people without homes. On January 27, in correlation to the drives, a transit camp was opened in Goalpara district, replacing the six detention centers still operating in several districts of Assam. This camp was specifically built for perceived outsiders. On May 28, a four-day eviction drive was launched at Orang National Park in Sonitpur district and continued into Darrang district, aiming to clear thousands of acres of land and evict hundreds of illegal settlers. On July 17, a mother of two was killed following a confrontation with a forester and two home guards amid the eviction drive in the Sonitpur forest area. On August 31, hundreds of families affected by the state evictions demonstrated against the government, demanding rehabilitation while the government continued the drives.

Throughout the year, protests erupted in response to intended changes in the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). In a statement on January 22, the chief minister of Assam said that he wanted the cut-off date for determining foreigners to be 1951 instead of 1971. In a statement on March 17, he continued to emphasize that illegal immigrants, especially those coming from Bangladesh, pose a threat to the Assamese civilization and culture. On December 29, the Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad staged a sit-in protest, demanding a withdrawal of the CAA from the government in Golaghat district. twm

INDIA (KASHMIR)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1947

Conflict parties:	Al Badr, APHC, HM, JeM, LeT vs. government
Conflict items:	secession, autonomy

The violent crisis over autonomy or secession of the Indian-administered union territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) between Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Moahmmad (JeM), All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), People's Democratic Party (PDP), Jammu and Kashmir Ghaznavi Force (JKGF) as well as Al-Badr on the one hand, and the government on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, at least 37 militants belonging to HM, LeT and its alleged proxy, The Resistance Front, and at least 22 security personnel were killed in clashes throughout the year. For instance, in counterterrorism operations in the Rajouri sector, J&K, on April 20 and May 5, respectively, unidentified militants killed five security personnel. In a seven-day counterterrorism operation in Anantnag district, J&K, from September 13 to 19, security forces used drones, among other weapons, killing two members of LeT. Four security personnel were killed in the operation. On December 21, in Surankote tehsil, J&K, militants attacked two army vehicles during a military operation, killing at least four security personnel and injuring three. The People's Anti-Fascist Front, a JeM-proxy, claimed responsibility for the attack. The following day, the government suspended internet services in the area and increased aerial surveillance as well as ground operations.

During the course of the year, security forces arrested at least 55 militants. For instance, on September 24, security forces arrested five suspected members of LeT and recovered light and heavy weaponry as well as ammunition. On November 2, security forces arrested four alleged LeT militants in Baramulla tehsil, J&K, recovering weapons and ammunition.

The conflict also spilled over on Pakistani territory. Throughout the year, five militants were killed in targeted attacks. For instance, on February 20, unidentified gunmen shot dead a HM commander in Rawalpindi city, Punjab. On November 10, a former commander of LeT was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Bajaur district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

sag

*The CoBa 2022 wrongly indicated PDP as an actor. This has been corrected.

INDIA (MAFIA RAJ)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1986

Conflict parties:	Sand Mafia, Timber Mafia vs. civil society actors, government
Conflict items:	subnational predominance, resources, other

The violent crisis over natural resources, the protection of the environment, and subnational predominance in various states between the sand and timber mafia, on the one hand, and the government and civil society actors, on the other, continued.

Between April and the end of the year, the Sand Mafia had several violent encounters with government officials and conducted several attacks, with casualties in five instances. For instance, on April 18, three people were injured in an attack by the Sand Mafia in Parev village, Bihar state. In a response crackdown, the police seized 87 trucks transporting illegally mined sand and arrested the drivers in Khajura city, Bihar. On April 22, a body was found on the banks of Dadhwa river in Deoghar district, Jharkhand state. The police arrested three suspects connected to the Sand Mafia. On April 25, a village administrative officer of Murappanadu Temple was hacked to death with a scythe by the Sand Mafia after he had registered complaints against two individuals suspected of illegally mining sand in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu state. On April 29, the administrative team responsible for raids on illegal sand miners, mining on Dadhwa river, Chamradih village, Uttar Pradesh state, was attacked during a raid by the Sand Mafia. Three people, including the head of the administrative team, were injured in the encounter. On June 6, the Sand Mafia killed the head constable of Narayanpura village, Karnataka state, after he tried to stop them from transporting sand by tractor. On June 19, a patrol group

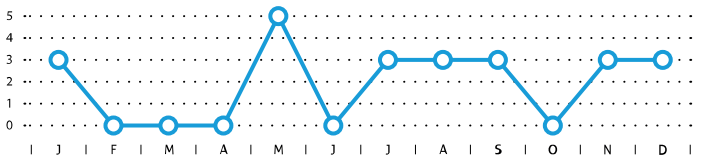
was attacked by the Sand Mafia leaving three injured in the Mathura Baldev Area, Uttar Pradesh. Subsequently, two suspects were arrested the same day. On November 1, on Madhe Road in the Aurangabad district, Maharashtra state, a member of the Sand Mafia driving a tractor laden with illegally mined sand killed a Home Guard Constable with the vehicle. In a similar incident, on November 14, the Sand Mafia ran over and killed a policeman and injured a Home Guard in Jamui district, Bihar.
Compared to previous years, activities involving the Timber Mafia decreased. The only violent incident occurred on May 30, members of the Timber Mafia killed one forester and injured three more with sharp weapons in the Goalpara district, Assam state.
mbb

INDIA (MANIPUR)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1964

Conflict parties: JCILPS, KCP, KNF, Kukis, KYKL, PLA, PREPAK, PREPAK-Pro, UNLF, ZRO vs. government vs. Meiteis

Conflict items: secession, autonomy, system/ideology, subnational predominance



downgraded (< 360 deaths)

The violent crisis over either subnational predominance, the status of Scheduled Tribes (ST), autonomy or secession of Manipur state between militants groups, activist groups, Meiteis, Kukis, and the government escalated to a limited war. The militants were organized in groups such as Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) and the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK).
Tensions between the two ethnic groups, the Meiteis and the Kukis, escalated. The Meiteis demanded the ST status by the government to ensure benefits, which was strongly opposed by the Kukis as they feared it would disadvantage them even further. On April 14, the Manipur high court published an order in favor of the Meitei demand which outraged the Kuki community and led to violent clashes between the two groups. On May 3, the All Tribal Students' Union of Manipur organized a Tribal Solidarity March to protest against the Meiteis demand for the ST status during which violence between the groups broke out across Manipur. Following the clash, at least 50 were killed, 260 were reportedly injured, and at least 23,000 people were forcefully displaced. Cars, houses, churches, and temples were burned in the process, and army and Assam Rifles (AR) were deployed to bring the situation under control.
Since then, clashes between the two groups have occurred repeatedly. For instance, on August 4, three people from the Meitei community were reportedly killed in a new outbreak of violence in Bishnupur district. Houses of the Kuki community were burnt down and firing took place between them and security forces. On September 8, violence erupted again between the Kuki and Meitei in Tengnoupal district which led to the death of several people and injury of at least 40. AR deployed tear gas to bring the situation under control. On September 26 and 27, protests were staged by students in Imphal West district after two Meitei students went missing on July 6 and were allegedly killed by Kuki militants. Protesters and security forces clashed, resulting in the injury of 45 people.
The government suspended mobile and internet services on multiple occasions. For example, on May 3, the government suspended internet and mobile services all across Manipur for 83 days. On September 26, the internet was suspended again for five days, following new eruptions of violence.
Throughout the year, militant groups carried out attacks against each other and the government. On January 25, two bombs allegedly planted by the PREPAK exploded in Ukhrul and Imphal East district, injuring five people. On June 25, the Indian Army was forced to release twelve apprehended KYKL militants in Kamjong district after a standoff with a mob. On November 7, four Kuki members were allegedly abducted by Meitei militants. In response, Kuki militants fired bullets towards a group of people in Kangchup and Kangpokpi district, injuring seven. On November 20, two Kuki men were killed in an ambush allegedly carried out by Meitei insurgents in Kangpokpi. twm

INDIA (NAGALIM)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1947

Conflict parties: NSCN-IM, NSCN-K, NSCN-K-Khango, NSCN-K-NS, NSCN-KK, NSCN-KYA, NSCN-NK, NSCN-R, NSCN-U vs. Government

Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The violent crisis over either secession or autonomy 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, the NSCN-Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM) faction had violent encounters with regional security forces, such as the Assam Rifles (AR). For instance, on September 13, a shootout broke out between NSCN-IM and AR in Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh. Two armed militants of NSCN-IM allegedly shot at AR on patrol. AR returned fire and killed one cadre of NSCN-IM and injured another. On November 11, during an army operation, AR shot and arrested a member of NSCN in the Tipong area, Assam.
Throughout the year, security forces arrested militants of various NSCN factions, often in relation to the extortion of civilians. For instance, on January 31, AR and District Police apprehended a cadre of NSCN-IM for orchestrating illegal extortion and a recruitment drive in Longding district, Arunachal Pradesh. On July 27, police arrested a cadre of NSCN-IM, a police inspector, and four civilians for stealing 2,480 pieces of ammunition from the central arms and ammunition store in Dimapur city, Nagaland.
NSCN-IM also responded to the May 3 riots between the Kuki and the Meitei people in Manipur [→ India (Manipur)]. For instance, on August 19, the NSCN-IM asked the Kuki and Meitei tribes not to bring their ethnic fight to the Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur. On August 18, in response to a video circulating in which a member of NSCN-IM expressed support to the Meitei tribe, the militant group denied allegations of supplying weapons and cadres to Manipur.

On April 6, the central government signed an extension of the ceasefire agreements for another year with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Neopao Konyak/Kitovi, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Reformation, and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland K-Khango. Furthermore, on September 6, the central government and NSCN-K Niki Sumi signed a one-year extension of the ceasefire agreement.
jwn

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. The government was supported by the Border Security Force (BSF), District Reserve Guard (DRG), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), especially the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA), and state- and district-level police forces.
Throughout the year, violent encounters, IED explosions, and other attacks resulted in the deaths of at least 151 people, including Naxalites and security forces. While Naxalites were mainly active in the federal states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, violence also occurred in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Telangana.
Clashes between Naxalites and security forces continued. For instance, on February 20, Naxalites ambushed and opened fire on police personnel of the district force, killing two in Rajnandgaon district, Chhattisgarh. On May 9, security forces killed three Naxalites during a counterinsurgency search operation in Kalahandi district, Odisha. During a shootout on December 14, security forces killed two Naxalites in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra.
Security forces continued to carry out anti-Naxals and search operations throughout the year. On April 30, police launched a search operation in Gadchiroli district, where they were fired upon by Naxalites. Three Naxalites were killed during the encounter. In a similar incident on December 24, Bastar fighters and DRG led an anti-Naxal operation along the Dantewada-Sukma border, Chhattisgarh, which resulted in the death of three Naxalites.
Throughout the year, IEDs planted by Naxalites resulted in the injuries or deaths of civilians and security forces. For instance, on April 26, ten DRG personnel and one civilian were killed in an IED blast in Dantewada district, Chhattisgarh. As in previous years, Naxalites carried out abductions and assassinations of civilians, security forces and former members of the CPI-Maoist, suspected to be informants for the police. For instance, on May 27, Maoist killed a local village head, accusing him of being a police informer in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh.
Naxalites targeted infrastructure throughout the year. On May 16, Naxalites blew up a mobile tower in West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand. On June 2, 32 of the 42 houses of an abandoned village in Nabarangpur district, Odisha were burned down, allegedly by Naxalites. Naxalites also continued to destroy construction vehicles. For instance, on June 7, Naxalites set fire to seven vehicles engaged in construction of a road in Kanker district, Chhattisgarh.
Naxalites continued to surrender before security forces. For instance, on August 4, 22 Naxalites surrendered before the police in Sukma district.
iha

INDIA (SCHEDULED TRIBES, SCHEDULED CASTES ET AL.)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1981

Conflict parties: Gujjars, Jats, Marathas, Rajputs vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over benefits under the reservation system between various communities, most prominently the Marathas and Gujjars on the one hand, and the central government as well as the governments of the respective federal states on the other, escalated to a violent crisis. The reservation system allocates jobs in the public sector and access to public education based on a community's status as either Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) or Other Backward Castes (OBC).
Throughout the year, members of the communities staged protests to highlight their demands. For instance, on July 28, Gujjars protested against a bill introduced on July 26 by the central government, which calls for the inclusion of the Pahari community into the ST category, in Jammu city, Jammu and Kashmir state. Gujjars argue that Paharis belong to the upper castes and are not a tribal community, which makes them unfit for the ST status. On August 16, 69 Gujjar families protested against the eviction notice they received from the forest department, in Dehradun district, Uttarakhand state. The notice was issued on the grounds of illegal encroachment on the land.
In the second half of the year, the Maratha community held multiple protests to demand their inclusion in the OBC category, some of which turned violent in Maharashtra state. For example, on September 1, the police used batons and teargas to disperse Marathi protestors, who had targeted public buses and vehicles, in Antarwali Sarati village. At least 32 people were injured, including 20 civilians and at least twelve police officers. The protestors set 20 buses on fire. On October 29, Maratha protesters set two residences as well as two offices by National Party Congress members and a hotel on fire, in Beed city. As a response to the violence, the government suspended the operations of public buses in the Sambhajinagar division, and of mobile internet services in parts of Beed district, and enforced a two-day curfew, on October 31.
lrs

INDIA (SIKHS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1947

Conflict parties: Khalistan supporters, KTF, SFJ vs. Government
Conflict items: secession

The non-violent crisis over the secession of Khalistan between various Sikh groups and the government escalated to a violent crisis. This year, suspected killings related to the conflict took place internationally.
While there was no organized violence by militant groups, violent measures against them occurred irregularly from the start of the year. For instance, on May 6, two unidentified shooters killed the leader of the Khalistan Commando Force in Lahore city, Punjab province, Pakistan. On June 18, two unidentified shooters killed the leader of the Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) in Surrey city, British Columbia province, Canada. Accusations about the involvement of the Indian government in the incident by the Canadian government led to a diplomatic dispute. Furthermore, on July 6, the leader of the Sikhs for Justice militia (SFJ) was found dead in the USA.
Throughout the year, security forces continued to arrest militants and conduct raids. For example, on April 4, the police arrested two militants in Fategarh Sahib district, Punjab state. On April 23, a high-profile pro-Khalistan preacher was arrested after a month-long manhunt in Rode village, Punjab. On August 31, the Delhi police arrested two Khalistan supporters in connection with the SFJ for pro-Khalistan Graffiti before the G20 summit in the capital New Delhi. On May 17, the National Investigation Agency conducted raids in more than 100 locations in connection with the SFJ in the states of Delhi-NCR, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
mbb

INDIA (ULFA-I ET AL. / ASSAM)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1979

Conflict parties: AANLA, APLA, BLA, DNLA, KLO, KLO-KN, NLFB, ULFA, ULFA-I vs. government
Conflict items: secession, autonomy

The violent crisis over either secession or autonomy in Assam state between militant Assamese, Bodo and Karbi groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, the government held peace talks with Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO), United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and Dimasa National Liberation Army (DNLA). On April 27, the DNLA signed a peace agreement with the Assamese and the central government, promising to end further violence in the conflict. On December 29, ULFA signed a peace accord with the Assamese and the central government, in which they agreed to demobilize their armed organization and support a peaceful and democratic process. Militants continued to surrender to the government. For instance, on July 6, 1,182 militants belonging to different groups laid down their weapons in Guwahati city, Kamrup Metropolitan district. On October 28, 181 members of the DNLA surrendered their weapons in Haflong city, Dima district.
The United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA-I) and Kamtapur Liberation Organisation-Koch Nationalism (KLO-KN) refused to lay down their weapons. On January 21, ULFA-I released a statement, reiterating that they are not interested in peace talks with the government. On October 17, KLO-KN clarified that since they do not see themselves as Indians, they will continue the use of force to pursue an independent Kamatapur.
Several violent incidents took place involving ULFA-I, DNLA, and KLO cadres. For example, on February 9, during a police operation, the security forces killed one ULFA-I member and injured several others in Margherita town, Tinsukia district. On April 24, the police shot dead two KLO cadres and arrested four in Kokrajhar district. On September 15, a gunfight broke out between police and DNLA members, near Maibang town, Dima Hasao district. Police killed one DNLA cadre and injured three.
In the second half of the year, ULFA-I executed several of their own members. On September 20, two cadres were executed on charges of treason in Hachi camp, Sagaing region, Myanmar. On October 28, ULFA-I allegedly executed a cadre for trying to flee from a camp in Myanmar.
lrs

INDIA - PAKISTAN

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1947

Conflict parties: India vs. Pakistan
Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over the status of the Kashmir region, international and regional power, and water distribution between India and Pakistan escalated to a violent crisis.
Throughout the year, violations of the 2021 ceasefire agreement increased in 2023 with seven violent encounters along the Line of Control (LoC) between Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) union territory and Pakistan-administered Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, mutual accusations about state-sponsored terrorism increased.
On February 2, Indian security forces arrested three Pakistanis in the Tangdhar sector, Kupwara district, and the Indian army killed one Pakistani who tried to reach Indian territory in this area. On June 24, Indian troops fired across the LoC killing two Pakistani civilians and injuring one, who allegedly tried to infiltrate the Krishna Ghati sector in Poonch district, J&K. In the same district on August 21, Indian security forces shot dead at least one individual for identical reasons. Clashes continued on September 16, when the Indian army and J&K security forces killed three militants during a suspected infiltration attempt in Uri sector, J&K and on October 17, a cross-border firing between Indian and Pakistani security forces in the Arnia sector, J&K, left two Indian guards injured. On October 26, cross-border firing of Pakistani rangers and the Indian Army along the LoC injured four people in Arnia and Suchetgarh, J&K, and led to several houses being damaged. Furthermore on November 8, a cross-border firing with mortars and machine guns between Indian and Pakistani security forces in Ramgarh town, J&K, resulted in one dead Indian border guard.
Diplomatic tensions between the two countries remained high. On January 25, the Indian government requested talks about modifications of the Indus Water Treaty with the

Pakistani government. On July 7, the Permanent Court of Arbitration decided to open a Pakistan-initiated arbitration procedure over water use in the Indus River basin and rejected Indian objections over missing competence of the court. On several occasions, Indian and Pakistani diplomats attacked each other verbally at UN meetings. For example, on September 29, Indian and Pakistani diplomats accused each other of state sponsored terrorism in relation to J&K. Most diplomatic exchanges concentrated on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meetings, which were held by India during the first half of the year. India invited several high-ranking Pakistani ministers and military delegations to attend different SCO meetings, with the Pakistani foreign minister's visit in May being the first of its kind since 2014. In another example of stabilizing diplomatic relations, both countries exchanged imprisoned civilians on May 13 and 19.
ezu

INDONESIA (ISLAMIST MILITANTS GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1981

Conflict parties: JAD, JI et al. vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between Islamist militant groups, such as Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, joint security forces arrested at least 91 suspected members of Islamist militant groups across the country. On March 16, for instance, Densus 88, the National Police's counter-terrorism force, arrested five suspected members of JI in Palu and Sigi, Central Sulawesi province. On December 14, Densus 88 arrested nine suspected JI affiliates in Sukoharjo, Sragen, Klaten and Boyolali in Central Java province, seizing multiple firearms and an ammunition deposit.
On March 26, two JAD affiliates on motorcycles attempted to enter a Roman Catholic Church during a Palm Sunday mass in Makassar, South Sulawesi province. When confronted by security personnel, one of them detonated explosives, killing the two attackers and injuring at least 20 others. This marked the only suicide bombing of the year.
Clashes between Islamist militants and national police forces ended fatally on several occasions. On April 10, three Uzbek nationals linked to the al-Qaeda-affiliated group Katiba al Tahwid wal Jihad (KTJ) escaped from the North Jakarta Immigration detention center where they had been held since their arrest on March 24. They attacked the immigration officers with knives, leaving four injured and one dead. In the ensuing manhunt, Densus 88 captured two of them while one drowned after having jumped into a river trying to escape. In a two-day operation starting on April 11, a Densus 88-led raid in Mesuji and Pringsewu district, Lampung province devolved into a shootout, leaving two members of JI dead and an officer severely injured. Densus 88 also arrested four and seized an assault rifle, homemade firearms and machetes. The deceased were accused of having harbored two leading figures of JI, including Zulkarnaen, who have since been sentenced to long prison sentences.
With Indonesia's general elections set to take place in February 2024, Indonesian security forces remain on high alert. To secure the elections, on October 19, the Indonesian police launched the Mantap Brata Operation comprising over 260,000 police personnel. October also marked the most significant spike in arrests, with Densus 88 arresting 59 people suspected of plotting to disrupt the general elections by attacking security forces. Between October 3 and October 28, Densus 88 arrested 19 suspected JI and 40 suspected JAD affiliates across the provinces of Central Sulawesi, Jakarta, Lampung, South Sumatra, West Java, West Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara and West Sumatra, seizing guns and chemicals used to make bombs.
mno

INDONESIA (PAPUA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1961

Conflict parties: OPM, ULMWP et al. vs. government
Conflict items: secession, resources

The violent crisis over secession and natural resources between the Free Papua Movement (OPM) including associated opposition groups and the Indonesian Government continued.
Up to 600 people were internally displaced throughout the year. For instance, after fighters of the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB), the armed branch of OPM, attacked a school building and a civil airplane in Oksibil, Papua Pegunungan Province, on January 9, around 150 people were displaced.
As part of the strategy of TPNPB, multiple government buildings have been attacked and burned down as well as civilian infrastructure. The overall goal, as set out by the TPNPB command in 2021, is to expel Indonesian migrants who they say do not belong to the region. For instance, on April 28, TPNPB fighters burned down five civilian homes near the residence of the local Indonesian regent in Kago, Papua Tengah Province. On September 19, TPNPB fighters burned down the marketplace in Serambakon, Papua Pegunungan Province, killing at least two people. Indonesian military and police reacted to these incidents with raids and targeted killings. On September 12, police forces shot dead four people suspected of being involved in a school burning in Fakfak regency, Papua Barat Province.
On February 2, TPNPB fighters attacked an airplane in Paro, Papua Pegunungan Province. They took all passengers and the pilot, a New Zealand national, hostage, and later set fire to the plane. The passengers were released but the New Zealand pilot was still being held hostage, as of the end of 2023. OPM and TPNPB respectively demanded a free Papua as a requirement for releasing the pilot.
Indonesian military and police were accused of human rights violations and torture. A child was taken into custody on April 7 and was allegedly tortured and killed by Indonesian authorities in Nduga regency, Papua Pegunungan province. Authorities conducted different rescue and evacuation missions following TPNPB attacks. For instance, on October 16, after seven mining workers were killed by TPNPB in Yakuhimo Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province, military personnel evacuated eleven civilians affected by the attack. Similarly, on November 12, 200 civilians sought shelter in a military post in Gome District, Papua Tengah Province, after TPNPB members threatened to kill local inhabitants and burn down their houses.
das

JAPAN – RUSSIA

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1945

Conflict parties: Russia vs. Japan
Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over resources, international power and territory of the Kuril Island chain between the Russian Federation and Japan continued.
Since the beginning of the year, both sides have increased their militarization in the region. For instance, on January 4, Japan approved the expansion of its military capacities following Russian military drills and the deployment of missile systems on the Kuril Islands as announced by Russia on 12/06/22. On March 22, the Russian Minister of Defence announced that a division of its coastal defence missile systems was deployed to Paramushir, one of the Kuril Islands. Over the course of the year, the Russian military conducted several exercises with sea vessels, warships, landing crafts and troops in the Sea of Japan on March 24, April 14, and between June 5 and 20. In July, Russia conducted joint military exercises with the Chinese military involving several sea vessels and warships. For instance, from July 20-24, they conducted exercises in the Sea of Japan. On August 31, Russian military moved equipment and missile systems from the Iturup and Kunashiri islands, Kuril Islands.

ugü

JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, USA – NORTH KOREA

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1993

Conflict parties: Japan, ROK, USA vs. DPRK
Conflict items: system/ideology, international power, other

The non-violent crisis over international power, ideology, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear program between Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), and the USA, on the one hand, and the 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 22 incidents of North Korean weapon launches, including long-range missiles and the launch of a reconnaissance satellite [→ North Korea – South Korea].
For instance, on March 14, DPRK fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the East China Sea, prompting ROK and the US to respond with a combined attack drill. From April 4 to 7, DPRK tested an underwater strategic weapon system. In the following days, DPRK's military appeared to have fired a new type of intermediate-range ballistic missile. Following the rocket launch, the Seoul city government sent out an emergency alert advising citizens to prepare for evacuation. On June 15, DPRK fired two short-range ballistic missiles towards the East Sea. On November 21, DPRK successfully launched a reconnaissance satellite into space for the first time.
Japan, the ROK and the US responded to increased missile launches with more military presence. At least six combined attack drills, coordinated between all three allies, took place in the first half of the year. For instance, at the beginning of April, the US and ROK carried out combined attack drills in Pocheon, Gyeonggi Province. On August 20, DPRK hackers carried out cyberattacks targeting combined military drills between ROK and the US.
In June, a US soldier crossed the border with DPRK, resulting in the first diplomatic meeting for a long time. In early September, the US sanctioned several DPRK companies and individuals for supplying weapons to Russia and Hamas.
kga

KAZAKHSTAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↓ | Start: 2004

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

The limited war over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, such as the illegal Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DVK), the Democratic Party of Kazakhstan (DPK), as well as individual activists, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
After President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced political reforms following the large-scale protests in January 2022, the level of violence declined, however, tensions between the conflict parties remained. On January 5 and 7, prior to the first anniversary of the 2022 unrest, police detained at least twelve activists, including members of the DPK and the Alga, Kazakhstan movement, in the cities of Almaty, eponymous region, Oral, West Kazakhstan region and the capital Astana. Furthermore, ahead of expected protests on Republic Day on October 25, police detained at least seven opposition members in Astana and Almaty.
Authorities also took legal action against key opposition figures. For example, on June 22, investigators indicted a journalist linked to the Altynshy Qantar movement for alleged ties to DVK. Similarly, on November 29, a court in Astana sentenced the leader of Alga, Kazakhstan to seven years in prison. Alga Kazakhstan attempted to register as a political party since 2022. On April 10, a court in Almaty sentenced the DPK leader to six years in prison on probation for allegedly organizing riots in January 2022.
Several incidents occurred around snap parliamentary elections on March 19. The pre-election period was marked by intimidation against journalists and civil society activists. On January 14, underage perpetrators ignited the car of an Altynshy Qantar activist in Almaty. The landslide victory of the ruling Amanat party triggered small-scale gatherings concentrated in Astana and Almaty. For example, on April 1, a group of non-elected opposition candidates protested alleged election manipulation in Almaty.
ax

KYRGYZSTAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2005

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

The non-violent crisis over national power and orientation of the political system between the opposition and the government in Kyrgyzstan escalated to a violent crisis.
Throughout the year, the government systematically restricted the operational space for opposition media and NGOs. On April 27, a district court in the capital Bishkek blocked the media outlet Radio Azattyk, having published a video about the border dispute between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in 2022 [→ Kyrgyzstan – Uzbekistan – Tajikistan (border communities / Fergana Valley)]. The blockade was lifted on July 12, after an agreement between Azattyk and the Ministry of Culture. Furthermore, on September 12, the Ministry of Culture blocked the Russian-language and, on November 9, the Kyrgyz-language version of the media outlet Kloop on grounds of alleged false information. On May 3, the Parliament removed the Ombudswoman prematurely from her position, upon her presenting a report on the increasing number of human rights violations in 2022. MPs approved a new Ombudswoman on May 17. On October 25, Parliament approved a law restricting the operations of foreign-funded NGOs.
The economic agenda of the government also caused friction between the opposition and the government. For example, a tax reform obliging entrepreneurs to introduce cash registers and electronic bills provoked numerous rallies across the country throughout the year. On November 30, during a rally of vendors at a marketplace in Bishkek, police detained a protester who attacked and injured a civil servant. On December 5, President Sadyr Japarov postponed the reform by six months.
Apart from social tensions, issues of national power between the conflict actors also remained salient. On June 5, the State Committee for National Security detained several individuals suspected of planning a coup d'état. The detainees were accused of recruiting citizens and receiving foreign financial assistance.
Foreign affairs caused friction between the opposition and the government as well. Throughout the year, supporters of individuals detained in the Kempir-Abad case of 2022 organized several non-violent protests in Bishkek, such as on January 10, March 17 and October 4. On August 28, a court in Bishkek released several prisoners under house arrest, though eleven remain in detention. On September 2, security forces arrested an opposition MP, former Secretary of the Security Council, on grounds of alleged abuse of power due to his signature of a protocol on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border in 2009. Regarding the Russia-Ukrainian war, a District Court of Bishkek extended the ban on rallies in the capital's center, which had been in place since 03/2022, until December 31. On March 23, authorities banned an organization of Russian émigrés publicly opposing the war. Similarly, throughout June, security forces detained three activists for their position against the war. agl

KYRGYZSTAN – TAJIKISTAN – UZBEKISTAN (BORDER COMMUNITIES / FERGANA VALLEY)

Intensity: 3 | 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, de-escalated to a violent crisis. After the intense fighting between Kyrgyzstani and Tajikistani security forces in 01/2022 and 09/2022, frequent consultations regarding the shared borders took place.
Compared to previous years, relations between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were generally calm and no clashes between security forces occurred. The only violent incident occurred on July 24 in Ak-Say village, Batken Region, Kyrgyzstan, near the Tajik exclave of Vorukh, when Kyrgyz civilians clashed with Tajik civilians, injuring at least three. While the Kyrgyz side claims that a brawl emerged after a Tajik convoy cut off Kyrgyz cars on the Ak-Say - Kok-Tash road, the Tajik side alleges that a Kyrgyz citizen stoned cars of the convoy, leading to damage on the cars and the aforementioned injuries.
Talks between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on their common border continued throughout the year. Kyrgyzstan's Batken region, marked by significant fighting in 09/2022, hosted meetings on border delimitation between Tajik and Kyrgyz officials throughout the year, for instance on December 14, when negotiators demarcated 47,05 km of the disputed border. In total, more than 250 km of shared border were newly demarcated. Despite these diplomatic efforts, the border between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan remained closed.
Over the course of the year, talks on the delimitation of the Uzbekistani-Kyrgyzstani border were held at regular intervals. The countries concluded talks on border delimitation and signed a protocol on February 26, in which the parties agreed on a schedule of field surveys to demarcate certain sections of the border.
The governments of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan held two trilateral meetings in Batken. On April 29, officials of the three nations met to proceed with the delimitation of Tajikistan's border with its neighboring states. The second meeting took place on August 3 and was aimed at opening the Kyrgyz-Tajik border. Despite diplomatic efforts, the border remains closed. tda

LAOS (BUDDHISTS – CHRISTIANS)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1975

Conflict parties: Buddhists vs. Christians
Conflict items: system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the right to practice religious beliefs between the Christian minority on the one hand, and the government as well as the Buddhist majority on the other, continued.
On January 23, district level officials and village authorities

forced eleven Christians to renounce their faith and return to animistic beliefs in northern Laos. The villagers were also forced to sign a paper that prohibits Christians from living in their home village.
On February 7, in Mai village, Luang Namtha province, Buddhist villagers including village authorities demanded from 15 Christian families to renounce their faith. 61 Christians were internally displaced, as they refused the renunciation.
Human rights and Christian NGOs frequently reported aggressive behavior towards Christians and evictions from villages. For instance, on July 11, a Christian activist published a report accusing the government of mirroring the Chinese clampdown on Christian minorities [→ China (Christians)]. llo

MALDIVES (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2003

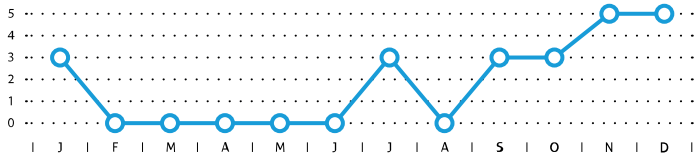
Conflict parties: government vs. opposition
Conflict items: national power

The violent crisis over national power between the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), and the People's National Congress (PNC), on the one hand, and the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), on the other, continued.
The MDP put forth Ibrahim Mohamed Solih as their presidential candidate after he served as president for five years. Mohamed Muizzu was put forth as a candidate for the opposing PPM-PNC coalition, as former president Abdulla Yameen's incarceration disqualified him from running in the election. The High Court rejected pleas from Yameen to be made eligible to run in the election. A faction around Mohamed Nasheed, another former president, broke away from the MDP and filed for a political party registration on May 21. The Elections Commission greenlit the formation on July 2 resulting in the new party "The Democrats". Mohamed Muizzu of the PPM emerged victorious in the presidential election held on September 30 and took office on November 17. While he is considered a pro-China candidate and - contrary to newly elected presidents in the past - did not visit India, the Indian government nonetheless agreed to Muizzu's demand and electoral promise to withdraw its troops from the Maldives.
A string of protests organized by the PPM calling for the release of Yameen from prison continued throughout the year prior to the election. On October 10, Muizzu made good on a campaign promise and had Yameen transferred from prison to house arrest.
The police responded forcefully to PPM protests with several arrests, including the arrest of journalists. For instance, the police injured two journalists with non-lethal weapons as well as brute force on February 6 in the capital of Malé. Both journalists had to receive medical treatment for sustained injuries, one had to be taken to Sri Lanka for further treatment. The police also injured three journalists during protests in Malé on March 16 and July 20.
On August 30, the High Court declared the ban of the "India Out" movement issued via presidential decree by former president Solih in 2022, as bearing no legal weight. The High Court also abolished an act restricting free speech perceived as a threat to national security. It had been in place since 1968.
fmo

MYANMAR (AA / RAKHINE STATE)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2015

Conflict parties: AA vs. Myanmar Army
Conflict items: autonomy



The limited war over autonomy between Arakan Army (AA) and the Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw) in Rakhine State escalated to a war. In November, the ceasefire agreed upon on 11/26/22, collapsed. In Shan State, the Three Brotherhood Alliance (3BHA), which includes AA, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), and Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), started a war with the Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw) over autonomy [Myanmar (→ MNDAA / Shan State); Myanmar (TNLA / Shan State)].
The offensive by 3BHA that started in October and the Myanmar Army's countermeasures resulted in at least 132 civilian deaths, large-scale destruction of public infrastructure, and 125,000 IDPs in Shan State. The conflict between AA and the Myanmar Army that flared up again resulted in at least 64 civilian casualties, widespread destruction of housing infrastructure and 161,000 IDPs in Rakhine State over the year, as reported by Amnesty International.
The United League of Arakan (ULA) and its military wing AA used the ceasefire with Myanmar Army that was kept from 11/22 until November to further consolidate their power in Rakhine State. In May, cyclone Mocha caused widespread devastation in Rakhine State and caused at least 1.2 million IDPs. During this environmental crisis, ULA/AA acted as an organizing and coordinating power, which resulted in further legitimacy gains among the population. Relations with the Rohingya, another ethnic group in Rakhine State, improved despite clashes with ARSA [→ Myanmar (Rohingya)].
On September 29, the Tatmadaw shelled an IDP camp in Laiza, Shan State, where AA was present, killing one AA officer, 29 civilians and injuring ten AA members and 57 civilians. On October 27, 3BHA launched Operation 1027, a large-scale offensive in northern Shan State, near the Chinese border. The offensive is still ongoing, with 3BHA having reportedly captured over ten townships and more than 200 junta camps in Shan State. In Rakhine State, AA used the situation in Shan State to unilaterally break the ceasefire and resume the fight against the Myanmar Army. Since then, AA reportedly captured over 150 Army bases and camps. During the offensive, AA and 3BHA relied on smaller weapons and advanced systems such as modified commercial drones.
The Myanmar Army was in retreat both in Shan and Rakhine States and resorted to the shelling of civilian infrastructure, for instance, on December 21, Army troops fired dozens of artillery shells into Minbya township, Mrauk-U district, and Ann township, Kyaukpyu district. Myanmar Army heavily deployed artillery, frigates, and fighter aircrafts. On December 5, the Army allegedly used chemical weapons forbidden under the Chemical Weapons Convention in Paletwa Township, Chin State, as reported by both AA and Amnesty International.
tgs

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 State Progress Party (SSPP), the Palaung National Liberation Army (PNLA) as well as the United Wa State Army (UWSA), on the other, continued.

RCSS clashed with PNLA over ethnic and territorial issues, while the conflicts between RCSS and SSPP are regarded as inter-factional territorial issues between the southern and northern parts of Shan State. Shan State Army, the armed wing of SSPP, and TNLA are both members of the Federal Political Negotiation and Consultative Committee, led by the UWSA.

In March and April, fighting between SSPP and RCSS continued, reportedly in Kunhing township, as well as Laikha township, both in Loilem District, southern Shan State, forcing approx. 500 residents to flee starting on April 11. There were no casualties reported but an ongoing mobilization of troops on both sides in the area.

On April 3, RCSS and PNLA members engaged in a shooting at Nampartet village, Mawkmai township, Langkho District, southern Shan State. Both sides accused the other of territory breaching, reportedly leaving eight dead on the RCSS side and three injured on the PNLA side. On May 20, RCSS attacked PNLA at Wan Khieng village, Langkho.

On September 27, SSPP intruded on TNLA territory in Kutkai town, eponymous township, Muse District, northern Shan State. In response, SSPP maintained that they had informed TNLA ahead of time. On November 7, TNLA arrested a villager, allegedly a local Shan activist, and clashed with SSPP as SSPP inquired about the arrest in Sae Luang village, Muse township, eponymous district, killing two SSPP members.

On November 30, RCSS and SSPP signed a ceasefire agreement after four rounds of negotiations. Both factions agreed to halt hostilities and find a peaceful solution for future issues. As part of the truce, both parties would exchange prisoners, discuss troop deployment, and hold bilateral meetings every two months.

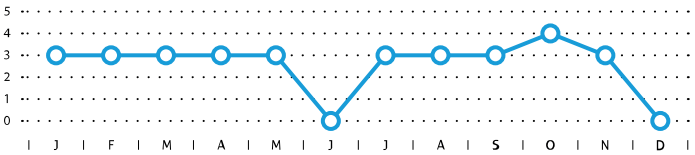
Overall, sporadic fighting emerged among the conflict parties in both the southern and northern parts of Shan State. Local media reported that RCSS, TNLA, SSPP, PNLA, and UWSA continued to forcibly recruit civilians.

cth

MYANMAR (KIA, KIO / KACHIN STATE)

Intensity: 4 | Change: • | Start: 1961

Conflict parties: KIA, KIO vs. Myanmar Army
Conflict items: autonomy, resources



The limited war over autonomy of Kachin State and resources between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), politically represented by the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), on the one hand, and the military junta, backed by the military of Myanmar (Tatmadaw), on the other, continued.

Throughout the year, at least 200 people were killed and more than 150 people injured as a result of the conflict in Kachin State. In addition, between 5,000 and 10,000 civilians were displaced. The Myanmar military regularly targeted KIA-controlled areas with artillery strikes, mortar fire, and airstrikes. Offensives conducted by the military often included violence against civilians, burning down houses, and destroying property. In their operations, the military placed particular focus on Hpakant township, Kachin State, which is central to the jade mining sector, and key routes to China.

On March 4, the Myanmar military burned down at least 30 houses in Shwegu township. On March 30, military troops raided a village in Bhamo township after carrying out several airstrikes. During the attack, the military killed ten civilians, burned down at least 100 houses and displaced more than 3,000 people.

On October 9, the Myanmar military conducted an airstrike on Mung Lai Hkyet, a displaced persons camp. The assault left at least 29 people dead, more than 60 people injured, and did not seem to have any military targets. The IDP camp is located near Laiza town, close to the KIA headquarters.

In the months of July, August, and October, respectively, more than 2,400 IDPs were reported in Kachin State. In July, clashes between military troops and the KIA in Waingmaw township displaced over 1,000 people. In August, fighting in Hpakant township displaced between 400 and 600 people. In October, clashes between the military and the KIA in several villages in Kachin and northern Shan State displaced over 1,000 people.

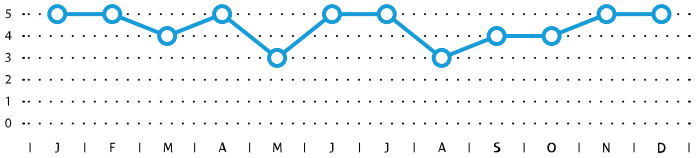
tsr

MYANMAR (KNU, KNLA, DKBA ET. AL. / KAREN STATE, KAYAH STATE)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1948

Conflict parties: Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), Karen National Defense Organisation (KNDO), Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), Karen National Union (KNU), Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), People's Revolution Alliance (Magway) vs. Myanmar Army

Conflict items: autonomy



The limited war over autonomy between the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the armed-wing of Karen National Union (KNU), in alliance with the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO), the Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF), the Karenni National People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), the Karenni Army (KA), and the People's Revolution Alliance (Magway), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw), on the other, escalated to a war. On June 30, the KNPLF, which had served as BGF for the Myanmar Army, switched alliances.

Throughout the year, at least 536 people were killed, 144 injured, and about 65,000 became IDPs or refugees. In at least 40 incidents, heavy weapons were used, mostly by the Myanmar Army. Besides the main area of the conflict, the states of Karen and Kayah, Bago East Division, Mon East Division, and Tanintharyi Northeast Division became part of the conflict.

Between January 1 and 6, at least 130 Myanmar Army soldiers and 14 KNLA members were killed and 25 injured, as KNLA forces attacked some military camps in Taung Sung village, Dooplaya district, Karen State. KNLA also collaborated with the People's Defence Force (PDF) [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. For instance, on January 4, they executed an attack on three military camps in Kyainseikgyi township, Kawkareik district, Karen State, killing at least 50 soldiers, while three KNLA members were killed and another six injured. On March 9, the Myanmar Army shelled Hsaw Htee township, Nyaunglebin district, Bago East Division, which led to at least 11,600 IDPs. On April 5, the Border Guard Forces (BGF) clashed with KNLA and PDF joint forces in Shwe Kokko city, Myawaddy district, Karen State, killing at least 85 and injuring another 60 BGF members, as well as causing over 10,000 civilians to flee, 9,000 of them over the border to Thailand. Between April 18 and 21, further 3,000 civilians fled during clashes of the Myanmar Army and KNLA in Mekanel village, Myawaddy district.

Violence of the Myanmar Army against civilians and infrastructure intensified in May. On May 9, at least 100 Myanmar Army soldiers killed and burnt the bodies of 18 civilians in a raid in Nyaung Pin Thar village, Nyaunglebin district. The same day, soldiers of the Myanmar Army burnt down approx. 30 houses in Lelwainggyi village, Nyaunglebin district. On May 10, the Myanmar Army raided Nyaw Tha village, Nyaunglebin district, killing 22 civilians.

On June 2, joint forces of KNLA and Magway ambushed checkpoints of the Myanmar Army at Don Tha Mi Bridge, Hpa-An district, Karen State, killing 45 Army troops, and injuring 19. Two KNLA and PDF joint forces were killed and one injured in the fighting. On July 2, KNLA forces raided another police station, killing ten policemen, and injuring another 15.

On September 18, the Myanmar Army arrested and killed seven PDF members in Palaw township, Myeik District, Tanintharyi region and on September 22, the Myanmar Army arrested and killed another 27 PDF members, who were evacuating civilians in Chay Yar Taw village, Sagaing district, Sagaing Region.

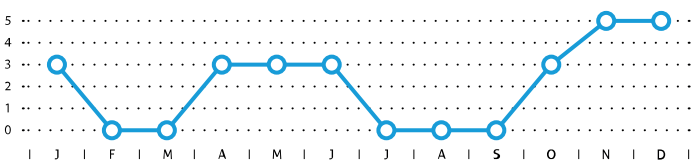
On November 11, KNLA, PDF, KIA, KA, and KNDF forces launched Operation 1111. On the same day KNLA, PDF, KA, and KNDF joint forces attacked Loikaw, Kayah State. On November 13, the Myanmar Army shelled Loikaw, killing 20 civilians, injuring 15. On the same day, KNLA and PDF forces attacked a military outpost at Attran Bridge, Chaung Hna, Khwa, Mon State, killing 14 Myanmar Army troops, capturing 28. On November 15, KNLA, PDF, and KIA members captured Loikaw University, killing 112 Myanmar Army soldiers, injuring 32. Six KNDF forces and at least 34 civilians were killed and another 50 civilians injured. 32 Myanmar Army soldiers surrendered during the fighting and further 32 were captured by KNLA joint forces. The Myanmar Army retaliated the losses in Loikaw targeting smaller villages and civilian targets around Kayah State's capital. On November 19, artillery shelling on Ottar Yone monastery, Loikaw, killed nine civilians. Between the launch of Operation 1111 on November 11 and December 30, the UN reported 136,000 IDPs in Kayah, Kayin, and Mon State. nif

MYANMAR (MNDAA / SHAN STATE)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1989

Conflict parties: MNDAA vs. Myanmar Army

Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources



downgraded (< 360 deaths)

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 escalated to a limited war. This year, at least 100 violent incidents occurred, resulting in at least 204 people killed and 58 injured.

After announcing a year-long ceasefire with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), which started on January 1, the Myanmar Army continued to launch offensives against the EAOs, including the MNDAA. Between January 13 and 16, the Myanmar Army attacked several MNDAA bases near Hseni Township, Lashio District, Shan State, resulting in at least 30 people killed and four injured.

On April 26, an aircraft of the Myanmar Army dropped two bombs on Hway Tawng village, Hseni. The attack killed one civilian, injured 12, and led to the destruction of two houses. Between June 1 and 3, the Brotherhood Alliance, which

includes the Arakan Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army and MNDAA, met with the government-controlled National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, facilitated by China. They discussed the removal of the EAOs from the list of unlawful associations and the release of detained soldiers. Yet fighting continued throughout the month with at least four clashes between the MNDAA and the Myanmar Army in villages of Toneshan and Kyantitshan, Kokang, and Manping Village in Kutkai Township, Man Bang village near Lashio Township, killing at least 13 people, displacing approx. 140 people, and damaging eleven houses.

On October 14, MNDAA fighters attacked a group of at least 30 Myanmar Army soldiers as they attempted to locate an MNDAA base in Kokang, killing at least 16 soldiers and injuring another seven.

On October 27, the MNDAA, together with its allies from the Brotherhood Alliance and Peoples Defense Forces, launched Operation 1027, which according to the EAOs, aimed at gaining greater control over the areas they claim through coordinated attacks in northern Myanmar [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. Operation 1027 led to numerous clashes between the Brotherhood Alliance and the Myanmar Army, resulting in the capture of over 400 military bases and around ten towns by the EAOs as well as the displacement of over 660,000 people by the end of the year. The MNDAA among others took control of the towns of Chinshwehaw, Hseni, Kulong, and Mongkow and surrounded Laukkai. At least 150 people were killed and 25 injured in the fighting between the MNDAA and the Myanmar Army in November and December. For instance, on November 14, at least 6 people died during the clash between MNDAA and Myanmar army in Laukkai. On November 24, MNDAA seized four military bases in Hseni, arresting 30 Myanmar Army soldiers and seizing weapons. On the same day, 16 people were killed during the fight. MNDAA killed 20 captured Myanmar Army soldiers on November 20 and 70 on December 1, as the soldiers tried to flee the Shee Shan area of southern Kokang region.

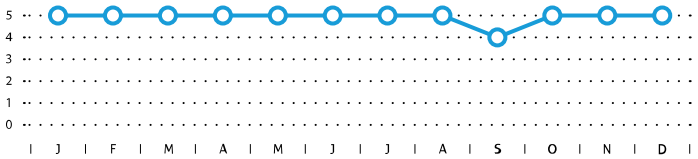
In addition to conventional light and heavy weapons, including fighter jets, the Myanmar Army also used chemical bombs. Large numbers of weapons and ammunition, including howitzers and armored vehicles, were captured by the MNDAA, in part because at least 369 Myanmar Army soldiers surrendered to them. Efforts by China to broker a ceasefire by facilitating negotiations between representatives of the Brotherhood Alliance and the Myanmar Army in Kunming city, capital of Yunnan province, China, on December 14 were unsuccessful. ls

MYANMAR (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 5 | Change: • | Start: 1962

Conflict parties: National League of Democracy (NLD), National Unity Government (NUG), People's Defense Forces (PDF) vs. Myanmar Army, Pyu Saw Htee militias

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The war over national power and the orientation of the political system between the National League of Democracy (NLD) party and its interim government, the National Unity Government (NUG), with its armed wing, the People's Defense Forces (PDF), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw), as well as the Pyu Saw Htee militias, on the other, continued. The Myanmar Army had staged a coup d'état against the democratically elected NUG on 02/01/21. Following the NLD's decision in January not to re-register due to a new pro-Army electoral law introduced in the same month, the NLD was formally dissolved as a political party on March 28. The 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)].

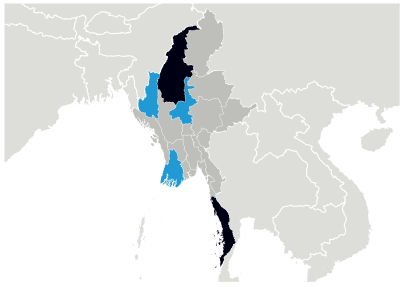
Throughout the year, the conflict reportedly resulted in at least 1,129 deaths. Furthermore, there were 8,600 arrests of activists, security forces, and members of the political opposition.

This year, the majority of violent incidents occurred in the border regions and Sagaing Region, which became a hotspot for airstrikes, armed clashes, and arson attacks. The Myanmar Army carried out at least 500 airstrikes this year, resulting in 250 civilian casualties. For instance, on April 11, the Myanmar Army attacked opposition buildings in Kanbalu township, Sagaing Region, using thermobaric ammunition, killing at least 175 opposition activists and civilians, injuring 125 and leaving around 1,000 displaced. Militias, such as the Pyu Saw Htee, supported the Myanmar Army, often focussing their attacks on alleged members of the PDF or other opposition groups. For instance, on January 14, Pyu Saw Htee members attacked Ngar Myaung village, Kanbalu township, killing eight members of a family who hosted the local NLD village office in their house. The PDF was also responsible for initiating attacks on the military, using ambushes and coordinated attacks, primarily on military bases and convoys. For example, on September 17, PDF forces, employing heavy artillery, attacked six junta gunboats which were carrying over 100 soldiers from Mandalay to Bhamo in Kachin State. In retaliation, the Myanmar Army attacked Toke Gyi village, Katha Township, Sagaing Region, killing seven villagers, as well as burning down at least 45 houses, arresting 50 locals, and causing more than 1,000 to flee their homes during the raids. Between April 10 and 15, in Than Bo Village, Nawnghkio Township, Shan State, the PDF killed at least 30 Myanmar Army members in a series of intense clashes, which resulted in the military retaliating with five airstrikes on that day, killing two civilians. Within Chin State, the Myanmar Army killed 15 and injured 19 members of the Chin National Front (CNF), Chinland Defence Force (CDF), and the Chin National Army (CNA) by airstrikes and artillery over the year.

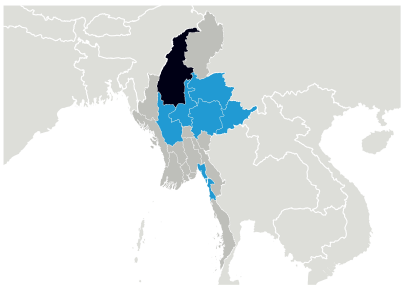
Moreover, unarmed protests and other non-violent forms of resistance continued, principally across the Sagaing Region and in central parts of the country. On August 8, seven members of the Myanmar Army in civilian clothes opened fire on a pro-democracy protest in Monywa Town, Sagaing Region, leading to three arrests. Further arrests and executions of political prisoners took place on February 28, in Ywar Sone Village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, where the Myanmar Army and Pyu Saw Htee members executed four anti-junta activists.

Furthermore, the international community condemned the violent incidents. ASEAN released a statement following their meeting on July 11 and 12, which urged all parties

MYANMAR (OPPOSOITION)



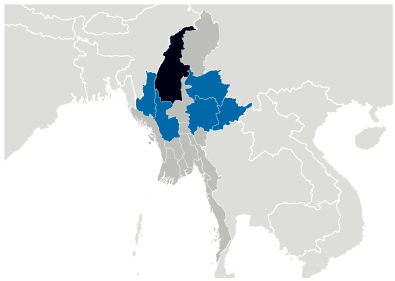
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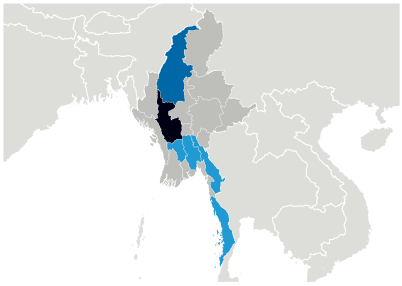
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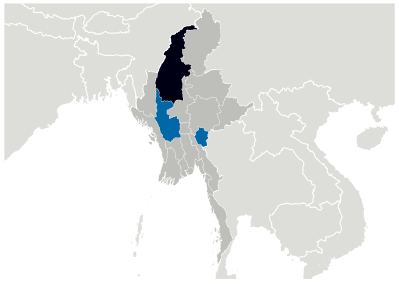
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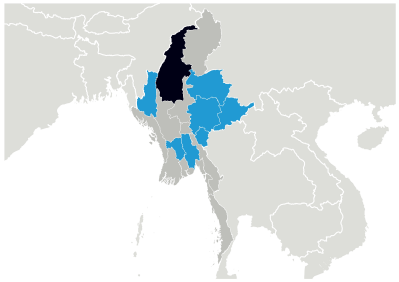
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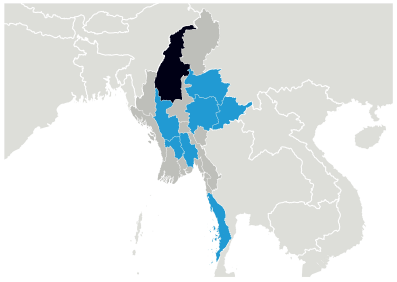
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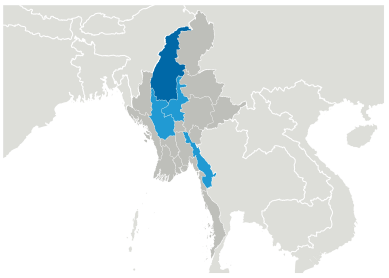
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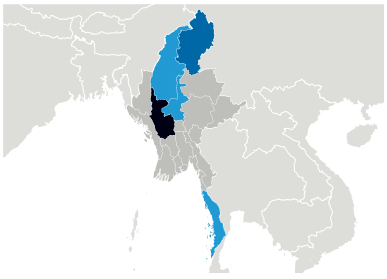
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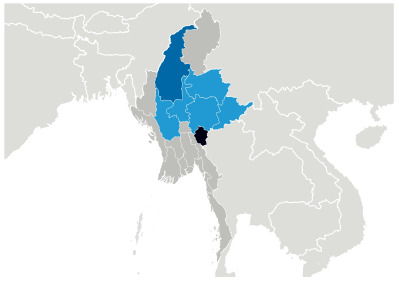
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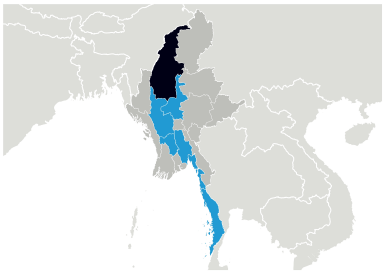
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October



November



December

NO VIOLENT CONFLICT MEASURES | VIOLENT CRISIS | LIMITED WAR | WAR

to take concrete action to immediately halt indiscriminate violence, denounce any escalation, and to implement the ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus. The UN's July 14 resolution built upon this announcement, calling for an immediate end to all violence and all violations of international law in the country, as well as to protect the human rights of all people within Myanmar.
In late October, a new dynamic of the conflict evolved. On October 27, the Three Brotherhood Alliance (3BHA), consisting of the Arakan Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, launched the so-called Operation 1027 alongside other organisations, such as the PDF. This ongoing offensive significantly altered the conflict, with the 3BHA reporting that around 300 military positions had fallen to the resistance groups. Internationally, the offensive resulted in China calling for an absolute ceasefire throughout Myanmar on November 2, after the capture of some towns by the pro-democracy groups, including Chinshwehaw town, Lukkaing district, Shan State, located on the Chinese border. On November 6, the PDF captured Kawlin, Sagaing Region, after overrunning the Myanmar Army there. This marked the first district capital to fall to opposition forces. sb

MYANMAR (ROHINGYA)

Intensity:	2	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 ethnic rights of Rohingya between the Rohingya ethnic group and ethnic armed organizations, such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
On July 21, a clash between the Arakan Army (AA) and ARSA was reported in Buthidaung township, Rakhine State. In September, AA conducted searches in predominantly Rohingya villages in northern Rakhine State, arresting residents suspected of links to the controversial ARSA. Approx. 100 AA members targeted locations in southern Buthidaung township during these operations [→ Myanmar (AA / Rakhine State)].
Throughout the year, approx. 2,500 Rohingya fled, mostly to neighboring countries such as Bangladesh and Indonesia, at least 569 of whom were reported dead or missing. On January 6, a township court in Bogale, Pyapon District, Ayeyarwady Region, sentenced 112 Rohingya refugees to prison as they were caught travelling outside refugee camps. On July 22, Bangladeshi police forces arrested a leader and commander of ARSA [→ Bangladesh (Rohingya / Cox's Bazar)]. On July 25, Indian police arrested 74 Rohingya refugees in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, accusing them of crossing the border illegally. On August 9, three Rohingya refugees drowned in the Bay of Bengal as a boat capsized. Some 17 more died on the following day as another boat capsized. Furthermore, Myanmar authorities captured over 100 Rohingya as they tried to flee the country. Junta officials arrested 38 Rohingya on their way to Malaysia on October 27 near Ah Ngu Maw village in Rakhine's Rathedaung township. On November 2, the Myanmar Navy arrested over 200 Rohingya in western Myanmar. Throughout November the number of fleeing Rohingya reached the highest point with at least 1,319 Rohingya fleeing to Indonesia by boat in November. They were not welcomed in Indonesia, especially on November 16, when a boat of refugees was pushed back by Indonesian civilians into the sea. On December 28, the Indonesian Navy pushed a boat with refugees on the shore of Aceh Province back into international waters. nha

MYANMAR (SOCIOECONOMIC PROTESTS)

Intensity:	3	Change:	↗	Start:	2007

Conflict parties:	Kachin Independence Army (KIA), local protesters vs. Myanmar Army, resource companies
Conflict items:	resources

The non-violent crisis over resources, such as the mining of jade, in Kachin State and the Sagaing Region between local protesters, the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) as well as its military wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), on the one hand, and resource, mostly Chinese mining, companies backed by the Myanmar Army, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
Throughout the year, local activists continued to protest over environmental and socioeconomic consequences of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative, such as ongoing logging and mining operations.
On March 21, in Mansi township, Bhamo district, Kachin State, a protest against rare earth mining with at least 1,000 local protesters led to the destruction of huts and structures at a Chinese mine. In response, on April 15, the Kachin Independence Organization made a public announcement and halted all rare earth mining operations in Bhamo. Between May 4 and 10, the state visit of the foreign minister of the People's Republic of China (PRC) triggered nationwide anti-PRC protests. Protesters burned PRC flags and pictures of PRC officials in front of the Letpadaung Copper mine, Salingyi township, Sagaing Region, owned by the Chinese company Wanbao. On May 7, the local resistance group Natogyi Guerilla Force shelled a control center of a Chinese pipeline in Mandalay Region, killing two soldiers of the Myanmar Army, and wounding five. On July 5, three Ethnic Armed Organizations, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, and the Arakan Army, published a statement pledging to protect Chinese infrastructure projects. On August 7, 17 local syndicats released a joint statement against Wanbao stating that the company allows the Myanmar Army to use its compound as a military base for raids and the shelling of surrounding villages.
KIA-backed mining operations also caused tensions [→ Myanmar (KIA, KIO / Kachin State)]. On June 2, the Army-affiliated Wu Yang People's Militia Force arrested four villagers, who were protesting ironstone mining in Kachin State, accusing them of supporting the KIA.
Mining operations continued to substantially damage the environment. In Kachin State, gold mining is affecting the life of 10,000 people in Waingmaw township, causing river diversions and landslides. Gold mining also polluted the Indawgyi, the largest lake in Myanmar. Extensive jade mining caused a landslide on August 13, killing over 30 people in Hpakant township, Mohnyin district.

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MYANMAR (SSA / SHAN STATE)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1952

Conflict parties: RCSS (SSA-S), SSPP (SSA-N) vs. Myanmar Army

Conflict items: autonomy

The violent crisis over autonomy of the Shan State and the orientation of political system in Myanmar between the Shan State Army North (SSA-N) and its political wing, Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP) and Shan State Army South (SSA-S) and its respective political wing, Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), on the one hand, and the Myanmar Army, on the other, continued. This year was marked by several rounds of peace talks among all parties, and sporadic clashes between SSPP/SSA-N and the Myanmar army.

Throughout the year, SSPP/SSA-N clashed with the Myanmar army on several occasions. On January 24, a military helicopter of the Myanmar army flew over the SSPP headquarters in Wan Hai Township, Loilem District, without prior notice, resulting in threats from the SSPP. On March 11, a police vehicle and a military truck attacked SSPP soldiers using both firearms and explosives in Mongyai Township, Lashio District, injuring several SSPP soldiers. On June 9, the Myanmar army ordered the SSPP/SSA-N to close ten of its military outposts in Laikha Township, Loilem. In the absence of response from SSPP, the Myanmar army increased personnel in the area. On August 6, the SSPP/SSA-N clashed with the Myanmar army due to their refusal to withdraw troops from Laikha. Between August 6 to 7, regime forces shelled SSPP-controlled areas in Laikha. The Myanmar army launched an attack with a unit of 70 troops, employing artillery fire and ground troops to target an SSA-N base in Nampauk village, situated east of the Namtein Creek in Laikha.

All parties engaged in several rounds of peace talks throughout the year, discussing issues such as holding elections in the territories controlled by the ethnic armed organizations (EAO), amending the Basic Constitution from 2008, and establishing a federal union of Myanmar. For instance, on March 22, a meeting between the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, United Wa State Army, SSPP and the Myanmar army took place discussing the planned elections in August in their respective territories [→ Myanmar (inter-militant rivalry / Shan State)]. On July 11 and 12, the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee (NSPNC) facilitated peace talks with the RCSS again. The planned election was delayed due to increasing violence in Myanmar between various EAOs and the Myanmar army [→ Myanmar (opposition)]. On September 21 and 22, more peace talks unfolded in the capital, Nay Pyi Taw, this time involving the NSPNC and the RCSS to cooperate in measures to conduct the delayed elections in and providing humanitarian aids in EAO-active areas. sbo

NEPAL (KIRATIS / KOSI, MECHI, SAGARMATHA)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1992

Conflict parties: Kiratis, Limbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha, various indigenous groups vs. government

Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance

The dispute over autonomy and subnational predominance between indigenous groups, Kiratis and Limbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.

In the first half of the year, Province 1 in Nepal's southeast, predominantly inhabited by ethnic minorities and indigenous people groups, was renamed Koshi Province after a river flowing through the province. On March 1, the provincial assembly passed the name change, making Province 1 the last of Nepal's seven provinces to receive a name after the federal reform of 2015. Especially Kiratis criticized the renaming due to its disregard for the ethnic and religious heterogeneity of the inhabitants.

Local inhabitants, mainly belonging to minority communities in the province, frequently protested the name change between March and May. While the protests generally remained peaceful, security forces frequently used force to counter them. On March 19, security forces baton-charged protesters in Biratnagar, Koshi Province, injuring one protester who died of his injuries on March 24. Four members of security forces also sustained injuries. Protesters and security forces clashed again following his funeral on April 22, after protesters allegedly entered a restricted area. At least six members of security forces and six protesters sustained injuries. Further protests erupted on March 28 and 29 in Biratnagar. Security forces used water cannons and teargas against the protesters, injuring at least 25 protesters. On May 28, protesters entered a restricted area in Biratnagar, leading to 27 arrests and the deployment of tear gas and water cannons, injuring dozens of protesters.

Tensions also occurred between protesters and public representatives of the region. During the protests on March 28 and 29, a group of protesters attempted to lock up a local ward chief, who sustained injuries following the incident. On December 12, protestors threw stones at the car of the province's Chief Minister, damaging the vehicle but not injuring the Chief Minister. ser

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.

Tensions between the two countries remained high, with

DPRK launching missiles in 22 instances throughout the year [→ Japan, South Korea, USA – North Korea]. For instance, on June 15, DPRK fired two short-range ballistic missiles from Sunan, Pyongyang, towards the Sea of Japan. The launch took place amidst the largest ever combined military exercises conducted by ROK and USA between May 25 and June 15. The drills mobilized 2,500 soldiers along with heavy military equipment.
ROK repeatedly engaged in joint military drills alongside the US and Japan this year. For instance, on February 19, ROK and the US participated in joint air drills. On August 18, during a summit at Camp David, Maryland state, US, the three countries announced to enhance their security cooperation [→ Japan, South Korea, USA – North Korea]. Meanwhile, DPRK established closer diplomatic ties with the PRC and Russia. On September 13, at a summit at Vostochny Cosmodrome Space Launch Center, Amgur region, Russia, Russian President Vladimir Putin pledged to support DPRK's space program.
On November 21, DPRK launched a reconnaissance satellite into space for the first time. On November 22, ROK responded by partially suspending the Pyongyang Joint Declaration, signed on 09/19/18 which, among others, established no-fly zones and barred various military exercises along the Military Demarcation Line. On the next day, DPRK stated that it will reinstate all military measures that were halted in accordance with the Pyongyang Joint Declaration and launched a ballistic missile from Sunan, Pyongyang. akw

NORTH KOREA, CHINA (DEFECTORS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2000

Conflict parties: DPRK, PRC vs. defectors (network)
Conflict items: system/ideology, other

The 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 NGO based mostly in the Republic of Korea (ROK), on the other, continued.
In September, landmines reportedly killed three NKD trying to cross the Tumen River near the city of Musan, North Hamgyong Province, DPRK. Another five NKD were reported to be killed or injured in mid-October in the same area. DPRK authorities also allegedly imposed a series of severe punishments against citizens, such as deportation to prison camps and public executions, for various actions considered to be criminal in DPRK, e.g. leaving the country without permission. PRC authorities also executed unusual extensive measures against NKD in the border region. For example, reports emerged that the Chinese government was using facial recognition software to track North Korean defectors. In March, for example, at least five defectors and a local broker were arrested near the northeastern city of Dalian, Liaoning Province. In October, PRC reportedly repatriated at least 500 NKD, as PRC officially considers NKD illegal economic migrants under two agreements with DPRK. This prompted criticism by ROK. On December 7, the Seoul-based Transitional Justice Working Group reported they had lost contact to all members of this group in DPRK.
On March 16, the ROK announced an increase in financial and other support for NKD, including the first rise in the basic resettlement subsidy in the last four years. On March 30, the ROK Ministry of Unification (MoU) published its annual report on North Korean human rights abuses for the first time. The report, based on witness testimonies by NKD, highlighted widespread violent abuses by DPRK between 2017-2022, such as public executions and torture.
In September 2023, the ROK constitutional court declared a law barring the dissemination of anti-DPRK leaflets into DPRK as unconstitutional, prompting criticism by DPRK.
According to MoU, 196 NKD reached ROK in 2023, compared to 67 in 2022. This year, an unusually high number of nine NKD reached ROK by sea instead of the land route via PRC. jkl

PAKISTAN (BALOCHISTAN)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1948

Conflict parties: BLA, BLF, BLT, BNA (militant group), BNA (political party), BNP-M, BRG vs. government
Conflict items: secession, resources

The violent crisis over the secession of Balochistan province and the control of its gas, oil, coal, and mineral resources between several Baloch militant groups, allegedly supported by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)], and political parties on the one hand, and the government, supported by China, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, Baloch militant groups and security forces clashed on several occasions. Confrontations between them left at least 73 security personnel dead and another 38 injured as well as 13 militants dead.
As in previous years, Baloch militants repeatedly attacked infrastructure associated with the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. For instance, on August 25, members of the Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) set ablaze a mobile phone tower belonging to a Chinese company in Kech district, Balochistan. The largest of these attacks occurred on August 13, when members of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) attacked a convoy of Chinese engineers with hand grenades and small arms near the port city of Gwadar. In the ensuing shootout, security personnel shot two BLA fighters dead. BLA later claimed to have killed four Chinese nationals and eleven Pakistani security forces as well as injuring several more.
Throughout the year, Baloch militants attacked security forces on several occasions. For instance, on November 3, BLF ambushed two military vehicles in Pasni Tehsil, attacking them with IEDs, rockets, and small arms fire, killing 14 soldiers and destroying the vehicles. In response, the military conducted large-scale operations in the surrounding area using helicopters. On April 27, BLA killed a senior officer of Pakistan's Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in an IED attack in Khuzdar city.
Throughout the year, security forces conducted targeted operations against Baloch militants. On April 7, the military announced it had arrested a leader of the Baloch Nationalist Army (BNA). On October 6, CTD personnel shot dead two alleged BLA members in Quetta city during a raid. On October 15, security forces shot dead a high-ranking BLA commander and another militant of the same group in Kech district during another raid. On December 20, a BNA commander as well as 70 of his followers publicly announced their surrender which reportedly resulted in the dissolution of BNA. The militant group had been formed in 2022/12 as a merger of several Balochi militant groups.

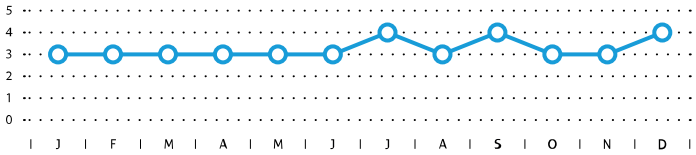
On August 11, high-ranking members of the Balochistan National Party-Mengal announced their resignation from the party, founding the Baloch National Alliance instead. Balochistan is set to hold provincial elections in 2024. hbe

PAKISTAN (ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2001

Conflict parties: al-Qaeda, et al., IS-K, LeJ, TTP vs. government, political parties

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, escalated to a limited war.

In violent confrontations between Islamist militant groups and government forces, 353 people were killed and at least 491 injured. The main territory of the conflict continued to be Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), however there was a significant increase in violence in Punjab. The establishment of two new administrative units in Punjab within TTP's organizational structure, announced on June 15, illustrates this development. The most significant Islamist militant groups continued to be TTP and IS-K.

Throughout the year, several particularly violent attacks occurred. For example, on January 30, a TTP member carried out a suicide bombing attack inside a mosque in Peshawar, KP, killing 84 people and injuring at least 221. On July 30, an IS-K militant blew himself up at a workers' convention of the pro-Taliban Sunni political party Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) in Khar Town, KP, killing 55 people and injuring at least another 100. Moreover, on September 6, TTP militants attacked two military posts in Chitral district, KP. During the resulting shootout, 16 people were killed and at least 47 injured. On December 12, the deadliest attack against security forces was carried out when TTP-affiliated Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan (TJP) together with TTP militants attacked a security force checkpost in Dera Ismail Khan district, KP. In this incident, 25 security personnel as well as 27 attackers were killed, and the number of injured persons remained unknown.

The dispute between the Pakistani government and Afghan Taliban government about Afghan support for TTP continued [→ Afghanistan – Pakistan]. On June 9, the UN stated that the Afghan Taliban Government was supportive of the TTP. During the second half of the year, the Pakistani Government began to enforce the announced mass deportations of Afghan refugees arguing with a connection of Afghan immigrants and increased TTP activity.

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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 such as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the government continued.

During the year, electoral procedures remained an issue. In January, PTI governors dissolved the provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in order to push for early regional and federal elections. On April 4, the Supreme Court ordered the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold elections by May 15, however, both the ECP and the government postponed the regional elections in Punjab and KP, as well as the linked federal elections. On November 2, the ECP announced that elections should be held on 02/08/24.

Throughout the year, PTI held rallies and protests, some of which turned violent. For example on March 8, PTI organized a protest in Lahore, Punjab. In clashes, several officers and protesters got injured. Moreover, PTI leader and former Prime Minister Imran Khan faced continued persecution. On March 15, PTI-supporters prevented Khan's arrest by blocking his house in Lahore, resulting in 50 policemen and several injured protesters. On May 9, police managed to arrest Imran Khan, causing violent protests the next day. In the aftermath, at least five members of PTI were killed, 160 policemen injured and over 5,000 PTI supporters were arrested. Several government and army facilities came under attack and were raided by the protestors. Following the arrest of hundreds of high-ranking party members, a group of party leaders left PTI and formed the new party Istehkaam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) on June 6. On August 5, a court in Lahore sentenced Imran Khan to three years in prison based on corruption charges. Three weeks later, the Islamabad High Court suspended his sentence, nonetheless extending his custody based on the existing 150 cases pending against him at the time.

Journalists continued to face governmental repression. For example, on May 1, police arrested a prominent journalist criticizing the government in Sialkot city, Punjab, and detained him for five months without official charges. On March 5, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) banned all satellite TV channels from airing Imran Khan's speeches and press conferences. On August 9, the government passed a new law, extending PEMRA's mandate on censoring alleged fake news.

mom

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 the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), and the government continued. Most of the incidents took place in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan.

Throughout the year, the Pakistani government and military

continued to take action against PTM members and supporters. On June 19, a journalist regularly covering PTM protests was temporarily abducted and tortured by five unidentified individuals in Bannu city, KP. On August 18, police forces detained 50 PTM members after a protest march at Express Chowk, Islamabad Capital Territory. As in previous years, the imprisonment of PTM leaders remained an issue. On February 14, a PTM leader was released from Karachi Central Jail, Sindh, after two years of detainment. On June 19, he was arrested again at Dumdel checkpoint, KP, and remained in prison for a few days. Moreover on August 19, he and another PTM leader were arrested in Islamabad after allegedly voicing anti-state comments at a protest the previous day. Both were released on bail during September and October. On December 4, the same PTM leader was arrested again in Chaman, Balochistan, after joining a local protest. The incident left one civilian injured. Police and PTM accused each other for the violence.
After an increase in terrorist attacks in KP which started in 08/2022 and continued in 2023, PTM joined several protest marches for peace [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. For instance, on January 6, PTM members were part of a protest in Wana, KP, and on February 3, PTM leaders joined protests in several places in KP. Moreover, PTM joined several protests in response to the change in visa policy for Afghan citizens. For example, PTM members participated in a protest in Chaman, Balochistan, on October 20.
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).
Sindhi groups continued to criticize Sindhi and Pakistani politics. On January 17, members of the Sindhi community gathered in Jamshoro city to remember a Sindhi nationalist leader. The protesters chanted anti-Pakistan slogans. Police clashed with protesters and three police personnel and two Sindhi activists were injured. Another protest of Sindhi nationalist groups happened on April 25, in Sann city. Protesters criticized forced conversions, forced disappearances, violence against Sindhis, and Chinese influence in the province. On August 10, members of a Sindhi student organization and the student organization Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT) clashed at Karachi University in Karachi city. The incident left at least five individuals injured.
Tensions remained high between the major political parties of Sindh province, PPP and the Pakistan faction of MQM (MQM-P). On January 25, a PPP worker was shot dead under unclear circumstances in the Korangi area of Karachi city. The individual formerly worked for MQM-P. On August 23, members of PPP and MQM-P clashed about the deployment of party flags in Shah Faisal town. Both parties used iron rods and sticks and one MQM-P politician was injured. On December 10, MQM-P claimed that supporters of PPP shot four members of MQM-P during an election campaign in Karachi city. Police stated the incident occurred in the context of a property dispute and had no political grounds.
Throughout the year, the London faction of MQM (MQM-L) continued to be active in Sindh province. On June 23, the website of MQM-L was unblocked after seven years for unknown reasons. On July 10, approx. 80 MQM-L supporters held a rally in the Korangi area of Karachi city and blocked a road with motorbikes. Police arrested four protesters on the spot. After the protest, Pakistan Rangers and police conducted a series of raids and arrested approx. 28 suspected MQM-L supporters. In addition, authorities arrested at least three MQM-L members throughout the year. For instance, on May 25, personnel of the CTD arrested a member of MQM-L responsible for several killings. lih

PAKISTAN (SRA / SINDH)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	2020

Conflict parties:	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 Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, SRA predominantly attacked influential individuals, security personnel and infrastructure in Sindh province. For instance, on February 16, a member of SRA killed the deputy director of several private schools in Sindh province with a pistol in Gulistan-e-Jauhar city, who reportedly had ties to the militant group Al-Badr, active in the Kashmir conflict [→ India (Kashmir)]. In another incident, on August 1, SRA shot a high ranking member of Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) with a gun in Qazi Ahmed city, who succumbed to his injuries on August 5 [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. On July 11, SRA targeted a van of the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) with a remote-controlled IED on the Northern Bypass in Karachi city, injuring three security personnel. A similar incident occurred on August 18, when a member of SRA threw a hand grenade at a police vehicle and injured three policemen in the Sachal area of Karachi city. In March, SRA damaged several railway tracks in Sindh province. For instance, on March 23, SRA carried out an IED attack on railway tracks in Jamshoro district, and one week later, on March 30, SRA damaged two railway tracks in Hyderabad district and Jamshoro district with explosives.
Authorities continued to take action against SRA. On September 28, Sindh Rangers carried out an operation against suspected SRA members in Sakrand village. During the operation, villagers and security personnel clashed and Sindh Rangers killed four individuals and injured approx. four while villagers injured four security personnel. Furthermore, throughout the year, authorities detained a number of SRA-affiliated individuals. For example, on April 19, the CTD arrested a member of SRA who confessed to a murder attempt on April 11 in the Gulshan-e-Hadeed area of Bin Qasim town. Authorities recovered 30 pistols in his possession. On May 23, the CTD arrested a SRA-affiliated individual in connection with a planned IED attack on a Chinese restaurant in the Clifton

area of Karachi city.
In total, SRA killed at least two individuals and injured approx. ten while authorities killed four, injured at least four, and arrested approx. 15 individuals affiliated with SRA.
lih

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (BOUGAINVILLE)

Intensity: 1 | Change: • | Start: 1964

Conflict parties: national government vs. Autonomous Bougainville Government
Conflict items: secession, resources

The dispute over secession and resources between the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG), on the one hand, and the national government, on the other, continued.
According to the Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA), the next step towards independence of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville requires Papua New Guinea's parliament to ratify the 2019 referendum results, in which 97.7% voted in favor of full independence.
On July 31, it was agreed that a simple majority was sufficient to approve the results in parliament. The national government intended to decide on the referendum in a secret ballot and not to limit the sessions of debate in parliament. However, on November 28, the government insisted that the referendum was not binding and that only the national parliament could bring the results into legal effect. The ABG claimed that parliament had no veto-power and that, in accordance with the BPA, approval of independence is mandatory. It also voiced frustration over the adjournment of the parliamentary decision to 2024.
Throughout the year, the devolution of powers from PNG to the ABG continued. On April 9, for instance, consultations on a constitution for an independent Bougainville started, and, in late October, the coastal area was mapped.
som

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (INTER-COMMUNAL RIVALRY)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1975

Conflict parties: Aiyala vs. Hulis vs. Engans vs. Nomali vs. Min vs. Punano vs. Yauna vs. various other tribes
Conflict items: subnational predominance, resources

The limited war over subnational predominance and resources, including arable land and livestock, between various communal groups de-escalated to a violent crisis.
Throughout the year, inter-communal violence left at least 252 casualties. On April 24, two people were killed and several houses burned down during a dispute between the Nomali and Aiyala tribes in Porgera, Enga Province, allegedly due to unmet peace agreement commitments. This followed the withdrawal of the PNG Defence Force the day before and led to its immediate redeployment. At least six further people were killed on April 26, which amounted to a death toll of at least 13 people since the beginning of the dispute on March 6. Tensions over ownership of a Digicel network grid tower in the area have been ongoing for the past few years and have also caused repeated clashes between the two tribes.
In August, a series of attacks between the Itokon Nena, Sau Walep, Lungupin, and Yopo tribes with the Kandaolin, Mupapallu, Sikin, Wapukin and Palinau tribes occurred in Wapenamanda district, Enga province due to territorial disputes and theft accusations. This resulted in at least 150 deaths and the destruction of land and property in Middle Lai, Aiyal valley, and Tsaka. These attacks attracted the attention of international media, especially after a video circulated depicting the mutilated corpses of three naked mercenaries being dragged by a vehicle around Wapenamanda district. The warring tribes agreed to a ceasefire imposed by the Enga Law and Order Task Force amongst other peace advocates on September 14.
On November 27, Engan men from Enga province attacked a Huli leader from Hela province in Tabubil, Western Province, which resulted in fighting between Engans and Hulis later that day. On November 30, Huli youths torched several houses in Tabulil, including some belonging to the Min tribe, which led to the displacement of over 1,000 Engans and Mins.
On December 12, six men were killed in a dispute between the Yauna and Punano tribes in the Kaintu district, Eastern Highlands province. There have been tensions since 10/2022 over the right to claim benefits from the Ramu 2 hydropower project in their district. Three Mobile Squad police units were deployed to Kaintu district on December 14 to stop the fighting.
aev

PHILIPPINES (BIFF)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2008

Conflict parties: BIFF vs. government
Conflict items: secession, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over subnational predominance in and secession of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) between the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and the government, supported by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), continued. The dynamics shifted after the 2022 peace deal between MILF and the government, leading MILF to strengthen government efforts in BARMM [→ Philippines (MILF)]. Two MILF militants denied alleged ties to BIFF on December 6. BIFF continued its attacks in BARMM throughout the year.
Overall, violence concentrated in BARMM, resulting in 42 deaths, including four Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) soldiers and 38 BIFF members, as well as in 279 BIFF members in various provinces who surrendered. Despite a decrease in deaths and surrenders compared to the previous year, military operations continued. Notable events included preventing a bomb plot in the Mamasapano community, Maguindanao del Sur province, and a major operation in Maguindanao del Sur province on December 1 that led to the death of eleven BIFF members. In the same community, two armed clashes between MILF and BIFF occurred. For instance, on January 24, BIFF ambushed members of two MILF brigades with an IED, leaving two MILF members and four injured.
March featured an AFP operation with arms seizures, and a number of BIFF attacks at government checkpoints. Throughout April, 25 BIFF surrendered and two BIFF fighters were killed, Moreover, seven civilians were injured in a bomb at-

tack on April 18, allegedly planned by BIFF together with Dawlah Islamiyah [→ Philippines (Islamist militant groups)]. May saw the highest number of BIFF surrenders, with 77 members renouncing allegiances. On June 12, AFP specialists defused three bombs and a military operation on June 19 resulted in seven BIFF fighters' and one soldier's deaths.
The latter half of the year saw a notable decrease in fatalities and injuries on both sides compared to the first half of the year. BIFF militants underwent validation by the Joint Armed Forces of the Philippines-Philippine National Police Intelligence Committee making them eligible for support from the Tulong ng Gobyernong Nagmamalasakit government program that aimed to reintegrate former rebels.
Despite these initiatives, tensions persisted on Mindanao, with BIFF engaging AFP personnel. Notably, on August 7, a BIFF member linked to the murder of a regional police chief was apprehended, leading to 13 BIFF members surrendering on August 10. Additional surrenders and incidents occurred throughout August and September, with AFP soldiers killing two BIFF militants in Sultan Kudarat province, SOCCSKSARGEN, on September 24.
On October 11, 50 BIFF militants surrendered and yielded a cache of firearms in Maguindanao del Sur. November and December saw further surrenders, including eleven BIFF fighters in Cotabato province. 17 BIFF militants surrendered in Koronadal city, South Cotabato province, SOCCSKSARGEN, on December 19.
tco

PHILIPPINES (CPP, NPA)

Intensity: 3 | 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, de-escalated to a violent crisis.
This year, continuous military action between the conflict parties resulted in the deaths of at least 168 people, of whom 135 were NPA fighters, 14 security personnel, and 19 civilians. Moreover, at least 19 NPA fighters, 36 security personnel, and five civilians were injured. While clashes between the conflict parties were not limited to a specific region, the most intense fighting was reported in the Negros Island Region, Eastern Visayas, Caraga Administrative Region, and Bicol Region. At least 2,325 civilians were displaced throughout the year.
On the weekend of February 4, two separate clashes in Negros Occidental province, Western Visayas, between NPA fighters and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) troops, caused 822 individuals to flee and left three NPA fighters dead. In another incident on May 11, 553 individuals were displaced and at least two NPA fighters were wounded in Negros Occidental. This year saw decreased CPP-NPA activity and a significantly decreased number of violent clashes, with only one incident claiming more than six lives, when on December 17, AFP troops engaged in combat against NPA fighters in CALABARZON, leaving one soldier and six NPA fighters dead. Most other skirmishes were characterized by spontaneous encounters between government forces and NPA fighters. CPP-NPA fighters in low numbers usually ran into security forces and briefly engaged in combat before fleeing. The mentioned encounters mostly showed limited fighting, no AFP casualties and few NPA casualties. As in the previous year, no bilateral ceasefire was declared by the end of December.
Moreover, several people were assassinated in relation to the conflict. For instance, on June 14, gunmen killed a family of four in a raid in Buenavista village, Negros Occidental. Human rights groups and the NPA accused local AFP forces, claiming that the AFP had coerced the father of the family to act as a guide in the previous year. In turn, police and the military claimed that NPA was responsible because the victim had allegedly helped them.
mho

SRI LANKA (INTERRELIGIOUS TENSIONS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1948

Conflict parties: Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists vs. Muslims vs. Christians vs. Hindus
Conflict items: system/ideology

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between several religious groups, such as Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, and Hindus continued.
Throughout the year, Sinhalese Buddhists backed by the government continued to harass the Tamil minority. For instance, on August 18, a clash between Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus at the contested religious Kurundi site in Northern province was prevented by police. As Tamil Hindus had gathered for Pongal festivities, Buddhists tried to interrupt them. On September 17, Sinhalese Buddhists destroyed a memorial float dedicated to a Tamil revolutionary in Trincomalee, Eastern province, which was organized by the Tamil National People's Front (TNPF). An MP of the TNPF was injured in the attack. Sinhalese Buddhists also built shrines in places of pilgrimage for Tamil Catholics on the island of Katchatheevu, Northern province.
Furthermore, there have been instances of police dispersing Tamil protests and repressing memorial activities. On May 16, police officers arrested a staff member of an NGO over a banner which read "Tamil Genocide Memorial Day" in Batticaloa, Eastern province. On June 7, police officers arrested the leader of the TNPF, who was scheduled to table a motion in Parliament regarding him being assaulted by alleged police personnel the week before. On October 8, police officers assaulted several Tamil protesters who were calling for the removal of Sinhalese settlers in Batticaloa, Eastern Province.
On September 30, a Tamil judge, who had presided over a controversial case regarding the alleged destruction or appropriation of Hindu temples by the government for archaeological reasons, fled the country after receiving threats to his life. This sparked protests as well as strikes by the Mullaitivu Bar Association, calling for a more independent judiciary.
On May 28, the Criminal Investigation Department arrested a comedian, accusing her of insulting Buddhism and Buddhist Girls' Schools during one of her shows. fmo

SRI LANKA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2022

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

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, such as civilian protesters, trade unions, the Inter University Students' Federation (IUSF), as well as other civil society groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
The contested political issues included inflation, food and fuel shortages, as well as corruption. The country's economic situation, which had originally sparked protests across the country in March of 2022, improved and inflation rates declined sharply. However, the fiscal deficit increased at the beginning of the year and energy prices remained high, putting the government under public pressure to implement fiscal reforms. The protests organized by student and trade unions were centered in the capital of Colombo, Western Province.
On January 16, police personnel fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse an IUSF protest in Colombo and later arrested three protesters. Over 3,000 people had demanded the release of the IUSF's leader from prison as well as the reduction of gas, fuel, and electricity prices. Similarly, on February 4 - the day marking 75 years of independence from British colonial rule - police forces used water cannons and tear gas to disperse a peaceful protest in Colombo.
Clashes between the police and protesters escalated on February 26. Police forces in Colombo used tear gas and water cannons to disperse over 10,000 protesters who had been rallied by National People's Power (NPP), an opposition alliance, over concerns that the government was delaying local government elections. Consequently, at least 15 persons were hospitalized with minor injuries and an NPP local government candidate died after sustaining an eye injury.
In the following two months, major demonstrations took place in Colombo and across the country. On March 15, public sector workers went on strike and staged protests against high costs of living and increased taxes. On April 21, thousands of Sri Lankans protested in Colombo, demanding justice for the victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings, a series of suicide bombings whose perpetrators remain disputed. Both remained peaceful with no reports of violent clashes between police and protesters.
On August 10, police forces used water cannons against IUSF protesters in Colombo and arrested 20. The students demanded a halt of proposed higher education reforms and the abolishment of inhumane labor laws.
On October 25, at least 4,000 teachers protested in front of the Ministry of Education in Colombo demanding increased pay, allowances and government funding. They clashed with police personnel who attempted to stop the protest with water cannons, tear gas and batons, injuring several protesters.
jdi

TAJIKISTAN (ISLAMIST GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1997

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

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, ideology and national power between Islamist opposition groups, such as the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) and Jamaat Ansarullah, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
As in previous years, Islamist militants continued to illegally cross the Afghan-Tajik border, triggering violent responses by Tajik security forces. According to the State Committee for National Security, security forces killed two members of Jamaat Ansarullah on April 26 in a shootout in Dashti Vazgulyam Section, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) on grounds of alleged terrorist activity after illegally entering the country from Afghanistan. In a similar incident, on September 5, security forces killed three members of Jamaat Ansarullah in Kevron, GBAO.
Apart from violent incidents, the judiciary initiated several prosecution cases against individuals accused of having links with groups declared as Islamist by the government. On April 1, a court in Khatlon Province convicted an imam accused of watching and distributing video material of the banned opposition party National Alliance of Tajikistan. On July 19, a local court extended the prison term of a former defence attorney of IRPT by ten years. On February 20, Russian authorities arrested a Tajik blogger accused of racial and religious hatred in Saint Petersburg, Northwestern Region, Russia, and on June 22, the same authorities detained an activist allegedly affiliated with the banned Salafiya movement in Berezovo, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Russia. Both actions occurred at the request of Tajik authorities.
Cases of judicial pursuit and pressure on families of allegedly Islamist-affiliated individuals continued in Tajikistan and abroad, particularly in Russia and the EU. In this regard, authorities sentenced the son of a founding leader of IRPT to seven years in prison on March 29 in the capital Dushanbe. Moreover, security forces detained and interrogated almost 50 relatives of Tajik citizens living abroad. These events followed the protests led by members of the Tajik diaspora and activists living outside Tajikistan. Particularly, on September 28 and 29, protests took place against President Emomali Rahmon during his official visit to the German capital Berlin.
mdp

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 separatist groups, such as Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) and Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, acts of violence between security forces

and insurgents remained frequent despite ongoing peace talks with the BRN and other rebel groups. These incidents predominantly took place in the three southern provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat, which have historically been at the center of the conflict. Notably, no casualties have been reported in the province of Songkhla, which has seen much violence in the preceding years.

During the first months of the year, insurgents conducted several attacks and ambushes on members of security forces, defense volunteers, and the public. For instance, on February 17, unidentified assailants detonated a roadside bomb which flipped over a police vehicle in Banang Sata district, Yala Province. Subsequently, the gunmen opened fire on the officers inside the police vehicle, killing one and injuring four.

Security forces also continued their campaign against secessionist groups. On January 20, a group of soldiers and police officers encountered an alleged insurgent camp in a jungle near Si Sakhon district, Narathiwat Province, and both parties clashed. The gunfight resulted in three dead insurgents. In the aftermath, security forces seized several rifles.

The toll of civilian casualties increased over the following months. On June 2, a roadside bomb injured at least three monks, as well as two volunteers escorting them. The attacks included both more indiscriminate roadside bombings and targeted killings. For example, on June 17, insurgents attacked a police base in Ban Khlong Maning, Pattani Province. On the same day, insurgents ambushed a pickup truck near Ban Hulu Kunung, Narathiwat Province, killing one and injuring two civilians. On April 9, two alleged insurgents killed a local defense volunteer in a drive-by shooting in Tak Bai, Narathiwat Province.

The ongoing negotiations between the government and the insurgents were hampered by the general elections held on May 14, accompanied by uncertainty about the future government's position on the matter. This led the BRN to temporarily withdraw from the talks. tja

UZBEKISTAN (KARAKALPAKSTAN)

Intensity:	1	Change:	↓	Start:	2022

Conflict parties:	Karakalpaks vs. government
Conflict items:	autonomy

The violent crisis over autonomy between the Karakalpak people in Northern Uzbekistan and the government de-escalated to a dispute.

In 05/2022, large-scale protests broke out in Uzbekistan's autonomous republic of Karakalpakstan after a constitutional draft envisioned removing Karakalpakstan's sovereignty rights such as the right to secession. Over the course of the year, authorities arrested and put activists involved in the 2022 protests on trial for allegedly inciting violence. For instance, on January 31, a leading Karakalpak activist was sentenced to 16 years in prison by a court in Bukhara, eponymous Province. He played a key role in the protests of 2022 in resistance to the controversial constitutional provision. Furthermore, 16 activists received prison sentences. The Supreme Court in the capital Tashkent rejected appeals against the imprisonments on June 5. ser

VIETNAM (MONTAGNARDS)

Intensity:	3	Change:	↗	Start:	1958

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

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Montagnards and the government escalated to a violent crisis.

On June 11, armed groups attacked two commune offices in Dak Lak Province, located in the Central Highlands, killing four policemen, two commune officials, and three civilians, and injuring two policemen. The attackers burnt down two commune office buildings using Molotov cocktails. Following the attacks, the government detained approx. 100 people. Six of the suspects were human rights activists linked to a pro-Montagnard organization that advocates for religious freedom. However, the Montagnards denied their involvement in the attack. On June 19, Cambodia's then-prime minister Hun Sen announced that all Montagnards who formerly sought refuge in Cambodia would be expelled as a reaction to the incident in Dak Lak Province.

On July 27, in a reply to a 2022 UN letter of concern regarding the suppression of the Montagnards, the government denied religious and ethnic discrimination against the Montagnards. Moreover, the government's letter did not recognize the term indigenous Montagnards, stating that it was historically inaccurate and factually denied their existence as a separate group.

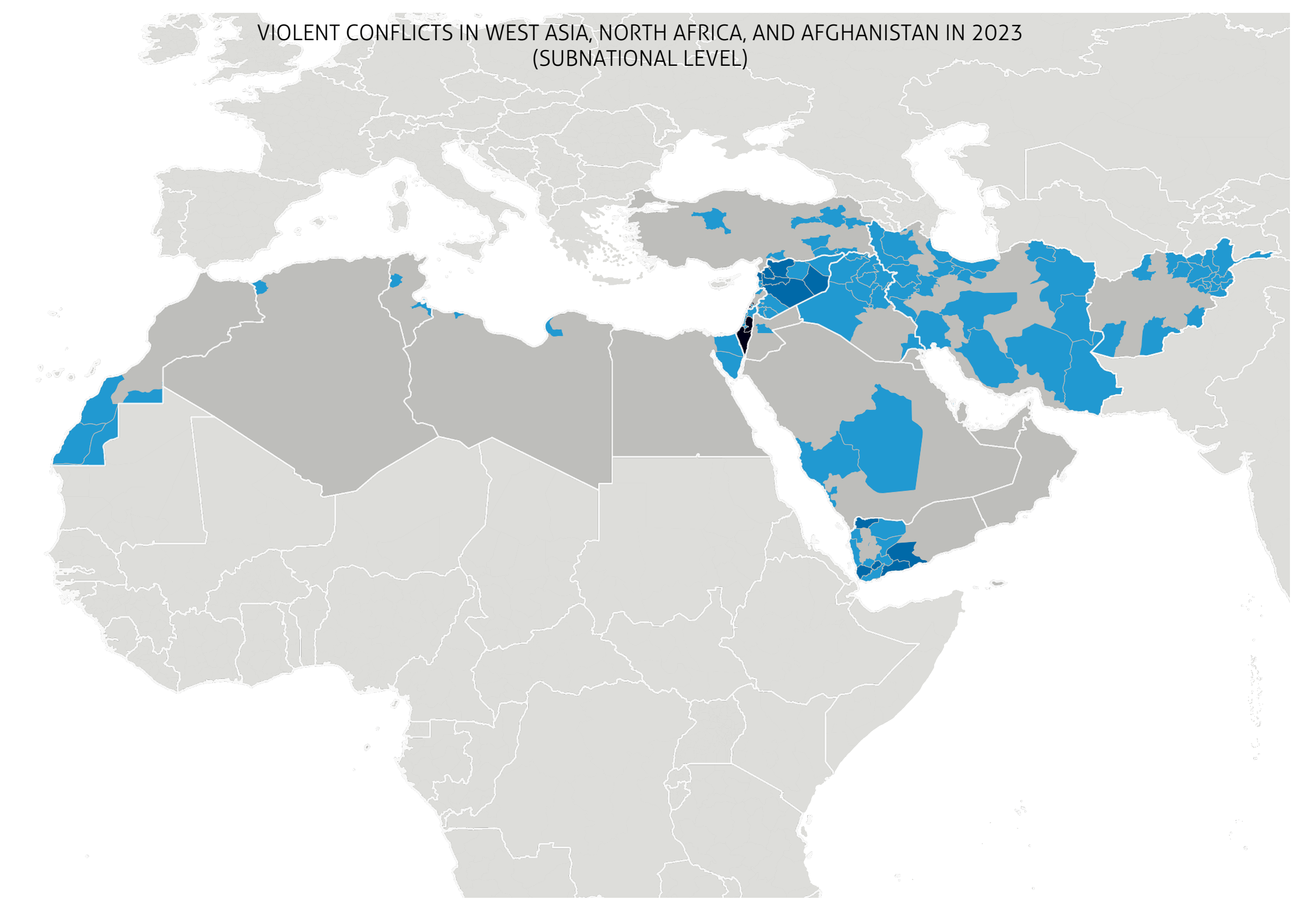
In the second half of the year, however, the government's oppression against religious minorities increased. On October 31, four Montagnards were arrested after having invited the country's newly appointed president Vo Van Thuong to attend church services in Dak Lak Province. On November 15, officials disrupted a gathering of Montagnards in Buon Don District, Dak Lak Province, and forced members to recant faith, disqualifying it as illegal religious activity.

On November 24, eleven Montagnards who had been seeking refuge in Thailand's capital Bangkok were detained by the local police. Despite their legal refugee status the Thai government accused them of illegally residing in Thailand. At the end of the year, at least 2,000 ethnic Montagnards were taking refuge in Thailand after their persecution in Vietnam.

tln

WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN

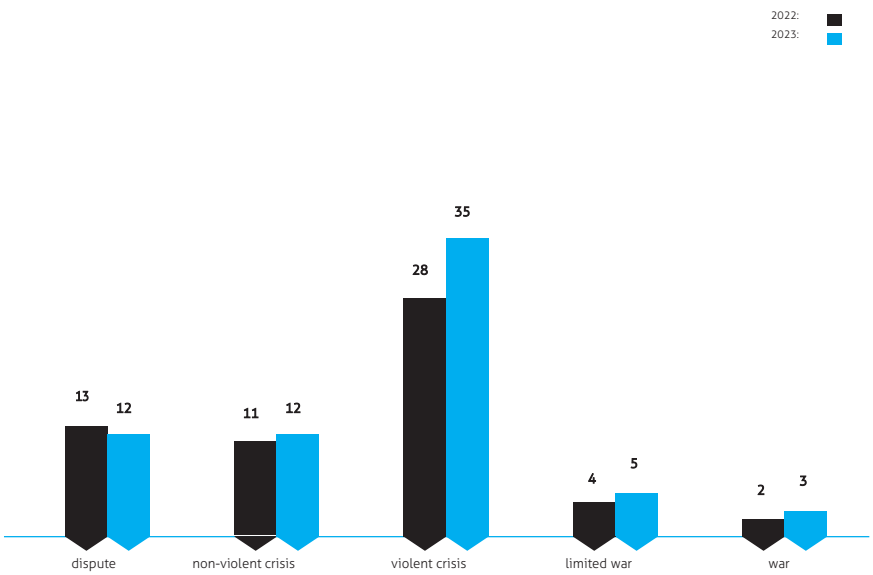
VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2023
(SUBNATIONAL LEVEL)



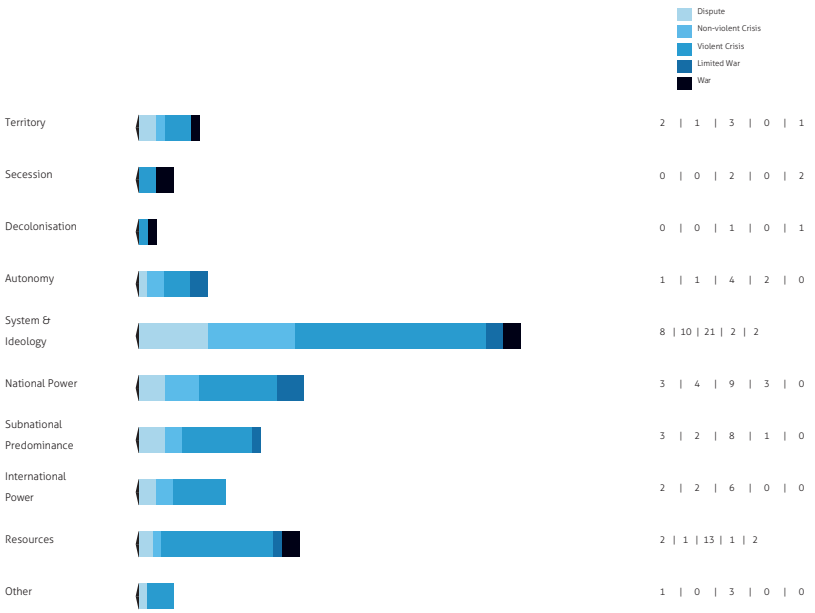
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Text will be provided by the end of calendar week 51, 2024.

CONFLICT INTENSITIES IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT ITEM IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2023



FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT INTENSITIES BY CONFLICT TYPE IN WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA AND AFGHANISTAN IN 2023



Overview: Conflicts in West Asia, North Africa, and Afghanistan

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 (IS)*	ISKP vs. government	system/ideology	2015	•	3
Afghanistan (opposition)*	AFF, ALM, NRF, other armed opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2022	↘	4
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 (Islamist militant groups)*	Al-Mourabitoun, AQIM, Blood Signatories, IS, Jund al-Khalifa, MUJAO vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1998	•	2
Algeria (opposition)*	Hirak movement, labor unions, opposition parties vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	2
Algeria – Morocco*	Algeria vs. Morocco	international power	1963	↑	3
Bahrain (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1975	↗	3
Egypt (Christians - Muslims)*	Christians vs. Muslims	subnational predominance	1952	↘	2
Egypt (IS)*	IS vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2014	•	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)*	government vs. intra-systemic opposition, non-systemic opposition	system/ideology, national power	1993	↘	3
Iran (PDKI et al.)*	PDKI, various other Kurdish parties and groups vs. government	autonomy, system/ideology	1979	↓	1
Iran (People's Mujahideen)*	PMOI vs. government	system/ideology, national power	1979	•	1
Iran (PJAK)*	PJAK vs. government	autonomy	1979	↑	3
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	↗	2
Iran – USA*	Iran vs. USA	system/ideology, international power	1979	↑	3
Iraq (IS)*	IS vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2014	•	3
Iraq (KRG – opposition)*	KRG vs. opposition movement	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2011	↘	1
Iraq (Kurdistan Regional Government)*	Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) vs. Government	autonomy, resources	1971	↑	3
Iraq (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
Iraq (Shiite militant groups)*	Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Badr Organization, government, Kata'ib Hezbollah, Saraya al-Salam	system/ideology, national power	2004	•	3
Israel (Hamas et al.)*	Hamas, other Islamist groups, PIJ vs. government	secession, resources	1988	↑	5
Israel (Hezbollah)*	Hezbollah vs. government	territory, system/ideology	1982	↑	5
Israel – Lebanon*	Israel vs. Lebanon	territory, international power, resources	1948	↗	3
Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)*	Palestinian protesters, PNA vs. government, Israeli settlement movements	secession, decolonisation, system/ideology, resources	1948	↑	5
Israel – Syria*	Syria vs. Israel	territory, international power, resources	1948	•	3
Jordan (opposition)*	opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2011	•	3
Kuwait (Bedouns)*	Bedouns vs. government	other	1959	•	1

Name of conflict[1]	Conflict parties[2]	Conflict items	Start	Change[3]	Int.[4]
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 (IS)*	IS vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2011	↘	2
Lebanon (opposition)*	opposition vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2019	•	3
Libya (IS)*	ISL vs. GNU	system/ideology, national power, resources	2014	↓	1
Libya (opposition)*	GNU vs. GNS	system/ideology, national power, resources	2011	•	3
Libya (tribes)*	Tebu vs. Tuareg vs. various other tribes vs. GNU, LNA	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources, other	2012	↑	3
Mauritania (anti-slavery activists)*	IRA, opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology	2015	↗	3
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)*	oppositional groups vs. government	system/ideology	2011	•	1
Saudi Arabia (IS)*	IS, government	system/ideology, international power	2015	•	2
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. IRG Government of Yemen, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United States	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 (IS)*	IS vs. government	system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources	2014	•	3
Syria (Kurdish groups)*	KDPS vs. AANES vs. SDF vs. government	autonomy, subnational predominance, resources	1962	↗	4
Syria (opposition)*	FSA, HTS, NC vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	4
Syria (Türkiye – SDF / Northern Syria)*	HRE, SDF, YPG vs. FSA, Türkiye	autonomy, subnational predominance, resources	2018	•	3
Syria – Türkiye*	Syrian vs. Türkiye	territory, international power	1946	↘	1
Syria – USA*	Syria, USA	system/ideology, international power	2003	•	2
Tunisia (Islamist militant groups)*	Ansar al-Sharia, AQIM, Uqbah ibn Nafi Brigade vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2011	•	3
Tunisia (opposition)*	civil society groups, opposition groups vs. government	system/ideology, national power	2010	↘	2
Türkiye (IS)*	IS vs. government	system/ideology, national power, resources	2014	•	2
Türkiye (opposition)*	Government, HDP, Nation Alliance, TIP	system/ideology, national power	2013	↗	3
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, Ansar al-Sharia vs. AQAP	system/ideology, subnational predominance	2010	↓	1
Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)*	al-Houthi forces vs. Saudi Arabi, 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 statehhod 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 (IS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2015

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

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) continued. Throughout the year, ISKP killed at least 83 individuals while the Taliban heightened security measures in the region, killing at least 27 ISKP militants.

ISKP carried out persistent attacks against security forces and high-ranking personnel of the IEA. On January 11, for instance, ISKP killed 20 people in a bomb attack outside the Afghan Foreign Ministry in the capital Kabul. Another attack on the ministry occurred on March 27, during which six people were killed in a suicide bombing, including three security forces. On June 6, an ISKP car bomb killed the deputy governor of Badakhshan province and his driver, further injuring six civilians. On June 8, ISKP conducted a bomb attack during the governor's funeral service inside the Nabawi Mosque in Faizabad, Badakhshan province, killing 19 and injuring 28 people.

In response, the Taliban heightened security measures in the region, conducting raids that reportedly led to the removal of eight key ISKP leaders throughout the year. For example, on April 26, security forces raided an ISKP hideout in Zaranj, Nimroz province, where they killed the ISKP leader responsible for the Kabul airport suicide bombing on 08/26/2021. On June 6, IEA security forces killed seven ISKP militants in a series of raids in Kunar province including ISKP's leader Sanaullah Ghafari, who had led the group since 2020. On December 8, IEA security forces conducted overnight raids on Islamic State bases near the Iranian border, killing one ISKP operative and capturing several others.

Furthermore, ISKP continued targeting Shiite and other religious minorities. For instance, on October 13, ISKP conducted a bomb attack on the largest Shiite mosque in Pul-i-Khumri, Baghlan province, during Friday prayers, killing seven people and injuring 15. On October 26, ISKP detonated a parcel bomb at a sports club in the predominantly Shiite Dashti Barchi neighborhood in Kabul, killing four people and injuring seven. On November 7, ISKP claimed responsibility for a bomb blast on a minibus in the same neighborhood, killing at least seven civilians and wounding 20 others. jgr

AFGHANISTAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2022

Conflict parties: AFF, ALM, NRF, other armed opposition groups vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The war over the orientation of the political system and national power between various armed opposition groups, primarily the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan (NRF), on the one hand, and the Taliban-ruled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), on the other, de-escalated to a limited war.

Following the formation of the IEA with the takeover of the capital Kabul by the Taliban on 08/15/21 [→ Afghanistan (Taliban et al.)], the NRF violently resisted the Taliban in Panjshir Valley, Panjshir Province, until the eventual occupation of the valley by the Taliban from 09/06/21. Since then, the NRF and other armed opposition groups, mostly comprising former Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) members, have switched to conducting insurgent attacks against IEA forces and representatives in various provinces. While the NRF mainly operates in the northeastern provinces of the country, the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) in both the South and Northeast. Throughout the year, the NRF and AFF conducted attacks against IEA forces. For instance, on March 29, the NRF announced the beginning of a spring offensive with an attack on a Taliban educational center in Kabul. In a clash two weeks earlier on March 14, eight IEA fighters and two NRF members were killed in Pul-e Hesar District, Baghlan Province, after IEA forces conducted house-to-house searches. On April 10, the Taliban killed eight AFF militants in an ambush, including a senior commander, and seized numerous weapons in Salang District, Parwan Province. On May 7, NRF forces killed nine IEA fighters and injured 16 others in Khost wa Firing District, Baghlan Province. During the incident, four NRF fighters were also killed and seven houses destroyed in the village of Jangalak, eponymous province.

Following the second anniversary of IEA's proclamation, both the AFF and NRF intensified their attacks across multiple provinces in August. For instance, on August 7, the NRF claimed to have attacked an IEA base in Shuhada District, Badakhshan Province, killing two Taliban fighters and injuring another, while itself losing one member in the attack. Similarly, the AFF claimed to have killed one Taliban member and injured four others in an attack on an IEA outpost in the city of Kandahar, eponymous province, on August 26. On October 28, IEA forces killed an NRF commander in an attack on his house in Du Ab District, Nuristan Province. During the ensuing clash, NRF forces killed six Taliban fighters with a further 15 Taliban defecting to the NRF.

Meanwhile, the Taliban also targeted civilians accused of supporting opposition groups. On March 16, Taliban intelligence forces detained four civilians on charges of cooperating with the NRF in Paryan District, the former NRF stronghold of Panjshir Province. On April 19, a university professor was detained on the same charges. On August 25, the Taliban forcibly expelled at least 15 families from their homes in the villages of Khosh-dara and Khawosh, Khost wa Firing District, under the pretext of their alleged association with the NRF.

Furthermore, non-violent resistance of various civil groups and loosely organized protesters opposing Taliban rule manifested throughout the year. For instance, following IEA's decision to shut female beauty parlors across the country, around 50 women protested the ban and other restrictions on women on July 19 in Kabul. The Taliban violently dispersed the protesters with water cannons and detained several of the women. On August 19, at least eight members of a women's rights organization were detained for several hours on charges of organizing a protest in Kabul.

Opposition groups and former government officials continued to lobby for international support, for instance, at two conferences from April 24 to 26 and December 3 to 5 within the so-called "Vienna Process for a Democratic Afghanistan". cve

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. Despite regular diplomatic exchanges between the foreign ministers of the two countries, political tensions over water rights in regard to the Helmand River remained. Furthermore, clashes erupted along the border sporadically throughout the year.

After having reached an agreement on the provision of Iran with water from the Helmand River in August 2022, tensions resurfaced. On May 18, after Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi warned IEA to respect Iran's rights over the Helmand River during his visit to the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan and Baluchestan. Also on May 18, the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and Iran discussed Iran's water access and the expansion of cooperation in different domains, such as trade and energy. On August 26, IEA foreign minister reaffirmed Iran's right to a share of the Helmand River's water. On October 23, however, a spokesperson in the Iranian ministry of energy claimed the IEA had completely cut off the water supply to Iran for over a month.

On May 27, a violent clash on the Afghan-Iranian border in the Kang district, Nimroz province, erupted between Iranian border guards and IEA forces, killing two Iranian soldiers as well as one IEA fighter. On May 31, against the backdrop of intensifying tensions, IEA sent additional veteran forces and heavy military equipment to the border town Islam Qalah, Herat province, Afghanistan.

ero

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, the status of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, and security concerns by Pakistan were the primary issues of contention.

Throughout the year, the Islamist militant Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) conducted multiple attacks within Pakistan, mostly targeting Pakistani security forces [→ Pakistan (Islamist militant groups)]. Following such attacks, the Pakistani government repeatedly called upon IEA to act against TTP presence in Afghanistan. For instance, on January 2, Pakistan's defense minister alleged that militants had been using Afghan territory as sanctuary and to conduct cross-border attacks. On January 19, Pakistan's foreign minister ruled out cross-border strikes against militant targets in Afghanistan and instead offered Pakistani support for IEA to act against militant groups. On August 6, it was reported that the IEA Supreme Leader had issued an internal decree forbidding cross-border attacks.

Tensions nevertheless remained along the border of the two countries, prompted, for instance, by Pakistan's announcement that it had completed 98 percent of the fencing of the Durand Line as of April 26 with the aim to prevent cross-border migration and improve security. On February 19, Afghanistan unilaterally closed the Torkham border crossing between the two countries, accusing Pakistani immigration authorities of not abiding by an agreement to allow Afghans to enter Pakistan for medical care without documents. Pakistan rejected these charges, citing tightened border controls to prevent TTP militants from entering the country. On February 20, Pakistani and Afghan border guards exchanged fire, leaving one Pakistani soldier wounded. Following talks, both sides agreed to reopen the border crossing on February 25. On June 25, five Pakistani border guards and two IEA fighters were killed and four others injured in a shootout along the Angur Ada border in Afghanistan's Barmal District, Paktika Province. Following armed clashes between Pakistani and Afghan border guards on September 6, the Torkham border crossing remained closed until September 15.

IEA also protested the situation of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, following a nationwide crackdown by Pakistani authorities. On October 3, Pakistan's interim government announced that all undocumented foreigners, including 1.7 million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, must leave the country before November 1 to avoid forced deportation. IEA condemned the plan. As the ultimatum passed on November 1, the Pakistani government initiated mass deportations of Afghan refugees. Due to the large-scale influx of returning Afghans, temporary camps were set up near the border crossings in Afghanistan and, on November 13, Pakistan opened three new border crossings to expedite the process. According to the UN, a total of 478,800 people had returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan between September 15 and December 21. cve

ALGERIA (BERBERS / KABYLIA)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1963

Conflict parties: Berbers vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, system/ideology

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, self-determination and autonomy of the Kabyle region between Kabyle activists, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.

The government continued its restrictive activities against Kabyle activists, human rights advocates, and journalists. Over the year, authorities arrested and sentenced Kabyle activists for alleged involvement with the Movement for the Self-Determination of Kabylia (MAK) that the Algerian government classified as terrorist in 2021. For instance, on March 8, the criminal court of Dar El Beïda, Algiers Province, sentenced five Kabyle activists in absentia to life in prison for involvement with the MAK. On July 21 in the capital Algiers, the court of Sidi M'Hamed sentenced the spokesperson for the Union for the Kabyle Republic and newspaper director in absentia to life in prison.

The yearly recurring fires and high death tolls in the summer led to tensions and accusations regarding responsibility between Kabyle activists and the government. On September 8, police prohibited the media from covering commemorations of victims of the fires in July that occurred in Ath Ousalah, Bejaia Province. On October 23, an appeal trial confirmed a mass death sentence for 38 Kabyles while other Kabyles

received varying long prison sentences. They were convicted for allegedly having murdered an individual on 08/11/21 who was perceived as responsible for starting the fires in August 2021. Since November 7, general strikes and sit-ins occurred every Thursday in November in Larbaa Nath Irathen and surrounding communes in Tizi Ouzou Province to solidarize with these detainees.
Opposition parties and groups and Kabyle activists continued to operate from the diaspora. For instance, on April 15, the provisional Kabyle government was established in Paris, France. On May 1, the first working meeting took place. nfe

ALGERIA (ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1998

Conflict parties: Al-Mourabitoun, AQIM, Blood Signatories, IS, Jund al-Khalifa, MUJAO vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The non-violent crisis over ideology, the orientation of the political system and international power between Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Islamic State (IS), and respective affiliated groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
The government continued its counterterrorism measures, primarily in the peripheral provinces of Bordj Badji Mokhtar and Tamanrasset. For instance, on February 12, military forces captured four terrorists and the light weapons in their possession. In total, the military authorities arrested 22 terrorists said to have been active in Islamist groups operating in the Sahel Region, without specifying their precise allegiance. [→ Mali, Burkina Faso et al. (JNIM, AQIM et al.)]. In an interview broadcasted on March 6, the AQIM emir Abu Ubaidah Youssef al-Annabi called for resumed and increased terrorist activity in the country, demanding "combat in Algeria" and reaffirming AQIM's determination to fight. He also praised his ongoing strategy of recruiting in the Sahel. He claimed that there had been "territorial gains towards the South and the Gulf of Guinea" and announced there would be no limits to AQIM's expansion.
fka

ALGERIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: Hirak movement, labor unions, 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 trade unions, opposition parties, and the Hirak movement, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
The government continued to restrict activities of Hirak activists, human rights advocates and journalists across the country. For instance, on April 2 in the capital Algiers, the Tribunal of Sidi M'Hamed ordered the dissolution of a media company and sentenced its director to seven years in prison. This case led to protests in the diaspora, such as on March 30 and May 30 in Paris, France.
On September 26 and December 5, two UN Special Rapporteurs in two official statements denounced the treatment of activists and restrictions imposed by the government.
The government also continued to restrict opposition parties, such as on January 2, when it coerced the leader of the Movement for Youth and Change to abandon politics. On February 23, the Council of State confirmed the dissolution of the pro-Hirak youth group Rassemblement Actions Jeunesse and the suspension of the party Democratic and Social Movement. On May 25, authorities arrested the leader of the party Democratic and Social Union for two days. On April 12, and June 4 and 11, opposition parties and civil society groups met in Algiers to discuss national issues as part of an initiative to form an internal front, resulting in disagreements.
Furthermore, two new bills restricting trade union and media rights, led to several strikes throughout the year. For instance, on February 28, 32 trade unions went on a nationwide strike. In October, the government repressed pro-Palestinan protests [→ Israel – Hamas et al.] and on October 19, protests were tolerated under governmental supervision in Algiers, posing an exemption from the general protest ban in power since 5/9/21. nfe

ALGERIA – MOROCCO

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1963

Conflict parties: Algeria vs. Morocco
Conflict items: international power

The dispute over regional power between Algeria and Morocco escalated to a violent crisis.
Diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco remained severed, including the continued shutdown of parts of the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline passing through Morocco and border closures. While violence erupted after Moroccan tourists crossed the border to Algeria without permission, the situation remained non-violent during the first half of the year with both sides confining themselves to mutual accusations of hostility.
On August 29, Algerian coastguards killed two Moroccan tourists after they got lost at night and strayed into Algerian waters on jet skis near Saïdia city, Berkane Province. Another tourist who was also part of the lost group was detained and sentenced to 18 months in prison for entering the country illegally. In another instance, on December 13, Algerian coastguards arrested three Moroccan nationals who crossed into Algerian waters on jet skis off Marsa Ben M'Hidi beach, Tlemcen province.
On March 21, Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune said that Algerian-Moroccan relations had reached the point of no return. On the contrary, Mohammed VI, the current monarch of Morocco, emphasized on June 29 his aim to normalize relations between Algeria and Morocco.
The Western Sahara conflict is at the center of tensions between Morocco and Algeria, with Algeria backing the Popular Front of the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamran and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) [→ Morocco (POLISARIO / Western Sahara°)]. The African Lion military exercise that, among others, took place in Morocco from May 13 to June 18 in collaboration with 18 nations including Israel, prompted Algeria to carry out a live ammunition military exercise near the Moroccan border in Bechar Province after Morocco reiterated its claim of sovereignty over Western Sahara. tku

EGYPT (CHRISTIANS - MUSLIMS)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1952

Conflict parties: Christians vs. Muslims
Conflict items: subnational predominance

The violent crisis over religious predominance between Christians and Muslims de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
While Christian communities, especially in Upper Egypt, faced a number of violent attacks by Muslim residents, the attacks resulted in damage of property only. Meanwhile the government continued its efforts to improve conditions for religious freedom, for example through licensing the construction of churches.
On May 15, the Cabinet approved the legalization of 216 unlicensed churches and service buildings, raising the total number of legalized churches and buildings to 2815 since 2017.
On September 5, Muslims in the village of al-Khayari, Abu-Qurqas, Minya Governorate, looted construction material and burned down the house of a Christian villager, following social media rumors that he was building an unlicensed church. The police arrested several of the attackers.
On December 18, Muslim villagers clashed with the police while torching three Christian-owned houses as well as the construction site of a church in Al-Azeeb, Samalout, Minya governorate. The police arrested several of the attackers. jbe

EGYPT (IS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: IS vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predominance in the Sinai Peninsula between the Islamic State's (IS) local affiliate, Sinai Province, on the one hand, and the government on the other hand, continued.
In contrast to last year, most of the clashes between the Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF) and IS affiliate did not take place in North Sinai Governorate, but in South Sinai Governorate and mainly occurred in the first quarter of the year.
On January 1, the IS affiliate claimed responsibility for the first attack on mainland Egypt in almost three years. The attack had occurred on 12/30/22 in Ismailia, Al-Isma'iliyyaa Governorate, when members of the group opened fire on a police checkpoint, killing four and injuring twelve. On February 2, Sinai Province attacked a military vehicle near St. Catherine, South Sinai Governorate, injuring four and killing one soldier. It was the first attack linked to the local branch in South Sinai since 2019. On March 7, the EAF and Sinai Province exchanged fire near al-Tur town, South Sinai Governorate, leaving one soldier injured. On May 17, Human Rights Watch and the Sinai Foundation for Human Rights criticized the detention and torture of women and girls related to suspected members of IS. There were no further violent disputes in the second half of the year. phg

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 and the government continued.
Over the course of the year, militants killed at least eleven military and police personnel. Since responsibility for incidents was generally not claimed by specific groups, there is a strong probability of an overlap with the conflict concerning the IS affiliate Sinai Province [→ Syria (IS)]. National authorities continued to impose media blackouts of varied scale and duration in the Sinai Peninsula, which began in 2013.
At the beginning of the year, high-ranking members of the government brought attention to the situation in Sinai on multiple occasions. For example, on January 14, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouli and a delegation of seven other ministers toured the northern half of the peninsula. On January 25, President Abdel Fattah as-Sisi declared that terrorism had been defeated in Sinai, but that further investments remained necessary to secure this achievement.
Over the year, a total of seven violent incidents were registered. On February 27, an unidentified group of militants opened fire on a military vehicle near St. Catherine, South Sinai Governorate, killing one soldier and injuring at least four others. On March 7, a shootout occurred in at-Tur, South Sinai, between the Egyptian Armed Forces and militants, leaving one soldier wounded. On July 30, prisoners of a National Security Agency (NSA) facility in al-Arish, North Sinai, reportedly managed to seize weapons and open fire. At least three policemen were killed and 21 wounded, with the fate of the prisoners unclear. In the immediate aftermath of this incident, several NSA officers were taken hostage by unknown militants. On September 17, an IED detonated on an Egyptian Air Force base in North Sinai, killing at least seven soldiers. Throughout the year, several incidents saw at least four civilians killed and three wounded by IEDs presumably left behind from previous clashes.
From August onward, an alliance of tribes staged several waves of protests, demanding the right to return to their villages in the evacuated zone bordering the Gaza strip. Several tribes had, in recent years, supported the government against Islamist militants, in hopes of regaining access to the evacuated zone. The August protests brought forth an agreement for a return on October 10, which was later withdrawn by the military, citing the escalation in Gaza as the reason for a necessary postponement [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)]. Consequent protests on October 23 were violently dispersed, with the military arresting nine protesters and injuring one.
mg

EGYPT (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 2 | Change: • | Start: 1954

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

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the opposition and the government continued. While launching a national dialog on political, economic, and social reform, the government continued to persecute human rights defenders, political activists, and opposition leaders. Authorities arrested and prosecuted two known opposition figures as well as dozens of campaign workers in the run-up to the presidential elections held from December 10 to 12. On March 5, an Emergency State Security Court sentenced 30 individuals, including members of the human rights group Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedoms, to prison terms on charges such as joining, leading, funding, and supporting a terrorist group. On May 3, a national dialog between various participants, including human rights organization leaders and opposition figures, started. The Egyptian Civil Democratic Movement, the largest opposition group in the country, joined the national dialogue. On September 16, the leading figure of the newly formed Free Court, a coalition of mostly liberal parties, was convicted of slander, defamation, and verbally assaulting a police officer and sentenced to six months in prison. In November, a former leader of the leftist Al-Karama party, who entered into the presidential race in March, as well as his campaign coordinator, faced trial for printing and distributing authorization forms without permission of the authority as well as incitement and conspiracy. Since the start of his campaign entry into the presidential race in March 2023, the government has arrested dozens of his family members, friends, and campaign workers based on various charges, including joining a terrorist group, membership of a subversive organization, and disseminating fake news. jbe

IRAN (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↘ | Start: 1993

Conflict parties: government vs. intra-systemic opposition, non-systemic opposition
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The limited war over ideology, 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, de-escalated to a violent crisis.
Since the mass uprising in September 2022, the government continued to repress protests violently to maintain control, and carried out an increasing number of executions.
In contrast to last year, people engaged in smaller, decentralized protests. Throughout the year, people associated with the workers' movement, retirees, and farmers repeatedly protested against the sustained economic crisis across the country. Workers protested for an increase of wages in Tehran, on January 30 and May 5, and in Chabahar city, Sistan and Baluchestan province, on February 20. On April 3, a group of approx. 50 retirees demanded an increase in social welfare in Ahvaz city, Khuzestan Province. Similarly, on May 2, a group of less than 100 retirees of the telecommunications branch gathered peacefully in Tehran in front of the respective ministry.
Furthermore, the women's rights movement, student movement, and United Youth of Iran (UYI), an alliance of about 30 civil society and youth grassroots groups, which formed during last year's pro-women's rights mass uprisings, continued to organize protests, demanding civil and minority rights. On April 8, at least 200 students protested against government plans for a stricter veiling law. The new bill includes higher fines, longer jail time in case of misconduct, and the use of AI to enforce the regulation. On June 15, security forces detained at least 40 student protesters in Tehran, who conducted a sit-in protest against the respective law, injuring ten.
One exception to the small decentralized protests was witnessed on the one-year anniversary of Masha Amini's death in September 2022. Between September 16 and 25, people gathered during at least 25 protests all over the country to commemorate her death and protest the government. In response, authorities deployed troops to the cities of Saqqez, Baneh, and Marivan in Kurdistan Province between September 13 and 15, leading to the death of two protesters. The government also deployed security forces to Tehran, and the cities of Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province, and Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Furthermore, as a result of last year's mass uprisings, the government executed at least six people on related charges. One convict, for instance, was executed on November 28, in Hamedan city, eponymous province.
Following Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)], protesters expressed solidarity with the Israeli victims, while the government supported and condoned Hamas' actions [→ Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)]. emb

IRAN – ISRAEL

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1979

Conflict parties: Iran vs. Israel
Conflict items: system/ideology, power; international

The violent crisis over international power and ideology between Iran and Israel continued.
Throughout the year, Israel continued its airstrikes in Syria [→ Israel – Syria], targeting Hezbollah [→ Israel (Hezbollah)] and other Iranian-backed militias operating in Syria as well as the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which had been building up its military presence and military industry in the country. On March 31, for instance, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) conducted an airstrike in the Syrian city of Damascus, eponymous governorate, leading to the death of two IRGC officers. On July 2, a senior official in the IRGC was killed in another Israeli airstrike. The attack occurred in Homs, eponymous governorate, in an area considered to be a stronghold of Hezbollah and other Iranian-backed militias. Two IRGC members and two pro-Iranian militants were killed by an Israeli airstrike in Damascus, eponymous governorate, on December 2. On December 25, the IDF killed one of the IRGC's top commanders in Syria in an airstrike in Sayyida Zeinab, Dimashq governorate. Three days later, in the same governorate, the IDF conducted an airstrike on Damascus airport, killing eleven senior IRGC officers and injuring another.

Israel further continued its covert actions in Iran, primarily targeting the Iranian military industry. For instance, on January 28, three quadcopter drones attacked an Iranian munitions factory in Isfahan, eponymous Province, with US officials confirming that Israel was behind the attack. On December 10, Iran began a trial against a Swedish national and EU employee who was detained in April 2022 charged with spying for Israel. In another case, Iran reported the execution of an alleged Mossad operative on December 16, in Zahedan jail, Sistan-Baluchestan Province.
Iran, on the other hand, was held responsible for plotting against Jewish communities and Israeli citizens abroad. On March 28, for instance, Greek police supported by the Mossad arrested two members of an Iranian militant cell planning to attack a synagogue in Athens. The group is connected to a previous attempt to attack Israeli tourists in Türkiye, which was prevented by Turkish intelligence on 06/23/2022. On June 29 the Mossad claimed to have captured the head of a militant cell, which planned to kill an Israeli citizen in Cyprus. On October 11, a senior Hamas official claimed the militant group had coordinated with Iran as well as other Iranian-backed militant groups of the so-called Axis of Resistance prior to its assault on Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)]. On November 23, Iran's minister of cultural heritage and former IRGC general admitted for the first time that Iran had been providing Hamas with training and military equipment. njk

IRAN – UAE

Intensity:	2	Change:	↗	Start:	1971

Conflict parties:	Iran vs. UAE
Conflict items:	territory

The dispute over territory between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) escalated to a non-violent crisis. Both countries continued their efforts to ease tensions and normalize their relationship. Rapprochement, however, was hindered by the persisting dispute over three Iranian-controlled islands in the Persian Gulf claimed by the UAE.
Throughout the year, both countries continued to expand economic cooperation. On March 20, for instance, both countries signed an agreement to facilitate trade movement. On June 22, another agreement was signed to expand air transport services and increase trade and tourism opportunities. Furthermore, on December 14, Iran announced visa-free entry for a number of countries, including the UAE.
High-level meetings continued between Iran and the UAE furthering diplomatic relations and military cooperation. On April 4, for instance, Iran appointed its first ambassador to the UAE since 2016. On June 22, Iran's foreign minister visited the UAE, during which he met with the Emirati president. Furthermore, on June 3, the commander of the Iranian Navy announced a naval alliance with several Gulf and South Asian states, including the UAE, following the Emirati announcement to exit a US-led maritime coalition.
Nonetheless, the dispute over the Iranian-controlled islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa continued between both countries. For instance, on August 2, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) launched military exercises off the coast of Abu Musa. On September 26, the IRGC announced the construction of approximately 900 residential units on the islands to solidify Iranian presence. During the UN General Assembly on September 23, the UAE called on Iran to end its occupation of the islands. A day later, Iran's mission to the UN dismissed the Emirati claims over the islands as baseless and a violation of international law in their address to the General Assembly. njk

IRAN – USA

Intensity:	3	Change:	↑	Start:	1979

Conflict parties:	Iran vs. USA	
Conflict items:	system/ideology, power	international

The dispute over the orientation of the political system and international power between Iran and the USA escalated to a violent crisis.
As in previous years, Iran continued to accuse the US of supporting the Iranian opposition, provoking internal conflict and inciting civil unrest in Iran. On January 3, the US accused the Iranian government of repressing its own people and supporting Russia's war against Ukraine by supplying the former with UAVs [→ Russia – Ukraine]. On the same day, US officials emphasized that it will keep all options "on the table" if diplomatic efforts should fail in negotiations regarding the nuclear deal. Both countries held talks about a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action-successor agreement mediated by Omani officials in May. On July 15, Iranian and US diplomats met in the Omani capital of Muscat and declared their intention to normalize political relations between the two countries and to come to an agreement about the Iranian nuclear program. The result of the talks included an unwritten agreement and a prisoner swap. On September 18, Iran freed five US prisoners after the US government agreed to unfreeze an Iranian fund worth USD 6 billion in exchange.
Throughout the year, the US imposed sanctions on several Iranian individuals and companies, either because they sold petrol products as well as petrochemicals, or because they supplied Russia with UAVs. For example, on February 3 the US blacklisted eight high-ranking Iranian executives of a drone manufacturer.
Throughout the year, Iranian proxies and US forces faced each other in Syria. For instance, on March 23, a drone-strike killed a US contractor and wounded at least six US servicemen in Al-Hasakah city, eponymous Governorate. In retaliation, two US airstrikes killed at least 14 alleged Iranian-backed militia in the same city and in Al-Mayadin town, Dayr az Zawr Governorate. Following Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)], tensions further intensified, and Iranian-backed militant groups carried out at least eleven attacks on US military bases in Iraq, Hīt city, al-Anbar Governorate, and in Syria, Al-tanf military compound, Homs Governorate, and Al-Mayadin and Al-Bukamal city, Dayr az Zawr Governorate killing at least one US contractor and wounding at least 30 US contractors and servicemen.
In response, US authorities freezed aforementioned funds worth USD 6 billion. Furthermore, the US carried out retaliatory strikes killing at least 21 alleged Iranian-backed militants. On November 8, US forces killed eight people in an airstrike and wounded seven in Al-Mayadin, Syria. On November 22, US forces killed eight people in an airstrike in the Iraqi capital Baghdad, leading the Iraqi government to condemn the airstrike as a violation of territorial integrity and sovereignty. emb

IRAQ (IS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: IS vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power, resources

The violent crisis over orientation of the political system, national power, and resources between so-called Islamic State (IS), on the one hand, and the Iraqi government, on the other, continued. IS continued its attacks primarily in the capital of Baghdad as well as Diyala, Kirkuk and Salah ad-Din Governorates.
Throughout the year, several attacks, mostly targeting the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), were attributed to IS, during which three service personnel were killed and 13 others injured. For instance, on June 11, IS fighters attacked an army outpost in al-Multaqa subdistrict near Dibis, Kirkuk Governorate, killing at least two Iraqi soldiers. During the second half of the year, the attacks on police and military posts using improvised IEDs increased. On August 17, an army vehicle was struck by an IED near the village of Albu Nimr, Al Anbar Governorate, leaving five security officers wounded. On September 18, IS detonated two IEDs on an army convoy in Diyala Governorate, leaving two officers injured. Those cooperating with the Iraqi government also came under attack, such as fighters from the Tribal Mobilization (TM). For instance, on November 4, IS attacked TM fighters in the Al Anbar Governorate, killing one. On August 29, IS killed one French soldier and injured at least three others in Salah ad-Din Governorate.
Throughout the year, ISF conducted 31 operations primarily targeting IS hideouts, leaving at least 123 militants dead. For instance, multiple airstrikes were carried out in the Hamrin Mountain range destroying hideouts and killing three IS militants on February 2. On August 16, the ISF conducted an airstrike on an underground bunker of IS in Wadi al-Shay region, Kirkuk Governorate, killing four militants. Additionally, ISF continued its fight on the ground. For example, on March 1, 17 IS militants were killed in the Al Anbar Governorate during an operation supervised by the Counter Terrorism Service. On March 12, ISF carried out an operation in an area between al-Qaim and Rutba in Al Anbar Governorate, killing 22 IS militants.
fna

IRAQ (KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1971

Conflict parties: Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) vs. Government
Conflict items: autonomy, resources

The dispute over resources and autonomy between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Iraqi government escalated to a violent crisis.
Despite tensions between the two actors, the conflict has remained non-violent for the past few years. The last time armed clashes broke out was in 2017, when Iraqi government forces launched a surprise offensive in retaliation for an independence referendum organized by the Kurdish regional government.
On October 22, Iraqi federal forces clashed with Peshmerga fighters from the semi-autonomous Kurdish region of Iraq. The fighting broke out when both sides attempted to take control of three military posts on Mount Qarah Dagh in Makhmour district. These posts, previously vacated by the Turkish dissident group Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), had initially been handed over to the Iraqi army. However, the situation escalated when Kurdish Peshmerga forces attempted to reclaim these positions, arguing that the posts fell within their jurisdiction. Two Iraqi soldiers and two Peshmerga fighters were killed during the clashes, which lasted around two hours.
On November 2, the Peshmerga and the Iraqi army agreed to share control of the military posts in Makhmour. According to Kurdish officials, the dispute has since been attributed to a misunderstanding.
tdi

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.
Several demonstrations against Qu'ran burnings took place throughout the year. For instance, on January 23, one police officer and seven demonstrators were injured during a rally organized by al-Sadr supporters in front of the Swedish embassy in Baghdad against the burning of a Qu'ran in Stockholm, Sweden. Following another Qu'ran burning in front of a mosque in Stockholm on July 20, hundreds of protesters stormed the Swedish embassy in Baghdad on the same day and set the building on fire. Nine demonstrators and Iraqi security forces were injured in this incident. On July 22, in reaction to the burning of a Qu'ran in front of the Iraqi embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark, hundreds of al-Sadr's supporters again tried to storm the Green Zone, where foreign embassies and the seat of government in Baghdad are located.
Protests against unemployment and the inflation crisis continued this year. On January 25 and February 3, hundreds protested in the capital Baghdad against the devaluation of the national currency against the USD. On May 25, more than 60,000 recent medical school graduates from across Iraq protested in Baghdad to demand direct employment from the government. Protests similarly took place in the Kurdistan Region, occasionally leading to clashes between protesters and security forces. For instance, on January 2, university graduates demonstrated in the city of Kirkuk, eponymous governorate, against the lack of employment opportunities at the state-owned company North Oil. Five people were injured in clashes between the police and the demonstrators. On November 26, Iraqi security forces near Kirkuk city stopped hundreds of teachers from the Kurdistan Region [→ Iraq (Kurdistan Regional Government)] from protesting in Baghdad to demand the federal government to cover their unpaid wages.
On August 29, the central government decided to return the former headquarters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in the city of Kirkuk, sparking protests in the region throughout the year. For instance, on the same day, hundreds of protesters, including members of the Shiite militia Asa'ibAhl

al-Haq [→ Iraq (Shiite Militant Groups)], organized a sit-in to stop the handover of the building and prevent the KDP from resuming its activities in Kirkuk. On September 2, tensions escalated, leaving four protesters dead and 16 others injured. Throughout the year, the persecution of journalists and public media figures continued. For instance, on March 26, a political commentator was arrested for allegedly insulting Prime Minister Muhammad Shia' Al-Sudani. On October 3, a television presenter was abducted by militiamen in Baghdad, presumably due to criticism of their leader. tdi

IRAQ (SHIITE MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2004

Conflict parties: Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, Badr Organization, government, Kata'ib Hezbollah, Saraya al-Salam

Conflict items: system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and 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. Since October, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq (IRI) has emerged as a significant force. Although only Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, an offshoot of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, has publicly declared itself part of the group, experts consider the IRI to be an umbrella term.

Throughout the year, clashes between Shiite militant groups, in particular Kata'ib Hezbollah, and government forces continued. On March 14, two Kata'ib Hezbollah fighters were killed and two security forces injured during a clash between the militia and the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service at Camp Speicher, a strategic outpost near the city Tikrit, Saladin Governorate. On May 15, Kata'ib Hezbollah injured two security officers in another shootout in the capital Baghdad's Albu Aitha suburb.

The violent rivalry between the two Shiite militias Saraya al-Salam and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq continued. For instance, on November 9, one member of Saraya al-Salam and two members of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq were killed and three police officers were injured in a shootout in Basra, eponymous governorate. Following the local elections in Iraq, armed clashes between the two militias broke out in Baghdad on December 26, leaving two militants injured.

Furthermore, attacks on civilians continued this year. For instance, on February 20, nine civilians were killed in the town of Khalis, Diyala Governorate. Additionally, on March 29, three civilians were killed in the same town. On March 6, eight civilians were shot dead in the city of Miqdadiyah, Diyala Governorate. Although no party has claimed responsibility for the attacks, Shiite militias, including the Iran-backed Badr Organization, have been blamed for the killings.

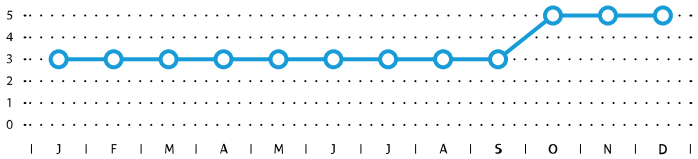
Following the election of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani in October 2022, Shiite militant groups initially halted attacks on US troops. However, after the assault of Hamas on Israel [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)] in October this year, when Shiite militias resumed attacks on US bases. For instance, on November 20, IRI militants injured eight US and allied soldiers in a missile attack on the Al-Asad airbase in Al Anbar Governorate. On December 25, three US soldiers were injured in a drone attack on the Al-Harir Air Base in Erbil Governorate, for which Kata'ib Hezbollah claimed responsibility. tdi

ISRAEL (HAMAS ET AL.)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1988

Conflict parties: Hamas, other Islamist groups, PIJ vs. government

Conflict items: secession, resources



The violent crisis over the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state and resources between the state of Israel and Palestinian armed groups, most notably Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and local groups such as The Lion's Den and the Jenin Brigade escalated to a war.

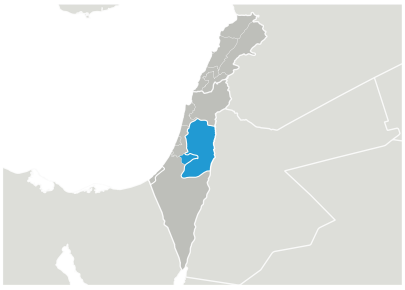
The conflict escalated on October 7, when Hamas launched a surprise attack with fighters entering the southern part of Israel from the Gaza strip. In the attack, they killed more than 1,200 Israelis, including 300 members of the security branches and 260 civilians at a music festival in the Negev desert. Hamas managed to control an area around the Gaza strip to the city of Ashkelon for up to two days, before the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) regained control of the area. More than 1,000 Hamas members were reportedly killed in the hostilities. The ground assault on October 7 was accompanied by heavy rocket attacks, targeting Israeli cities, hitting buildings in Ashkelon and Tel Aviv. Around 240 people were taken hostage by Hamas. In total, 250,000 Israelis were evacuated from the Gazan border vicinity.

On October 8, Israel started a total blockade of the Gaza strip, blocking all goods, supplies, and border traffic, leading to a humanitarian crisis among the population. The Israeli air force started to conduct air attacks on Hamas facilities in Gaza the next day. Israeli airstrikes and ground assaults killed at least 15 Hamas commanders in the first three weeks of the escalation. On October 13, the civilian population was called upon to retreat to the south of the Gaza strip by the Israeli military. The Gazan authorities reported more than 21,000 casualties between October 7 and the end of the year [→ Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)]. Around a million Gazan citizens left Gaza city fleeing to the south, whilst the evacuation route proclaimed by Israel was shelled as well. Air strikes by the IDF destroyed or severely damaged approx. 45 percent of the buildings in Gaza city and 18 percent in the whole Gaza strip until November.

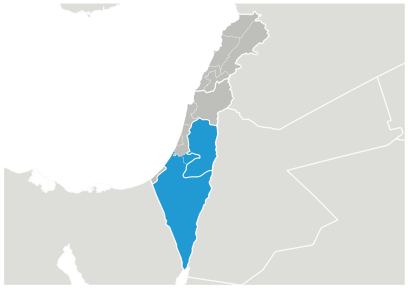
Around October 26, preceded by minor operations, the IDF began a large-scale ground offensive on the Gaza strip. Hamas combatants were mostly stationed in tunnels under Gaza city. It is estimated that around 1,000 Hamas fighters had been killed in Gaza by 31 October. Hamas accused Israel of targeting hospitals and refugee camps, while Israel accused Hamas of setting up strategic locations near vulnerable civilian infrastructure. For example, Israel suspected a Hamas control center under the Al-Shifa hospital, which was hit by a rocket on October 17, for which both sides blamed the other.

On November 24, a truce was declared between Israel and Hamas, including an exchange of hostages held in Gaza for detained Palestinians. In total, 110 of the 240 hostages

ISRAEL (HAMAS ET AL.)



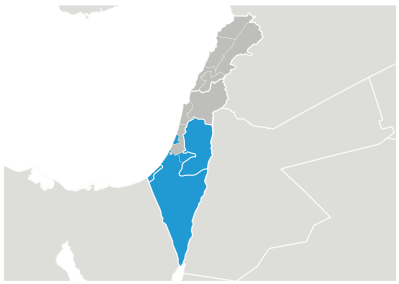
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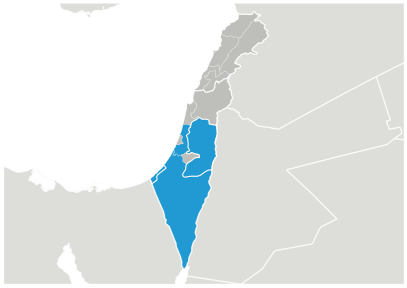
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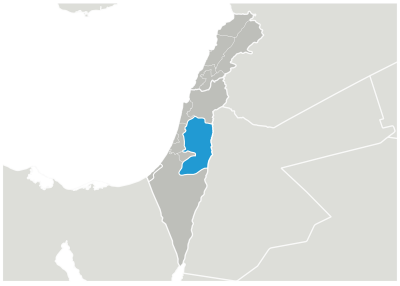
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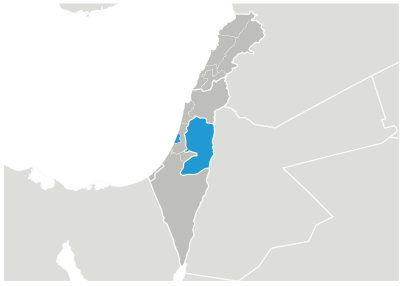
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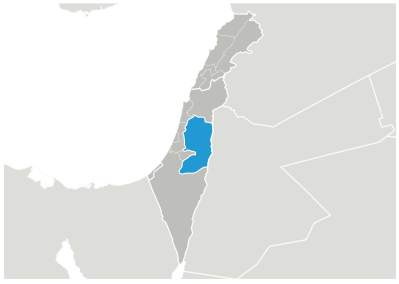
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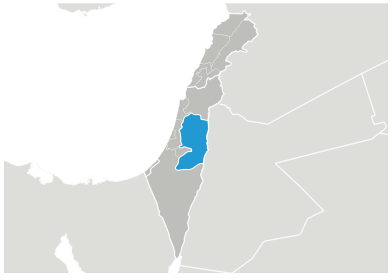
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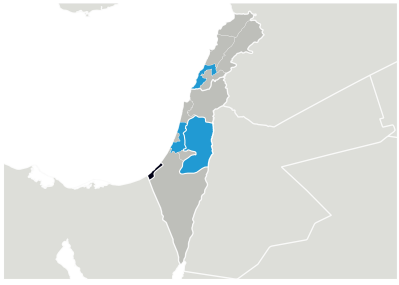
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November



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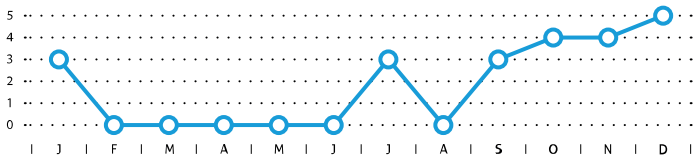
NO VIOLENT CONFLICT MEASURES
VIOLENT CRISIS
LIMITED WAR
WAR

and 240 Palestinians were freed in the agreement. The truce lasted for a week, until Israel resumed air attacks on Gaza after allegedly having intercepted a Hamas rocket. On December 1, two Hamas members conducted a terror attack in Jerusalem, in which five people were killed and six were injured.
December became the month with the highest number of IDF casualties, rising up to 172. Israel claimed full military control over the northern Gaza strip, shifting the fighting to the southern area around Khan Younis city. On December 18, three hostages were mistakenly killed by IDF forces. Around 700 Hamas and IDF members surrendered in Gaza. Rocket fire towards Israel continued throughout the whole escalation but diminished to an average below 20 rockets a day in December, the IDF stated. By the end of the year, 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.3 million inhabitants had been displaced during the conflict [Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)].
Earlier in the year, both Israel and the Palestinian side launched rockets at one another. For instance, on May 2, a series of violent encounters started, when the PIJ launched more than 40 rockets from Gaza towards Israel. In response, the Israeli military attacked targets in Gaza later that day. On May 9, the Israeli air force launched Operation Shield and Arrow against Gaza, killing three PIJ leaders and at least twelve civilians. On May 11 alone, the PIJ fired more than 600 rockets towards Israel, which killed one person and injured five others in Rehovot city, central district, as well as damaging buildings. An unconditional ceasefire brokered by the Egyptian government on May 13 ended the episode. A total of more than 30 people were killed and 70 were injured. The destruction of several buildings was reported, rendering 165 Palestinians homeless.
Further violent clashes and attacks occurred in Israel and the West Bank. For example, on January 28, a Hamas member attacked a synagogue in East Jerusalem, where eight people were killed, including the perpetrator, and three others injured. On March 7, six Palestinians were killed in a firefight in Jenin, Jenin Governorate, including a Hamas member. The IDF raided Palestinian territory throughout the year. For instance, on April 22, two members of The Lion's Den group were killed during a raid and more than 20 civilians injured by tear gas used by Israeli forces. On June 19, five Palestinians were killed, including PIJ members, and at least 90 Palestinians and eight Israeli soldiers were wounded in Jenin, Jenin Governorate. The IDF deployed a helicopter gunship and the militants resorted to explosive devices.
Palestinian protests erupted at the Gazan border around September 14, following verbal threats by Hamas on September 4, proclaiming the possibility of a total war. Israel accused Hamas of fueling protests and launched airstrikes against border posts, which left at least 22 injured and an unknown number of deaths. Furthermore, Israel closed the northern border point in Eretz from September 16 to 28. Hamas' assault on October 7 followed a week later.
tsk

ISRAEL (HEZBOLLAH)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1982

Conflict parties: Hezbollah vs. government
Conflict items: territory, system/ideology



The violent crisis over ideology and territory between the Lebanese Hezbollah and the Israeli government escalated to a war. Overall, Israeli military forces, on the one hand, continued to carry out airstrikes on Syrian territory and arrest suspected Hezbollah collaborators. On the other hand, Israeli forces and Hezbollah conducted daily airstrikes on Southern Lebanon and Northern Israel, respectively, except for the period of a truce between November 24 and 30.
Before the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah intensified in October, Israeli forces arrested several alleged members of Hezbollah which they accused of digital communication with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and carrying out recruitment and spying activities on Israeli military forces.
From January until September, the Israel Defense Force (IDF) conducted multiple airstrikes on Hezbollah positions in Quneitra and Tartus governorate, Syria, which led to the death of four people, including two Syrian soldiers, and at least seven people wounded. For instance, on April 24, Israeli forces bombed a Syrian military post near the Druze town of Hader, Quneitra, with artillery shells. After the outbreak of the war between Hamas and Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)], on October 8, Hezbollah stated it attacked IDF positions in disputed Shebaa Farms with rockets and artillery "to liberate the remaining part of our occupied Lebanese land and in solidarity with the victorious Palestinian resistance". IDF forces reacted with drone and artillery strikes' on Har Dov, also Shebaa Farms.
By December 31, airstrikes and armed clashes between Israeli forces and Hezbollah along the Israel-Lebanese border had wounded over 157 people, including six Lebanese soldiers, and killed at least 103, including a minimum of 65 Hezbollah members, eight IDF soldiers, three journalists, and a UNIFIL mission peacekeeper. In addition, Israeli airstrikes destroyed 18 houses and caused damage to 56, most of them in Aitaroun, and a mosque in Jebbayn, Southern Lebanon.
Both conflict parties used rockets, artillery shells, mortars, anti-tank, air-defense and surface-to-air missiles, helicopters and fighter jets, drones - sometimes filled with explosives - and small arms. For example, on November 23, Hezbollah launched a large-scale rocket attack on the Israeli Ein Zeitim military base close to Safed, Northern Israel, and used guided missiles as well as mortars to other target sites, such as Kibbutz Menara, Upper Galilee. Israel reacted by using fighter jets and mortars, a helicopter and a drone as well as tanks to attack the rocket launchers and target Hezbollah positions.
Furthermore, Amnesty International accused Israel of war crimes because it targeted civilian populated areas in Aita al-Chaab, al-Mari, and Dhayra, Southern Lebanon, with white phosphorus which is prohibited under international humanitarian law. The use of phosphorus between October 10 and 16 led to the hospitalization of nine people. The IDF

said it used artillery shells to target Hezbollah infrastructure and cells in response to missile attacks by Hezbollah from Lebanon.
After measures intensified between Israel and Hezbollah due the start of the war between Israel and Hamas [→ Israel – Hamas et al.], hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah displaced over 74,471 between October 8 and December 26 in Lebanon, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In Israel, on October 20 and 22, over 20,000 left their homes after its Defense Ministry announced the evacuation of 42 communities close to the Israel-Lebanon border, including the city of Kiryat Shmona in Northern Israel. On November 8, a further 600 people had to leave their homes in the town of Dan, Northern Israel. sap

ISRAEL – LEBANON

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1948

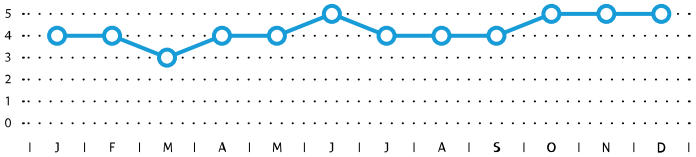
Conflict parties: Israel vs. Lebanon
Conflict items: territory, international power, resources

The non-violent crisis over territory, international power, and resources between Israel and Lebanon escalated to a violent crisis. Throughout the year, tensions intensified over violations of the UN demarcation line (Blue Line), which determined the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in 1978. Lebanon accused Israel of land border and air space violations as well as the annexation of the village of Ghajar, located on the border between Lebanon and Israeli occupied Golan Heights, on multiple occasions. The UN and the USA stepped up their efforts to mediate between the conflict parties.
On January 13, Lebanon shot down an Israeli drone after it entered Lebanese air space. On January 18, Lebanese forces accused the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) of illegally crossing the Blue Line, leading to a non-violent confrontation. On January 22, following the previous incidents, Lebanon declared a state of alert of its armed forces. As a result of another Israeli border violation, on March 5, the two armies faced off in Bint Jbeil, Nabatieh governorate, where the Lebanese army forced the IDF to retreat without the use of force.
On April 16, the IDF used smoke grenades against civilians, who were approaching the border. On June 9, protests erupted in Kfar Chouba, Nabatieh governorate, after the IDF erected barbed wires and conducted excavations for a week on territory claimed by Lebanon. On July 15, Lebanese civilians crossed the border into North Israel. The IDF responded by using tear gas to disperse protesters and fired warning shots.
On July 11, Lebanon accused Israel of annexing the village of Ghajar, located on the border of Lebanese governorate Nabatieh and Israeli occupied Golan Heights, and threatened to file a complaint to the UN. On August 16, the UN brokered a meeting between the Lebanese forces and IDF, but no outcomes were reached. On August 31, the UN extended the UNIFIL mandate for peacekeeping along the Blue Line. On the same day, the US offered to mediate in the conflict, which according to the Lebanese foreign minister was to be discussed with Israel first.
On September 23 and 27, the IDF and Lebanese forces exchanged smoke and stun grenades along the Blue Line near Kfar Chouba, Nabatieh, and Sheeba farms. On October 5, however, the IDF, the Lebanese army, and UNIFIL forces cooperated in dismantling an illegally constructed concrete structure near the Israeli town Shtula within the buffer zone. As a result of Israel's conflicts with Hezbollah and Hamas [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)], on November 22, Lebanon filed a complaint before the UNSC, citing the ongoing killing of Lebanese civilians by the IDF. On December 5, the IDF killed a Lebanese soldier, claiming it was an accident. lro

ISRAEL – STATE OF PALESTINE° (PNA)

Intensity: 5 | Change: ↑ | Start: 1948

Conflict parties: Palestinian protesters, PNA vs. government, Israeli settlement movements
Conflict items: secession, decolonisation, system/ideology, resources



The violent crisis over the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state, decolonisation, 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, escalated to a war. The conflict was intertwined with the war between Hamas and the state of Israel, which intensified with the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)].
The UN stated that, since October 7, Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) bombardments of the Gaza strip had killed 21,672 and displaced almost 1.7 million Palestinian civilians. Furthermore, on October 9, Israel imposed a "complete siege" on Gaza, cutting off electricity, food, water, and gas from 2.2 million inhabitants. The UN and WHO warned of a humanitarian catastrophe on October 16, stating that only 24 hours of water, electricity, and fuel were left. Human Rights Watch stated on December 18 that the state of Israel was using starvation of civilians as a weapon of war. After lengthy negotiations between Israel and Egypt alongside UN officials and the USA, humanitarian aid was delivered to Gaza on October 21. Organizations such as Doctors without Borders echoed the UN's assessment that aid was being delivered in insufficient amounts. On November 17, the UN World Food Program warned of immediate starvation, as only ten percent of the necessary food supplies were entering besieged Gaza. On November 24, a four-day-long ceasefire between Hamas and Israel commenced, which allowed more aid to flow temporarily. By December 17, over 60 percent of Gaza's infrastructure had been destroyed and, according to UNRWA, an unprecedented humanitarian crisis emerged. Crisis Group stated on December 30, that Israel was "eradicating the ability [of Palestinians] to live in Gaza". On December 29, South Africa filed a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, accusing it of crimes of genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.
Israel's military operations in response to Hamas' attacks included the forced evacuation of northern Gaza on October 13, displacing over 1 million Palestinians. The IDF orders to evacuate designated safe zones in the South left "no safe place" in Gaza according to Doctors without Borders.

By December 20, 85 percent (1.9 million) of Gaza's population was displaced. International organizations such as Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor accused Israel of targeting Palestinian civilians, as it hit schools, houses of worship, hospitals, and refugee camps among others. An explosion at Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza city on October 17 killed between 200 and 500 Palestinians. Israel denied its involvement in the bombing while investigations by Human Rights Watch suggested it could have been caused by a failed rocket launched by Hamas. Gaza's hospitals remained affected. For instance, on November 12 at Al-Shifa hospital, critical infrastructure, including the oxygen station, water tanks, the cardiovascular facility, and the maternity ward were damaged, and three nurses killed. On November 12, an IDF operation directly hit the Indonesian hospital and killed twelve people.

Israel's bombing of a Greek Orthodox church on October 19 in Gaza's old city killed 18 civilians. Approx. 450 IDPs were seeking shelter in the church. Amnesty International called for an investigation of the incident as a war crime. On October 31, Israeli air strikes hit the densely populated Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza allegedly targeting a Hamas leader, killing 50 Palestinians and injuring 150. On December 17, the IDF struck a school in western Khan Yunis, southern Gaza, killing 14 Palestinians. Furthermore, on December 25, Israeli media published videos of the IDF detaining hundreds of Palestinian civilians inside a soccer stadium in Gaza city, where detainees were forced to strip to their underwear. Human Rights Watch and the OHCHR accused Israel of using these defense actions as collective punishment which can constitute a war crime under international law.

Evacuation through the Rafah crossing to Egypt began on November 1 for dual nationals and their families only. Other exits out of Gaza remained closed. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Reporters without Borders and the OHCHR continuously voiced concern about the killing of Palestinian journalists in Gaza. On November 22, an IDF airstrike killed the director of a Gazan news agency along with at least eight family members in his house in Al Nuseirat refugee camp. According to CPJ, Israel's bombardment had killed over 70 journalists since October 7. The amendment to Israel's counterterrorism law on November 8, allowed imprisonment in the West Bank and Israel for social media interaction that could indicate identification with Hamas. The Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights in Israel accused Israel of limiting "free speech targeting Palestinian citizens of Israel".

The ongoing hostilities in the Gaza strip intensified the violent clashes in the West Bank. Since October 7, Palestinians have killed four Israelis in the West Bank and four in West Jerusalem. The Israeli military killed 298, injured about 3,800 and Israeli settlers killed eight Palestinians in the West Bank, according to OCHA. About 40 percent of Palestinian injuries were in the context of anti-Israel protests. The majority of casualties resulted from search-and-arrest raids, such as the large-scale raid on Jenin, Jenin Governorate, on January 26, in which the IDF killed ten Palestinians and injured more than 20. On October 10, Israel's national security minister announced the distribution of weapons to civilians "to protect the settlements and cities". As a consequence, on October 14, between 16 and 19 Palestinians were killed throughout the West Bank, predominantly in Nablus and Bedouin villages. In total, 506 Palestinians and 36 Israelis were killed throughout 2023 in the West Bank, according to OCHA.

Since October 7, the conflict between Israel and Palestine has captured international attention with protests in support of Israel or Palestine happening regularly worldwide. In some countries, such as Germany, the war caused criminalization of supporting Palestine. Additionally, the phrase "Kill all Palestinians" was sprayed on a High School in Munich, Germany, on December 11. Assaults on Israelis and Jews as well as Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims living outside of Israel increased. On October 31, Bolivia decided to cease its diplomatic relations with Israel in "condemnation of the aggressive and disproportionate Israeli military offensive". On November 1, in Vienna, Austria, the Jewish part of a cemetery was set on fire. Within Israel, large demonstrations took place throughout the year against Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's proposed plan to alter the Israeli judiciary system and his settler politics. On May 15, the UN officially commemorated the Nakba for the first time.

Before October 7, Israeli forces and settlers killed 179 Palestinians in the West Bank, already surpassing 2022 as the deadliest year since UN data collection began in 2005. From April 24 to 26, the IDF besieged Aqbat Jabr refugee camp in Jericho, Jericho Governorate, affecting 8,000 Palestinians. During the month of Ramadan, Israeli forces repeatedly raided in and around al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and forcibly expelled about 400 worshippers on April 5 and 6. Military violence erupted before October 7 throughout the year, such as after May 2, when Protests across Gaza and the West Bank sparked after a Palestinian activist died during hunger strike in an Israeli prison. Land rights, issues of decolonization and resources caused many attacks. On February 26, Israeli settlers attacked several Palestinian towns including Ramallah, Nablus and Salfit, killing three Palestinians, injuring over 400, and destroying more than 75 houses, 100 vehicles, and agricultural land. It was preceded by a Palestinian who shot two Israeli settlers in Huwara town, Nablus Governorate. The Israeli government approved further legalization of settler outposts on February 12, which provoked international criticism. This year's destruction of Palestinian property in the West Bank surpassed 2022 and 2021, according to the UN. rra, ivg

ISRAEL – SYRIA

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1948

Conflict parties:	Syria vs. Israel
Conflict items:	territory, international power, resources

The violent crisis over territory, international power, and resources between Israel and Syria continued. Throughout the year, Israel intensified its airstrikes against Syrian military positions, Hezbollah outposts and Iranian infrastructure in Syria, which also led to the killing of Syrian civilians and the destruction of civilian infrastructure in Syria [→ Israel (Hezbollah); Iran – Israel]. In most instances, Israel did not confirm its military operations in Syria.

For instance, on February 19, Israel conducted an airstrike on the densely populated neighborhood Kafr Sousa in the capital Damascus targeting Iranian installations and damaging several residential buildings. At least five people were killed and 15 wounded. The frequency of airstrikes increased in March and April. On March 7, an Israeli airstrike struck the Aleppo Airport, Halab Governorate, resulting in the death of three people. On April 8, six missiles were fired from Syrian territory towards the Golan Heights. Five missiles were intercepted, with one hitting Israeli territory, setting off sirens in northern Israel. No casualties were reported. Subsequently,

on April 9, the Israeli Air Force launched airstrikes on Syrian military installations near Damascus.
The frequency of airstrikes increased drastically following the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7 [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)]. According to the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights, between October 10 and November 12, 19 Israeli attacks on Syria were recorded. Israel intensified strikes on Damascus International and other civilian airports to disrupt Tehran's increasing use of aerial supply lines to deliver arms to allies in Syria and Lebanon, including Hezbollah. On October 25, the Israeli Army fired artillery shells on military infrastructure and mortar launching sites belonging to the Syrian army in the Golan Heights. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, arms depots and a Syrian air defense radar were destroyed, leaving eight Syrian soldiers dead and seven injured. On November 8, Israeli airstrikes targeted military positions of the regime forces in Tel Qalib and Tel Al-Masih, As Suwayda' Governorate, a military airport located near Damascus and the locality between Sayyidah Zaynab and Akraba, Rif Dimashq Governorate, killing at least three members of the Lebanese Hezbollah. On December 2, an Israeli airstrike struck positions of Hezbollah in Sayyidah Zaynab and Hujaira, Rif Dimashq Governorate, killing four people, among them two members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards and injuring five others. On December 7, two missiles were fired from Syrian territory towards the Golan Heights, causing no casualties. Subsequently, on December 8, four people, including three members of Hezbollah, were killed in an Israeli drone strike on Golan Heights. On December 25, a high ranking official of Iran's Revolutionary Guards was killed in an Israeli airstrike near Damascus. 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 and civil society organizations, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued. Most large-scale protests were linked to the conflict in neighboring Israeli and Palestinian territories [→ Israel – State of Palestine (PNA)].
Throughout the year, thousands of Jordanians expressed their support for Palestine. Additionally, human rights groups, activists, and journalists expressed their concerns about a new cybercrime law.
On February 24, hundreds of Jordanians demonstrated near the Israeli embassy in the capital Amman, as well as in Irbid governorate. Again, on April 7, hundreds protested in Amman city against Israel's incursions into the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Israel, on April 4. Protesters urged the government to expel Israel's ambassador and cancel all bilateral treaties, a demand that was reiterated throughout the year. Their demands were not met by the government.
On August 12, King Abdullah II approved a new cybercrime law, targeting online speech deemed harmful to national unity. The announcement of the bill prompted protests of hundreds of activists throughout July. Before implementation, rights groups, including Human Rights Watch, condemned the new law.
Large demonstrations broke out in support of the Palestinian civil society in October, following the escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hamas [→ Israel – Hamast et al.]. On October 17, several thousand demonstrated near the Israeli embassy in Amman against Israel's military assault in Gaza. Several anti-riot police personnel were injured during clashes with protesters. On December 11, millions of Jordanians participated in a general strike to demand a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and a severance of relations with Israel. The next day, King Abdullah convened an emergency meeting of his generals, security chiefs, and the Ministry of Interior. The country is home to over two million Palestinian refugees, with a large part of the population identifying as Palestinian. phg

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 Palestinian groups such as Hamas and Fatah, as well as other Palestinian fractions and extremist groups, such as Al-Shabab Al-Muslim, Ansar Allah, and Osbat al-Ansar, continued. The conflict witnessed multiple clashes within Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon's South Governorate, involving competing militant factions.
Throughout the year, violence resulted in the death of 32 Palestinian refugees, 127 injured refugees, and approx. 1,300 internally displaced people.
On March 1, an altercation between members of Fatah and Osbat al-Ansar, a Sunni extremist group, escalated into an armed clash in Ain al-Hilweh camp, South Governorate. Both factions used RPGs, grenades, and machine guns, leaving one dead and seven injured. Tensions between both groups continued in the following days. For instance, on March 9, members of Osbat al-Ansar injured another member of Fatah. Violence escalated again on July 30, when heavy fighting between Fatah and the islamist group Al-Shabab Al-Muslim broke out in Ain al-Hilweh camp, after an Al-Shabab assassination attempt against a local Fatah leader on the same day. The clash left six dead and 20 Palestinians injured. Both groups used machine guns, RPGs, and hand grenades. Fighting recommenced on August 1, resulting in six more deaths.
Following a lull in August, violence resurged on September 7, when clashes between Fatah and Al-Shabab Al-Muslim erupted in Ain al-Hilweh Camp, injuring 20 and forcing approx. 1,300 inhabitants from their homes. Fighting, including the use of machine guns, RPGs, and hand grenades, persisted until September 13, accounting for 16 deaths and an estimated 71 persons injured.
abl

LEBANON (IS)

Intensity: 2 | Change: ↘ | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: IS vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance

The violent crisis over ideology and subnational predomi-

nance between the Islamist militant group Islamic State (IS), on the one hand, and the government, on the other hand, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis. The origin of the conflict dates back to the rise of IS in the Syrian civil war in 2011, when Lebanon became a target for Syrian rebel groups due to Hezbollah involvement. In 2015, IS began targeting Hezbollah strongholds within Lebanon and attempted to establish their caliphate across the Syrian-Lebanese border, seizing territory within Lebanon.
Over the course of the year, IS continued its efforts to recruit new members to offer financial support, obtain weapons, and plan attacks in Lebanon. In September, a group of eleven men from Lebanon, Syria and Palestine attempted to form a terror network near Ein El Hilweh refugee camp in the South Governorate and carry out terror attacks for IS. The Lebanese Army Intelligence (LAI) carried out several arrests in January, March, May, August, September and November, most recently on November 1, when five men from Lebanon and Syria were arrested by the Lebanese Army for carrying out missions for IS. In total, the LAI arrested at least 22 individuals for illegally entering Lebanon, having links to IS, or being an active member of the jihadi terror organization. lka

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.
Demonstrations concerning the economic crisis, necessity shortages such as water and electricity, and corruption and the educational system continued with numerous instances of attacks on banks, sit-ins, and roadblocks. As in 2022, no fatalities were reported.
In January, the demonstrations primarily targeted financial institutions and government offices. For example, on January 17, the Depositors' Cry group held a sit-in in front of the justice palace in the capital Beirut, during a visit by European judges Roadblocks with burning tires became a common form of protest, with instances reported on January 20 in Saida, South Governorate, and later on February 17 in Tripoli, North Governorate. On March 22, security forces used tear gas against a protest of army retirees protesting low pensions in Beirut, injuring two.
In April, tensions further escalated with multiple demonstrations occurring throughout the month. For example, on April 18, hundreds of retirees, civil servants, and public school teachers protested in downtown Beirut. A similar protest erupted on April 25 in Burj al-Shemali, South Governorate, when security forces attempted to stop an illegal construction project. On both occasions, security forces responded with teargas and batons, injuring one demonstrator on each side.
On May 9, security personnel of a bank branch injured a member of the Depositors' Cry group in downtown Beirut during a protest. On May 30, second-hand car dealers and taxi drivers blocked a highway in front of Beirut's port to protest fiscal policies.
In June, protests continued with a notable incident involving vandalism. On June 15, Depositor's Cry protestors vandalized four banks in the Sin al-Fil district of Beirut using incendiary devices and color bombs.
In the second half of 2023, protests centered around the educational system. For instance, on September 18, public school teachers protested in front of the Parliament in Beirut against the working conditions in the educational sector. Furthermore, on October 10, university students gathered in front of the Palace of Justice in Beirut to protest against tuition fees. abl

LIBYA (IS)

Intensity: 1 | Change: ↓ | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: ISL vs. GNU
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power, resources

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, national power, and resources between the Islamic State in Libya (ISL), on the one hand, and the Government of National Unity (GNU), on the other, de-escalated to a dispute.
On January 1, a mass grave containing 18 bodies was found near the town of Sabha, Sirte District, a former ISL stronghold.
On May 29, 56 suspected ISL members were charged for their involvement in the bombings of a police training center in Zliten, the city gate of Msallata Gate, both in the Murqub District, as well as the the beheading of 20 Egyptian Copts and one Ghanaian Christian in Sirte District. At least 23 of those sentenced were given death sentences by the Misrata Appeals Court.
On August 22, government security forces arrested an ISL leader.
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, resources, and the orientation of the political system between the UN-backed Government of National Unity (GNU), on the one hand, and the rival Government of National Stability (GNS), on the other, continued.
On May 16, the House of Representatives (HoR) suspended Fathi Bashaga as prime minister and head of the GNS, and appointed former finance minister Osama Hamada.
Between May and June, the GNU conducted drone strikes in regions that were home to armed factions opposing the GNU. On May 26, the GNU targeted alleged smuggling networks in Zawiya city, eponymous district. On June 2, the GNU continued drone strikes in western regions in Al Mayah, Zawiya, Zuwarah, and Al Ajaylat in the Nuqat al Khams district. On August 14, two military groups backed by the GNU clashed in Tripoli, eponymous District, killing at least 55 people and injuring at least 146.
At the same time, members of the GNU and the GNS engaged in UN-backed negotiations to explore options for a unified government. On March 12, the UN Envoy called on the rival administrations to reach an agreement by mid-June and to

hold long-delayed elections by the end of the year. The initiative was supported by Western powers and the GNU, while it was criticized by the GNS. On October 26, in a letter to the UN Secretary General, 57 Libyan political parties expressed their dissatisfaction with the UN Envoy and criticized the UN's claim of neutrality.
The head of the GNS, a US citizen, might be ineligible for elections should the rules for candidacy be adapted to exclude dual citizens and military figures from running in presidential elections. On June 3, the so-called "6+6 Joint Committee" consisting of six members from the High Council of State (HCS), backing the GNU, and the HoR, backing the GNS, announced the approval of a constitutional framework for presidential and legislative elections. However, some members of the HCS and the HoR, along with various opposition parties, separately announced that they did not accept the results. On June 9, the 6+6 Joint Committee for determining election laws in Libya stated that the draft election laws had been unanimously approved by the members and declared as final. On July 11, the HCS adopted a roadmap for elections that included the formation of a unified government and was not approved by the HoR. On November 8, the President of the HCS and the Speaker of the HoR reiterated their commitment to continue consultations on Libya's political crisis.
sag

MAURITANIA (ANTI-SLAVERY ACTIVISTS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2015

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

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system between the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) as well as other opposition groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
Throughout the year, the government continued to suppress IRA members, other activists, and Black Mauritanians on multiple occasions. For example, on February 10, Mauritanian police forces detained, tortured, and killed a human rights activist by strangulation in the capital Nouakchott. Protests arose in Nouakchott the next day, following the news of his death, and continued for several days. On February 20, the Public Prosecutor's Office of Nouakchott-Nord charged eight people, including the police commissioner, in relation to the death of the activist.
On May 24, two weeks after Mauritania's parliamentary elections, police forces detained more than 20 human rights activists in Nouakchott, including presidential candidate Biram Dah Abeid, for several days after they protested election fraud. IRA supporters protested the detentions.
On May 28, a Black Mauritanian died in police custody in Sebkha, Nouakchott-Ouest province, hours after being arrested, showing signs of torture. Protests broke out in several cities as a result, for example in Nouakchott, Kaedi, Gorgol province, Sebkha, as well as in Boghé and Bababé cities, both in Brakna province, where protesters clashed with security forces. At least one protester was killed and dozens were injured in these protests in Boghé after police fired live bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters. On May 31, the government temporarily shut down mobile internet services, preventing people from sharing footage of police brutality and attempting to curb further protests.
In December, civil society organizations protested the end of the civil registration campaign on December 31, which started on July 11, criticizing its lack of uniformity and transparency of the procedures for authenticating identities and granting citizenship.
Generally, displacement of Mauritanian minorities increased. For instance, throughout the year, several thousand Mauritanians fled through South and Central America to seek asylum at the US southern border.
tku

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 the 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.
On May 13, the leaders of the four parliamentary opposition parties reinforced their commitment to cooperate but were unable to form a united opposition front. After a call by Moroccan syndicates, more than 2,000 people protested for workers rights in the capital Rabat on May 1. On June 5, the Confederation Democrate de Travail called for protests against high prices, which were forbidden by the government. Still more than 50 people joined protests in Casablanca city, Casablanca-Settat region.
On March 13 the Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) party published a communiqué calling the Moroccan foreign policy Zionist. Subsequently, the government called the PJD to order, citing danger to Moroccan foreign policy. On June 7, the president of the Israeli parliament visited Morocco. Meanwhile, more than 200 people protested against the normalization of relations with Israel, in Rabat. On October 14, more than 20,000 people protested in Rabat in support of Palestine in the Israel—Hamas war [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)].
lwb

MOROCCO (POLISARIO / WESTERN SAHARA°)

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 Saguía el-Hamra and Río de Oro, commonly known as Western Sahara, between the Popular Front of the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamran and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO), supported by Algeria, and the government, continued.
The first half of the year was characterized by POLISARIO building military capacity. On February 3, an investigation by Israeli media revealed a closer cooperation on a financial and military level between POLISARIO and Hezbollah than

previously known, including money laundering. On February 25, media reported that Iran had delivered autonomous flying Kamikaze drones to POLISARIO in collaboration with the Algerian government. Violence increased in the second half of the year. For example, on September 1, a Moroccan drone strike killed one POLISARIO commander and three POLISARIO fighters in Mehaires, Laâyoune-Sakia al Hamra region. On October 16, a Moroccan drone strike killed four further POLISARIO members in Dakhla-Oued Ed-Dahab region, and on October 28, POLISARIO, using guns and explosives, killed one person and injured three, two of them severely, in Smara, Laâyoune-Sakia al Hamra. Moreover, on November 17, a Moroccan drone strike killed at least two people and injured at least two in POLISARIO-controlled territory in Laâyoune-Sakia al Hamra.
From January 13 to 18, POLISARIO held its first congress since the end of the armistice in 2020 in Dakhla camp, Tindouf province, Algeria. Brahim Ghali, leader of POLISARIO and thus head of the self-proclaimed Arabic Republic of Western Sahara since 2016, was reelected. On March 30, the special envoy of the UNSG on Western Sahara invited representatives of POLISARIO, Morocco, Algeria and the USA to informal multilateral talks on the status of Western Sahara in New York, US. Starting from April 11, for the first time since 2020, six UN supply convoys were able to reach MINURSO sites in Tifariti and Mehaires, Laâyoune-Sakia al Hamra, and in Agwanit and Mijek, Dakhla-Oued Ed-Dahab, on land due to an agreement between POLISARIO and Morocco. On November 21, the UN launched a two-year aid plan for Sahrawi refugees.
On May 15, Portugal stated its support for the Moroccan autonomy plan, whilst on July 18, Israel recognized Western Sahara as a part of Moroccan territory.
Human rights abuses were continuously reported by both sides in the Western Sahara. For instance, on April 30, POLISARIO arrested and tortured a Sahrawi activist with Spanish citizenship, in the prison of Dahbia, Tindouf, Algeria. A human rights organization accused the Algerian government of handing over the activist. On July 17, three Moroccan settlers attacked a Sahrawi human rights defender and journalist with knives and swords in Dhakla, Dakhla-Oued Ed-Dahab.
lwb

SAUDI ARABIA (IS)

Intensity:	2	Change:	•	Start:	2015

Conflict parties:	government, IS	
Conflict items:	system/ideology, power	international

The non-violent crisis over ideology and international power between ISIS and affiliated militant groups on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia, supported by the USA and the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS (GCDI) on the other, continued.
Throughout the year, ISIS announced intended terrorist attacks. For instance, on May 12, ISIS declared goals for their future actions, such as targeting embassies in Saudi Arabia, the "land of the two holy sites".
Despite this, Saudi Arabia participated in a series of international initiatives to reaffirm its intent to counter ISIS over the course of the year.
For instance on June 7, Saudi Arabia hosted a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to promote security and stability in the region and globally. The same day, the 18th meeting of the Counter ISIS Finance Group (CIFG), a working group of the GCDI, took place. CIFG issued a statement expressing its continued resolve to tackle ISIS financing of all forms, addressing in particular the spread of ISIS across Africa and Asia.
One day later, US and Saudi foreign ministers and members of the GCDI released a joint communiqué stating that fighting ISIS "remained the number one priority".
GCDI announced USD 600 million funding for extremism prevention programs in Syria and Iraq.
During the meeting, an Iraqi foreign ministry spokesperson stressed the importance of a solution to the al-Hol Camp, al-Hasakah Governorate, Syria, which accommodates at least 50,000 people with alleged ISIS-ties. Furthermore, the spokesperson announced the repatriation of 3,000 people convicted of terrorism related to ISIS.
By November, Saudi Arabia had executed approx. 33 people on charges of terrorism. For instance, on March 7, Saudi Arabia executed a Saudi national accused of being a member of a terrorist group and for attacking Saudi security forces with a molotov cocktail. Later that year, on July 4, Saudi Arabia executed five people – four Saudis and one Egyptian – for bombing a mosque, in Dammam city, Qatif province, for which ISIS had claimed responsibility nine years prior.
trc

SAUDI ARABIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	1992

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

The violent crisis over the political system between the Saudi Arabian government and the Saudi Arabian opposition continued.
In 2023, the Saudi Arabian government cracked down on social media activists. A Saudi preacher Awad al-Qarni, who was arrested in 2017 for criticizing the regime on social media platforms, faced the death sentence. The sentence against the women's rights activist Salma al-Schihab, who shared tweets criticizing the government on Twitter, was renewed in January. In July, a teacher and Twitter activist was sentenced to death. Wikimedia published a report claiming that several governmental members tried to influence regime-critical articles. Following increased international pressure, the Saudi Arabian regime released the Saudi-US citizen Saad Ibrahim Almadi, who published critical tweets on social media and was arrested after entering the country.
Executions under the rule of Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman increased and were conducted for the first time during Ramadan, leading to national and international criticism. By September of this year, 100 people had been executed by governmental entities, among them convicts of political, religious, or ideological resistance to the regime.
The death penalty against minors was officially abolished by May 2023. However, in June 2023, seven juveniles faced the death penalty in national prisons.
The Saudi Arabian government also acted against members of its own government. On January 25, for instance, 142 governmental ministry officials were arrested, accused of corruption. On February 27, ten former judges were arrested by the Specialized Criminal Court, accused of high treason

and sentenced to death, after which they were replaced by regime loyalists. On May 22, the Saudi Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) stated it had arrested 84 people across seven ministries, on grounds of corruption. hre

SAUDI ARABIA, YEMEN (AQAP)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 1990

Conflict parties: AQAP vs. IRG Government of Yemen, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United States

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) and the Saudi-backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), on the other, continued.

While fighting occurred in at least six governorates, incidents occurred predominantly in the Abyan and Shabwah governorates. AQAP issued several statements, threatening retaliatory measures against the opposing coalition and urging locals to join AQAP military forces, such as on February 6, when AQAP released a video calling for an uprising and toppling of the Saudi regime.

Throughout the year, several bombings and clashes occurred between AQAP and STC-led forces. For instance, on February 7, an improvised explosive device (IED) attack targeted the Southern Forces in Abyan governorate, resulting in the deaths of two commanders and leaving four others injured. On June 14, a Yemeni drone struck the Sheaab Madhab area of Shabwa governorate, known to be a deployment zone for AQAP members. The attack left four AQAP fighters dead. AQAP consistently utilised IEDs and drones. On May 12, an AQAP drone attack targeted a site affiliated with the Shabwa Defense Forces and, on June 22, AQAP detonated three explosive devices in a military vehicle and two ambulances respectively.

Yemeni forces made significant territorial gains throughout the year. For example, On August 12, the Southern Forces gained full control of the AQAP-affiliated Al-Hajla Camp in Abyan governorate. On September 28, as the Abyan Security Director announced the expulsion of AQAP members from positions behind Wadi Rafd.

vbo

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, such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), different factions of the Syrian National Army (SNA), and the Syrian Liberation Front (SLF) continued.

This year, most clashes occurred between HTS and SNA, predominantly in the Governorate of Idlib. On March 20, SNA members opened fire, killing four and injuring three members of a Kurdish family in the SNA-controlled city of Jinderis, Idlib. Consequently, mass protests against SNA rule broke out. This led to HTS entering the city of Jinderis, stating their aim to stabilize the region. On March 28, Türkiye-backed SNA factions moved into Jindaris to drive out the HTS troops.

Throughout June, HTS and SNA initiated diplomatic talks that concluded in a fuel-trade agreement between the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) and Idlib as well as negotiations on political arrangements, such as prospects for a joint civilian administration between HTS and SDF.

Hostilities between the two opposition groups continued. For instance, on September 8, the SDF killed five HTS militants and injured 18 others following an infiltration attempt by the HTS into areas run by the AANES. On September 25, HTS attacked SNA posts after it failed to reach an agreement on sharing control over the al-Hamran crossing in the city of Jarablus, Idlib. HTS advanced on several SNA positions, killed seven SNA fighters, and injured 20 others using guns. A simultaneous drone attack by unknown combatants killed two HTS fighters and injured eight. SNA reclaimed all during the clashes lost territory in Jarablus from the HTS, excluding a garrison base at the al-Hamran Crossing, and fortified its positions near al-Bab, Idlib. At the end of September and the beginning of October, Türkiye brokered a ceasefire between HTS and SNA factions, which is still in effect.

cdb

SYRIA (IS)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2014

Conflict parties: IS vs. government

Conflict items: system/ideology, subnational predominance, resources

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, subnational pre-dominance, and national resources between so-called Islamic State (IS), on the one hand, and the Syrian government, on the other, continued. This year, IS launched significantly smaller operations since their large-scale attack on the SDF controlled prison in the city of al-Hasakah, eponymous Governorate, last year, resulting in a reduced number of casualties.

On February 11, the most violent attack of the year took place in the city of Palmyra, Homs Governorate. IS kidnapped approx. 75 truffle pickers and killed at least 53 of them using machine guns in the following days. The casualties were mostly civilians, and at least seven regime soldiers who had been stationed to protect the truffle pickers. IS took advantage of the truffle picking season and killed at least 27 further people in the Governorates of Hamah, al-Raqqah, and Dayr az-Zawr. For instance, on March 11, IS kidnapped at least 26 people and killed at least three in Khanaser desert, Halab Governorate. In total, the attacks on truffle pickers resulted in at least 66 deaths.

Throughout the year, IS launched most of their attacks in Dayr az-Zawr, killing at least 67 people. For instance, on September 10, clashes erupted between IS and the pro-government militia National Defense Forces (NDF). During the fighting, at least 13 people were killed and at least ten injured.

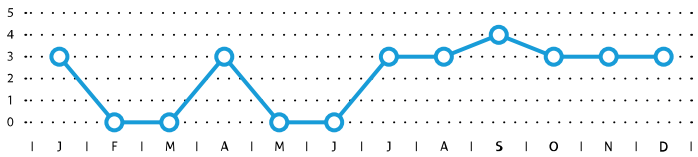
In April, IS attacks and landmines killed at least 54 people

in Hama Governorate, including at least 36 civilians and 18 combatants. For instance, on April 9, four civilians died following the detonation of two different landmines. On April 16, IS attacked a group of NDF members and civilians, leaving at least 36 people dead.
Throughout the year, the USA conducted several operations against IS. For example, US forces killed two of their leaders in a helicopter raid in Halab on April 17 and in a UAV strike in eastern Syria on July 7. On September 28, US forces captured another in al-Hasakah Governorate.
goy

SYRIA (KURDISH GROUPS)

Intensity: 4 | Change: ↗ | Start: 1962

Conflict parties: KDPS vs. AANES vs. SDF vs. government
Conflict items: autonomy, subnational predominance, resources

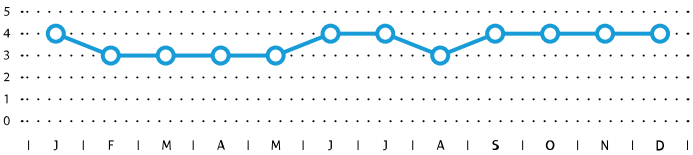


The violent crisis over autonomy, subnational predominance, and resources between the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and Kurdish dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), affiliated militias, as well as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Syria (KDPS), on the one hand, and the Syrian government and pro-government forces, on the other, escalated to a limited war.
The Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) faced several challenges in 2023 between various external and internal threats, most prominently the conflict with Türkiye and Türkiye-backed militias [→ Syria (SDF – Türkiye / northern Syria)].
In the territory controlled by AANES, unrest and instability continued. On January 23, protesters stormed the justice palace and burned offices in Raqqa city, eponymous Governorate. Five people sustained injuries when protestors threw grenades. SDF and Asayish, the internal security force of AANES, responded with measures including raids, curfews, and arrests as well as the suppression of protests throughout the year. Furthermore, forced recruitment by the SDF, including minors, was reported on several occasions. Especially in areas with an ethnic Arab majority, protests and violent incidents were common. Responsibility often remained contested, mainly between either government affiliated militias, local residents or alleged members of the so-called Islamic State (IS) [→ Syria (IS)].
Fighting occurred between SDF and government troops. For example, on April 13, two fighters died and four were wounded in clashes between SDF and government-affiliated militias near al-Tabiya, Dayr az-Zawr Governorate.
Within the area controlled by AANES, geographically overlapping with Dayr az-Zawr, heaviest clashes in years occurred in late summer between several groups including SDF, Military Council of Deir ez-Zor (MCD), a formerly SDF-affiliated militia, Arab tribal fighters and government affiliated militias. On July 25, five people were killed in a fight between Asayish and the MCD in the towns of al-Sur and al-Busaira, Dayr az-Zawr. The arrest of several MCD members, as well as the highest ranking commander by Asayish forces, escalated the conflict on August 27. For eleven days, both sides fought in the wider area around Dheban, Dayr az-Zawr. MCD and tribal forces temporarily managed to gain control over several settlements. On September 1, the Syrian government supported the tribal forces with sporadic artillery shelling and sent affiliated troops to join the fighting. SDF forces pushed back MCD and affiliated fighters, regained control over the settlements, and captured the last stronghold of the uprising, Dheban town, Dayr az-Zawr, on September 6. The fights left at least 90 people killed and more than 100 people wounded. SDF and Asayish detained more than 300 people linked to the clashes, including 30 activists.
Fighting flared up again on October 29, when mutual artillery shelling over the Euphrates River was accompanied by several assaults and infiltration operations on SDF-held territory from government-controlled areas, Dayr az-Zawr. During the clashes, which lasted two days, at least 26 people died. Between late October and December, the number of attacks against SDF increased significantly in Dayr az-Zawr. For instance, on December 17, clashes with SDF followed in the town of Hawaij, after pro-government militias crossed the Euphrates River, leaving three militants dead. som

SYRIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 4 | Change: • | Start: 2011

Conflict parties: FSA, HTS, NC vs. government
Conflict items: system/ideology, national power



The limited over national power and the orientation of the political system between opposition groups, primarily comprised of the Syrian National Army (SNA) backed by Türkiye, Hay"at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary (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, depending on the source, the overall death toll varied from 370,000 to more than 600,000. At least 5.6 million people have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and 6.9 million have been internally displaced. The overall death toll for the government forces and opposition forces estimated to be at least 661. Over the course of the year, violent incidents were mainly concentrated in opposition-held areas and increased in Idlib, Halab and Hamah Governorate.
Throughout the year, the ceasefire brokered by Russia and Turkey in March 2020 was violated on several occasions. Clashes between the government and various opposition groups, especially HTS, were mainly confined to opposition-held regions, mostly Al Ladhiqiyah Governorate. For instance, on March 11 HTS ambushed a military post on Nahshaba frontline, Al Ladhiqiyah, leaving two regime soldiers dead. On August 11, HTS attacked regime positions with heavy weapons on Ain Al-Baida frontline, Al Ladhiqiyah, leaving six regime soldiers dead. At the same time, the humanitarian

situation especially in the opposition-controlled areas worsened significantly after Russia vetoed a UN resolution on July 11 allowing humanitarian aid to reach the region. In the northern regions of Syria, some 4.1 million people are in need of humanitarian aid provided by the UN.
On October 5, a drone attack on a military college in the city of Homs, Homs Governorate killed at least 100 people and left more than 200 wounded. While no group claimed responsibility, Syrian security reports blamed opposition groups for the attack. The following day, UN Secretary-General Guterres issued a statement condemning the attack and urging all parties to respect international law. Subsequently, Syrian regime forces intensified their attacks on north-western Syria . The attacks mainly focused on the city of Idlib and the city of Ariha, Idlib Governorate as well as Aleppo, Halab Governorate. For instance, between October 4-9 18 shellings carried out by the Syrian regime forces were reported, targeting health facilities and vehicles in the cities of Ariha, Idlib and Aleppo, leaving 42 civilians dead and more than 66 injured. Russian forces supported the Syrian regime by carrying out airstrikes in opposition-held regions. For instance, on November 13, Russian forces carried out airstrikes in Idlib Governorate, leaving 34 militants dead and more than 60 injured.
Throughout the year, anti-regime protests spread across Syria, especially after the Syrian regime raised fuel prices, exacerbating the country's already deepening economic crisis. Protests centered in As Suwayda and Dar'a Governorate. For instance, on August 25 mass protests took place in various cities across Dar'a Governorate. On the same day, regime forces opened fire on protesters in the city of Al-Sanmin, Dar'a; no casualties were reported. Protests also took place in the city of Aleppo and various cities across Idlib Governorate directed against the HTS government. People mainly protested against the alleged abuse of power and arbitrary arrests. For instance, on September 26 protests erupted in the city of Al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate after HTS took over several villages and towns in the northern part of the Governorate. nub

SYRIA (TÜRKIYE – SDF / 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, Türkiye continued to attack SDF-controlled areas with UAVs, warplanes, artillery, and tanks. Most attacks occurred in Aleppo, al-Hasakah, and Raqqa Governorates. For instance, on January 4, a UAV belonging to the Turkish occupation forces injured two SDF fighters in the village of Tal Taweel, al-Hasakah Governorate. On January 7, Turkish forces carried out drone attacks in Halab Governorate, during which one civilian was killed.
After two earthquakes at the beginning of February led to mass displacement and the destruction of infrastructure, especially water plants and energy infrastructure, the humanitarian situation in the occupied region worsened significantly. While hundreds of buildings were destroyed, at least 2,300 people were killed, and a further 2,950 were injured. In February, Türkiye continued to carry out air raids in the affected areas. For instance, on February 26, Türkiye shelled two villages near Tal Temir, al-Hasakah Governorate, leaving two civilians dead.
Furthermore, Turkish military forces and Turkish-backed militias continued to attack civilian infrastructure and agricultural lands throughout the year. The cutting of more than 4,000 olive trees by pro-Türkiye militias in Afrin, Aleppo Governorate, and the shelling of wheat and barley fields worsened food security and livelihood in the region. For instance, on May 27, other Turkish-backed forces targeted agricultural lands in the village of Fatsa, ar-Raqqa Governorate, Moreover, targeted bombardments led to power outages, including medical centers. For instance, on June 16, Turkish Forces bombed a hospital in the city of Tel Rifat, Aleppo Governorate, leaving four people injured.
Beginning on December 23, Türkiye intensified its attacks with intense shelling and drone strikes. For instance, on December 27, Türkiye used UAVs in Qamishlo, Aleppo Governorate, leading to the destruction of civilian infrastructure, including health centers. The same incident left eight people dead and 13 injured. lou

SYRIA – TÜRKIYE

Intensity:	1	Change:	↘	Start:	1946

Conflict parties:	Syrian vs. Türkiye
Conflict items:	territory, international power

The non-violent crisis between Syria and Türkiye over territory (the Hatay province) and international power de-escalated to a dispute.
Even though both conflict parties were involved in fighting activities within Syria, the attacks were not targeted directly at each other [Syria (Türkiye – SDF / northern Syria)]. Multiple meetings between representatives of Türkiye and Syria along with representatives of Russia and Iran in the Astana format took place, aiming at improving Syrian-Turkish diplomatic relations. For instance, the deputy foreign ministers met on April 3 and 4 and again on June 20 and 21 in Astana, Kazakhstan.
Syria sought respect for its sovereignty, expecting Türkiye to end the presence of Turkish troops on its territory. Instead, on October 17, the Turkish parliament passed a motion to extend the deployment of Turkish troops in Syria. On May 10, Türkiye voiced the hope that improved relations with the Syrian government would allow for a safe return of Syrian refugees currently residing in Türkiye. hwa

TUNISIA (ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS)

Intensity:	3	Change:	•	Start:	2011

Conflict parties:	Ansar al-Sharia, AQIM, Uqbah ibn Nafi Brigade vs. government
Conflict items:	system/ideology, national power

The violent crisis over the ideology and political system between Islamist groups and the government continued.
On May 9, an attacker employed by the National Guard killed

a colleague in the town of Aghir, Medenine Governorate, before driving to the El Ghriba Synagogue in Er-Riadh, Medenine Governorate, where about 6,000 Jewish pilgrims had gathered. When his attempt to enter the courtyard of the synagogue failed, he opened fire, killing two security guards and two Jewish pilgrims. Police shot and killed the attacker shortly after. Authorities did not provide a motive, however, media reports indicate the perpetrator had known Islamist views, and internal investigations against him had already taken place. None of the conflict parties claimed responsibility.
On October 17, after Hamas accused Israel of bombing a hospital in Gaza, a crowd of a few hundred people attacked a dormant synagogue in Al-Hammah town, Gabes Governorate. The building was hammered, burned, and the crowd shouted Islamist chants. The Palestinian flag was raised over the building.
On December 27, security forces killed three terrorists in a counterterrorist operation in the mountainous region near the town of Kasserine, eponymous governorate. Security forces also seized explosives, weapons, and munitions. One member of the security forces was wounded.
Throughout the year, the National Guard made arrests of Islamists, resulting in several imprisonments. For instance, on February 15, members of a terrorist cell that had pledged allegiance to the Islamic State were arrested in Bizerte city, eponymous governorate. Additionally, on January 12, a terrorist cell that had planned to assassinate the former interior minister was sentenced to up to 25 years in prison in the capital Tunis. On November 7, security forces captured four Islamists that escaped prison on October 31, at Mount Boukornine, Ben Arous Governorate. Another fugitive of the same group had been caught two days earlier in Ettadamen municipality, Ariana Governorate.
sdr

TUNISIA (OPPOSITION)

Intensity:	2	Change:	↘	Start:	2010

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

The violent crisis over the orientation of the political system and national power between various opposition and civil society groups, on the one hand, and the government, on the other, de-escalated to a non-violent crisis.
Throughout the year, several waves of protests occurred due to imprisoned opposition leaders and reduced press freedom. On January 14, the twelve-year anniversary of the Tunisian revolution, around 2,000 protestors gathered against the authoritarian rule of President Kais Saied. On July 25, which marked the two-year anniversary of Saied's power grab, several hundred protested again. Both these protests, like most others, took place in the capital Tunis.
Following Saied's speech, in which he accused migrants of bringing violence and crime into the country, protests occurred in Tunis between February 26, and March 5. The main organizers of the protests were trade unions, notably the Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail, the main opposition party, Front de Salut National, and journalists.
On October 12, following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)], all civilian groups, including trade unions, government and opposition parties, peacefully protested together in Tunis in support of Palestine.
Throughout the year, the government incarcerated more than a dozen opposition figures. For instance, on May 15, police arrested two journalists who criticized the police following a terrorist attack [→ Tunisia (Islamist militant groups)]. On October 3, the government arrested the leader of the opposition party, Parti destourien libre, leading to protests of at least 1,500 supporters in Tunis. In another instance, on April 17, authorities detained the head of the main opposition party Ennahdha, who on September 29, went on hunger strike in support of other political prisoners. lwb

TÜRKIYE (IS)

Intensity:	2	Change:	•	Start:	2014

Conflict parties:	IS vs. government
Conflict items:	system/ideology, national power, resources

The non-violent crisis over the orientation of the political system, national power, and resources between the so-called Islamic State (IS), on the one hand, and the government, on the other, continued.
This year, government forces continued conducting raids and detaining suspects and members of the so-called Islamic State (IS) as part of counterterrorism operations across the country, including in border regions in Syria, such as the Afrin District. While raids took place throughout Türkiye, most raids were concentrated in the capital Ankara and the city of Istanbul, eponymous provinces, and the provinces close to and behind the Syrian border. IS members in Türkiye did not conduct any attacks throughout the year.
In the first half of the year, Turkish security forces detained at least 85 individuals with suspected ties to IS. On March 30, for instance, during a city-wide operation in the capital, Ankara, security forces detained 19 foreign nationals who had allegedly been in contact with IS in conflict zones. On April 29, a leading IS member died during an operation conducted by Türkiye's National Intelligence Organization when he detonated a suicide vest in Jandaris town, Aleppo Governorate, Syria.
In the second half of the year, Turkish security forces detained at least 570 individuals for their alleged connection to IS. For instance, on October 6, the government announced that 92 people suspected of having ties to IS had been detained in simultaneous counterterrorism operations in 26 provinces across the country. On October 17, Turkish security forces detained 17 further individuals in Istanbul. The suspects were accused of financing the IS through money trafficking and cash transfers to and from people with suspected IS affiliation whose assets had been frozen earlier. On December 22, Türkiye announced that their security forces arrested at least 304 people in a nationwide operation against IS. The majority of suspects were detained in Türkiye's three biggest cities of Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, eponymous provinces.
sag

TÜRKIYE (OPPOSITION)

Intensity: 3 | Change: ↗ | Start: 2013

Conflict parties: Government, HDP, Nation Alliance, TIP
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, the Felicity Party, the Democrat Party, the Future Party, and the Democracy and Progress Party, as well as the People's Democratic Party and the Worker's Party, 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, on the other, escalated to a violent crisis.
On February 4, the deadliest earthquake in Turkish history struck the southwest of Türkiye and Syria, killing more than 50,000 Turkish people. In the following weeks, oppositional leaders increasingly criticized the government over its response to the crisis. For instance, four days after the earthquake, the CHP's leader condemned the government and accused the AKP of neglectful oversight of construction projects, therefore rendering them partly at fault for the magnitude of destruction. On February 27, people protested during a football game in Istanbul, eponymous province, calling for the resignation of the government.
Tensions further heightened during the weeks before the presidential election. For instance, on May 7, protesters threw stones at a leading CHP figure's campaign bus during an event promoting their presidential candidate. Nine people were injured. On May 15, the presidential elections were held. None of the candidates received more than the 50 percent necessary for the win, sending the elections into a second round. Despite many polls having predicted the win of the CHP's candidate, Erdogan was re-elected as president, continuing his 20-year rule for another five-year term. goy

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 called the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK), on the one hand, and the Turkish government, on the other, continued.
Between January and October, at least 152 people were killed and six injured. In terms of the geographical boundaries of the conflict, which is limited to the territories of Türkiye and Iraq, 18 Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) and 114 PPK members were killed. The conflict between the TAF and the PKK took place predominantly in the southeastern Turkish provinces of Mardin and Sirnak, and in the northern Iraqi governorates of Nineveh, Duhok, and at-Ta'min. While most of the military confrontations took place on Iraqi territory, 175 PKK members were arrested by the Turkish security forces and 20 surrendered to the Turkish police within the borders of Türkiye.
The dynamics of the decades-long conflict was affected by the earthquake that struck areas of Türkiye and Syria on February 6. In response, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire on February 10. This truce was extended during the presidential elections in Türkiye in May and officially terminated on June 15. During the four-month ceasefire, only three instances of TAF members being killed in clashes with the PKK were reported. On April 28, one TAF soldier was killed in Mardin province, and on May 16, three gendarmerie members were killed in Sirnak province during a clash with the PKK. On June 12, two Turkish soldiers died in a homemade bomb attack in Duhok governorate, Dahuk Province, Iraq, for which the Turkish government blamed the PKK.
Despite the relatively low number of casualties on the PKK side, a particular pattern was observed. During the military activities, the TAF targeted several PKK members, who were put on the Turkish government's "five-colored list". For example, on January 22, Turkish gendarmerie forces killed Hamiyet Yalçınkaya, who was in the red (most wanted) category in Sirnak province.
On several occasions, the TAF targeted PKK hideouts. For instance, on October 3 and 4, TAF destroyed caves, depots, and bunkers located in such three governorates of Iraq as Dohuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah Governorate. Meanwhile, military clashes between the TAF and the PKK caused damage to civilian infrastructure. For example, Turkish airstrikes on June 14 in the Amedi district of Dohuk Governorate, where PKK bases were reportedly located, caused significant destruction to local forests and farmland. sak

YEMEN (AL-HIRAK / SOUTHERN YEMEN)

Intensity: 3 | Change: • | Start: 2007

Conflict parties: Al-Hirak vs. government
Conflict items: secession

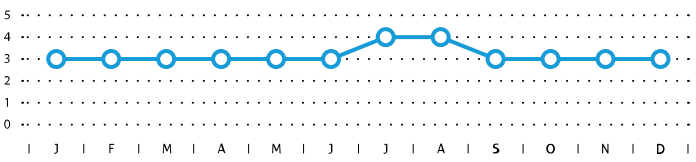
The violent crisis over secession of southern Yemen between al-Hirak, also known as the Southern Movement and dominated by the Southern Transitional Council (STC), backed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), on the one hand, and the government represented by the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), backed by Saudi Arabia, on the other, continued.
The STC's ambitions to establish an independent southern Yemeni state were highlighted on May 25 during the 6th STC National Assembly. On February 21, STC president al-Zoubaidi held discussions with the UN Special Envoy to Yemen in Aden to underscore the significance of incorporating the southern matter into UN negotiations.
Despite STC's leadership, challenges emerged. On August 26, STC Security Belt forces fired upon Southern Movement (al-Hirak) protesters, injuring at least three in Martyrs' Square, Aden, and apprehended an al-Hirak leader. On June 20, anti-STC Hadrami leaders established the National Hadrami Council (NHC) in Riyadh, positioning it as a participant in future discussions. Additionally, on May 4, political groups from Hadramawt governorate and Shabwah governorate boycotted a STC consultative meeting in Aden.
Violence primarily occurred in the governorates of Abyan, and Shabwah between STC-backed forces and AQAP [→ Yemen (AQAP – al-Houthi forces)]. On August 1, AQAP militants launched an attack on STC forces at Al Madiq site in the Wadi Umaran region in Abyan governorate. The incident involved heavy artillery, mortars, and rocket-propelled grenades, resulting killing at least five STC fighters and injuring four. On September 24, AQAP carried out two attacks against STC-

affiliated fighters in the Wadi Umaran region in Abyan and Al-Musaina region, west of the Shabwa governorate, utilizing an improvised explosive device (IED) and causing a minimum of eight deaths and leaving three injured in total. On October 5, AQAP detonated a vehicle-borne IED targeting the commander of the STC-backed Special Security Forces in Zinjibar, Abyan governorate, leaving five injured. On March 9, STC-backed al Hizam Security Forces in Abyan dismantled an IED planted by likely AQAP that contained 9kg of TNT.
On June 10, AQAP launched a complex attack on STC-backed Shabwani Defense Forces Brigade in al Musina'a, Shabwah using rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, and machine guns. At least two people were killed and six injured. On June, 13 Shabwa Defense Forces launched a counterattack on the terrorist in Ataq, Shabwah, reporting alleged heavy losses.
On May 31, the Houthis [→ Yemen, Saudi Arabia (al-Houthi forces)] launched a ballistic missile, targeting the Shabwani Defense Brigade in Markah al Alya, Shabwah governorate, with no reported casualties.
On December 12, Israeli media reported that STC had conveyed its interest in collaboration with Israel [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)] against the Houthi rebels. This came after the STC leader stated on Twitter that STC's naval forces could significantly contribute to "protecting international shipping lanes" and ensuring "the economic security of the international community". lab

YEMEN, SAUDI ARABIA (AL-HOUTHI FORCES)

Intensity: 4 | Change: • | Start: 2004

Conflict parties: al-Houthi forces vs. Saudi Arabi, Yemen
Conflict items: national power



The limited 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 Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and supported by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, anti-Houthi popular resistance, and tribal forces, on the other, continued.
Exchanges of political prisoners took place between Saudi Arabia and al-Houthi forces on March 12 and April 14 in the contested Ma'rib governate. On August 11, a United Nations-led evacuation of one million barrels of crude oil from an abandoned tanker off the coast of Yemen, which removed a major point of contention as well as a potential environmental catastrophe in the region. On September 15, al-Houthi officials traveled to the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh to take part in Omani-brokered peace negotiations, which were deemed successful despite sidelining the current, internationally recognized Yemeni government and coinciding with the September 26 drone attack on the Southern Saudi-Arabian border, which caused four Bahraini military casualties.
Despites overtures of peace, skirmishes and attacks have continued throughout the year, such as near-daily shelling of the Shada border district of Sa'dah by Saudi Arabian- and Coalition military. For example, on January 7, an artillery barrage left one civilian dead and eleven injured. A shooting on February 7 left a further two dead and three injured.
Ma'rib governate saw increased levels of violence, as al-Houthi forces launched an attack on government sites on January 8 using rockets and artillery, leading to 13 casualties and an unspecified number of injured persons. Another al-Houthi armed attack on military sites on February 26 led to eleven casualties, and a third attack on March 22 led to 19 casualties. Mass displacement in the area also exceeded national averages, with IOM Yemen reporting consistently high figures, peaking at 1314 IDPs between April 2 and April 8.
Similarly, fighting flared up in Lahij governate, as al-Houthi forces conducted a January 27 attack on government military sites, incurring eight casualties, as well as an April 19 raid which left one dead. After months of relative calm, al-Houthi forces conducted another raid on al-Hirak-aligned government troops on August 27, leaving 18 dead and several injured.
Steps towards peace were complicated by recent events. Between October 17 and October 24, al-Houthi forces deployed missiles and drones towards Israel in retaliation for extensive military action and bombardment in Gaza following the October 7 escalation of conflict in the region. [→ Israel (Hamas et al.)] Saudi Arabia intercepted one such Israel-bound al-Houthi missiles over its airspace.
New international developments also shifted conflict dynamics, as al-Houthi attacks on cargo ships in the Red Sea on 20 November, 15 and 18 December in protest of conditions in Gaza [→ Israel – State of Palestine° (PNA)] have led the formation of an US-led maritime task force against the group. As the al-Houthi forces accumulate international enmity, the dimensions of the conflict may shift in 2024.
The al-Houthi forces also faced internal issues. Months of unpaid wages and a worsening humanitarian crisis resulted in a stampede at an overcrowded charity event in the al-Houthi-occupied capital of Sana'a on April 19, which left 78 dead and several injured. Coupled with protests in Sana'a, Ibb and al-Hadaydah governates on September 26, this resulted in the al-Houthi's National Defence Council dismissing their parallel government on September 27.
Increased infighting between the factions that make up the internationally recognized Yemeni government, specifically the Saudi Arabian-backed Islah party and the United Arab Emirate-backed al-Hirak movement, also complicated matters in the region. [→ Yemen (al-Hirak / Southern Yemen)]. Al-Hirak elements carried out military action against Islah party members in Shabwa governate on September 12 and Hadramout governate on September 27, arrested Islah loyalists in Abyan governate on November 4, and armed confrontations broke out between the parties in Hadramout governate on November 20.
Though open violence has reduced in recent years, Yemen remains a severe humanitarian crisis, with the UN estimating 21.6 million individuals in need of assistance in 2023. However, due to funding issues, the World Food Programme has announced an end to food aid shipments into Houthi-controlled areas, which account for approx. one third of territory and nearly 80% of the population. IOM Yemen has reported 56,058 new displacements in 2023, as of November 11. awo

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