New and underappreciated trends and developments: threats

Causing stress: Environmental problems and resource mismanagement are prompting protests.

- Failing environmental policy and service delivery systems are leading to unprecedented levels of public backlash, even in the most repressive regimes. *Economist; ACLED; ECOWAS*
- Although shortages may trigger violence in urban areas, the opposite is true in rural areas, where resource abundance often invites conflict. *Africa Times; UN ESCAP*
- How can we improve resource management performance to prevent conflict?

Building or burning bridges? Large-scale foreign infrastructure projects fuel societal tensions.

- The disastrous environmental and social consequences of foreign infrastructure investments increase the likelihood of political instability. *HRW; ACLED; NY Times*
- Projects worth up to a country’s entire GDP can induce economic entrapment, currency depreciations, and economic hardship. *Dawn; Bloomberg; Aon*
- Can we promote international codes of conduct for sustainable infrastructure investments?

Not just a European problem: The uncoordinated return of former combatants into society increases the risk of instability throughout Africa.

- Former terrorists and militants are in practice simply reinserted, rather than reintegrated, into society, further perpetuating conflict. *CEPOB; Just Security; Carnegie*
- Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants is made even more difficult by the return of their victims to the same communities. *Brookings; ICCT*
- How do we develop policies and prioritize reintegration in DDR programs to prevent recurrent cycles of violence?

State of neglect: Hidden forms of violence continue to fly under the radar.

- In areas with higher levels of conflict violence, intimate partner violence against women remains significantly higher long after the conflict is over. *World Bank (1); BMJ Global Health*
- The consequences of political violence on families and communities far outlive the conflicts, sowing the seeds for renewed political violence down the road. *Just Security; Carnegie Endowment; World Bank (2)*
- How can we make our strategies more inclusive and sustainable, so as to also address hidden forms of violence?
**Long-term trends: political violence (20-year timespan)**

Multi-factor assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trends</th>
<th>Sahel region</th>
<th>North Africa</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
<th>Post-Soviet Sphere</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Baseline</strong></td>
<td>Political violence</td>
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<td><strong>Political violence in the ring around Europe</strong></td>
<td>State-based violence</td>
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<td>Non-state violence</td>
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<td>One-sided violence</td>
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<td>Protests</td>
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</tbody>
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- ▲: Increasing threat
- ▼: Decreasing threat
- ▼▼: Net-zero / Stable
- ▲▼: Upward
- ▼▲: Downward
Global Security Pulse (October 2018)

Political violence in the ring around Europe

New and underappreciated trends and developments: international order

Forging or forcing peace? The premature repatriation of refugees exacerbates tensions.
  • Governments’ toughened stance on migration, spurred by a polarized public discourse, puts significant pressure on the international norm of non-refoulement. Clingendael; Chatham House; News Deeply (1)
  • As people return to conflict zones prematurely, the likelihood of political instability in the future will increase. News Deeply (2); Carnegie Middle East Center; ISS
  • How can we address societal tensions in recipient societies, without fueling long-term regional instability in countries of return?

A 21st century scramble for influence.
  • Many African governments appease their constituents with policies of ‘resource nationalism’, amid calls for decolonization and a push-back against foreign influence. Nikkei Asian Review; Reuters
  • Meanwhile, the race for the Western Balkans allows other powers to jostle for influence in the region. POLITICO; Guardian; NY Times
  • How can the Netherlands and the EU provide an attractive proposition to emerging powers as partners?

Exporting Big Brother: Developing countries as technological testing grounds.
  • The export of modern technology (e.g., AI, surveillance tech, BioTech) allows China to extend its influence in receiving countries. Foreign Policy (1); NY Times
  • Meanwhile, authoritarian governments are eager for surveillance technologies, expanding upon internet censorship, inter alia, under the guise of improving their country’s security and social stability. Foreign Policy (2); Tony Blair Institute; Quartz
  • How can we resist securitization and ensure that modern technology is being used responsibly?

Power projection by proxy.
  • As we are witnessing in the Ukrainian and Syrian conflicts, mercenaries are becoming instrumental to proxy warfare, calling into question the status of International Humanitarian Law. Bellingcat; Kyiv Post; ICDS
  • Although instruments of hybrid conflict are attractive given their relatively low costs and the lack of accountability and attribution, the resulting conflicts often turn out messier than anticipated. Carnegie; Lawfare
  • Are existing norms and rules sufficient to effectively deal with contemporary forms of hybrid warfare?

Rounding the bases: The race for overseas military stations.
  • The renewed interest in overseas military bases is inciting interstate military competition. Brown Political Review; Arab Weekly; Bloomberg
  • The geostrategic importance of, inter alia, the Red Sea is threatening an already precarious naval balance among great, but also middle powers. Lowy Institute; LPI
  • To what extent are we prepared to commit to gaining or consolidating military influence in the ring around Europe, especially in the naval realm?
Long-term trends: international order (20-year timespan)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>Norms</th>
<th>Trend</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to international water regime</td>
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<td>Support for policies that address the effects of climate change</td>
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<td>Adherence to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)</td>
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<td>Respect for human rights as governance objective</td>
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<td>Cooperation with International Criminal Court prosecutions, or active cooperation on suppression of terrorism</td>
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<td>Recognition that grave violations of International Humanitarian Law are unacceptable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-intervention unless authorized by the UN Security Council</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>Recognition of legitimacy of Westphalian state</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-imposition of maritime blockades, or active intervention to prevent/suppress these</td>
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<td>Recognition of need for unfettered sea lines of communication (SLOCs)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

▲ More compliance ▼ Under pressure ▼ Same/mild pressure

Authors: Reinier Bergema, Esther Chavannes, Willem Oosterveld, Bianca Torossian (HCSS). Contributors: Peter Knoope (ICCT), Pieter Bindt, Tim Sweij (HCSS), Danny Pronk (Clingendael). For a general methodological justification of horizon-scanning click [here](#) and for political violence in the ring around Europe click [here](#).

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