



WAR INDEX

2024

YEARBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

The Non-Governmental Analytical Center «Ukrainian Studies of Strategic Disquisitions» continues its annual project monitoring global military activity. We present to you the «War Index 2024».

In 2024, the main global event remains the Russia-Ukraine war, which has become one of the most technologically intensive and large-scale conflicts since the Korean War and the most significant in Europe since 1945.

The Israel-Palestine war, sparked by Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel, has had serious repercussions for the world and the Middle East. It escalated into Israel's military operation in Gaza, later spreading to Lebanon and triggering airstrike exchanges between Iran and Israel. By year-end, the rapid collapse of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria drastically shifted the regional power balance, diminishing Russia's influence.

Tensions are rising in the Pacific. The situation around Taiwan remains challenging due to China's regular naval drills. Particularly concerning is North Korea's display of military threats and its statements of readiness for war, accompanied by Pyongyang's direct involvement in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In less developed countries, long-standing conflicts persist, though many are de-escalating through negotiations (e.g., Ethiopia). At the same time, a potentially large-scale conflict between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda is unfolding. The attacks by Yemeni Houthis on civilian vessels in the Red Sea continue to pose risks to global supply chain security.

The situation in West Africa remains tense, with Russia exacerbating instability and supporting military coups in the region. Force continues to dominate as the primary method of resolving international disputes. A notable trend is the resurgence of conventional warfare, involving large-scale army clashes. At the same time, the significance of technological advancement — especially in precision and data transmission speed — has become increasingly evident. The Russia-Ukraine war is part of a broader global confrontation — a «silent third world war» — that has been unfolding since 2011 across numerous theaters of conflict. This is an undeclared war involving all elements of «fourth-generation warfare», which periodically erupts into overt military conflicts.

Alongside the U.S. — China proxy rivalry, regional powers like Iran and Turkey are actively engaging in military competition. The influence of networked paramilitary formations is growing, as is the emergence of quasi-state instruments. These quasi-states fill the «dead zones» outside the control of national governments, regional leaders, and the superpowers' strategic competition. Private military companies are operating at full capacity.

Direct military interventions, combined with the extensive use of non-military tools of pressure and coercion, are reinforcing the trend of using force to achieve political objectives.



Classification

OF MILITARY CONFLICTS

Experts from the Non-Governmental Analytical Center «Ukrainian Studies of Strategic Disquisitions» propose a classification of military conflicts for analyzing global military activity:

War:

- Global wars (mostly involving multiple coalitions)
- Regional wars
- Local wars
- Interstate wars (including lowintensity phases)
- Wars between a state and a coalition
- Foreign intervention
- Civil wars (varying intensity, including external interference)

Border conflict

(limited armed incident)

Local conflict

Military coup

Terrorism

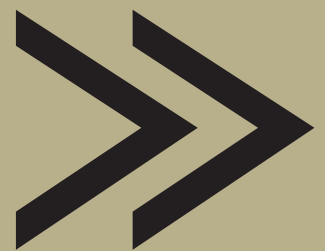
(or guerrilla action from a different perspective)

Internal political crisis – tension, political crisis

(with the possibility of escalation and external intervention)

Diplomatic standoff – trade wars, diplomatic conflicts

Military conflicts





THE METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING THE WAR INDEX INVOLVES EXAMINING ACTIVELY MANIFESTING CONFLICTS WORLDWIDE DURING THE RESEARCH PERIOD THROUGH A SERIES OF INDICATORS DELINEATING THE CONFLICT'S ESSENCE, PROGRESSION, AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY, AND CLASSIFYING THEM BY TENSION LEVEL, FROM THE HOTTEST TO MINIMAL CONFRONTATIONS.

War Ukraine



Despite unfavorable external and internal factors, wartime Ukraine in 2024 managed to accomplish several critical strategic objectives:

- Disrupting Russia's plan to fully occupy Donetsk and Luhansk regions and launch a strategic offensive in Zaporizhzhia region.
- Successfully shifting the war onto the territory of the aggressor state.
- Expanding the domestic defense industry to meet the needs of Ukraine's Armed Forces.

The key strategic outcome of these achievements is Ukraine's continued resilience in resisting the aggressor, proving that the Kremlin cannot accomplish its main goal in this war — eliminating Ukrainian statehood, with all the

catastrophic consequences that would entail for the Ukrainian people.

It is important to emphasize that this strategic success was achieved despite Ukraine's internal challenges, which will be discussed later.

At the same time, the Kremlin leadership remains disconnected from reality, still mistakenly believing that it has the ability to defeat Ukraine in this war and impose its will on the entire civilized world.

Assessing the strategic situation requires balance, especially considering the conviction of the newly elected Donald Trump administration that Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine can be halted exclusively through political means.

SITUATION ON THE FRONTLINE

Summarizing the subjective perception of the situation in Ukraine's information space, the overall state of affairs on the frontline in 2024 can be described as follows:

- After prolonged and intense battles, Ukraine's Defense Forces were forced to withdraw from key areas, including Avdiivka and Vuhledar. These retreats were due not only to the enemy's superior manpower and equipment but also to internal issues, such as command deficiencies.
- The withdrawal of Ukrainian forces from the left bank of Kherson Oblast in the summer of 2024 also marked a significant strategic shift.
- The enemy solidified its air superiority by actively using guided aerial bombs — Soviet-era bombs upgraded with UMPK modules, which allow for a drop range of over 70 kilometers and function as «flying artillery».
- A persistent issue remains the shortage of personnel for Ukraine's Defense Forces, driven by both demographic challenges and mobilization difficulties.

- The delay in U.S. military aid between January and April 2024 provided Russia with at least a five-month strategic advantage.

- Another critical issue highlighted in the media is the «generational gap» in Ukraine's command structure.

Given these factors, it is understandable that the Ukrainian public perceives the situation as highly unfavorable, affecting national morale, mobilization efforts, and likely the psychological resilience of many Ukrainian soldiers.

However, from an objective perspective — where victory is defined as disrupting enemy plans — Ukraine's Defense Forces have achieved at least five significant strategic successes:

- Thwarting Russia's Kharkiv Offensive (May 2024): Russian forces failed to advance close enough to place Kharkiv under artillery fire.

- Blocking Russia's Offensive on Pokrovsk (Sept–Oct 2024): Ukraine's forces, acting as a «firefighting unit», prevented a direct assault on the strategically important city.

- Preventing a Major Russian Offensive in Southern Ukraine: This averted the complete rollback of Ukraine's previous counteroffensive gains.

- Launching Operations in the Kursk Region: By taking the war onto Russian territory, Ukraine reduced enemy activity in other sectors, such as the South and Kupiansk.

- Foiling Russian Sabotage Attempts: Ukrainian security services disrupted Russian efforts to destabilize the country through acts of sabotage, including arson attacks on military personnel's vehicles and critical infrastructure.

These successes highlight why the Kremlin has so far failed to achieve its primary objective — the total destruction of Ukrainian statehood.

According to official figures, since February 2022, Ukraine has lost 43,000 soldiers killed and

370,000 wounded. However, Western media often manipulate casualty figures, suggesting total losses in the hundreds of thousands.

The most pressing issue for wartime Ukraine is the gap in communication between the public, the military, and the government. Transparency regarding the frontline situation, mobilization, casualties, and achievements could be significantly improved. The current communication vacuum not only hampers Ukraine's effectiveness but also allows certain Western actors to pressure Ukraine into concessions to Russia.

UKRAINE'S DEFENSE INDUSTRY AND WESTERN MILITARY AID

Despite the challenges, Ukraine's defense industry achieved notable successes in 2024:

- Deployment of long-range cruise missiles based on the Neptune anti-ship missile system, which were used for the first time against targets inside Russia.

- Production of approximately 6,000 long-range kamikaze drones, instrumental in two major strategic campaigns - disrupting Russian oil refinery operations in spring 2024 and striking Russian ammunition depots in autumn 2024.

- Expansion of domestic production of Soviet-caliber ammunition and successful maintenance of Warsaw Pact-standard armored vehicles and aircraft.

However, Ukraine's defense sector remains significantly smaller than Russia's. While Ukraine's defense industry employs around 300,000 people, Russia's military-industrial complex employs up to 3.5 million. This underscores the urgent need for further expansion of Ukraine's defense production

capabilities.

Throughout 2024, Ukraine also began joint ventures with Rheinmetall to repair and manufacture armored vehicles, artillery shells, and air defense systems. However, the tangible impact of these projects is expected in 2025–2026, given the time required to set up production.

Regarding military aid from Western countries, two fundamental points should be highlighted.

First, in 2024, Ukraine's Defense Forces received their first Western-model F-16 fighter jets

and a significant number of anti-aircraft missiles for Western-style air defense systems. This prevented Russia from inflicting critical damage on Ukraine's energy system and critical infrastructure.

Second, the actual volume of assistance from the U.S., Germany, and other Western countries this year was insufficient for effective defense. This underscores the urgent need to strengthen Ukraine's defense-industrial complex.



RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC POSITION

Several key aspects should be noted:

- The Kremlin leadership still avoids conducting a full-scale mobilization in Russia, preferring «intermediate» measures such as deploying troops from North Korea and mercenaries from the so-called «Global South».

- The Kremlin has also received up to 100 KN-23 ballistic missiles from North Korea. While unprecedented in military history, this has had more of a psychological than a strategic effect in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

- A similar case is the use of the medium-range ballistic missile known as «Oreshnik». The Russian leadership appears to be using it primarily as a tool for strategic intimidation rather than for battlefield

advantage.

- Current data suggests that Russia has a stockpile of Soviet-era weapons sufficient for approximately 2–3 more years of combat at the current intensity. However, it remains unclear what the Kremlin plans to do once these reserves are depleted.

Given these four strategic factors, it is logical that, at this stage of the war, the Kremlin is relying on:

- Terrorist missile and drone strikes;
- Psychological intimidation and influence over pro-Russian forces in the West.

Russia employs these tactics to impose its will on Ukraine and other countries, as its military has proven incapable of achieving a direct battlefield victory over Ukraine.





Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the outlined strategic situation in Russia's war against Ukraine, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Ukraine has made significant progress in thwarting the Kremlin's aggressive plans, though these successes have not been adequately communicated to both the Ukrainian public and Western allies.
- The Kremlin has failed to impose its will purely through military means and has thus resorted to hybrid influence tactics and direct terror strategies.
- There is potential to further strengthen Ukraine's position to decisively derail the Kremlin's aggressive plans.

In light of this, general recommendations emerge, which will naturally be subject to internal political debate:

- Improve communication between the public, government, and military to prevent Kremlin forces from exploiting information gaps.
- Prioritize the development of Ukraine's defense-industrial complex as a key tool for strategic autonomy.



War Israel

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Israel's security landscape is marked by ongoing challenges. The country launched the prolonged military operation «Shield and Sword» against Hamas in Gaza following a series of large-scale rocket attacks and incursions in late 2023. The conflict escalated in 2024, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides. Israel carried out extensive airstrikes, while Hamas continued rocket attacks on Israeli cities, including Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The fighting led to widespread destruction in Gaza, exacerbating humanitarian issues and drawing international criticism of Israel's actions.

After 15 months of conflict, Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire that took effect on January 19, 2025. The agreement includes a phased exchange of hostages and prisoners, with 90

Palestinian detainees already released and further exchanges planned. While many Israelis support the deal, opposition within Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition—particularly from far-right members advocating for a reoccupation of Gaza—threatens the ceasefire's stability.

The West Bank experienced significant unrest, with intensified clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinian militants, as well as heightened tensions between settlers and Palestinians.

In 2024, Israel carried out major military operations in Lebanon due to escalating threats from Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed militant group. Cross-border hostilities became frequent, with Hezbollah launching attacks on northern Israeli

towns, prompting Israel to respond with targeted strikes on Hezbollah positions.

Tensions escalated following a series of provocations, including drone incursions into Israeli airspace and attacks on border towns. Clashes along the Israel-Lebanon border resulted in casualties on both sides, prompting Israel to initiate military operations. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) launched preemptive airstrikes on Hezbollah's rocket storage sites, command centers, and training camps in southern Lebanon. Strikes also targeted critical infrastructure used by Hezbollah, such as tunnels and weapons manufacturing facilities. The IDF conducted limited cross-border raids to disrupt Hezbollah's logistical and supply chains, aiming to neutralize

high-value targets. Following Hezbollah's rocket barrages on Israeli cities, the IDF carried out artillery and airstrikes in retaliation, extending to Beirut and the Bekaa Valley, targeting Hezbollah's political and logistical networks. The attacks led to the elimination of Hezbollah's leadership.

In northern Israel, particularly in towns like Metula near the Lebanon border, residents face uncertainty as a 60-day truce with Hezbollah nears its end. Despite the ceasefire, both sides have tested its limits, fueling ongoing mistrust and tension. The Israeli government has expressed concerns about the Lebanese Armed Forces' ability to enforce the agreement, contributing to the region's deteriorating security situation.

Negotiations

Israel has continued efforts to expand normalization agreements with Arab countries, building on the Abraham Accords. While ties with the UAE and Bahrain have deepened, progress with Saudi Arabia has stalled due to regional tensions and disagreements over the Palestinian issue.

Casualties

The death toll in Gaza is difficult to verify as figures are provided by Hamas-controlled health authorities. Their reports estimate up to 50,000 deaths since October 2023, mostly civilians. Up to 2 million people have been internally displaced. On the Israeli side, up to 1,000 soldiers and 1,000 civilians have been killed, with over 500,000 internally displaced.

Trends



In 2024, Israel faced an unstable security environment with active conflicts on multiple fronts, ongoing tensions with Iran, and internal political disputes.

Humanitarian Consequences

Gaza is facing a severe humanitarian crisis due to the ongoing fighting, Hamas's rule, and bombardments. Food, water, and medical supplies are critically scarce. There are no safe zones within Gaza, where 2 million people live in a confined area of 42 by 12 km. Hamas has been using civilian sites — mosques, schools, kindergartens, residential buildings, parking lots, and beaches—as dual-purpose locations, making them targets (often with civilians inside as human shields). This has resulted in mass casualties from Israeli strikes, with accusations of genocide directed at the IDF.

Impact on Global Affairs

Iran's nuclear program and regional influence remain top national security concerns for Israel. Israeli intelligence has reported that Iran is nearing nuclear weapon capability, prompting covert operations and diplomatic pressure to halt further advancements. Cyberattacks between Israel and Iran have intensified, targeting critical infrastructure on both sides.

Forecast

INTENSITY

The war is at a medium-intensity phase.

The year 2025 will continue to pose challenges for Israel, though it may be less violent than the previous year. The success of ceasefires with Hamas and Hezbollah will be crucial for maintaining stability. However, internal political divisions and regional instability remain serious threats that could impact Israel's security trajectory in the coming months.

Syria War

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Syria is experiencing a complex and rapidly evolving security and geopolitical situation following the recent overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad’s regime. The Syrian civil war, which lasted since 2011, culminated in late 2024 with the fall of Assad’s government. This resulted from a coalition of Islamist rebel groups capturing key strongholds. Violence persisted in many regions, including Idlib, Aleppo, and Deir ez-Zor, as various factions—remnants of Assad loyalists, Kurdish forces, ISIS affiliates, and rebel groups—competed for control. Northern Syria remained unstable due to Turkish military incursions targeting Kurdish-controlled areas, leading to clashes between Turkish forces and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Assad’s removal in December by Islamist rebels ended the 13-year civil war, bringing significant political changes. With his fall, Syria entered a phase of political fragmentation, with various factions establishing control over different territories, resulting in localized governance and continued instability. The new leadership, headed by Ahmed al-Sharaa, pledged to uphold religious freedoms and form an inclusive government. However, skepticism remains due to al-Sharaa’s past ties with extremist groups.

Although ISIS suffered territorial defeat in 2019, it maintained a presence in Syria, particularly in desert areas. The group conducted guerrilla attacks on both military and civilian targets, exploiting governance gaps and security vacuums. In 2024, ISIS escalated its operations in central and eastern regions, targeting Syrian and allied forces as well as civilians.

Casualties

Since 2011, over 400,000 people have been killed, with millions displaced. In 2023 alone, several thousand military personnel and civilians lost their lives.

Humanitarian Consequences

By 2024, Syria remained one of the world’s most severe humanitarian crises. As of 2025, reports indicate 7.2 million internally displaced persons and 6.2 million refugees, primarily in neighboring countries. Recently, there has been an increase in refugees expressing a desire to return home, with nearly 30% planning to do so in 2025. Since December 8, 2024, approximately 210,000 Syrians have returned to the country.

INTENSITY

Civil War.



Trends

While Assad's downfall marks a major turning point, Syria's path to stability remains fraught with challenges. International support will be crucial in addressing security issues, providing humanitarian aid, and facilitating economic reconstruction. The collapse of Assad's regime has left a significant power vacuum, sparking territorial disputes among Islamist rebel groups, Kurdish forces, and remnants of pro-Assad militias.



Impact on Global Affairs

Russia continued to support Assad's regime until its fall, prioritizing its strategic interests, including the Tartus naval base and Khmeimim airbase.

Iran played a major role in backing pro-Assad forces through military deployments and advisory support. However, the regime's collapse in late 2024 significantly diminished Iran's influence in Syria.

Turkey persisted in its operations against Kurdish forces in northern Syria, emphasizing concerns over Kurdish autonomy and perceived national security threats.

The United States maintained a presence in northeastern Syria, cooperating with the Syrian Democratic Forces to counter ISIS and secure oil fields.

Forecast

Syria's security situation in 2025 is expected to remain complex and unstable due to the fallout from Assad's removal, ongoing armed conflicts, and geopolitical rivalries. Israel is likely to continue targeting Iranian military assets and Hezbollah positions in Syria, contributing to instability in the country's southern regions.

War

Yemen

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The war in Yemen has been ongoing since 2015. It is a confrontation between the northern part of the country (where the Houthis — a Shiite group supporting former president Ali Abdullah Saleh — are based, and where the «Ansar Allah» movement was formed) and the southern part (where Sunnis support the government of Abd Rabbo Mansour Hadi). The Houthis are supported by Iran and, to a lesser extent, Russia, while the south is supported by Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies, who are conducting a military intervention in the country.

At the same time, terrorists such as «Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula» and «ISIS» have been operating in the desert outskirts.

During the monitoring period, fighting continued with attempts at peaceful settlement amid intensified Houthi attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea.

In mid-December, a series of attacks on commercial ships occurred in the Red Sea, for which the Houthis claimed responsibility. They stated that they would not allow cargo shipments heading to Israel, a country they declared war on after the outbreak of hostilities on October 7. In response, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced the launch of an international operation in the Red Sea to protect cargo shipments, named «Prosperity Guardian». In January 2024, the Biden administration re-designated the Houthis as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group, although they had been removed from the list in 2021.

In February 2024, Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi threatened to escalate attacks on ships in the Red Sea if «the aggression against Gaza and the blockade of the Palestinian people are not stopped». In the same month, the European Union announced the launch of Operation «Aspides» to restore shipping security in the Red Sea.

In March 2024, the Houthis claimed their first attack on cargo ships in the Indian Ocean. By the end of the year, the total number of attacks on military and commercial ships in regional waters exceeded 130.

Throughout the year, Houthi military targets were regularly bombed by the EU, the U.S., and the UK. However, the allies' efforts have not yet been able to end the attacks on ships.



Impact on Global Affairs

The region is located at the crossroads of transit routes from China to the Suez Canal and Europe. External actors are actively intervening in the conflict, which has been ongoing for more than eight years. A regional confrontation between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula states (Saudi Arabia, UAE) continues.

Since April 2022, the Houthis and the Yemeni government, with the mediation of the UN, have agreed to ceasefires multiple times, which helped reduce the intensity of the fighting and the terrorist threat in the region. However, the threat has significantly escalated due to attacks on cargo ships in the Red Sea.

INTENSITY

Civil war with foreign interventions (effectively a confrontation of coalitions).

Negotiations

Despite the progress made in previous years, peace talks are currently at an impasse due to the international community's outrage over Houthi attacks on shipping.



Casualties

Since the beginning of the war, over 150,000 people have died due to hostilities, including approximately 9,000 civilians. 50,000 have been injured, and up to 4 million have become refugees. The total death toll exceeds 377,000 people.

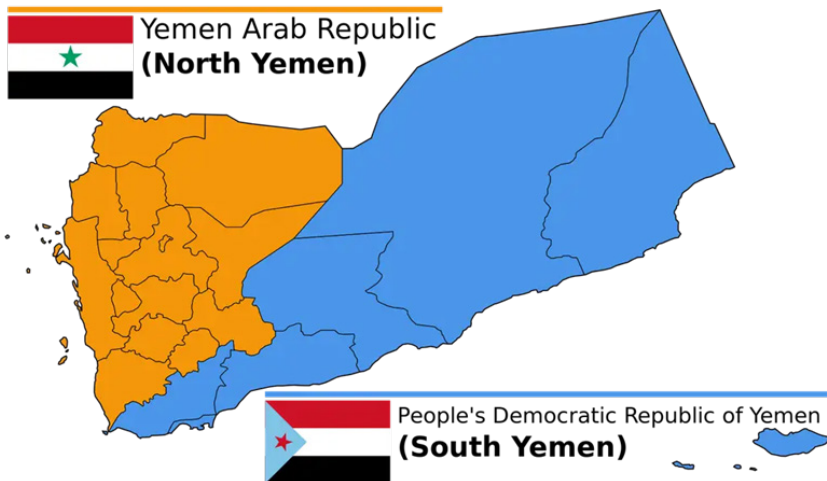
During the monitoring period, 100–150 Houthi soldiers and three American military personnel were killed. Several dozen sailors died, with 25 still in captivity with the Houthis.



Humanitarian Consequences

The humanitarian crisis has led to widespread hunger and a cholera epidemic, resulting in over 80,000 deaths between 2016 and 2018. Thanks to humanitarian aid, the threat has been mitigated, but the risk remains significant.

During the war, more than 227,000 people have died from hunger and lack of medical supplies, including over 85,000 children. More than 19,000 have died from bombings.



Trends

The trend towards peaceful settlement, which gained momentum in 2022-2024, has shifted again to sharp escalation due to the crisis in the Red Sea. Against the backdrop of weakening Iran's position in many parts of the Middle East, Tehran is currently not interested in a peaceful resolution to the Yemeni problem.

Forecast

In 2024, many expected a peace agreement between the Houthis and the recognized government, but this changed with the onset of the crisis in the Red Sea. In 2025, attacks on civilian vessels are expected to continue. Active land-based fighting may resume.

War South Sudan



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The civil war in South Sudan has been ongoing since December 2013. The armed phase began with an unsuccessful coup attempt on December 16, 2013, carried out by military forces affiliated with former vice-president Riek Machar.

Alongside the escalation of the armed conflict, peace initiatives have also intensified. Several rounds of negotiations were held, but the signed peace protocols were violated within days. The conflict is complicated by the different ethnic backgrounds of the leaders of the warring sides: President Salva Kiir is of the Nuer ethnicity, while Riek Machar is from the Dinka ethnic group.

The main peace agreement was signed on September 12, 2018. The document confirmed that Riek Machar would become one of the five vice-presidents of South Sudan, a transitional government would be formed, a new parliament would be established, and presidential elections were to take place. Since then, the implementation of the peace agreement has continued, with periodic clashes between the conflicting sides. It is worth noting that not all armed groups signed the agreement, and some are still in military confrontation with government forces.

In August 2022, a decision was made to extend the transitional period for another 24 months in order to complete the reforms, and presidential elections were then expected to take place.

CURRENT SITUATION AND RECENT EVENTS

At present, there are no large-scale, intense clashes, but periodic skirmishes continue to occur in various regions of the country.

In 2024, the conflict between the South Sudanese government and the National Salvation Front (NAS) remains unresolved, although there have been some attempts at mediation and violence cessation. NAS, led by General Thomas Cirillo Swaka, opposes the government forces, accusing President Salva Kiir of monopolizing power and violating the interests of many ethnic groups.

Fighting continues in Central Equatoria and other regions, often accompanied by attacks on civilians, further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. NAS is not a signatory of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict (R-ARCSS), signed by other parties in 2018. This complicates the peace process, as NAS seeks an independent resolution to its demands.

In the Upper Nile region, ethnic clashes between Nuer and Shilluk communities took place in February-March 2024 over resource disputes, particularly land and access to pastures. Inter-ethnic conflicts in Upper Nile and other regions of South Sudan are often linked to actions by local armed groups representing specific communities or acting in their interests.

In 2024, the main armed groups involved in conflicts included: from the Nuer side — the White Armies, Sudan People's Liberation Army-In Opposition (SPLA-IO),

Negotiations

Negotiations between the government of South Sudan and the National Salvation Front (NAS) are ongoing, but progress has been limited. NAS has not joined the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict (R-ARCSS), complicating the achievement of a broader consensus. The main challenges to the negotiations include a low level of trust between the parties, differences in goals and approaches to problem-solving, and disputes over NAS's participation in formal peace processes. The primary demand from NAS is the creation of a more inclusive governance system that takes into account the rights of various ethnic groups, in contrast to the current power structure centered around President Salva Kiir.

Although negotiations continue, reaching a final peace agreement requires greater willingness to compromise from both the government and NAS

and from the Shilluk side — Shilluk Militias and the National Salvation Front (NAS).

Armed conflicts in regions such as Abyei and Jonglei also involve rebel groups cooperating with or opposing the SPLA-IG (government forces). Tribal militias remain the primary players in inter-ethnic and territorial conflicts, often formed due to the weakness of centralized security forces.

In May 2024, a series of explosions occurred in the country's capital, Juba, related to unknown combat groups. The incident was likely organized by NAS or other government opponents, although no concrete evidence of their involvement was provided.

From August to October 2024, mass ethnic killings took place in Jonglei. Attacks by militants on villages triggered a chain reaction of violence, caused by disputes over natural resources and historical grievances between the Nuer, Dinka, and Murle ethnic groups.

Throughout the year, there were clashes in the Abyei and Heglig zones between Sudan and irregular formations from neighboring South Sudan. The most intense phase of the clashes occurred in June.



Humanitarian Consequences

Overall, since the start of the conflict, 2.47 million people have fled South Sudan as refugees, and 2 million have become internally displaced. 7.5 million people have required some form of humanitarian aid or protection, and 7.7 million have faced the threat of hunger.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, over 9 million people need humanitarian assistance — more than two-thirds of the population. It is estimated that 2 million people remain internally displaced, while 2.29 million have fled to neighboring countries.

INTENSITY

The civil war is at a low-intensity phase with periodic outbreaks of violence.



Casualties

Between April and June 2024, UNMISS documented 1,062 victims of intercommunal and political violence, including 442 killed, 297 wounded, 197 kidnapped, and 126 subjected to sexual violence. This represented a 32% increase in violent incidents and a 16% increase in the number of victims compared to the first quarter of 2024. The severity of violence was highest in Warrap state, where 32% of all civilian casualties occurred.

Over 300 people were killed in ethnic clashes, 12 in explosions in the capital, and over 150 from violence in Jonglei state.

The total number of deaths since the start of the conflict is approximately 500,000.

Forecast

In South Sudan, national elections have been postponed from December 2024 to December 2026. The reason for the delay is insufficient preparation and the need to complete several important tasks, including conducting a population census, developing a permanent constitution, and establishing a National Electoral Commission. This decision, approved by the government, is also related to security concerns and the need to avoid conflict during elections.

Repeated failures to uphold numerous peace agreements, political competition, and the mobilization of armed groups indicate a lack of genuine commitment to a political resolution by South Sudan's leaders.

The shrinking of civic and political space reduces opportunities for civilians to participate in the development of the constitution, transitional justice, national elections, and other key democratic processes. Frequent delays in the democratic process may heighten instability and public disillusionment, undermining trust in the government's commitments or its ability to organize free and fair elections.

War Sudan



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

On October 25, 2022, a coup took place in Sudan, which resulted in the removal of civilian representatives from power, consolidating all political functions in the hands of the military wing. The main figure behind the coup was General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who played a key role in ousting the dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

The coup was caused by contradictions between the military and civilian representatives of the Sovereign Council and the Sudanese government. In particular, according to the 2019 power transition agreement, the power was supposed to be fully concentrated in the hands of the civilian wing by November 17, 2021. However, there were several issues the military wanted to retain influence over, including investigations into human rights violations during the Darfur crisis, revenue from the extractive sector, the existing security order, and the military.

Since the coup, the country has witnessed continuous demonstrations and protests demanding the return of a civilian government. The authorities have responded with repression, including arrests and the dispersal of rallies.

On April 15, fighting erupted in Sudan between the regular Sudanese Army (loyal to General al-Burhan) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by the second-in-command, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (also known as Hemedti). Tensions had been rising between the two generals over the agreement intended to ensure the transition of power and civilian governance of the country. The main points of contention included the timeline for integrating paramilitary groups into the regular Sudanese Army, control over economic sectors, and hierarchy within the military forces.

In 2023, the conflict was most intense in the following

regions:

- Khartoum – the capital, where the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and RSF actively fought for control over government institutions, the airport, and residential areas.

- Omdurman and Bahri – key satellite cities of Khartoum, which also became centers of heavy fighting.

- Darfur (especially Western and Northern Darfur) – an area with a history of ethnic conflict, where fighting significantly worsened the situation, including mass killings and human rights violations.

- Kordofan (Southern and Western) – here, tensions affected both rural and urban settlements, leading to a humanitarian crisis.

CURRENT SITUATION AND RECENT EVENTS

In 2024, the conflict not only maintained its intensity in traditional zones of confrontation but also spread to new regions: Eastern Sudan (Red Sea regions, including Port Sudan), northern Sudan regions (including cities along the border with Egypt), border regions with South Sudan, and urban agglomerations in the central part of the country.

At the beginning of 2024, the RSF launched attacks on South Kordofan, defeating SAF forces in the town of Habila in the Nuba Mountains and advancing toward Dalanga, which they were unable to capture. However, RSF gained control of the town of Muglad in Western Kordofan.

In January 2024, the RSF focused on consolidating their gains in the Gezira State but was unable to take full control. In February 2024, the Sudanese Army

regained some positions in the city of Omdurman, marking the first significant breakthrough for the army in the conflict. In April 2024, the SAF and their allies began a counteroffensive, attacking Wad Madani from the east and west.

As of April 2024, fighting continues in Khartoum State, with RSF controlling the southern and western parts of Omdurman, SAF holding the northern and eastern parts of Omdurman, and RSF controlling most of Khartoum and Northern Khartoum.

Fighting also continued in Darfur, with intense battles over the city of Al-Fashir in Northern Darfur, which remained the last stronghold of the Sudanese Army in Darfur. As of September 2024, RSF had advanced into central areas of Al-Fashir, with SAF's territorial control being at its lowest since the intensification of the fighting in May 2024.

In Kordofan, the RSF tried to establish control over the western and northern parts. On June 20, 2024, RSF captured Al-Foul, the capital of Western Kordofan, after SAF forces retreated following several hours of fighting. SAF retreated to Babanas, their only base in Kordofan.

Battles also occurred along the Nile. In May 2024, the RSF began attacks on Sudanese forces between Khartoum State and the Nile State, as well as in the White Nile State near the border with Gezira State.

At the end of June 2024, RSF began storming areas around the city of Sennar. RSF succeeded in capturing the cities of Singa, Dinder, Mazmum, and Wad-an-Nail. On August 3, RSF launched its first attack on the Blue Nile State since the beginning of the war.

Since September 2024, for the first time since the war began, the balance of power seemed to shift in

favor of the Sudanese Army. On September 26, the Sudanese Army launched a large-scale offensive in Khartoum. In October 2024, the Sudanese Army began a counteroffensive in Sennar and Gezira States, which were successfully reclaimed from RSF.

During the last rainy season, which caused a lull in the fighting, both sides rearmed and reorganized their forces. The local population has largely supported the Sudanese Army, which now relies on cooperation with various armed groups.

On January 12, the government army announced the liberation of Wad Madani – an important logistical hub and the capital of Al-Jazirah State.

Casualties

The ACLED project recorded over 28,700 deaths across Sudan in 2024, including more than 7,500 civilian deaths directly caused by violence. However, due to the deteriorating situation in the country and so-called indirect factors, the total number of casualties may reach 100,000.

Humanitarian Consequences

12 million people have been internally displaced, and more than 3.1 million have fled the country as refugees.

Impact on Global Affairs

Sudan is located in the strategic Red Sea region, one of the most important maritime arteries in the world. For this reason, the country attracts particular attention from the United States, Russia, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the EU. The conflict has a destabilizing effect on the East African region, which is already unstable.

INTENSITY

The civil war is in an acute phase with numerous casualties.

Negotiations

Throughout 2024, various peace initiatives were undertaken to resolve the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). However, no significant progress was achieved.

August 2024: Peace negotiations were scheduled in Geneva, organized jointly by Switzerland and Saudi Arabia, aimed at ending the fighting that broke out in April 2023. Despite the talks in Geneva, the opposing sides could not reach a final agreement, prompting discussions on alternative approaches to peace negotiations.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan proposed to mediate between Sudan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to resolve the tension, emphasizing Turkey's commitment to Sudan's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

In December, RSF announced plans to cooperate with the proposed new civilian government, raising concerns about the potential division and creation of parallel administrations in Sudan.

Forecast

The conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) could spread to new regions due to the struggle for strategic resources (water, gold, oil). An escalation of chaos is expected in Darfur, Khartoum, and other unstable zones. Peace negotiations between the sides seem unlikely due to both sides being inclined toward a military resolution of the conflict.

Due to growing chaos and the government's weakness, there may be an increase in the influence of radical groups, which will create additional challenges for regional security. If no significant breakthrough in negotiations or military advantage for one side is achieved, Sudan is likely to remain in a state of prolonged conflict.

War Ethiopia



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Ethiopia, a country consisting of over 90 ethnic groups, has been facing typical ethnic tensions common in many African nations. Factors such as population growth, unemployment, and competition for resources exacerbate these tensions.

After the fall of the military regime in 1991, an ethnic federal system of governance was implemented to address historical grievances by allowing different regions of Ethiopia to have self-governing rights. This led to the rise of ethnic nationalist movements and weakened national unity. Tensions increased between the capital and the Tigray region, leading to an armed conflict in November 2020, which continued until November 2022. In 2023, peace efforts were underway, but there were incidents of war crimes committed by Eritrean allied forces. However, the main flashpoint of tension became the Amhara region, where local militias (Fano militia) revolted against the central government in April 2023. The conflict began after the

government attempted to dissolve the Amhara special forces and other regional forces to «promote national unity.»

During the 2024 monitoring period, the conflict in the Amhara region intensified. On March 22, militias killed Brigadier General Haddis Diro. Fano forces seized the strategic city of Metemma on the border between Ethiopia and Sudan on September 1, cutting off fuel and food supplies through the border. In response, Sudan allowed Ethiopian government forces to retreat to its territory. Fano also controlled a large city in the Gondar region. In October, the government launched a counteroffensive with the support of the loyal regional government of Amhara.

In 2024, diplomatic tensions with Somalia escalated after Ethiopia, which has no coastline, signed an agreement with the Somaliland region in January to lease a coastal area for a port and military base in exchange for future recognition of independence. The conflict was resolved in December.

Casualties

Since the beginning of the armed conflict with Tigray, over 3,000 Ethiopian military personnel have been killed, and more than 4,500 wounded. From the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), over 6,000 people have died, up to 3,000 have been injured, and up to 2,000 are in captivity. In other clashes, tens of thousands of people have died.

Significant losses among the civilian population—according to various reports, between 600,000 and 800,000 civilians have died as a result of the conflict.

In 2024, over 300 civilians were killed by drone strikes, which have been frequently used.

INTENSITY

Civil war, internal political crisis with periodic clashes and rising inter-ethnic tensions, diplomatic conflict. In the settlement phase.

Negotiations

The main conflict with Tigray is still in a fragile ceasefire phase, with the capital guaranteeing autonomy under the Tigray People's Front.

In December 2024, an agreement was signed between Ethiopia and Somalia through the mediation of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The Turkish leader announced that Somalia and Ethiopia had signed a declaration, under which Ethiopia would abandon its plans to recognize Somaliland and, in return, gain access to the sea. Turkey's influence in the region has significantly increased after the downfall of the pro-Russian regime in Syria.

Humanitarian Consequences

According to international estimates, over 1 million people have become refugees, mostly to neighboring Sudan. More than 3 million people are internally displaced. The situation is especially dire for tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees who have been living in camps in Tigray for years. A potential humanitarian disaster is looming, with around 13 million people in Ethiopia depending on food aid, which increases reliance on supplies from Black Sea countries.

The situation is especially difficult for tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees who have lived in camps in Tigray for years.

Trends

Fano militia claims to control over 80% of the Amhara region. The government has banned journalists from accessing the region and blocked mobile communications.

Impact on Global Affairs

External actors, particularly Russia and the United States, are interested in resolving the conflict. The region is of particular importance as part of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, the Red Sea, and the Suez Canal, which are key shipping routes, including for oil products.

In previous years, U.S. sanctions for human rights violations and more lenient policies increased the threat of Ethiopia drifting toward Russia and China. At the same time, Ethiopia is highly dependent on Ukrainian grain supplies, so it has actively advocated for normalizing supply routes. Since November, Ethiopia has been receiving grain through the «Grain from Ukraine» program. The peace process has created conditions for restoring contact with the West. However, since the end of 2023, relations with pro-Russian Eritrea and fragmented Somalia have worsened.

Forecast

Given the progress of peace negotiations, stabilization in Tigray is expected in the coming years, with a probable resolution in the Amhara region. However, the unresolved ethnic contradictions and involvement of external forces (Eritrea, Sudan, Chinese and Russian influences) require greater international attention.

War

Central African Republic

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The war in the country has been ongoing intermittently since 2012. The main confrontation is between the Muslim North (the Seleka Rebel Alliance) and the Christian South, which retains control over the capital, Bangui, and supports the central government. Tensions between religious communities are escalating, with reports of genocide. The presence of UN peacekeepers, primarily French (in the area of influence of which the CAR was located), is ineffective.

During the monitoring period, Russian mercenaries from the Wagner Group, supporting the central government, remained active. They serve as the main bodyguard for President Faustin-Archange Touadéra. A low-intensity war continues between government forces, supported by Russia, and several opposition groups over control of key areas, including mines. In March 2024, government forces and their Russian allies retook control of the city of Sékikédé from the Coalition of Patriots for Change rebels. In July, José Béfió, the leader of the Anti-Balaka organization in Ugami, was killed in a clash with government forces and Russians. In August, militants from the «Return, Restoration, Revival» group killed two Russians in an ambush near a mine in the Markunda area.

In October, rebels, during a clash with a government convoy, took a Chinese citizen hostage.

Casualties

Overall, more than 8,000 combatants have been killed since the conflict's inception, with tens of thousands of civilians dead (exact figures unknown).

Humanitarian Consequences

More than 300,000 refugees to neighboring countries, over 700,000 internally displaced persons.

Impact on Global Affairs

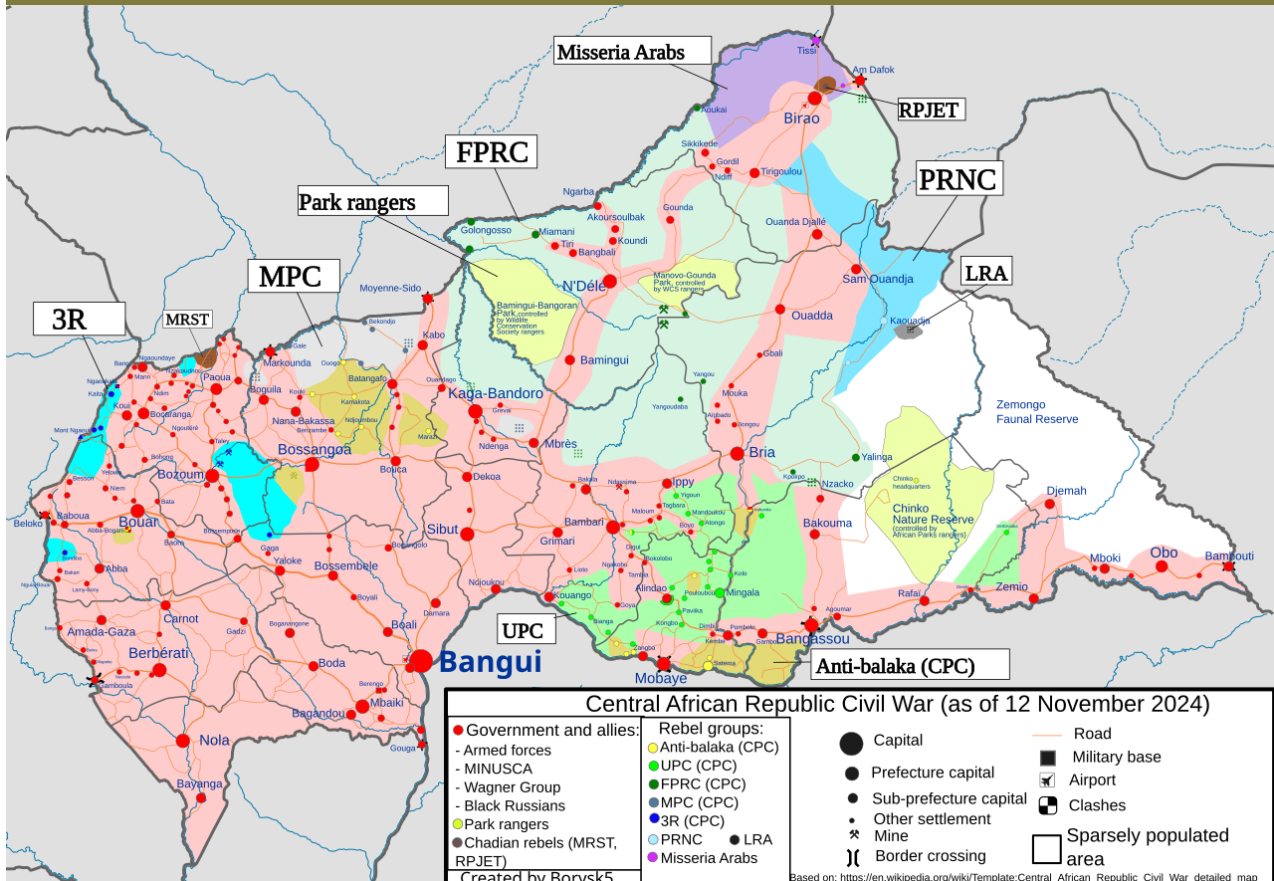
Russia is seeking to strengthen its influence in individual African states and shows other dictatorial regimes the possibilities for cooperation. Russian instructors are training the government army, actively supplying weapons and armored vehicles. Precious metals and other easily accessible resources are being exported from the CAR, mostly via the Cameroonian port of Douala. The CAR has become one of the main bases for the formation of Russia's African Corps. There are reports of storing valuables and foreign currency reserves of Russian elites in the country. Wagner mercenaries are also recruiting locals for the war in Ukraine.

INTENSITY

Civil war at a low intensity phase.

Negotiations

Negotiations on a ceasefire continue, with strong support from Russia (which has established relations with the capital's authorities — including funding and the presence of security — Russian mercenaries).



Forecast

Russia's activity in the region has peaked, leading to increasing resistance from other players, notably France and Turkey. However, today, opponents of Russia are forced to respond in new locations, such as Niger and Mali. Meanwhile, after Russia's defeat in Syria, logistics and communication with the region have become significantly more difficult, which opponents of Moscow's influence, primarily Turkey and France, may exploit.

Border Clash

Armenia – Azerbaijan



Events and Incidents

After the formal dissolution of the so-called Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh Republic) at the end of 2023 and the restoration of Azerbaijan's control over its territory, no clashes have occurred between Baku and Yerevan. Currently, the conflict between the two states does not have an armed character.

Casualties

None.

Intensity

Border clash.

Trends

Currently, there are no serious threats of the conflict escalating into a hot phase. Armenia lacks the resources for a revanche, and most of society does not share such aspirations. However, a potential source of destabilization remains the occupation of Azerbaijani exclaves Barkhudarli, Sofulu, Yukari Askipara, Kyarli, and Yaradullu by Armenia, as well as the occupation of some Armenian territories by Azerbaijan during 2021-2022. Another ongoing issue is Armenia's provision of a transport corridor to Baku for access to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. Simultaneously, the development of relations between Russia and Azerbaijan is taking place, with Armenia gradually distancing itself from Russia.

Impact on Global Affairs

The result of Azerbaijan's restoration of control over the territory previously controlled by the so-called Republic of Artsakh is the complete withdrawal of the Russian contingent on June 12, 2024, which had been stationed there since the end of the Second Karabakh War. However, relations between Moscow and Baku have not worsened. Azerbaijan's territory is used by Russia for the export of gas and oil and as a transport corridor to Iran. Moscow is not interested in normalizing relations between Baku and Yerevan and uses any opportunity to interfere in the peace talks process.

Armenia is gradually distancing itself from Russia in favor of the EU and the US. In February 2024, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced the «freezing» of Armenia's membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). However, Yerevan, disillusioned with the EU and US's indecisive policy regarding the South Caucasus, continues to maintain a certain level of allegiance to Moscow. For example, in October

2024, Nikol Pashinyan attended the BRICS summit in Kazan. As in 2023, Armenia continues its course on rearming its armed forces. India and Iran are the main suppliers.

Turkey and Armenia held several meetings throughout 2024, including between the leaders of the two states. The sides are working on opening borders and restoring the railway, which has been nonfunctional since 1993. Starting in 2025, the Border Troops of Armenia's National Security Service will begin patrolling the border with Turkey and Iran, which had previously been solely managed by the Russian FSB Border Service.

Despite Armenia's actual request, the EU and the US conducted a weak policy in the region throughout 2024. However, in 2025, it is expected that the Armenian parliament will vote on holding a referendum on the country's accession to the EU.

Forecast

The conflict will remain relevant in the short- and medium-term.

Kyrgyzstan – Tajikistan



Negotiations

On May 16, 2024, Azerbaijan and Armenia agreed on the demarcation of 12.7 km of the state border. On May 24, 2024, Baku restored control over the villages of the Gazakh district – Baganis-Ayrim, Ashagi Askipara, Heyrimli, and Gizilgadjili – which had been occupied since 1990. This led to protests in Armenia, which lasted from April (the beginning of demarcation talks) until June 2024. On August 30, Baku and Yerevan signed a regulation that will guide the functioning of the bilateral commission on border demarcation. Currently, the most problematic issue remains the signing of a peace agreement between the two states. As of the preparation of this material, it is known that the parties have reached a preliminary agreement on the draft document with a preamble and 17 articles, the content of which has not been disclosed.

Events and Incidents

On May 7, 2024, Tajik shepherds used firearms against Kyrgyz border guards near the village of Ak-Bosogo in the Leylek district of Batken province, Kyrgyzstan.

Casualties

1 injured Tajik shepherd.

Intensity

Border clash.

Trends

In 2025, the parties will focus on signing and ratifying agreements and further demarcating the borders. At the same time, this will be the biggest challenge, as setting up border posts in some areas will block access to water resources and pastures for both Tajik and Kyrgyz shepherds. Most incidents involving firearms on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border occur due to the illegal crossing of the border for livestock grazing. The issue of the Tajik exclave of Vorukh, with a population of over 45,000 people, as well as the exclave of Lolazor, will remain relevant.

Negotiations

In February, March, July, and August, bilateral topographic groups and working groups on legal issues from the government delegations of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan conducted the delimitation of the shared border. On December 4, Dushanbe and Bishkek announced the completion of the definition of the entire 972-kilometer boundary. Working groups from both countries are preparing documents for ratification by parliaments and signing by presidents.

Forecast

Border incidents will continue, even after the completion of the demarcation process.

Impact on Global Affairs

Resolving the decades-long conflict will promote stronger economic ties between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. A key beneficiary of a peaceful resolution is Turkey, which positions itself as a leader in the Turkic world and seeks to unite the states of the region (excluding Tajikistan) within the framework of the Turkic States Organization. Ankara played a role in facilitating the completion of the border delimitation between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. For Russia, this is a highly unfavorable scenario, as by supporting the conflict, it kept both states within the CSTO. China, taking advantage of the improved relations between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, began building a railway bypassing Russia on the territories of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in late December 2024. This is another stage of the «Belt and Road» project. Accordingly, the continuation of the conflict resolution between Bishkek and Dushanbe will intensify the struggle between Moscow, Ankara, and Beijing for influence in the region.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

A f g h a n i s t a n



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

August 30, 2021, is considered the date marking the end of the large-scale war in Afghanistan. It began on October 7, 2001, when the U.S., supported by NATO allies, intervened in Afghanistan and overthrew the Islamist «Taliban» regime. However, the Taliban continued their guerrilla warfare, eventually regaining power after twenty years of conflict. Today, under the name of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the country is in partial international isolation, striving for global recognition.

Since then, the fighting has been characterized by clashes between the new government forces and the republican National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF). The Panjshir conflict began immediately after the Taliban seized Kabul in August 2021, but since then, the resistance movement's activity has been reduced to guerrilla operations in the northeast. Currently, the National Front does not control any territory but carries out partisan attacks.

In 2024, anti-Taliban forces significantly increased their activities, reflected in the rise in the number of operations, expansion of attack geography, and attempts to



target Taliban leadership. However, their influence on the stability of the Taliban regime remains limited.

Throughout the monitoring period, the activity of the Islamic State (Khorasan group) continued in Afghanistan. In 2024, dozens of terrorist attacks took place, such as near a bank building in Kandahar, which killed 21 people and wounded more than 50. Similar attacks happen multiple times every month in different cities across the country. Additionally, the Khorasan group claimed responsibility for a terrorist attack

at Russia's Crocus Hall, which resulted in 145 deaths and 551 injuries.

Since the end of December 2024, tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan have escalated due to attacks by the Pakistani Taliban and border clashes. Pakistan responded with airstrikes and active military actions along the border, while Afghanistan criticized these actions, citing civilian casualties. Both sides are increasingly involved in mutual attacks, creating the risk of a full-scale conflict.

Negotiations

Despite the Taliban's efforts to negotiate a ceasefire, the resistance movement continues its activities, albeit on a smaller scale.

In September, NRF leader Ahmad Massoud stated that his forces had conducted over 200 operations since the beginning of the year and had more than 5,000 fighters operating in 20 provinces. Thus, the insurgents are not yet willing to negotiate peace.



Casualties

The Panjshir conflict has claimed the lives of about 1,000 new government military personnel. The insurgents claim to hold over 1,500 prisoners. Exact casualty figures for the insurgents are unavailable, but they have been severe; likely several thousand killed and hundreds captured.

As a result of the conflict with Pakistan, about 900 Afghans and 400 Pakistanis have been killed.

Dozens of civilians have died and hundreds have been injured as a result of Islamic State terrorist attacks.



Impact on Global Affairs

Afghanistan is directly within China's sphere of interest, as it is located in the area of the Chinese investment project «Belt and Road Initiative.» Beijing has already become one of the largest creditors of the new government in exchange for access to trade infrastructure.

Despite negative expectations, the Taliban are not creating favorable conditions for the advancement of Russian interests in the region. Kabul is seeking understanding with the U.S. as a guarantor of its recognition in order to gain access to external markets.

Afghanistan also hinders the advancement of Iran's interests to the east. Official Tehran has reiterated that it does not intend to recognize the Taliban government. Armed clashes occurred along the border between the two countries throughout the year.



Trends

Currently, the primary efforts of the new Afghan government are focused on achieving international recognition. This process is not progressing as quickly as Kabul would like. Afghanistan continues to face a severe economic crisis, with most of the population living below the poverty line. A key cause of this is the country's detachment from the global trade system.

The main trend in Afghan-Pakistani relations is the growing tension and mutual hostility. Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of supporting militants, while Afghanistan condemns Pakistan's military strikes, which lead to civilian casualties. Both sides are increasingly drawn into border clashes, deepening the conflict and complicating prospects for cooperation.

INTENSITY

A high-intensity local conflict with numerous casualties. There is a threat of escalation into a full-scale war between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Forecast

ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT WITH PAKISTAN. REGULAR BLOODY TERRORIST ATTACKS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE IN 2025.



LOCAL CONFLICTS

Libya

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The conflict has been ongoing since 2011, after the killing of Muammar Gaddafi. In western Libya, the Government of National Unity, led by Fayez al-Sarraj, has been established, while in the East, General Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army oppose them. The rest of the territory is controlled by tribes and smaller groups. Haftar's forces are supported by Russia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia, while the Government of National Unity is

backed by the UN, Turkey, and Qatar.

During the monitoring period, despite the formal end of the civil war in late 2020, tensions and instability have remained. Sporadic clashes, skirmishes, and struggles over oil fields and resources continue. On August 9, nine people were killed in clashes between rival militias in Tripoli. On December 15, the main oil refinery in Zawiyah was shut down after clashes between local militias caused fires in the building's infrastructure.

INTENSITY

The civil war is currently in a phase of low intensity, with preparations for elections underway.



Negotiations

Efforts to permanently end the Libyan war have been ongoing. Negotiations started in January 2021 and are still continuing. Military actions sporadically resume despite the ceasefire agreement reached in October 2020. In August, a significant conflict arose over control of the Central Bank, with attacks on its representatives, who were close to the eastern Libyan government. Following this, Khalifa Haftar announced the cessation of oil extraction at all controlled oilfields. The United States joined the negotiations — on August 27, General Michael Langley, head of U.S. Africa Command, met with senior officials of the Libyan National Army, including Khalifa Haftar, in Benghazi. On November 16, local elections were held in 58 municipalities across the country, the first time since 2014 that voting was held simultaneously in both the eastern and western parts of the country.

Trends

These issues highlight that Libya has not yet overcome the consequences of war and remains largely chaotic and poorly unified, lacking proper command and control over its security apparatus.

Casualties

Thanks to the ongoing negotiation process, the number of casualties has significantly decreased, but local skirmishes still result in dozens of deaths.

Impact on Global Affairs

After losing ground in Syria, Russia is attempting to create a new base in Libya for links with dependent African countries. However, these efforts are facing opposition from Turkey and other actors.

Forecast

THERE IS STILL A LACK OF TRUST BETWEEN THE UN-RECOGNIZED WESTERN GOVERNMENT AND THE EASTERN GOVERNMENT IN TOBRUK. ARMED STRUGGLES FOR POWER CONTINUE IN MAJOR CITIES (TRIPOLI, BENGHAZI, SIRTE). FURTHER ESCALATION IS LIKELY BETWEEN THE CYRENAICAN GOVERNMENT (LED BY KHALIFA HAFTAR, WITH RUSSIAN SUPPORT) AND THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT IN TRIPOLI.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

Myanmar



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Throughout 2024, fighting between the Myanmar Armed Forces and opposition forces has intensified across the country. Key events included the continuation of Operations 1107 and 1111 (launched by Karen ethnic groups in the Kayin State, on the border with Thailand), the continuation of Operation 1207 (initiated by the Alliance of Three Brothers — ethnic groups of Rakhine, Pa-O, and Kokang — in the northern regions of the country, including areas adjacent to Bangladesh, India, and China), and Operation 0307 (started by Kachin ethnic groups in Kachin State). As of the

end of 2024, the Myanmar military junta controls a narrow coastal strip in the Tanintharyi region and in Mon State, part of Karen State, the entirety of Yangon and Irrawaddy regions, almost all of Naypyidaw, around two-thirds of Magway and Mandalay regions, the southern part of Shan State, isolated areas of the Sagaing region, Kachin State, and the city of Sittwe in Rakhine State. The junta has completely lost control of the border with Bangladesh, three-quarters of the border with Thailand, three-quarters of the border with China, and one-third of the border with India.



Trends

Compared to 2023, the combat actions have become more active. Throughout 2024, the military junta lost much territory and several key settlements, such as Ann (Rakhine State), Lashio (Shan State), Sadhon (Kachin State), and Laukkai (Shan State). Insurgents made progress in the Mandalay region (from the north). The military junta continues to fight to maintain its last strongholds in Chin State. Clashes also continue for settlements in the Sagaing region and Kachin State. The junta's authority is mostly stable only in the central and southern coastal areas of the country. In December 2024, the Myanmar military suffered significant defeats in Rakhine and Chin states.



Casualties

4,200 Myanmar military personnel killed and 810 wounded.

1,600 insurgents killed and 1,000 wounded.

3,500 Myanmar military personnel captured by insurgents.

876 Myanmar military personnel interned in India.

359 killed and 756 wounded civilians.

780,000 civilians have become refugees.

INTENSITY

Civil war.

Negotiations

After the fall of Laukkai in October 2024, representatives of the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army expressed their readiness for peace talks with the military junta. It is likely that both movements made this decision under pressure from China, which is not interested in the collapse of the regime of Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. The latter also expressed willingness for negotiations. However, during a meeting on December 19, the opposition rejected the junta's roadmap for general elections in Myanmar in 2025.



Impact on Global Affairs

The increasing number of refugees has created challenges for virtually all of Myanmar's neighbors. In the northern provinces of Thailand, there were minor skirmishes with Myanmar insurgents from various movements throughout 2024. India has fully closed its border with Myanmar. The new government in Bangladesh faced an influx of refugees, mostly from the Rohingya ethnic group, who are Muslim.

Meanwhile, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army are trying to involve China more in the conflict, creating a threat to its trade routes. Currently, Beijing has several proxy groups in Myanmar and continues to exert pressure on ASEAN countries to promote its vision of conflict resolution while preventing the involvement of the US in determining Myanmar's future.

Forecast

In 2025, the situation for the Myanmar Armed Forces is likely to worsen in isolated settlements, such as the city of Sittwe in Rakhine State. There will be an increase in the use of UAVs by both sides in the conflict. Given the persistence of current trends, battle intensity, and the lack of active third-party intervention, the collapse of the military junta is unlikely. However, the number of Myanmar Armed Forces personnel surrendering along with their families is growing. This could become one of the factors in the loss of positions and territories in 2025. It is also important to note that opposition forces to the junta are ethnically-based and are situational allies.

Mali

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Mali is located in the Sahel region, which suffers from terrorist attacks by jihadists. Political tension in Mali escalated from 2020, when after several months of protests, a military coup took place on August 18. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was ousted, and power was handed over to the military junta. On September 21, 2020, a transitional president, Ba Ndaw, was appointed, and Assimi Goita (the leader of the military junta) became vice president. The transition period in the country was supposed to last 18 months, after which elections were to be held.

However, nine months later, power changed hands again. On the evening of May 24, 2021, a military coup took place in Mali, during which the interim president Ba N'Dau, the government, and the prime minister were detained. After the coup, the junta promised to hold elections in 2022. However, in February 2022, a law was passed allowing the military to remain in power for up to five years. Meanwhile, the planned elections were postponed, which sparked significant criticism from the international community.

The country continues to face a high level of terrorist threats with constant incidents and civilian casualties. The geography of jihadist attacks is expanding: initially, they occurred only in the northern part of the country, but since 2022, they have also spread to the central region and near the capital.

After the events of 2020, Mali gravitated towards Russia: French and European contingents ceased operations in the country, and the UN Mission ended. Since 2022, Wagner Group mercenaries have been operating in Mali.

LOCAL CONFLICTS



CURRENT SITUATION AND RECENT EVENTS

In 2024, Mali is experiencing two main confrontations: the junta vs. jihadists and the junta vs. Tuareg.

The confrontation between the junta and jihadists has expanded to new territories in northern Mali, with a series of large-scale attacks on military positions, blockades of cities, and key transport routes. Terrorist attacks are ongoing. The main perpetrators are: JNIM (Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin), Mali's forces and/or Russian mercenaries (former Wagner group and African Corps), and the Islamic State in the Sahel (almost 90 incidents, 15%).

Fighting continues between Mali's army and the Tuaregs (officially known as the Coordination of Azawad Movements, CMA). The Tuaregs have been attempting to create their own state since the 1960s. Their most significant uprising occurred in 2012 and lasted until 2015, concluding with a peace agreement and the guarantee of self-rule for the Azawad region. The agreement was signed by the Tuaregs and the legitimate government of Mali. In 2023, the Mali junta demanded that MINUSMA peacekeepers leave the country due to inaction by the end of the year. This led to an escalation in relations with the Tuaregs, who accuse the government of Mali and Wagner mercenaries of violating the 2015 ceasefire agreement, aiming to seize control of bases in northern Mali previously occupied by MINUSMA. Since August 2023, Wagner mercenaries and Mali's forces have been clashing with the Tuareg coalition known as the «Permanent Strategic Framework for Peace, Security, and Development» (CSP-PSD).

On April 29, 2024, Abu Huzaifa, the commander of ISIS in the



Casualties

Up to a thousand dead in 2024.

INTENSITY

Internal conflict, terrorist acts.

Negotiations

In September 2023, after the breakdown of the truce with Tuareg rebels, the Mali junta postponed elections indefinitely due to “technical reasons”.

Sahel, was killed during a Mali army operation in the Menaka region.

On July 27, 2024, Mali’s army and Russian mercenaries were ambushed near the town of Tinzaouaten, near the border with Algeria. There were rumors that the Tuaregs supported Ukraine. The Tuaregs claimed to have destroyed 84 Wagner mercenaries. After this defeat, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov called Abdoulaye Diop and assured him that Russia would continue to support Mali’s armed forces. On August 4, the Mali junta announced that it was severing diplomatic relations with Ukraine due to Ukraine’s «support for terrorism» in the Sahel. On August 20, 2024, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger appealed to the UN Security Council, complaining about Ukraine’s support for rebel groups in the Sahel region.

On August 27, 2024, a Mali army drone strike killed about 21 civilians in Tinzaouaten.

On September 7, 2024, JNIM Islamists attacked a military school and airport in the capital, Bamako, killing over 77 people and injuring 255. Among the dead were military personnel. At least 20 militants were captured.

On December 1, 2024, seven high-ranking members of the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) were killed in drone strikes by the Mali army.



Impact on Global Affairs

Mali has completely severed cooperation with the USA, France, and the UN, relying on Russia and Wagner mercenaries to address security issues. In addition to increasing Russia’s influence in the Sahel, expanding propaganda channels, Russia’s mercenaries in Mali also have an impact on the Russian-Ukrainian war. The country has become the core of the Russian Sahel Alliance, as well as a center for forming the African Corps of Russian and local mercenaries, through which there are attempts to recruit mercenaries for the war in Ukraine.

According to The Blood Gold Report, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Kremlin has earned more than \$2.5 billion from African gold trade. This figure pertains to three countries: Mali, the Central African Republic, and Sudan. Many foreign companies are involved in Mali’s mining industry, paying taxes to the Mali government, which then funds the Russian mercenaries.

Russia’s presence in Mali and neighboring countries, amid the inertia of European states, is forcing even pro-Western regimes to seek compromise. On December 31, the Ivorian authorities ordered French troops to leave the country. The camp in Côte d’Ivoire, where French troops operate, will be handed over to the Ivorian Armed Forces. The issue of French troop withdrawal is also being discussed in Senegal and Chad. These countries are France’s partners and are strongly opposed to the pro-Russian juntas in neighboring states. However, they do not want to risk due to active anti-colonial propaganda from Russia. Therefore, neighboring countries are taking preventive measures, not waiting until the streets and the army demand change. The readiness of Paris to help is evidently seen as minimal.

Forecast

After the withdrawal of French troops, terrorist activity intensified. Their growing activity in Mali, the expansion of attack territories, could lead to the spread of terrorist activity to other countries in the region, as well as worsen the situation in Burkina Faso and Niger, which face the same threats. Russia will try to maintain influence in the region by solidifying the results achieved. However, the catastrophe in Syria signals growing logistical problems and the loss of the Kremlin’s image, expanding the opportunities for Moscow’s opponents to counteract Russian influence.

Burkina Faso

LOCAL CONFLICTS

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS



Since 2022, the country has been under the control of a military junta led by Ibrahim Traoré, which has sought assistance from Russia. Along with neighboring Mali, Burkina Faso successfully pushed for the gradual withdrawal of French forces from the country. However, the situation has not stabilized, as Islamist groups are actively operating in the provinces.

During the monitoring period in January, Russia sent approximately 300 military personnel to assist in training the Burkina Faso army and patrolling dangerous areas.

On February 25, at least 15 people were killed by ISIS during an attack on a Catholic church in the village of Essakane, in the Oudalan province. On March 31, jihadists from JNIM (Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin) attacked Burkinabe government forces in the Tapoa province, killing at least 41 Burkinabe soldiers and 32 civilians.

On August 25, JNIM launched another major attack on civilians who were building trenches to protect military outposts in the Barsalogo region. The attack resulted in at least 600 deaths and around 300 injuries.



Casualties

In total, more than 3,000 people have been killed in recent years, with over 1.5 million displaced.



Impact on Global Affairs

Since early 2022, Burkina Faso has gradually fallen into Russia's sphere of influence, with active Russian mercenaries and the African Corps operating in the country. Rosatom is preparing to build a nuclear power plant in Burkina Faso.



Burkina Faso has become another weak link in the Sahel region, where Islamist groups are actively strengthening their presence. Moscow has a strong influence in the military government, but their stability depends on Russia's position in neighboring Mali.

INTENSITY

Local conflict, terrorist acts.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Trends

The UN Security Council extended the mandate of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) for another year, reflecting continued international support for stabilizing the region amidst ongoing security challenges.

The DRC government's reinstatement of the death penalty in March 2024, ending a 20-year moratorium, drew criticism from human rights organizations. The execution of 102 individuals labeled as «urban bandits» raised concerns about due process and the risk of unjust convictions.

Overall, in 2024, the DRC faced severe security issues, particularly in the eastern regions, while participating in international efforts to achieve regional stability and garner global support.

Impact on Global Affairs

The DRC's relations with neighboring countries were strained due to the ongoing conflict in the East. Rwanda's support for the M23 rebels led to diplomatic tensions between the two countries, with the DRC accusing Rwanda of interfering in its internal affairs. Rwandan President Paul Kagame urged the DRC to negotiate with the M23 group, emphasizing the need for an internal political resolution to the conflict.

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

 In 2024, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) faced significant security challenges, particularly in its eastern regions, while actively engaging in foreign affairs to address internal conflicts and regional tensions.

The eastern provinces, especially North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri, saw an escalation of violence due to clashes between armed groups, including the revived M23 rebel group. These unrests resulted in mass casualties and the displacement of over 738,000 people between January and March 2024. The worsening security situation aggravated humanitarian needs, with more than 25.4 million people across the country requiring assistance.

The M23 rebel group expanded its presence in North Kivu, capturing strategic towns such as Masisi near the provincial capital, Goma. These rebel successes led to significant displacement of civilians and heightened regional tensions, with neighboring countries expressing concern over the instability. The prolonged conflict contributed to numerous human rights violations, including attacks on internally displaced persons (IDP) camps and civilians. Widespread violence highlighted the fragile security situation.

In January 2025, the rebels launched an offensive and attacked Goma, killing several dozen peacekeepers. Kinshasa blamed Rwanda for the attacks.

Forecast

The geopolitical and security landscape in the DRC in 2025 is fraught with challenges. The worsening conflict in the East, combined with regional dynamics involving neighboring Rwanda, creates significant risks for both national and regional stability.

INTENSITY
Local conflict.

S o m a l i a

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The internationally recognized government continues to control the capital and limited areas. There has been considerable activity by jihadists, particularly from the Al-Shabaab group. On January 21, the U.S. conducted airstrikes northeast of the city of Kismayo, killing three Al-Shabaab militants. On February 6, four explosions at the Bakara market in the capital, Mogadishu, killed at least ten people and injured about fifteen others.

In April, the government army killed about thirty Al-Shabaab militants during an operation in the Mudug region. In June, Al-Shabaab militants attacked four military bases and briefly captured the city of El-Dher, killing many government soldiers. The militants were ultimately defeated in an airstrike with U.S. assistance. In October, more than 50 Al-Shabaab militants were killed during a government operation, supported by the international coalition, in the El-Dher area of the Galgudud region.

Since the beginning of 2023, there has been a conflict in the region between the Somaliland National Army (which seeks independence) and the forces of the «Hatumoo State,» formed by the Dhulbahante clan around Las Anod, the capital of the Sool region. Negotiations are ongoing, with an interim result being the recognition of the Hatumoo administration by the Somali federal government, which seeks to weaken the separatists in Somaliland.

In December, fierce clashes occurred between Ethiopian-backed forces from Jubaland and federal troops near the town of Doolow, Gedo region. Later, Jubaland forces captured the town.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

Casualties

Hundreds of people have been killed and hundreds more injured. Several hundred thousand have been displaced in recent years, especially during the conflict in the Las Anod region.

Impact on Global Affairs

Ethiopia continues to intervene, supporting Jubaland forces and conducting separate negotiations about recognizing the independence of the Somaliland separatists. However, an agreement reached at the end of the month between Somalia and Ethiopia, mediated by Turkey, is likely to reduce Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia's affairs.

Forecast

Somali people are growing weary of the activities of Islamist groups, but the government lacks the resources to quickly regain control of the territory. This process will take time. Strengthening the central government could increase the influence of its external patron, Kenya, especially given Ethiopia's passivity as it deals with its internal issues and resolves its relations with Sudan and Egypt.

INTENSITY

Local conflict, terrorist acts.

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS



In the Lake Chad region, along the borders of Cameroon, Niger, Chad, and Nigeria, the active presence of Islamists from «Boko Haram» continues. At the same time, they are in conflict with their competitors—the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP). The increasing number of attacks on Christian churches intensifies mistrust of the government and undermines stability prospects in Nigeria. Meanwhile, rising tensions are expected in the Sahel region, leading to more waves of refugees. Rebel movements in the Niger Delta (Biafran separatists), Yoruba groups in the Southwest, and various semi-bandit groups are also becoming more active. Conflicts continue in the North between settled farmers and Fulani herders over access to grazing lands and water resources.

During the monitoring period, attacks continued in the Northern part of the country.

At the beginning of 2024, the Islamic State launched a campaign called «Kill them wherever you find them.» This campaign, running from January 1 to 10, led to an increase in attacks across the country.

On February 3, the Islamic State West Africa Province killed 4 police officers in the Nganzai Local Government Area of Borno State.

On March 7, 287 schoolchildren and a teacher were kidnapped from a school in the city of Kuriga, Kaduna State, by armed terrorists on motorcycles.

On June 29, at least 32 people were killed in bombings likely carried out by female suicide bombers in the northeastern Nigerian city of Gwoza.

On July 31, at least 19 people were killed during a Boko Haram attack on a market in Konduga, Borno State.

On August 22, Boko Haram militants killed 13 farmers in the Shirori area.

In December, a military jet mistakenly bombed two villages in Sokoto State during a bandit chase, killing over ten civilians. The bandits represented the new Lakurave group, based in neighboring Mali and Niger, where pro-Russian juntas are in power.

Nigeria



Casualties

Since the Boko Haram crisis began, over 30,000 people have been killed, and more than 25,000 are missing. During the monitoring period, several hundred people were killed.



Humanitarian Consequences

Over 2 million people have been displaced since the start of the conflict.

In Borno Province, the situation remains tense, preventing refugees from returning home.



Trends

It is estimated that up to 25 million Nigerians are facing a crisis or intensifying hunger, including 1.1 million in an emergency state. The country has irregular rainfall, which has led to a reduction in wheat crops in the North. These problems are compounded by the failure of the experiment to transition to a cashless economy, which was attempted in 2023.

Forecast

The growing instability and increasing religious tensions in the 200-million-strong state threaten large-scale conflict in the medium term. Support for Biafran separatism (oil-rich Niger Delta states) is growing in the Southeast, and in the Southwest, Yoruba separatism is on the rise. The government is unable to stop banditry and coastal piracy. However, stabilization remains possible with a consensus between the elites of the Christian South and the Muslim North.

INTENSITY

Local conflict, terrorism.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

Mozambique

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Since 2017, the gas-rich northern province of Cabo Delgado has been suffering from attacks by the terrorist group Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCA), with their goal being the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the region. This is further exacerbated by popular anger over the unjust distribution of the region's resource revenues and the marginalization of the local Muslim population.

A significant increase in the number of attacks began in 2020. In 2021, major clashes occurred in the areas of Palma, Nangade, Mocímboa, and Macomia within the Cabo Delgado province. In the summer, the armed forces of partner countries — Rwanda and members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) — began a joint operation in Mozambique, liberating part of the cities.

In 2022, the opposition intensified, with the geographic scope and number of casualties increasing. At the beginning of the year, the central part of Cabo Delgado remained the main area of conflict. However, from June 2022, a new offensive by the terrorist forces began, expanding the conflict zone to neighboring districts — Ancuabe, Chiure, and Mecufi — which had previously been calm.

Thanks to cooperation with partners, Mozambique managed to significantly weaken the activities of the

terrorists in 2023.

Description of the current situation and latest events during the monitored period

In 2024, a new wave of violence was recorded in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, including numerous attacks by militants associated with ISIS.

In February, attacks took place in the Chiure district (southern part of Cabo Delgado). In mid-March, Mozambique's security forces engaged in a battle with militants near the Macomia district. Between April and June, attacks occurred in remote areas, which the government attempted to counter with increased military presence.

In July, the Mozambican government announced a new large-scale operation against the militants, drawing support from regional partners such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC). However, clashes continued, resulting in casualties among government forces, including in August, when at least 15 soldiers were killed during an attack on a military base near Macomia.

The complex political situation, due to post-election protests in central regions, hindered efforts to combat the militant threat. In the last quarter of the year, new attacks were reported in the Palma area, where infrastructure was once again destroyed, and 6 people were killed.

INTENSITY

Local conflict,
terrorist acts



Casualties

Over the 5 years of the conflict, between 4,000 and 6,000 people have been killed. In 2024, more than 150 people were killed as a result of the conflict in the Cabo Delgado province and violence in other regions of Mozambique.

Specifically, about 40–50 civilians were killed during attacks on villages (in the Chiure, Macomia, and Palma areas), accompanied by building destruction, abductions, and arson. Approximately 110 military personnel were killed during combat and attacks. These figures are preliminary, and due to difficult access to the remote regions of Cabo Delgado, the exact number of casualties may be higher.



Humanitarian Consequences

Over 5 years of conflict:

- 1.5 million people needed humanitarian aid of some kind;

- Around 950,000 people were displaced internally.

During 2024, the number of internally displaced persons and refugees due to the conflict in Mozambique significantly increased. In particular, at least 100,000 people were forced to flee the Cabo Delgado province. Issues in refugee camps: due to overcrowding, there is a shortage of food, water, medicine, and sanitation facilities. Many people remain vulnerable without access to basic services.

Forecast

Post-election protests that erupted in 2024 due to allegations of election fraud are likely to continue.

Armed terrorist groups are expected to continue attacks, spreading violence not only in Cabo Delgado but also in neighboring provinces, due to the difficulty of completely eliminating the militants and the potential recruitment of new resources and fighters through cross-border support from other groups.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

Chad



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

In 2021, presidential elections were held in Chad, with Idriss Déby winning for the sixth time. The armed group «Front for Change and Concord in Chad» (FACT), which is believed to be linked to Libyan military commander Khalifa Haftar, attacked a border post of the Chadian military. They were joined by units of the «Military Command Council for the Salvation of the Republic» (CCMSR) and other groups. On April 20, President Idriss Déby was killed, a day after being declared the winner of the elections. The interim government was taken over by the military, led by the late president's son, Mahamat Idriss Déby.

Due to widespread public protests against the military's power grab, the National Transitional Council was established in Chad to demonstrate the military's willingness to relinquish power. In January 2022, the Chadian government released several opposition figures. In the following month, the military's transitional government accused the opposition «Union of Resistance Forces» (UFR) of attempting to recruit mercenaries from the Wagner Group to assist in uprisings.

On July 29, 2021, the National Transitional Council in N'Djamena presented a roadmap for the restoration of democracy in Chad. In March 2022, peace talks were held in Doha, Qatar, involving the Déby regime and several rebel groups, including FACT, CCMSR, and UF. More than 20 rebel groups officially withdrew from the

Doha negotiations in mid-July 2022. On August 7, 2022, the military government of Chad signed an agreement with 42 opposition groups. Five other rebel factions, including FACT, refused to join the agreement.

In 2024, several significant incidents related to security occurred in Chad:

- On March 25, seven soldiers were killed during a bombing attack, likely carried out by Boko Haram near Lake Chad;

- On June 18-19, explosions at an ammunition depot in N'Djamena resulted in nine deaths and 46 injuries;

- On October 27, a terrorist group attacked a military base on Borkou Island in Lake Chad, killing about 40 Chadian soldiers and injuring many others;

- On November 9, seventeen soldiers were killed during a Boko Haram attack on a military base near Lake Chad;

- On January 8, 2024, a group of militants attempted to attack the presidential palace but was unsuccessful.

In 2024, political life in Chad saw significant changes, particularly in international relations and internal security.

In May 2024, presidential elections were held, marking the end of the transitional period following Idriss Déby's death. General Mahamat

INTENSITY

Local conflict.

Déby Itno, the late president's son, won with 61.3% of the vote. Parliamentary elections were held in December, but were boycotted by the opposition.

On November 28, 2024, the Chadian government announced the suspension of the defense cooperation agreement with France. This decision came as a surprise, as France had been a key ally of Chad in the fight against Islamist groups in the Sahel region. As a result of the termination of the agreement, France began withdrawing its military forces from Chad. On December 10, 2024, two Mirage fighter jets were withdrawn from N'Djamena, marking the beginning of the end of decades of French military presence in the region.

Amidst changing relations with France, Chad increased cooperation with other states. In September 2024, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán announced plans to send Hungarian troops to Chad to help

manage migration flows from the Sahel region to Europe. Additionally, Russia has actively sought to establish military cooperation with Chad.

In January 2024, President Mahamat Déby visited Moscow and held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. In June of the same year, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited N'Djamena to continue discussions on further cooperation. A Russian cultural center was opened in N'Djamena, signaling Russia's intent to strengthen cultural and media ties with Chad. In September 2024, Chadian authorities detained a group of Russians and a Belarusian, including Maxim Shugalei, who was linked to the Wagner private military company. They were later released.

The deepening relationship between Chad and Russia has raised concerns in France and the United States, who see this as a threat to their interests in the region. Western countries are worried about the possible strengthening of Russian influence in Africa, particularly through entities like the Wagner Group.

Forecast

The forecast for Chad in 2025 includes challenges in security, the economy, and international relations. It is expected that the government of Mahamat Déby Itno will focus on consolidating its power, stabilizing the situation around Lake Chad, and rebuilding the economy after the impact of the conflicts. Continued tensions from Boko Haram and other threats from radical groups will remain key issues. In international relations, Chad may continue to strengthen ties with Russia and develop new partnerships following France's departure.

Cameroon

LOCAL CONFLICTS

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The conflict in Cameroon continues between the government and the English-speaking minority, with roots dating back to the colonial period. The territory was once divided between Britain and France. After gaining independence, Cameroon had a federal system, which was replaced by a unitary system in 1972, leading to a wave of resistance. Since then, discontent has been growing in the region, which led to an armed conflict in 2016. On October 1, 2017, independence was declared for the former Southern Cameroons, with the movement led by the militarized group ADF (Ambazonia Defence Forces). However, the central government was able to maintain control over the cities and gradually pushed the separatists out of most of the towns.

During the monitoring period, the activity of the Anglophone separatists continued, but overall, it was on the decline. On January 21, Cameroonian forces captured the ADF's top commander, Efang. In March, they carried out a series of raids against separatist hideouts in the Big Babanki, Bamenda, and Bambili areas. On April 10, 2024, rebels attacked a Cameroonian Rapid Intervention Battalion base in the Kumbo area.

On May 4, the former spokesperson for the ADF and president of the Ambazonia People's Rights Protection Group, Kapo Daniel, called for an end to the armed struggle against Cameroon. In a communiqué, they called for negotiations

and a transition to nonviolent resistance, and urged rebels to use their weapons only in self-defense until an agreement is reached.

On July 30, rebels from the Bulani group (operating on the border with Nigeria) attacked the village of Sop in the Ndu area, burning several houses.

On September 24, one of the Ambazonian leaders, Ayabu Cho Lucas, was arrested in Norway and accused of inciting crimes against humanity.

⊕ Casualties

Over the course of the conflict, more than 2,000 government soldiers and over 3,000 rebels have been killed.

🏠 Humanitarian Consequences

In recent years, more than 700,000 people have become refugees, with tens of thousands of Anglophones fleeing to neighboring Nigeria. Over 2,000 people have died.

INTENSITY

Local conflict of high intensity with casualties from clashes and terrorist attacks.

Negotiations

Attempts at negotiations between the government and the Ambazonian separatists began in late 2020 and early 2021 but have so far been unsuccessful.



Impact on Global Affairs

President Paul Biya is attempting to balance between Western and Russian influence, as previous reports suggested the possibility of hiring Wagner Group mercenaries to support the rebels. Along with neighboring Central African Republic, Cameroon has become a center for economic activities of the Wagner Group. This includes the gold mine in Ndassima, CAR, with gold bars being secretly shipped to Russia via the Cameroonian port of Douala.



Forecast

The prolonged conflict weakens the country, which has already created conditions for the activities of both Islamist groups and Russian mercenaries to intensify. However, recently, government forces have evidently been prevailing, which creates conditions for stable territorial control.

Western Sahara

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

The conflict in the region, which reignited on November 13, 2020, around a border crossing and road near the village of Al-Kharkarat, continued throughout 2024 with mutual shelling and attacks on positions, including the use of rocket weapons and drones.

Intensity

Low-intensity local conflict.

Casualties

47 Moroccan soldiers killed.

113 Moroccan soldiers injured.

15 POLISARIO militants killed, an unknown number injured.

1 Algerian soldier killed.

3 gold miners killed.

Trends

Morocco is gradually increasing support for its position regarding sovereignty over Western Sahara, offering autonomy for the region within the kingdom. Morocco is also continuing to increase its defense spending and is currently the second-largest importer of arms in Africa. It is likely that Morocco is considering a military option to resolve the conflict while simultaneously waging war against Algeria. Meanwhile, due to the change in leadership in Syria and the weakening of Iran, POLISARIO is facing resource problems. It is possible that Damascus may retract its recognition of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. It is also worth considering the shift in U.S. leadership, as during Donald Trump's first term, he recognized Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara.

Negotiations

On October 18, UN Special Envoy to Western Sahara Staffan de Mistura proposed dividing the territory of Western Sahara between Morocco and POLISARIO. Both sides rejected this idea. In late October, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the Mission for a Referendum in Western Sahara for another year. Russia and Mozambique (non-permanent members of the UN Security Council) abstained, and Algeria (also a non-permanent member of the Security Council) did not participate in the vote.

Impact on Global Affairs

In 2024, Western Sahara's sovereignty was recognized by Finland, France, Brazil, and Sierra Leone. France's support for Morocco is particularly significant in the context of its confrontation with Algeria. Meanwhile, Algeria continues to rely on Russia, purchasing arms, while China is also involved by providing Algeria with drones and missiles. Although the Western Sahara conflict itself does not directly impact global processes, it serves as an indicator of the relations between several countries involved. For example, the change in leadership in Syria led to the normalization of relations between Rabat and Damascus, which had long supported POLISARIO. Meanwhile, Algeria, preparing for Donald Trump's inauguration, signed a \$720,000 contract with the American lobbying firm BGR Group in September. Earlier, in July, the African Union decided to exclude POLISARIO from all meetings with international partners. Therefore, throughout 2024, Morocco's position strengthened, while Iran, Syria, and Algeria lost the proxy war in the region to Israel. Additionally, it is important to note that Rabat's control over Al-Kharkarat gives it de facto influence over migration flows to the EU via Western Sahara.

Forecast

The conflict will remain relevant in the short- and medium-term future.

LOCAL CONFLICTS



Niger

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

In August 2023, a coup occurred in Niger with the help of Russia, resulting in the removal of President Mohamed Bazoum. In response, ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) imposed sanctions on the junta that seized power and issued an ultimatum: 7 days to restore power to President Bazoum or face military intervention. However, the intervention did not occur, and peaceful negotiations were chosen as the primary tool for resolving the situation. The junta capitalized on anti-colonial rhetoric, particularly against the U.S. and France, promising to stabilize the country, where jihadist groups and Tuareg separatists seeking self-determination are active. Despite these promises, the situation remains complex.

During the monitoring period in January, Niger, together with Mali and Burkina Faso, announced its withdrawal from ECOWAS, accusing the organization of abandoning the “ideals of its founding fathers and pan-Africanism.” In February, Niger canceled a military agreement with the U.S. that allowed American military personnel to operate on its territory. In 2023, around 1,100 U.S. troops were stationed in Niger, operating from two bases, including the Nigerien Air Base 201 near Agadez. In April, the U.S. agreed to withdraw its forces. On March 21, 23 government soldiers were killed in an ambush by militants in the Tillaberi region. On June 21, militants killed 21 government soldiers near the border with Burkina Faso.

Intensity

Internal conflict, terrorist acts.

Negotiations

As of now, there are no agreements on a transitional period after which power should return to civilian control. ECOWAS is working towards securing the release of President Bazoum and setting the shortest possible deadlines for transferring power to civilians.

Impact on Global Affairs

The coup in Niger shifted the country's foreign policy orientation. Under President Mohamed Bazoum, Niger was a reliable partner to the U.S. and France both economically (uranium extracted in Niger covered 15% of France's needs and a fifth of the EU's needs) and in terms of security (a French military contingent was in the country, and there were U.S. bases). Additionally, Niger was part of the Crimean Platform and voted in support of Ukraine at the UN.

After the coup, relations with France were «frozen,» and the French military contingent was withdrawn. The Nigerien junta also succeeded in having U.S. forces leave the country.

Forecast

Niger suffers from terrorist attacks by jihadists and cannot secure its safety alone; therefore, it needs external help. Niger's shift into Russia's political orbit strengthened Moscow's position in the Sahel, but their future depends on the stability of foreign support.

Senegal

LOCAL CONFLICTS

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Since 1982, the Casamance region of Senegal (bordering Gambia and Guinea-Bissau) has been embroiled in a conflict between the separatists of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) and the government. The first ceasefire was signed in 2004. However, after the death of the separatist leader Augustin Diamacoune Senghor in 2007, the movement fragmented into several factions, which continued the struggle. Since 2015, the conflict has entered a phase of de-escalation. However, from June 2023 to April 2024, protests related to the arrest of opposition leader Ousmane Sonko took place in Casamance and across Senegal.

Intensity

A local, low-intensity conflict.

Casualties

60 killed, several hundred injured, around 500 arrested.

Trends

In recent years, the Senegalese Armed Forces have dealt significant losses to various factions of the MFDC. Most of them laid down their weapons and surrendered. The lack of public information regarding terrorist attacks or combat during 2024 (except for minor clashes in January) indirectly confirms the weakening of the separatists. At the same time, such a pause is driven by political opposition in Senegal. After the victory of President Bassirou Diomay Fay and his party "African Patriots of Senegal for Work, Ethics, and Brotherhood" (PASTEF) in the parliamentary elections, the likelihood of new protests has decreased. However, Fay's and PASTEF's hardline stance on separatists, including banning the discussion of autonomy for Casamance, could lead to a new wave of conflict in 2025.

Impact on Global Affairs

Given that the new government of Senegal is negatively inclined towards France and cautiously establishes ties with pro-Russian juntas in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, it is likely that Senegal could move closer to Moscow. The realization of this scenario will also depend on how successful Fay's peace initiatives are. Additionally, attention should be paid to the growing cooperation between Senegal and China in the fields of weapons and military equipment. China has also established direct sea connections with Dakar. Given that French troops are expected to withdraw from Senegal by 2025, it is likely that their place, in one form or another, may be taken by Chinese or even Russian advisors.

Negotiations

There were no direct negotiations between the parties during 2024. Communication occurred through the reactions of leaders of specific factions to statements made by President Fay. For example, in April, the «Mangukoro» faction responded positively to Fay's victory. Similarly, in November, this group reacted to the ban on the publication and sale of a book by French historian Severin Dalberto, which deals with the history of Casamance's struggle against the government. At the same time, Fay's government repeatedly emphasized the issue of demining large areas of the region and preparing a peace plan.

Forecast

The conflict will remain in a phase of de-escalation.

West Papua (Indonesia)

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Throughout 2024, the National Liberation Army of West Papua (NLWP) continued a series of attacks on Indonesian National Army (TNI) targets, Indonesian National Police (POLRI) stations, and the residences of Indonesian migrants in six provinces of the region: South-West Papua, West Papua (not to be confused with the whole region), Central Papua, Papua, Highland Papua, and South Papua.

Intensity

A local, low-intensity conflict.

Casualties

3 killed Indonesian policemen.

1 killed Indonesian soldier, 1 wounded.

12 killed NLWP militants and local criminal groups, 3 captives, about 20 arrested.

7 killed civilians (including 1 New Zealand pilot), 3 wounded.

Negotiations

Throughout 2024, as in previous years, Jakarta did not conduct negotiations with militants, who, according to Indonesian law, are considered terrorists. An exception was communication with New Zealand regarding the release of a New Zealand pilot, Philip Mertens, who was captured by NLWP fighters in 2023.

Trends

Various NLWP factions and the local criminal groups supporting them continued to engage in arson of schools, medical facilities, and attacks on police and army posts. Given that Indonesia's new president (since October 2024), Prabowo Subianto, has reinstated a migration program for Indonesians to the six provinces of West Papua, it is expected that the militants' activities will intensify. It is highly likely that Jakarta will increase its military and police presence in the region to maintain the appeal of migration from other islands.

Impact on Global Affairs

The NLWP traditionally seeks to internationalize the conflict, looking for diplomatic and resource support abroad, including taking foreign hostages. Meanwhile, Indonesia continues to insist that the events in West Papua are of an internal nature. The issue of armed confrontation in the region is often mentioned in the context of trade talks between the EU and Indonesia regarding a free trade agreement. It is known that Indonesian military forces practice torture on captured militants. In September 2024, several MPs from the UK's Labour Party met with Benny Wenda, the head of the political wing of the NLWP. In October, Indonesia once again expressed its dissatisfaction with Vanuatu's continued support for the separatist movement in West Papua.

Forecast

The conflict will maintain a low intensity. The NLWP and its allied groups will avoid direct confrontations with the Indonesian military and police. Militants will focus on capturing foreigners as prisoners, as happened in 2023 and 2024, and on destroying civilian infrastructure and local government institutions. It is quite likely that the Prabowo Subianto government may adopt a policy of diluting the Papuan population among the Indonesian populace.



Balochistan (Pakistan and Iran)

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Throughout 2024, Pakistan and Iran continued to focus their joint efforts on combating Baloch separatists in the Sistan and Balochistan province (Iran) and the Balochistan province (Pakistan). On January 16, Iran launched a series of missile strikes on Pakistani territory (Koh-e-Sabz, Balochistan). On January 18, Pakistan conducted Operation Marg Bar Sarmachar, shelling the Iranian city of Saravan (Sistan and Balochistan). On June 22, Islamabad launched Operation Azm-e-Istikhkam against the Balochistan Liberation Army, the Balochistan Liberation Front, the Sindh Liberation Army, and several Islamist organizations.



Trends

Combat activities on Iranian territory are significantly less intense than in neighboring Pakistan. Throughout the year, the Baloch separatist organization Jaish al-Adl carried out at least five known terrorist attacks in Iran, while Pakistan experienced over 100 different attacks. However, it should be noted that some information is not publicly disclosed by Tehran, in contrast to Islamabad. One indirect piece of evidence for this is the relatively accurate information on the number of injured Pakistani military and police officers, as well as the locations and nature of the militants' attacks. Despite some losses, Pakistan remains determined to continue the operation, as it aims not only to physically eliminate or capture the leaders of Baloch, Sindh, and Islamist organizations, but also to promote the economic development of the Balochistan and Sindh provinces.



Impact on Global Affairs

The Balochistan conflict is gradually contributing to the rapprochement between Iran and Pakistan. Tehran and Islamabad also share a common view on the situation in Afghanistan and a united stance on countering local Islamist groups. This, in turn, brings them closer to Russia and China. Beijing is particularly interested in Pakistan conducting operations against Baloch and Sindh separatists, as the Gwadar port (Balochistan) is a key transit point for Chinese goods in the region. China also aims to gain access to mineral extraction in the Balochistan region. Through this province, as well as neighboring Sindh, passes the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Since August 2023, Pakistan has expressed its intention to join BRICS. In October 2024, Islamabad hosted the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit. The US, similarly to China, is interested in the success of Pakistan's operations and provides corresponding arms and military equipment at Islamabad's request. Meanwhile, Israel and India support Baloch and Sindh separatists in Iran and Pakistan. It is also known that Afghan Taliban have significantly increased their training and equipment levels.

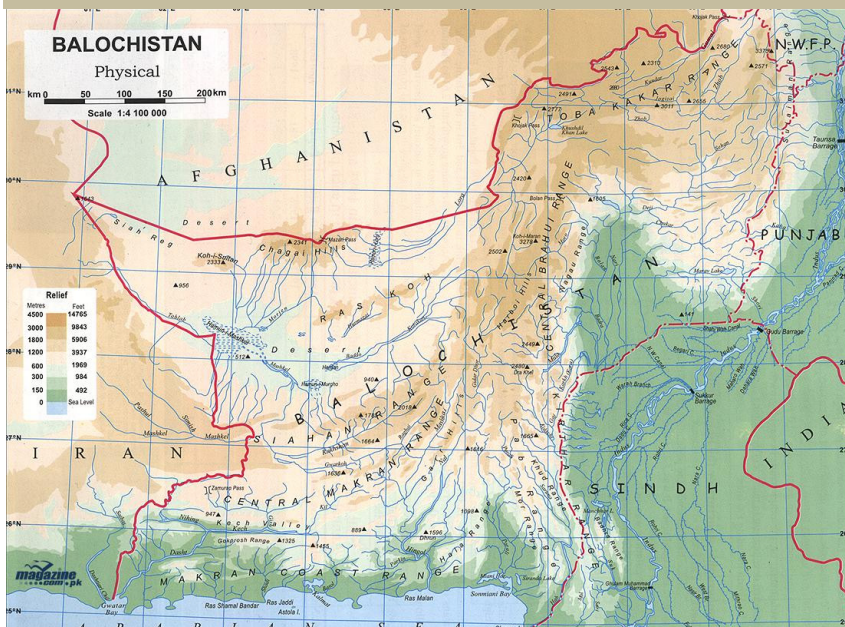
INTENSITY

Local conflict.

LOCAL CONFLICTS

Negotiations

Neither Islamabad nor Tehran are currently holding negotiations with separatist organizations. In early January, after exchanging strikes on each other's territories, Iran and Pakistan mutually recalled their ambassadors. However, a few days later, both announced the normalization of relations. In November, during a meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad, the parties discussed the possibilities of joint actions against Baloch separatists.



Casualties

459 killed, 671 injured Pakistani soldiers and police officers.

40 killed, 2 injured Iranian soldiers and police officers.

574 killed, 85 injured, 244 captured and arrested Baloch and Sindh separatists, as well as Islamist militants.

Forecast

Pakistan will continue Operation Azm-e-Istikhkam, while Baloch and Sindh separatists will focus on terrorist attacks, avoiding large-scale clashes. At the same time, one can expect increased support from the Afghan Taliban for local Islamist organizations. Iran and Pakistan will increase their level of cooperation, as Tehran is directly interested in the success of Islamabad's actions, as it affects its national security. There is a possibility of combat operations moving to Afghan territory (in the context of fighting Islamists) and conducting joint Iranian-Pakistani operations against the Baloch.

Terrorist Attacks Thailand

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

Throughout 2024, militants from the National Revolutionary Front (Barisan Revolusi Nasional) continued a series of terrorist attacks in Thailand’s southern provinces — Yala, Narathiwat, Pattani, Songkhla (the districts of Saba Yoi, Tefa, Chana, and Natawi). Among them: March 22 (a series of arson attacks and murders of Burmese-origin civilian workers in Yala), June 25 (the murder of a well-known local Malay human rights defender in Pattani), June 30 (a car bomb explosion in Yala), September 26 (the bombing of a military convoy in Narathiwat), October 10 (an attack on a border post in Pattani), October 18 (the detonation of improvised explosive devices in Narathiwat), November 7 (the murder of a head of one of the municipalities in Narathiwat), November 20 (the grenade bombing in Songkhla).



Casualties

1 killed and 16 injured Thai military and police officers.
4 killed and 24 injured civilians.

Trends

Compared to the previous year, in 2024, despite the start of peace negotiations, NRF militants increased the number of attacks. Notably, for the first time in five years, a terrorist attack was carried out in Songkhla province (Tefa district), where more than 63% of the population is Thai. Overall, the security situation in Thailand has significantly worsened. In addition to the NRF’s terrorist activities in the southern provinces, there is a gradual export of the conflict from Myanmar to northern Thailand.

INTENSITY
Terrorist Attacks.

Negotiations

As expected, on February 7, Bangkok and the NRF militants began negotiations, facilitated by Kuala Lumpur. The result was an agreement on a roadmap for conflict resolution. On July 1, Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim appointed a new facilitator for the negotiations between Bangkok and the NRF—former head of Malaysia's National Security Council Mohd Rabin bin Bisara. This change was prompted by the failure of his predecessor, General Zulkifli Zainal Abidin, known for his rigidity and inflexibility, to make any progress. In August, negotiations were stalled after the removal of Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin from office. On December 16, Thai and Malaysian Prime Ministers Pheuthongthan Chinnawat and Anwar Ibrahim announced progress in peace talks. At the end of the month, news emerged about the involvement of Pheuthongthan Chinnawat's father, former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawat, in the negotiations.



Impact on Global Affairs

The conflict in southern Thailand primarily affects its relations with neighboring Malaysia. This is due to the fact that local separatists are ethnic Malays. For quite some time, Kuala Lumpur, while not officially supporting the NRF militants, has sympathized with them, as have the general Malaysian population. The same is true for Indonesia, which is home to a significant number of ethnic Malays. At the same

time, beyond the ethnic factor, there is also a religious one. Thais are Buddhists, while Malays are Muslims. However, after Anwar Ibrahim came to power in Malaysia, the country shifted towards supporting conflict resolution. Kuala Lumpur faces certain security issues with Indonesian-oriented Islamic groups, and thus, it does not seek direct involvement in the southern Thailand conflict.

Forecast

Negotiations between the conflicting parties will remain relevant. However, no concrete results should be expected, as a quick resolution of the conflict is not a priority for the ruling Phai Thai party, led by Pheuthongthan Chinnawat. This is due to the continued influence of the military in the decision-making process. Local smugglers and drug cartels also have no interest in resolving the conflict.

Latin America

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

In 2024, Latin America remained a region with high levels of socio-economic instability. Countries were at the intersection of global powers' interests, primarily the US and China.

In December 2024, after 25 years of negotiations, an agreement on free trade between Mercosur (the economic union of South American countries) and the European Union was finalized. This created one of the largest free trade areas in the world.

Argentina President Javier Milei, despite his campaign promises to exit Mercosur, supported the agreement.

The actions of the Argentine government attracted the most attention from analysts during the monitoring period. Javier Milei implemented a series of market reforms that began to yield results by the end of 2024: inflation dropped to its lowest level in three years, the budget deficit was eliminated, and the economy emerged from recession. If this trend continues in 2025, Milei's policies will be regarded as extremely successful.

On July 28, 2024, **Venezuela**

held presidential elections. They caused significant political resonance, with international observers labeling them as rigged. This was due to the fact that the administration of current President Nicolás Maduro controlled most state institutions and suppressed political opposition. Edmund Gonzalez Urrutia, the candidate of the united opposition, who is considered the true winner of the elections, was forced to flee to Spain seeking political asylum. This occurred amid repression against dissenters and a political crisis both domestically and internationally following the announcement of Maduro's victory.

In **Colombia**, 2024 was marked by political changes, an escalation of violence from armed groups, and heightened international tensions. On February 27, President Gustavo Petro announced the cessation of weapons purchases from Israeli manufacturers and called Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip genocide. Over the course of the year, dozens of civilians died as a

result of terrorist attacks by anti-government groups.

In **Mexico**, June 2024 saw presidential elections in which Claudia Sheinbaum emerged victorious. She was supported by socialist President Manuel López Obrador and the Morena party. A wave of protests erupted in the country, with dissatisfaction directed at the election results and Obrador's socialist policies of previous years. Sheinbaum's victory means that the government will continue its policy for the next six years — the term length for presidents in Mexico.

The crisis at the border between Mexico and the US continues. In 2024, more than 100,000 illegal immigrants attempted to cross into the US each month. It is expected that with Donald Trump's return to the White House, the number of illegal immigrants will significantly decrease.

INTENSITY

Internal political crisis, threat of escalation into civil war.

INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS



Trends

Outbreaks of socio-economic instability are typical for almost all Latin American countries.

The socialist policies of Maduro's government in Venezuela, Lula in Brazil, Petro in Colombia, and others are pushing tens of thousands of citizens into poverty. However, the example of Javier Milei in Argentina should encourage Latin Americans to make more measured choices in upcoming elections.



Argentine President
Javier Milei



Humanitarian Consequences

Hundreds of thousands of citizens from Caribbean Basin countries attempt to reach the US every month, creating a humanitarian disaster in neighboring Mexico and the southern US states.

Riots in Mexico, Chile, and Peru, as well as terrorist attacks in Venezuela and Colombia, lead to numerous casualties, infrastructure destruction, and damage to various forms of property.



Casualties

Dozens killed, hundreds injured during protests. Dozens of victims of terrorist attacks in Colombia. Hundreds of Central American migrants who died trying to enter the US.



Impact on Global Affairs

Latin America has noticeably fallen out of the sphere of interest of the US under the Biden administration. The region is becoming an area of influence for China, which is establishing cooperation with national governments through cheap loans. For example, in 2024, Beijing invested in strategic infrastructure, opening a port in Chancay, Peru. It is likely that 2025 will be a year of increased US involvement in the region under the Trump administration.

Forecast

New and existing socialist governments will continue to hinder the region's development, making it more vulnerable to external influences. Argentina will be a striking exception, achieving significant economic development in 2025.

INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS

Bangladesh

EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

On August 5, 2024, following mass protests, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh resigned and fled to India. The next day, the country's President Mohammed Shahabuddin prematurely dissolved the parliament, and on August 8, a temporary government was formed under Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus.



Trends

Since all major demands of the protesters (restructuring the quota system for state job recruitment, resignation of Sheikh Hasina, and formation of a politically neutral government) have been met, the internal political situation in Bangladesh has stabilized. Chief advisor Muhammad Yunus has created six commissions tasked with reforming the constitution, electoral system, police, public administration, judiciary, and anti-corruption system. According to the new government, parliamentary elections are expected either at the end of 2025 or the beginning of 2026. However, the establishment of a Constituent Assembly must occur beforehand. Accordingly, the election that will determine the new government in Bangladesh will have a two-stage nature.



Casualties

Approximately 1,500 killed and 20,000 injured.



Impact on Global Affairs

The revolution in Bangladesh has significantly strained relations with neighboring India. While Dhaka and New Delhi signed several economic agreements in June 2024, aiming for a free trade zone, anti-Indian protests are now taking place in Bangladesh. This is due to India sheltering former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, where the majority of the population is Muslim, there have been persecutions and arrests of Hindus, attacks on their temples, and more. Overall, the fall of Hasina's regime could lead to a redistribution of spheres of influence in Bangladesh. Under her rule, Dhaka maintained normal relations with New Delhi, Beijing, and Washington. Consequently, the change in power in Bangladesh poses risks for India and opportunities for China. However, until power is transferred to a democratic government and the constitution is reformed, it is unlikely that major states will establish stable relations with the current government in Dhaka.

INTENSITY

Revolution, internal political crisis.

Negotiations

In Bangladesh, a dialogue continues between political forces regarding the future constitutional order in the country. This involves the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, student movements (which are expected to form a political party), and Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (an Islamic party). The main issue is the legitimacy of the current temporary government under Muhammad Yunus, as its formation is outside Bangladesh's legal framework. There are also discussions about the «reconstruction» of the constitution – either rewriting the current document or adopting a new one. In January 2025, public discussions on these reform directions are expected, as the commission is set to present them to Yunus' government by December 31, 2024.



Forecast

The electoral process will not begin until the new constitution draft and electoral system reforms are completed. According to a recent poll, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by Khaleda Zia, currently enjoys the greatest voter support. If elections were held in early 2025, the party would secure a majority in parliament. Meanwhile, sporadic protests against the current President Mohammed Shahabuddin (elected by a parliament controlled by the Awami League led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina) and anti-Indian protests will continue.

INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS

The Balkans



EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

In 2024, as in previous years, the Balkans remained one of the epicenters of conflict in Europe. Political, social, and economic instability were observed not only in the Western Balkans region, which traditionally attracts the attention of the EU and the US, but also within Bulgaria and Romania, particularly during Romania's presidential elections.

The Western Balkan countries (Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) did not experience acute internal conflicts, but existing tensions continued to deepen.

This primarily concerns the relationship between **Serbia** and **Kosovo**. Belgrade and Pristina made no progress in their dialogue on normalization, and all EU-mediated meetings in Brussels ended without results. Serbia continues to accuse Kosovo of failing to meet the terms of the 2013 Brussels Agreement, which stipulated the formation of the Association of Serbian Municipalities. This remains Belgrade's key demand for

normalizing relations with Pristina, which has consistently refused to comply. Prime Minister Albin Kurti has repeatedly stated that this would lead to the creation of a «grey zone» in Kosovo, controlled by Belgrade and inaccessible to the government in Pristina.

The tension between Serbia and Kosovo is compounded by the absence of fully functioning government institutions, judicial, and law enforcement systems in the northern municipalities of Kosovo, where Kosovo Serbs reside. Local elections in these northern municipalities, scheduled for autumn 2025, are expected to address this issue.

One of the most serious incidents that further hindered dialogue between Serbia and the partially recognized **Kosovo** occurred at the end of November. An explosion took place on the Ibar-Lepence Canal in the Zubin Potok municipality. As a result of the explosion, critical infrastructure, including energy facilities, was damaged. Belgrade and Pristina exchanged accusations, and representatives

of the international peacekeeping forces KFOR and EULEX (the EU mission in Kosovo) reported a deterioration of the security situation in Kosovo. Similar statements from KFOR and EULEX are occasionally made and align with the rhetoric from both Belgrade and Pristina. Each state attempts to prove the other's guilt to the international community, using media, social networks, and meetings with EU and US representatives. This disrupts constructive dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo, diverting both Belgrade and Pristina from addressing pressing internal and external issues.

The **Serbian** government largely ignores the crisis phenomena in Serbian society. Manifestations of this include protests by Albanians in the southern part of the country and mass demonstrations by students and activists. Albanian protests took place in the Preševo Valley (the collective name for the southern Serbian municipalities of Bujanovac, Preševo, and Medveđa) on ethnic grounds.

Protesters repeatedly claimed that they faced discrimination from the Serbian government. Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić and Prime Minister Miloš Vučević see these Albanian protests as being influenced by Kosovo, stating that the escalation of the «Albanian issue» benefits Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti.

Another manifestation of the internal crisis in Serbia was environmental protests, which became relevant again after the government revived the lithium mining project. Environmental activists and civil organizations oppose this project, but the government disregards public opinion, citing the economic and social interests of citizens.

While the government openly ignores protests from Albanians and environmental activists, it was forced to address the student protests. The trigger for the mass street demonstrations by students was a tragedy in the city of Novi Sad on November 1, 2024. A roof at the railway station collapsed, killing 15 people. On November 5, protests by students and opposition political forces took place in Novi Sad. The demonstrations later became more student-focused, leading to the blocking of the operations of various rectorates and faculties in Belgrade, Niš, Kragujevac, and Novi Sad. By the end of November, 85 faculties supported

the blockades, and 73 secondary schools joined the protests. The main demands raised by opposition political forces and youth from the outset included: holding those responsible for the railway station's renovation accountable; publishing the complete documentation related to the renovation; fighting corruption in the country; and closing cases against students and activists arrested during the November and December protests.

The student protests unexpectedly gained support from teachers, scientists, cultural and technical workers, and farmers. As a result, the government declared the school year prematurely over. To calm the students somewhat, the government published some documents related to the companies that carried out the railway station renovations. However, this was not enough for the demonstrators, who believe the government is hiding documentation that could reveal corruption links involving Prime Minister Vučević (who was the mayor of Novi Sad for a long time).

The government sees foreign intelligence agencies behind student protests, believing they aim to destabilize Serbia and remove President Vučić from power. Croatia has also been accused, with Serbia's leadership blaming it for organizing the

protests.

As expected, internal processes in **Albania** intensified in 2024, though the country managed to officially open «Cluster 1» in its EU negotiation process. The political and social crises that began in previous years have repeatedly brought citizens to the streets. The main demands included the resignation of the current government led by Edi Rama, the formation of a technical government before the parliamentary elections in May 2025, and the release of leaders of the Democratic Party.

Albanian citizens have shown dissatisfaction with Rama's government and his Socialist Party for several years. Opposition parties, including the Democratic Party and the Freedom Party of former president Ilir Meta, accuse the prime minister of power usurpation, authoritarianism, and corruption. The latter issue is key in Albania's negotiations with the EU, hindering the country's progress on the European path. Brussels expects Tirana to fight corruption and reform its judiciary. In October 2024, former president Ilir Meta (2017–2022) was arrested on corruption charges. He called his detention a political decision by the current prime minister, Edi Rama. Similar accusations were made against the current prime minister in 2024 by former prime minister Sali

Berisha, Mayor of Himara Fredi Beleri, and other senior officials in Albania. The case involving the arrest of ethnic Greek Fredi Beleri, who became mayor of Himara but could not assume office due to allegations of voter bribery, worsened relations between Albania and Greece. Athens repeatedly urged Tirana to stop ethnic persecution of the Greek population in Albania. The Greek government promised to block Albania's EU integration as much as possible.

Anti-government protests also took place in neighboring **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Croatia**. In Bosnia, demonstrations became a manifestation of a systemic crisis, which is deepening. Miners, medical workers, environmental activists, and human rights defenders took to the streets, demanding better working conditions, higher wages, and an end to violence against women in the country. Internal issues were further exacerbated by a large flood in early October 2024 in central and southern Bosnia, which claimed 27 lives. Due to the slow recovery process, residents of several cities repeatedly protested, calling on the government to accelerate aid.

At the same time, separatist rhetoric continued from the president of the Republika Srpska entity, Milorad Dodik. His statements about the separation

of Republika Srpska were supported by legislative actions — the entity's parliament passed several documents and decisions that suspended the application of republican laws in the entity. Dodik sought support for his plans from Moscow and Serbia, but neither the Kremlin nor Belgrade gave concrete promises. However, the negative consequence of Dodik's policies has been further destabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina, deepening several crises.

In **Croatia**, mass anti-government protests occurred in January, February, and March, sparked by dissatisfaction with the actions of Prime Minister Andrej Plenković's government. In March 2024, the country's parliament was prematurely dissolved at the request of opposition parties. The pre-election period was tense, as President Zoran Milanović was nominated by the opposition Social Democratic Party as a candidate for prime minister if the party won. The Croatian Constitutional Court prohibited Milanović from running, as it contradicted the constitution. To become prime minister, the president would have had to resign, which he did not do. Political tensions ended unsuccessfully for Milanović and the Social Democratic Party, which came second in the parliamentary elections. The

Croatian Democratic Union party won slightly more votes and had to negotiate with other parties to form a government. Plenković, who has been in power since 2016, remained prime minister. In December, opposition parties tried to declare a vote of no confidence in his government, but they did not gather enough votes.

At the end of 2024, both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia were marked by high-profile corruption scandals. In Croatia, Health Minister Vili Beroš was arrested in November, and in Bosnia, Security Minister Nenad Nešić was arrested in December.

In 2024, **North Macedonia** held parliamentary and presidential elections, which brought right-wing opposition forces to power. Gordana Siljakovska-Davkova became president, and the center-right VMRO-DPMNE party celebrated victory in the parliamentary elections. Its representatives formed a coalition government with the Albanian party Vredi and the left-wing party Znam. The government was led by Kristijan Mickoski, who, like the president, promised to bring the country into the EU. However, Gordana Siljakovska-Davkova immediately became embroiled in a scandal with Greece after refusing to use the country's constitutional name, "Republic of North Macedonia." Both she and Prime

Minister Mickoski stated that they would refer to the country as «Macedonia» in public speeches to domestic audiences. Additionally, the new government opposes amending the constitution to include provisions related to the Bulgarian minority in North Macedonia.

Bulgaria, sensitive to this issue, is blocking the country's EU membership. At the same time, the Bulgarian government is trying to deal with its own internal problems. Citizens of the country have gone to early parliamentary elections twice, the most recent of which took place in October 2024. The result, as with previous elections, did not lead to a reset of Bulgaria's political system. On the contrary, society and political forces have become even more polarized. A significant role in this is played by the country's president, Rumen Radev, who opposes sending weapons to Ukraine, refuses to support our country, and aligns his policies with pro-Russian sentiments in society.

Romania nearly plunged into political chaos when it held presidential elections on November 23. The unexpected winner of the first round was independent candidate Kelin Georgescu. He gained popularity thanks to his active election campaign on the social media platform TikTok. Romania's

Constitutional Court annulled the election results after the country's intelligence services reported potential foreign interference and possible links between Georgescu and the Kremlin.

For **Montenegro**, 2024 marked the final stage of a significant reshaping of the political scene that began after the Democratic Party of Socialists, once undeniably dominant, lost in the 2020 and 2023 parliamentary elections (now the largest opposition party with a pro-Western orientation). This marked the consolidation of new elites from centrist, declaratively pro-European, and pro-Serb forces (including pro-Russian ones) within the ruling coalition formed in October 2023. Following the expected restructuring of Montenegro's current 44th government, led by Milojko Spajić of the centrist, generally pro-European «Europe Now» movement, which took place on July 23, 2024, representatives of Serbian and openly pro-Russian forces (New Serbian Democracy, Democratic People's Party) entered the ruling cabinet for the first time since the country regained independence. Some of these representatives had previously questioned Montenegro's independence and the national identity of the Montenegrin people, and they hold a consistent anti-NATO

position (though they declaratively support the country's EU membership). Naturally, these political forces' attitude toward Ukraine, in the context of Russia's full-scale military aggression, remains rather restrained. Additionally, a clear indication of the integration of pro-Russian forces into Montenegro's ruling elite was the election of the well-known leader of New Serbian Democracy, Andrija Mandić, as Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament on October 30, 2023. As is known, Mandić was once accused in connection with a 2016 coup attempt in Montenegro (although all accused/suspected individuals were acquitted in the summer of 2024).

Interestingly, after this restructuring/expansion, Montenegro's government became quite cumbersome, comprising a record number of ministries (over 32). The government now includes both centrist pro-European forces (such as «Europe Now» and the Democrats) and pro-Russian parties (New Serbian Democracy, Democratic People's Party), as well as, unusually, traditionally pro-Western minority parties (Bosniak Party and Albanian Forum, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Bosniak Party leader Ervin Ibrahimović). This broad composition of the ruling cabinet, which sees the swift integration

of Montenegro into the EU as its top priority (with the government declaring the end of 2026 as the deadline for closing negotiations, and the end of 2028 as the target for full EU membership), contains a range of mutual contradictions that may escalate at any moment. The most obvious contradictions in the governing coalition are between the Serbian parties and the Albanian Forum.

It is worth noting that Montenegro, a country with a population of 623,000 according to the December 2023 census (published in the fall of 2024), has a national composition as follows: Montenegrins – 256,436 (41.12%), Serbs – 205,370 (32.93%), Bosniaks – 58,956 (9.45%), Albanians – 30,978 (4.97%), Russians – 12,824 (2.06%), Muslims – 10,162 (1.63%), with 17,907 (2.88%) not specifying their nationality. Linguistically, the country is made up of 43.18% Serbian speakers, 34.52% Montenegrin speakers, 6.97% Bosnian speakers, 5.25% Albanian speakers, and 2.36% Russian speakers.

The results of the recent census showed, on the one hand, that the ethnic and religious map of the country has hardly changed since 2011. On the other hand, it has supported pro-Serb forces in advancing their initiatives and narratives, which theoretically aim to turn Montenegro into «another Serbian state,» to withdraw

from NATO, and to maximize cooperation with Serbia and potentially with Russia. The first demand of these political forces is the recognition of the Serbian language as the official language (since most of the population declared Serbian as their native language, although there is no actual difference between Serbian and Montenegrin in Montenegro, and the debate is purely about the name of the language).

As for Russian influence, despite the significant rise of pro-Russian parties and the Serbian Orthodox Church, the country's largest denomination and main pro-Russian institution, relations between Podgorica and Moscow remain de facto frozen at the official level. However, Russia is steadily expanding its presence in Montenegro through «soft power» and interactions with the Serbian Orthodox Church and several municipalities where Serb parties hold power (such as Budva, Nikšić, Berane, Herceg Novi, etc.). A notable example of this was the summer 2024 Russian language summer school organized by the Russian embassy in Montenegro and the Russian House in Belgrade in Nikšić.

It is also worth noting that in 2024, relations between Montenegro and Croatia (the only one of Montenegro's neighbors in the EU) significantly deteriorated. This was a direct result of the

appointment of representatives of Serbian political forces to high-ranking positions in Podgorica. A particular point of irritation for Croatia was the adoption by the Montenegrin Parliament on June 28, 2024, of a resolution on genocide in the Jasenovac concentration camp. The following month, Croatia declared the Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament A. Mandić, leader of the Democratic People's Party M. Knežević, and Montenegrin Vice Prime Minister A. Bečić personae non gratae. In December 2024, Croatia sent a non-paper with 10 points to Montenegro's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, listing a range of problematic issues in bilateral relations (including the maritime border around the Prevlaka Peninsula and the investigation of war crimes committed during the attack of Montenegrin reservists as part of the Yugoslav People's Army on Dubrovnik in 1991-1992), which Zagreb would like to resolve as soon as possible. Croatia also holds several levers of influence, which could create significant obstacles for Montenegro on its path to EU integration, a process that notably accelerated in practical terms in 2024.

INTENSITY

Internal political crisis.



Trends

The listed Balkan countries are experiencing varying degrees of internal political crises, which differ in causes and manifestations. However, a common trait for all these states is public dissatisfaction with the government's actions or their absence, the spread of protest sentiments, and corruption scandals. This negatively impacts other areas of public life, deepens the crisis, and worsens relations with neighboring countries. This is particularly evident in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Montenegro. The ongoing crisis in Bulgaria, which has lasted since 2020, has led to elections no longer being an instrument for rebooting the political system and marking the beginning of new reforms in the country.

Protests in Croatia reflected citizens' dissatisfaction with the government's actions and a growing tendency toward populism, actively promoted in statements by President Zoran Milanović and representatives of the Social Democratic Party. In Romania, politicians and experts failed to account for the «black swan» factor, new electoral sociology rules, and the possibility of external interference in elections. While the EU has long discussed hybrid threats and

increased Russian activity in the Balkans, this once again proves that Russian intervention can be unexpected and tends to occur where it is least expected.

In Kosovo, Prime Minister Albin Kurti continues to build and develop state institutions, as well as an internal and external policy that is typical of an independent state. Significant obstacles remain — Belgrade's refusal to recognize Kosovo's independence, considerable international pressure, and Serbia's active interference in Kosovo's internal affairs. The Serbian leadership consistently demonstrates a willingness to negotiate the normalization of relations with Pristina, emphasizing Kosovo's failure to comply with international commitments regarding the creation of the Association of Serbian Municipalities and providing a safe environment for Kosovo Serbs. In this way, Belgrade diverts public attention from internal problems and seeks to make the issue of Kosovo one of the country's main concerns again. This also serves to discredit the government of Albin Kurti and President Vjosa Osmani, leading Kosovo to face increased international pressure since the spring of 2023. Belgrade uses this situation to strengthen its position in the EU and the US, so as not to face accusations of failing to adhere to the principles of a unified foreign policy regarding

the non-imposition of sanctions on the Russian Federation.

In Serbia, the authoritarianism of Aleksandar Vučić and the ruling Serbian Progressive Party, now led by Prime Minister Miloš Vučević, continues to strengthen. The political opposition has been opposing the government's actions for several years but, as in previous years, lacks unity in organizing resistance against the current president and government. Notably, there is a growing public activism. Citizens, environmental activists, students, scholars, and farmers increasingly express their dissatisfaction with government policies and try to fight against corruption. This is confirmed by protests initiated by youth in many cities across the country.

Montenegro has undergone deep political changes in the last year, and its political scene continues to fragment. The aforementioned events and decisions may (and already are, as in the case of relations with Croatia) harm Montenegro's European aspirations, nullify its recent achievements, and undermine the foundation of its traditionally Eurocentric policy. How serious these changes are and how they will affect the country's stance on our state and Russian aggression will become clearer in the next year. Currently, there is an intensification of public-political life in the country. The early local elections in the capital,

Podgorica, in September 2024 showed that the once-dominant «Europe Now» Movement has started to lose electoral support, while the pro-Western opposition (primarily the DPS) is showing signs of rising popularity. Moreover, these elections became another manifestation of open confrontation and competition between President J. Milatović and Prime Minister M. Spajić (it should be noted that both are quite openly pro-European, but the prime minister has become significantly dependent on coalition partners from Serbian parties).



Impact on Global Affairs

Despite the difficulties and unstable situations within these countries, their governments continue to orient themselves towards the EU, the USA, and NATO (except for Serbia, which, despite its so-called neutral status, is actively arming itself and maintaining relations with the North Atlantic Alliance under the Individual Partnership Program). The Balkan countries are involved in supporting Ukraine in different ways. Military aid is actively provided by Bulgaria, Romania, North Macedonia, Croatia, and Greece. Kosovar instructors are involved in the training program for Ukrainian military personnel in the UK. Almost all countries in the region, including Serbia, are sending humanitarian aid. Bosnia and Herzegovina is the exception, as its

government cannot join European sanctions against Moscow due to the opposition of the President of Republika Srpska. However, representatives of the Presidency of BiH and Ukraine have had several meetings on international platforms, and once in Ukraine.

Balkan countries continue to focus on Brussels and Washington rather than on creating a regional security system. This has long turned the Balkans into a testing ground for various hybrid influences from the Russian Federation. Using local pro-Russian politicians and soft power, the Kremlin continues to spread favorable rhetoric and narratives about the war against Ukraine, the inability of the EU and NATO to protect the Balkans from another war, and the threat of new conflicts based on ethnic and religious grounds.

ПРОГНОЗ

In the short term, there is unlikely to be a radical revision of Montenegro's established Euro-Atlantic oriented foreign policy (particularly regarding support for Ukraine). Nevertheless, the growing influence of pro-Russian forces on Montenegro's politics is becoming increasingly noticeable, and this trend will likely continue, potentially leading to some changes in the country's foreign policy course. Romania and Croatia are expected to hold presidential elections, while Albania and Kosovo will have parliamentary elections. These processes may bring unexpected results, as demonstrated by Romania's presidential race in November 2024. The region will continue to experience high levels of conflict potential and internal contradictions. This concerns not only the already traditional centers of instability—Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina—but also Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, and North Macedonia. It is highly advantageous for the Russian Federation for the Balkans to continue to be seen as an unstable region in Europe, which could explode at any moment. It is more beneficial for Russia to act through its proxies, using pro-Serb and pro-Russian forces present in each country rather than direct interference. This tactic has already shown negative results for the EU in Greece, Slovenia, and Croatia.

INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS

Iraq

Events and Incidents

In 2024, Iraq's security landscape was marked by both progress and ongoing challenges. The country continued its fight against remnants of the Islamic State (IS), with joint operations between US and Iraqi forces resulting in some successes. For example, a raid in the Anbar Desert in August 2024 led to the elimination of at least 15 IS members, including key terrorist leaders. However, despite these efforts, IS maintained its presence, particularly in regions such as Kirkuk, where attacks on Iraqi military personnel continued.

The US and Iraq reached an agreement to withdraw almost all US troops by the end of 2026, beginning a phased reduction of the US military presence. This plan calls for a transition to more comprehensive bilateral relations, covering various sectors besides security. The withdrawal plan signals significant changes in US

military strategy in the region, with a reduction in presence at Ain al-Asad and Baghdad airbases, while maintaining a presence in Erbil.

Iraq also faced challenges from Iran-backed militias that attacked Israel, which threatened to drag the country into broader regional conflicts. Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani's government attempted to distance Iraq from these military actions by using diplomatic efforts to prevent escalation and maintain internal stability.

Intensity

Internal Political Crisis.

Trends

There was a change in Iraq's parliamentary leadership after nearly a year of political deadlock, with the election of Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, a well-known Sunni legislator with close ties to Iran, as speaker of parliament.

Additionally, the UN Security Council unanimously voted to end the UN mission in Iraq by the end of 2025, signaling trust in Iraq's stabilization efforts and its progress toward restoring representative governance.

Overall, in 2024, Iraq operated in a complex security environment and participated in diplomatic initiatives to strengthen its sovereignty and regional position.

Impact on Global Affairs

In foreign policy, Iraq pursued a balanced approach between global and regional actors, notably the US and Iran. Prime Minister al-Sudani's visit to Washington in April 2024 highlighted efforts to strengthen ties with the US, focusing on economic investments and security cooperation. At the same time, Iraq sought to improve relations with Iran, attempting to prevent the spread of regional tensions onto its own territory.

Forecast

In 2025, Iraq will navigate a multifaceted landscape of security threats, political reforms, economic challenges, and human rights issues.

INTERNAL POLITICAL CRISIS

Iran



Events and Incidents

In 2024, Iran faced a challenging security environment characterized by both internal challenges and regional dynamics, while also expanding its role in international arms sales, reflecting its strategic ambitions and response to regional dynamics.

The unexpected death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash on May 19, 2024, led to early presidential elections. Masoud Pezeshkian unexpectedly emerged as the winner in the June-July elections, signaling potential changes in Iran's domestic policy.

In April 2024, military actions between Iran and Israel significantly intensified. After an Israeli strike near Iran's consulate in Syria, which resulted in the death of a senior officer of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), on April 13, Iran launched a significant barrage of drones and missiles at Israel. Although many were intercepted by Israeli air defense systems, the direct nature of the attack marked a notable escalation of the long-standing proxy conflicts between the two countries.

Iran conducted large-scale military exercises to strengthen

its defense capabilities amid rising tensions with Israel and the anticipated return of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency. These exercises, lasting two months, included air defense drills aimed at preparing Iran's systems for potential air, missile, and electronic warfare threats, focusing on protecting critical infrastructure, including nuclear facilities.

Iran recorded the highest number of executions in 30 years in 2024, with over 1,000 executions. This surge, including the execution of women, children, and political prisoners, drew international condemnation and highlighted the regime's intensified efforts to suppress dissent.

Intensity

Internal Political Crisis.

Trends

Iran's involvement in regional conflicts, particularly through proxy groups, faced setbacks. A significant event was Iran's withdrawal of most of its forces from Syria after the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in December. This retreat marked a failure for Tehran's regional ambitions, diminishing its ability to

support allied armed formations and conduct proxy operations against adversaries like the U.S. and Israel, especially following the effective defeat of Iran-supported Hezbollah by Israel.

Impact on Global Affairs

Iran became a significant arms supplier to Russia. In late 2023, Iran and Russia signed a contract for the supply of hundreds of missiles, with continued deliveries in 2024. This partnership not only provided Russia with critically needed military equipment but also strengthened Iran's defense industry through financial gains and technological exchanges. In July 2024, Iran and Armenia signed a \$500 million arms deal, which included various military equipment, signaling Iran's intention to expand its influence in the Caucasus and restore its strategic presence.

Iran actively pursued diplomatic initiatives to resolve regional tensions. In October, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi visited Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries to discuss regional security and advocate for neutrality in the event of escalating conflicts involving Israel. These efforts underscored Iran's intention

to prevent the use of neighboring territories for potential attacks on it.

As the country holding the presidency of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 2024, Iran hosted the 28th meeting of ECO foreign ministers in Mashhad. This gathering aimed to strengthen economic cooperation

among member states, reflecting Iran's commitment to regional economic development despite international sanctions and economic difficulties.

The anticipated return of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency suggests potential changes in U.S. foreign policy

towards Iran, with an expectation of a more assertive stance, reminiscent of the previous «maximum pressure» campaign. This prospect influenced Iran's foreign policy strategy, prompting both defensive preparations and diplomatic efforts to mitigate the impact of new U.S. pressure.



Forecast

The year 2025 will be pivotal for Iran. The country stands at a crossroads, with significant decisions ahead that will determine the future of its nuclear program, economic stability, and regional position.

DIPLOMATIC CONFRONTATION

01. GUYANA – VENEZUELA

Events and Incidents

On December 3, 2023, a referendum was held in Venezuela, initiated by President Nicolás Maduro, regarding claims to part of neighboring Guyana's territory — the Essequibo region. The aim was to legitimize the annexation of the region, the creation of a new state, Guyana-Essequibo, and granting Venezuelan citizenship to the local population.

The referendum results showed 95% support for the occupation of Essequibo. The region is sparsely populated and difficult to access, but it has significant oil reserves. It occupies almost 60% of Guyana's territory, though only 15% of the country's population resides there.

Preparation for aggressive actions by Venezuela was evident several months before the referendum. In October, information surfaced that Venezuelan military forces were building an airstrip near the Guyana border. Later, it became known that Venezuela was creating a new naval base to increase the reach of its naval forces along the Atlantic coastline.

Understanding Maduro's intentions, representatives of Guyana began to sound the alarm and call on the international community to prevent violations of international law.

External support is Guyana's only hope, as compared to Venezuela, it effectively lacks the forces for defense: its military consists of around 3,000 soldiers, while Venezuela's armed

forces have 125,000 to 150,000 personnel.

On February 9, 2024, the Center for Strategic and International Studies reported construction work and an increased military presence at a Venezuelan military base on the border between Venezuela and Guyana. In response to Venezuela's military buildup, on February 2, Brazil reinforced its garrison in Boa Vista, adding 600 soldiers and 20 armored vehicles.

On March 21, 2024, Venezuela passed a law declaring sovereignty over the Essequibo territory. The law, designed by President Nicolás Maduro, defines Essequibo as a new state of Venezuela, with its administrative center in the city of Tumeremo.

Venezuela and Guyana supposedly agreed to negotiations in Brazil, but specific details regarding the place and time have not yet been reported.

Trends

Currently, Venezuela is testing the reaction of its neighbors and the international community to its aggressive actions. However, the occupation, which seemed inevitable at the end of 2023, has not yet taken place. This may suggest that Maduro fears the response from the U.S., Brazil, and the international community in general.

Impact on Global Affairs

Venezuela's actions continue the trend of destabilizing global security and primarily serve

Russia's interests. Moscow's involvement goes beyond supplying military equipment to Maduro, as two Russian military bases are located on Venezuelan territory, along with a Wagner Group unit that is involved in training Venezuelan elite troops and providing personal security for Maduro. It is likely that the decision to annex the Essequibo region was made with the involvement of Kremlin advisors to Maduro.

The Guyana issue is expected to become a focal point for the new administration of Donald Trump. Among other representatives,

the future Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, views the Latin American (and specifically Venezuelan) focus as one of the main priorities in Washington's policy.

Forecast

Venezuela will not dare to annex Essequibo amid Trump's return to the White House. Maduro is likely to continue testing the patience of the international community by amassing troops along the Guyana border but will not engage in active actions.

02. GREECE – TURKEY

Events and Incidents

Throughout 2024, the relationship between Turkey and Greece has evolved within the framework of a so-called positive agenda (a term given to their bilateral relations at this stage by Ankara and Athens in October 2023). The countries decided to focus on strengthening cooperation in trade, education, science, and tourism. A significant event of the year was the visit of Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis to Ankara and his meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. This was a reciprocal visit to Erdoğan's trip to Greece in 2023, during which the so-called Athens Declaration on the normalization of relations between the countries was signed.

The Greek Prime Minister's visit to Ankara confirmed that relations between Greece and Turkey continue to develop despite deep contradictions and unresolved conflicts. On one hand, both countries aim to deepen and expand cooperation in tourism and transport

sectors. On the other, Turkey and Greece cannot reach a consensus on a number of issues – Greek cultural heritage in Turkey, Cyprus, the Aegean Islands, and the problem of the Eastern Mediterranean. Additionally, Athens holds a position opposite to Ankara regarding Hamas' attack on Israel and the subsequent events. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, during his meeting with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, stated that for Greece, Hamas is a terrorist organization. In response, he heard that for Turkey, Hamas is not a terrorist group. Disagreements regarding Middle Eastern events once again demonstrate that not all countries are willing to join the anti-Israeli coalition that Erdoğan has been trying to form for several months.

Further complications in normalizing Turkish-Greek relations were caused in 2024 by issues related to Greek cultural heritage in Turkey and Greece's creation of national marine parks in the Ionian and Aegean Seas. The Church of Christ the Savior in the Fatih district of Istanbul

(Chora Church), which had been functioning as the Kariye Museum since the late 1950s, was converted into a mosque, despite opposition from UNESCO and Greece.

In spring 2024, Athens banned bottom trawling in national marine parks and protected areas. Simultaneously, the Greek government proclaimed the creation of two national parks in the Ionian and southern Aegean Seas. These parks cover 30% of Greece's territorial waters. The establishment of a park in the Aegean Sea immediately triggered a negative reaction from Ankara, as the two countries have been in dispute over the continental shelf in the area for many years.

Intensity

Diplomatic Confrontation.

Trends

There are trends towards partial normalization, leading to an increased number of diplomatic and export-level meetings. However, territorial issues remain quite sharp, resulting in significant competition between Greece and Turkey in the energy sector and over the distribution of spheres of influence in the Balkans.

Impact on Global Affairs

Greece and Turkey are forced to consider full or partial normalization of relations, taking into account their membership in the North Atlantic Alliance and their desire to play an important role in Europe. Since the 2010s, both countries have been making attempts to return to active regional politics in the Balkans and develop closer cooperation with Mediterranean states.

Turkey is using the disputes between

Greece and Albania over national minorities to strengthen relations with Tirana in defense, military, cultural-educational, and economic spheres. Ankara is also enhancing its relations with Kosovo, whose independence Greece does not recognize. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan aims to include Balkan countries, especially Muslim ones, in the anti-Israeli coalition. However, he has struggled to achieve this, as his attempts to gain a positive response from Albania and Serbia have been unsuccessful. Belgrade remains one of Israel's key arms suppliers and actively purchases advanced weaponry from Tel Aviv. Serbia also seeks to improve its economic and trade relations with Israel, though relations with Ankara in this field are also quite productive and effective.

Greece, like Turkey, is striving to become a platform for resolving a range of Balkan conflicts. Athens is closely monitoring the developments between Bulgaria and North Macedonia, and Serbia and Kosovo, in order to anticipate potential issues with Greek Albanians.

The normalization of relations between Greece and Turkey, as well as cooperation within the framework of a «positive agenda» and political dialogue regarding the resolution of bilateral territorial disputes concerning Cyprus, islands in the Aegean Sea, and the continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean, are of significant importance for the security and stability of the European continent. The countries hold differing positions on these issues, a situation that Russia has long exploited to expand its spheres of influence in Europe and destabilize the EU and NATO from within. To achieve this, Moscow uses hybrid methods to influence both countries, deepening the problems and involving other nations in their resolution.

Cooperation between Ankara and Athens on issues related to illegal migration remains crucial, leading to ongoing tensions between the countries and worsening the situation in the Balkans and several European countries. As a result, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary are faced with the need to reinstate border checks and crossing points within the Schengen zone, which causes dissatisfaction among their citizens and increases skepticism about the relevance of the visa-free regime due to the presence of constant checks. This provokes growing discontent with government actions, strengthening anti-migration sentiments, which various political forces successfully exploit during election periods. As a result, more and more politicians and governments gain popularity not through concrete actions but through populist statements and promises to combat migration and close their countries

to immigrants, including labor migrants.

Forecast

Both countries are competing for leadership in the Eastern Mediterranean, seeking access to its continental shelves. Given the growing energy challenges and Europe's desire to diversify its gas and oil supply channels to free itself from Russian energy resources, there is a possibility of deepening tensions between Greece and Turkey in this region, involving disputes with Cyprus, Israel, and the EU. It is possible that Russia may attempt to exploit this conflict in its favor to spread misinformation about energy resources in Europe.

Athens and Ankara will focus on areas of cooperation that benefit both sides: tourism, education, and the transport system. Meetings on other hot topics in Greece-Turkey relations can be expected at various levels, but positive results are unlikely.

03. KOREAN PENINSULA

Events and Incidents

The Korean conflict emerged due to the division of Korea in 1948 into spheres of influence of the USSR and the USA between North Korea (DPRK) and South Korea (Republic of Korea), respectively.

This division led to the Korean War (1950–1953), which ended only with a ceasefire, leaving the countries divided. Despite the end of the Cold War, the conflict remained active with periodic military clashes, and today it is considered one of the longest «frozen» conflicts in the world. South Korea receives support from the USA, which maintains a military

presence south of the border as part of a mutual defense agreement. The DPRK is an ally of Russia and China.

Despite diplomatic efforts, including a series of summits in 2018, military tension persists. North Korea has developed nuclear and missile capabilities, leading to international isolation of the country. Today, the Korean border remains one of the most militarized areas in the world, with armed forces from the DPRK, Republic of Korea, the USA, and the UN stationed there.

During the monitoring period, a series of events occurred that contributed to the escalation of the Korean standoff.

On January 5, 2024, North Korea fired 200 shells at Yeonpyeong Island. Shortly after, Kim Jong Un called for changes to the DPRK Constitution to remove references to cooperation and to declare South Korea the most hostile country.

On June 4, South Korea suspended the Panmunjom Declaration of 2018 due to heightened tension after North Korea launched trash-filled balloons. Seoul also resumed broadcasting anti-North Korean propaganda. In response, the DPRK announced the recruitment of 1.4 million new soldiers to its armed forces.

In October, North Korea, as part of a military agreement with Russia, sent its troops to participate in the war against Ukraine. A few weeks later, North Koreans were used in combat against the Ukrainian Armed Forces in Russia's Kursk region. Previously, the DPRK began supplying Russia with KN-23 ballistic missiles, several dozen of which were used to target Ukrainian sites.

On December 3, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol declared a state of emergency, accusing members of parliament of pro-Russian tendencies. However, the decree was quickly annulled by parliament's decision. After this, the president was removed, and in January 2025, the court allowed his arrest.

Intensity

Diplomatic confrontation with sporadic security threats to the region.

Negotiations

Currently, no significant contacts have been recorded, relations are deteriorating, and mutual accusations and threats are being exchanged.

Impact on Global Affairs

In 2024, the DPRK entered the Russia-Ukraine war not only as a supplier of ammunition but also of manpower for Russia. By the end of October, the occupying army's ranks had been replenished with at least 10,000 North Koreans. Thus, unlike its regional enemies (South Korea and Japan), the DPRK military is becoming a combat force with real battle experience. Kim Jong Un is likely planning to use soldiers and officers who can return from the fighting against Ukraine as the foundation for future wars in his region.

Against the backdrop of the DPRK, Seoul is showing its weakness: the country is in a deep political crisis after a failed coup attempt. South Koreans also failed to provide Ukraine with arms that could help destroy the DPRK's forces.

Forecast

The status quo will persist with periodic security crises triggered by North Korea, such as drone launches from both sides. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs will continue to develop (it is already effectively surpassing Russian production when it comes to strategic nuclear weapons, their quality, and delivery methods). Cooperation with Russia, under the framework of comprehensive partnership, will increase, as Russia is dependent on arms and manpower supplies from Pyongyang.

04. TAIWAN

Events and Incidents

Tension between China and Taiwan arises from China's claims over Taiwan as a breakaway province and Taiwan's desire to maintain its self-governing status. China regularly conducts military exercises around Taiwan, signaling its readiness to use force for what it calls «reunification».

Although the U.S. officially recognizes Beijing, it remains a key ally of Taiwan, providing it with defensive weapons. Tensions between the U.S. and China have escalated due to increased support for Taiwan from Washington. Over the past few years, China has repeatedly demonstrated its apparent willingness to attack Taiwan, though no direct confrontation has occurred thus far.

During the monitoring period, Beijing conducted constant military exercises around Taiwan, creating a permanent threat to the island's security. For example, in May, the Joint Sword-2024 exercises took place, involving ground, naval, air, and missile forces to demonstrate military power in the region.

On October 15, Taiwan reported that 153 Chinese military aircraft surrounded the island during large-scale drills. During China's «Joint Sword-2024B» military maneuvers, fighter jets, drones, military ships, and coast guard forces surrounded Taiwan. Ninety aircraft entered the Air Defense Identification Zone, prompting Taiwan to deploy its forces and raise combat readiness.

China traditionally justifies its exercises as warnings against «separatist actions» or in response to statements from Taiwanese politicians. Tension around the island remains

high. The Chinese are closely monitoring the situation regarding the Russia-Ukraine war, particularly in the context of the West's readiness to respond to the aggressor's actions. If the U.S. and its allies continue to act indecisively, Beijing will consider the consequences of an attack on Taiwan as insignificant.

In May, Taiwan saw a change in president. Lai Ching-te advocated for the resumption of dialogue with China to preserve the "status quo." Throughout the year, Taiwan's exports to China hit a record low, but at the same time, investments in the U.S. increased significantly. Due to concerns over dependence on Taiwanese chips, the U.S. has intensified efforts to develop domestic production, including through subsidies for the construction of a factory in Arizona.

Intensity

Diplomatic confrontation with provocations from the PRC.

Forecast

Beijing is taking a wait-and-see approach, observing events in other parts of the world. Given its economic problems, the PRC will not risk losing access to global markets for the sake of occupying Taiwan. However, if the U.S. shows its helplessness in other theaters of war (primarily in the Russia-Ukraine conflict), China may escalate its actions toward Taiwan.

Information publication

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ANALYTICAL CENTER
„UKRAINIAN STUDIES OF STRATEGIC DISQUISITION“

WAR INDEX YEARBOOK 2024

The publication was prepared by:

Yuriy Syrotyuk,
Director of the Non-Governmental Analytical Center „Ukrainian Studies of Strategic Disquisitions,” Member of the Ukrainian Parliament VII convocation, Chief fire support sergeant of the 5th Separate Assault Brigade

Yuriy Oliynyk,
PhD in Political Science, Head of Research Programs at the Non-Governmental Analytical Center „Ukrainian Studies of Strategic Disquisitions,” and Armed Forces of Ukraine serviceman

Участь у зборі інформації брали:

Andriy Rudyk,
PhD in Social and Behavioral Sciences, Officer in the Armed Forces of Ukraine

Ivan Kyrychevskyi,
Expert at the Information and Consulting Agency Defense Express

Marta Oliynyk-Dyomochko,
PhD in Political Science, African Studies Researcher at the Global Ukraine Foundation

Bohdan Cherkas,
PhD in Political Science, Assistant Professor at the Department of Regional Studies, Institute of International Relations, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Kateryna Shymkevych,
PhD in History, Expert at the Analytical Center for Balkan Studies (online)

Oleksandr Chupak,
Head of Economic Programs at the Non-Governmental Analytical Center „Ukrainian Studies of Strategic Disquisitions.”

Anatoliy Demeshchuk,
PhD in History, Expert at the Analytical Center for Balkan Studies

Project partners:

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
TARAS SHEVCHENKO NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
OF KYIV



Layout: Mykhailo Kublii

Proofreading: Olha Petrenko-Tseunova

Contacts:
Tel.: +38(067) 605-35-05
E-mail: nac.ussd@gmail.com
ussd.org.ua

The publication includes maps and illustrations purchased on depositphotos.com and from open sources.

Signed for printing on January 31, 2025.

Print run 500 copies.