ViEWS monthly forecasts, November 2018*

Summary of forecasts

Tuesday 22nd January, 2019

ViEWS
PREDICTING CONFLICT

(a) State-based conflict (sb), December 2018

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), December 2018
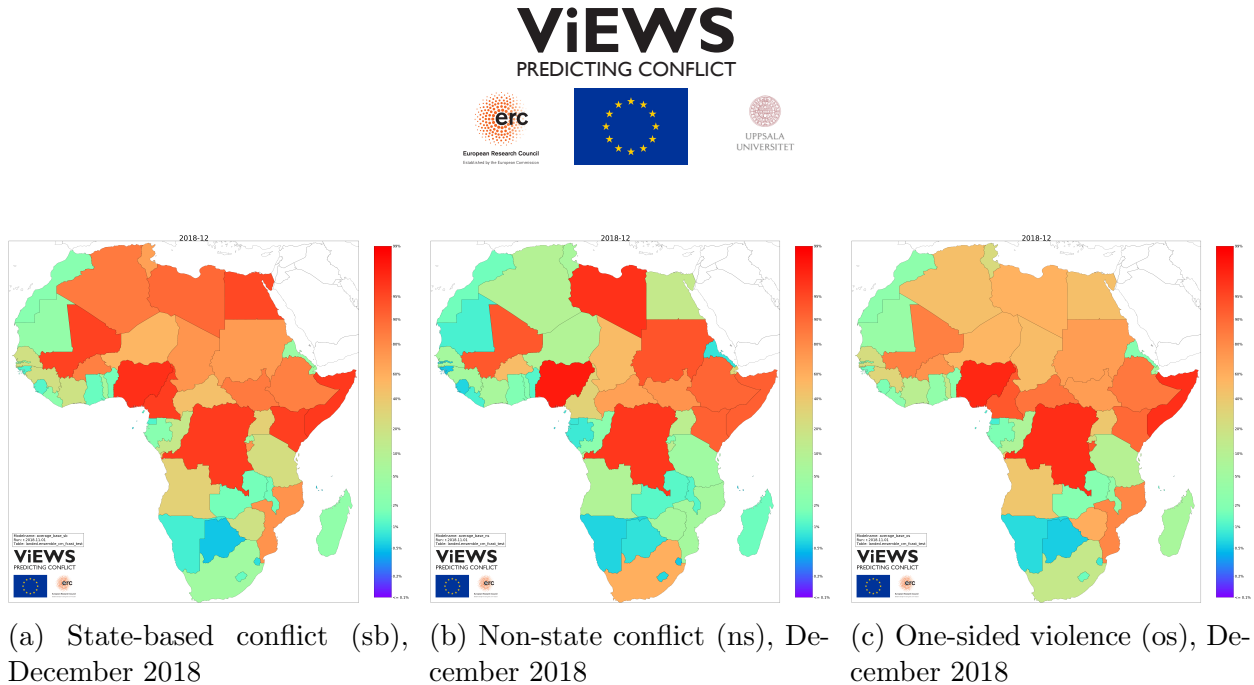
(c) One-sided violence (os), December 2018

Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for December 2018

This report presents ViEWS forecasts for December 2018 as of 30 November 2018. The forecasts are based on data that are updated up to and including October 2018. The underlying conflict data were produced by the UCDP (`http://ucdp.uu.se`). The ViEWS compilation of these data and data from other sources are available at `https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/views/data/downloads/`.

We highlight developments in the most recent months. For a discussion of what underlies the forecasts in terms of slowly changing risk factors as well as methodological issues, see

the ViEWS overview article.[1] Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for November 2018, Figure 2 the corresponding forecasts at detailed geographic locations, and Figure 3 shows the most recent observed conflict events. Similar reports for previous months are available at `http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/views/`, along with other information on the ViEWS project.

1 Forecasts for December 2018

The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what do we forecast will happen in December 2018? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in December 2018, based on data up to and including October 2018. Countries with red color have forecast probabilities close to 1, whereas blue countries have forecasts at less than 0.01. When the forecasts indicate that no events is as likely as at least one event, countries are drawn with a light orange color.
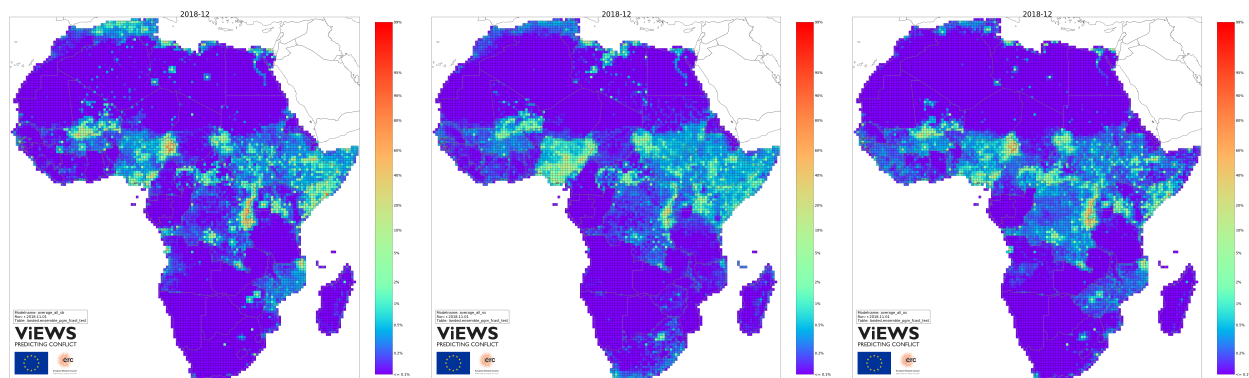
(a) State-based conflict (sb), December 2018

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), December 2018

(c) One-sided violence (os), December 2018

Figure 2: Ensemble forecasts for December 2018

Our forecasts for December 2018 are mostly similar to last month's forecasts. The November 2018 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

The UCDP has recorded some conflict events in October 2018 that change the forecasts for some countries (Figure 3 illustrates the most recent history of events).

We continue to forecast a high probability of conflict in countries that have a recent history of conflict or with recent protest events. In Mali, Nigeria, DR Congo, and Somalia at least one conflict event is almost certain. We also forecast a high probability of state-based conflict (**sb**) in Cameroon, as the recent violence continues (see Figure 3a). Separatist

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[1]`http://files.webb.uu.se/uploader/1576/ViEWS-OverviewArticle-June2018.pdf`.

violence in southern Cameroon continued throughout the summer of 2018,[2] as did clashes between government forces and IS (often referred to as Boko Haram) in the North.[3] In Kenya, too, we forecast a high probability of a state-based conflict event, as clashes between the government and Al-Shabaab as well as incidents of Al-Shabaab violence against civilians have been recorded in and leading up to October 2018.[4]

Our forecasts also indicate that the situation will remain volatile in Egypt, particularly given continued Jihadi activity in the Sinai.

The forecast maps for non-state conflict (**ns**) and one-sided violence (**os**) follow partly the same patterns as **sb**, but the patterns of past events differ across conflict types (see Figure 3). Cameroon and Egypt, for instance, have not had much **ns** conflict, whereas Libya and Sudan have seen a lot. We forecast a high probability also of **ns** in Kenya due to recent confrontations between cattle rustlers and herders.

The forecasts for **os** respond to about the same factors, but are less clearly related to protests and regime change. They also in general occur more frequently in newly independent countries. One-sided violence clusters in Nigeria and Cameroon (predominantly Boko Haram), DR Congo, and Somalia and Kenya (predominantly Al-Shabaab).[5]

Figure 2 presents forecasts at fine-grained sub-national geographical locations for December 2018, for each of the three outcomes. The color mapping is the same as for the *cm* forecasts.

The densest risk clusters for state-based conflict are in north-eastern Nigeria, the North and South Kivu provinces in DRC, in Somalia, and in Darfur. The forecasted violence in Mali is also quite intense, but more spread out geographically. All of these regions have been ravaged with violence for years as shown in Figure 3. These maps reflect that countries' recent conflict history is the strongest predictor of future violence.

The forecasts for non-state conflict and one-sided violence depend on the same factors although with somewhat different implications. For **ns**, we forecast main clusters in central Nigeria, Central African Republic, North and South Kivu, Darfur and the Kenyan Rift Valley. For **os**, northern Nigeria, Darfur, the Kivus, Somalia (Mogadishu area), and Northeastern Mozambique are the primary hotspots.

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[2]See the monthly report for June for some more details on Cameroon.

[3]See Figure 3a and `http://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/12422`.

[4]See Figure 3a and `http://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/10589`.

[5]See Figure 3c and `http://ucdp.uu.se/#/onesided/1071`.

2   History of UCDP organized violence

Figure 3 presents the the recent history of violence in each PRIO-GRID cell. Red cells had conflict in October 2018, and purple ones have not seen conflict in many years.

(a) State-based conflict (sb), October 2018

(b) Non-state conflict (ns), October 2018

(c) One-sided violence (os), October 2018

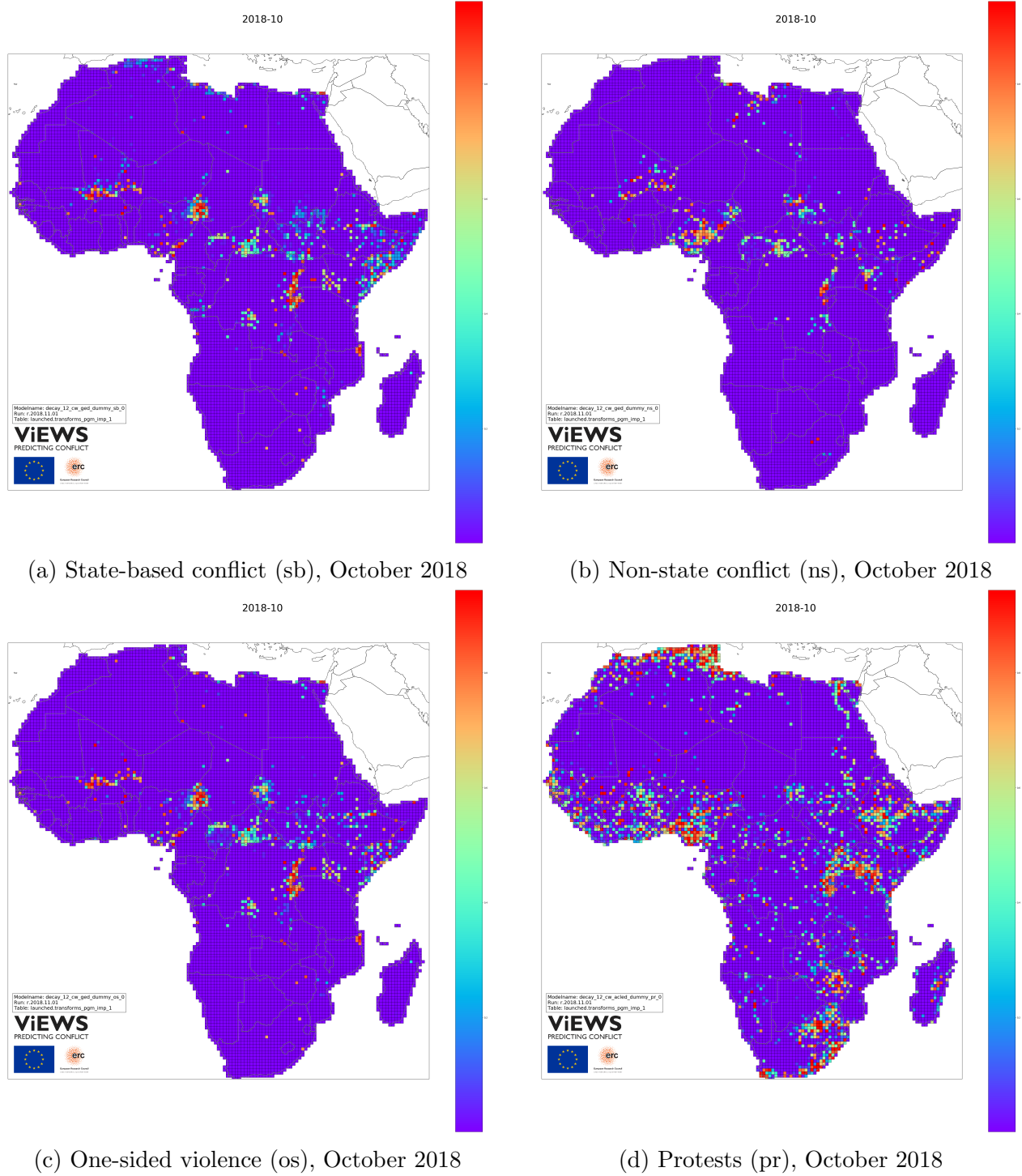(d) Protests (pr), October 2018

Figure 3: Decay function maps of observed conflict for October 2018

Figures 3a, 3b, 3c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 3d shows data on protests from ACLED (`https://www.acleddata.com`).