

# ViEWS monthly forecasts, June 2019\*

## Summary of forecasts

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

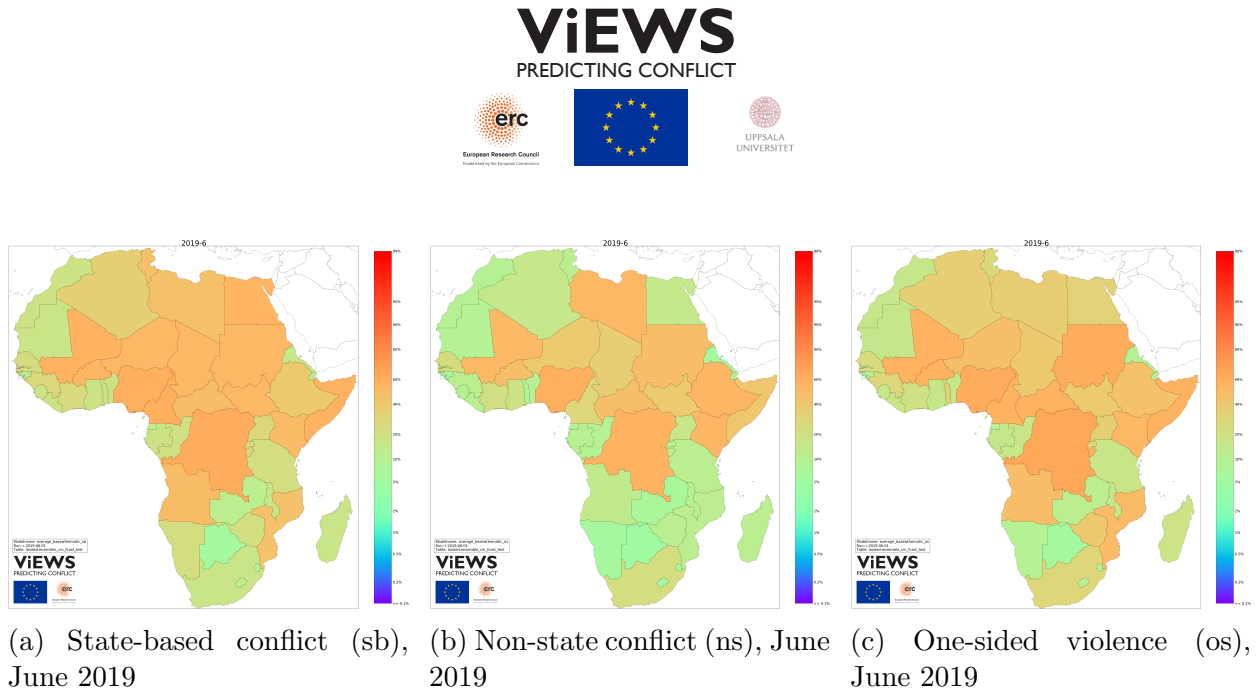


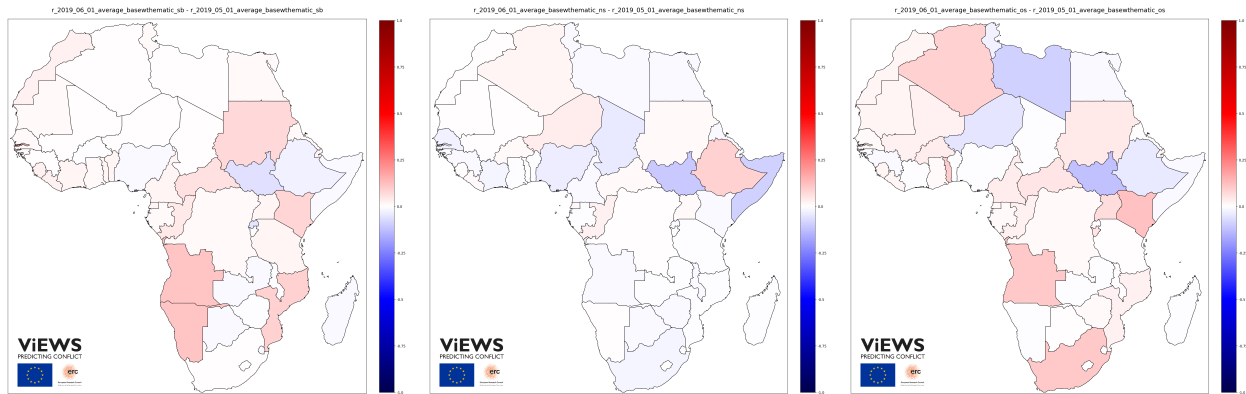
Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for June 2019

This report presents ViEWS forecasts for June 2019 as of 6 June 2019. The forecasts are based on data that are updated up to and including April 2019. 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

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\*This report was prepared by Håvard Hegre, Mihai Croicu, Frederick Hoyles, and Remco Jansen. The research was funded by the European Research Council, project H2020-ERC-2015-AdG 694640 (ViEWS). The simulations were performed on resources provided by the Swedish National Infrastructure for Computing (SNIC) at Uppsala Multidisciplinary Center for Advanced Computational Science (UPPMAX).



(a) State-based conflict (sb), (b) Non-state conflict (ns), June 2019 (c) One-sided violence (os), June 2019

Figure 2: Changemaps (cm) for June 2019

the ViEWS introductory article.<sup>1</sup> Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for June 2019, Figure 3 the corresponding forecasts at detailed geographic locations (PRIO-GRID level, or **pgm**)<sup>2</sup>, and Figure 5 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 June 2019

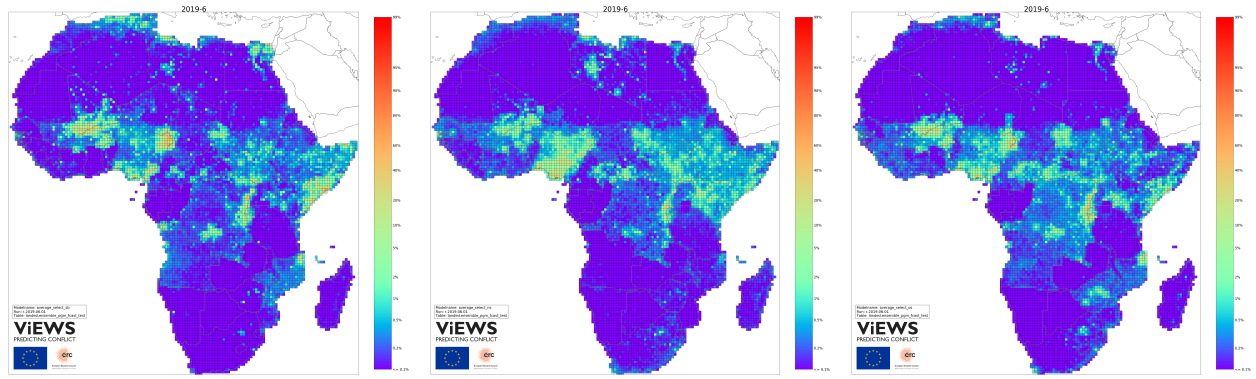
The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what do we forecast will happen in June 2019? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in June 2019, based on data up to and including April 2019. Countries with red color have forecast probabilities close to 1, whereas purple countries have forecasts at less than 0.1. When the forecasts indicate that no event is as likely as at least one event, countries are drawn with a light orange color.

Our forecasts for June 2019 are mostly similar to last month’s forecasts. The June 2019 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

We continue to forecast a high probability of state-based conflict (**sb**) in countries that have a recent history of conflict or protest events. Particularly in Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, DR Congo, Somalia, and Egypt the risk of at least one conflict event is high. We continue also to forecast a high probability of state-based conflict in Cameroon, as the recent separatist

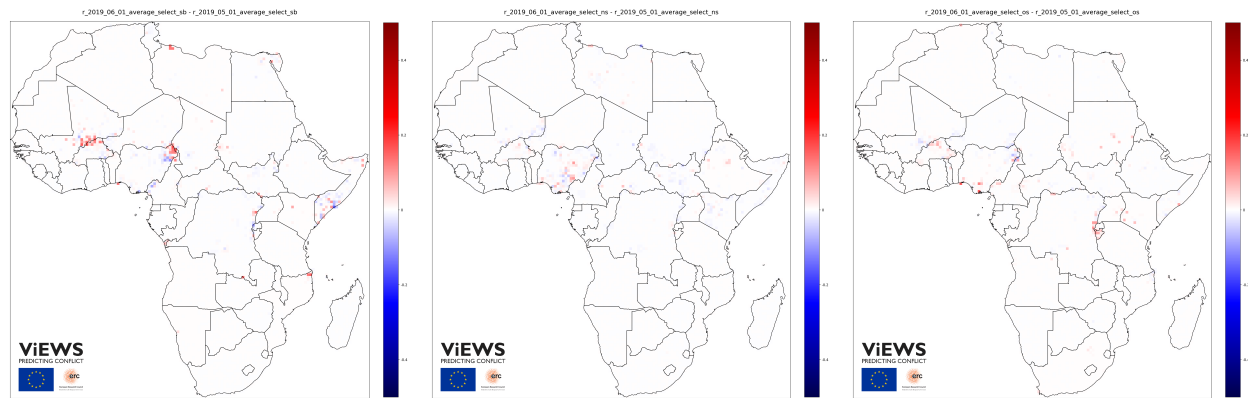
<sup>1</sup><https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022343319823860>.

<sup>2</sup>PRIO-GRID is a grid structure that divides the terrestrial world into squares of approximately 55 by 55 kilometers. See <http://grid.prio.org/>



(a) State-based conflict (sb), (b) Non-state conflict (ns), June 2019 (c) One-sided violence (os), June 2019

Figure 3: Ensemble forecasts for June 2019



(a) State-based conflict (sb), (b) Non-state conflict (ns), June 2019 (c) One-sided violence (os), June 2019

Figure 4: Changemaps (pgm) for June 2019

violence and clashes between government forces and IS (often referred to generally as Boko Haram in this region) continues (see Figure 5a).<sup>3</sup>

Compared to the May forecast (see Figure 2a), we forecast a higher probability of violence in Sudan, where mass resistance to the military take-over after the ousting of President Bashir has since been violently repressed by paramilitary forces. We also find a notable increase in the risk of state-based armed conflict in Angola, due to reports of a violent event between armed separatist movement Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) and Angolan soldiers Cabinda province on 12 April. The increase in the Gambia is due to an erroneously dated news report that was included in the April candidate events dataset. Note that the predicted probability of armed conflict in the Gambia remains low. The rise in Namibia is due to a then still unclear but coded event which led to two fatalities at the

<sup>3</sup>See the monthly report for June for some more details on Cameroon.

Namibian Institute of Mining and Technology. Note again that the risk of an armed conflict event in Namibia remains very low. Kenya furthermore shows an increase given a violent Al-Shabaab abduction on 12 April in Mandera town, which led to the death of a Kenyan policeman. More ambushes and raids have since followed in May. The risk of state-based violence has also increased in Mozambique, where attacks by islamist militants have continued in Cabo Delgado province. Finally, we find a decreased risk in South Sudan as the September 2018 peace agreement has still held and a six-month extension to the pre-transitional period has since been agreed to.

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 do differ across conflict types (see Figure 5). Cameroon and Mozambique, for instance, have not had much **ns** conflict yet have seen significant one-sided violence, whereas for Libya and Ethiopia the inverse is true. Mali, Nigeria, DR Congo, Kenya, and Libya remain at high risk of non-state violence this month, the latter being reflective of the advance into the south west and recently on the capital Tripoli of east-based Libyan National Army (LNA), which the UCDP codes as a non-state actor.

Compared to last month's forecast (see Figure 2b), the risk of **ns** conflict has increased in Ethiopia, where inter-ethnic fighting between Oromo and Aramha militias erupted in the country's north in April, while the escalated ethnic violence in central Mali seems to have stabilized this month. The risk of non-state violence has also notably decreased in South Sudan as the situation there has remained stable over the last few months. Somalia also shows a marked decrease despite a high intensity of state-based and one-sided violence over April.

The forecasts for **os** respond to about the same factors as **ns**, but are less clearly related to protests and regime change. They also in general occur more frequently in newly independent countries. The probability of one-sided violence events remains pronounced in Mali and Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Cameroon (predominantly given Boko Haram), DR Congo, Sudan, Central African Republic, and Somalia and Kenya (predominantly given Al-Shabaab). The risk of one-sided violence continues to be high in Burundi, too, which has experienced recurrent violence against real and perceived political opponents since 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Compared to our May forecast (see Figure 2c), we find an elevated risk in Algeria and Togo given recent repression of mass protests in these countries. Also in Angola there is an elevated risk, particularly given the government's repression of supporters of the Cabinda Independence Movement in recent months. In South Africa, protesters clashed with the police in the lead-up of the 8 May general elections, leading to a heightened risk of one-sided

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<sup>4</sup>See Figure 5c and <https://ucdp.uu.se/#country/516>.



violence there in this month’s forecast. Kenya shows an increase, too, due to significant Al-Shabaab violence against civilians in April. Conversely, we find a decrease in the risk of one-sided violence despite war breaking out in April, as Haftar’s LNA advanced on Tripoli. South Sudan, finally, also shows a clear decrease given the noted stabilizing situation there.

Figure 3 presents forecasts at fine-grained sub-national geographical locations for June 2019, for each of the three outcomes. The color mapping is the same as for the *cm* forecasts.

The densest risk clusters at **pgm** level for state-based conflict continue to be in north-eastern Nigeria, the North and South Kivu provinces in DR Congo, Somalia (southern states in particular), Egypt’s Sinai, and the northeastern Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique where an Islamist insurgency emerged at the end of 2017. The risk of violence in Mali and Burkina Faso is also remains high, but is more spread out geographically. Most of these regions have been facing violence for years as shown in Figure 5, reflecting that countries’ recent conflict history is the strongest predictor of future violence.

Compared to last month (see Figure 4a), we find the strongest increases in the risk of state-based violence in and around Libya’s Tripoli given LNA’s advances, central Mali and Burkina Faso given escalated Jihadi activity, and the far northeast of Nigeria given ramped up security operations in the region since April. Interestingly, the risk appears to have declined in the southern parts of Borno State, while the risk in Cameroon’s Far North has increased. The Anglophone areas of Cameroon appear to show a reduced risk of state-based violence in June. Moving to DR Congo, risk appears reduced around Lake Kivu, but increased around Butembo (Lake Edouard). Reported violence in Katanga also produces a marked increase in a grid-cell there. Continued clashes with Islamist militants in Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique produces a continued elevation in the risk of state-based violence there. In Somalia, finally, we find a clear decrease of risk in Mogadishu, but an unclear pattern of increase and decrease around the country’s capital.

The forecasts for non-state conflict and one-sided violence depend on the same factors although with somewhat different implications. For **ns**, we particularly forecast clusters of elevated risk in central Mali, central and southern Nigeria, the Kivus in DR Congo, and as of recent, western and northern Libya. Compared to last month (see Figure 4b), the risk of non-state violence has increased most notably in central and southeastern Nigeria in particular, given escalated herder-farmer violence in April.

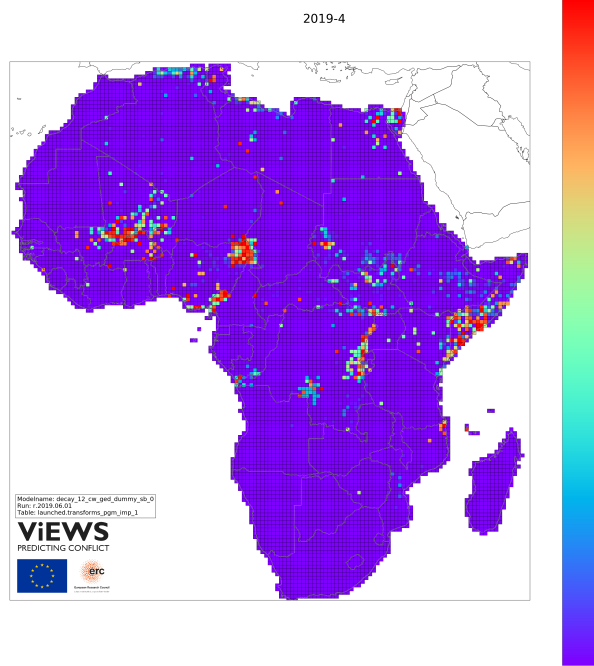
With regard to one-sided violence, northeastern and southern Nigeria as well as neighboring Anglophone Cameroon, the Kivus, Burundi, and Somalia (Mogadishu area) continue to be primary hotspots in June 2019. Risk has also remained elevated for the northeastern Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique, where attacks on civilians by suspected Islamist militants continued throughout April. Compared to last month (see Figure 4c), the risk of one-sided

violence has reduced in central Mali, while high risk has moved further into Burkina Faso's north. The risk of one-sided violence in northeastern Nigeria shows a mixed pattern of increase and decrease, while Nigeria's south shows several hotspots for this month. Finally, we find a relevant increase of risk of one-sided violence in the Nord Kivu as well as Burundi, where authorities violently cracked down on opposition in April.

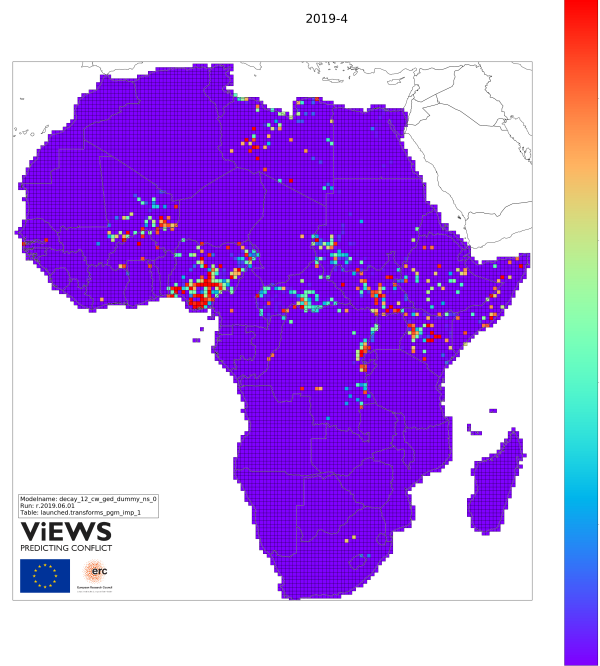
## **2 History of UCDP organized violence**

Figure 5 presents the the recent history of violence in each PRIO-GRID cell. Red cells had conflict in April 2019, and purple ones have not seen conflict in many years.

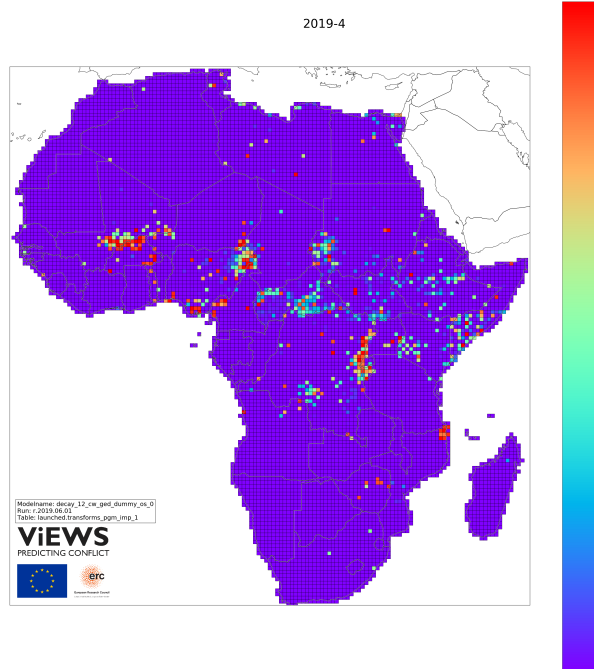
Figures 5a, 5b, 5c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 5d shows data on protests from ACLED (<https://www.acleddata.com>).



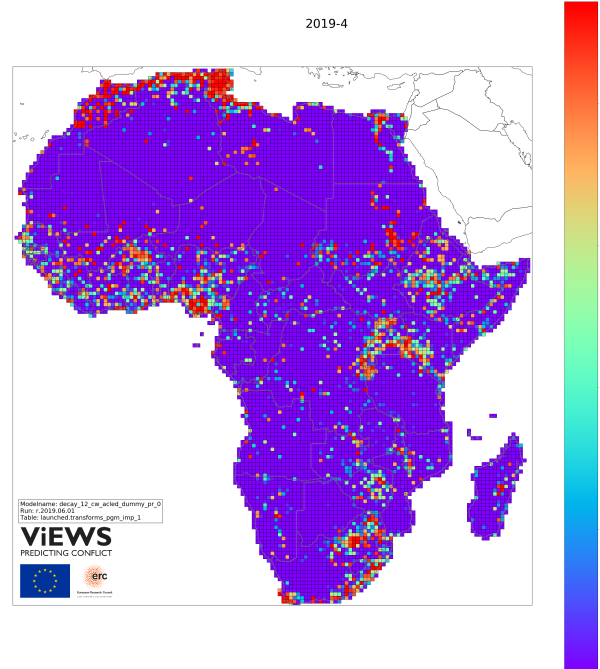
(a) State-based conflict (sb), April 2019



(b) Non-state conflict (ns), April 2019



(c) One-sided violence (os), April 2019



(d) Protests (pr), April 2019

Figure 5: Decay function maps of observed conflict for April 2019