ViEWS monthly forecasts, July 2019*

Summary of forecasts

Tuesday 2nd July, 2019

(a) State-based conflict (sb)   (b) Non-state conflict (ns)   (c) One-sided violence (os)
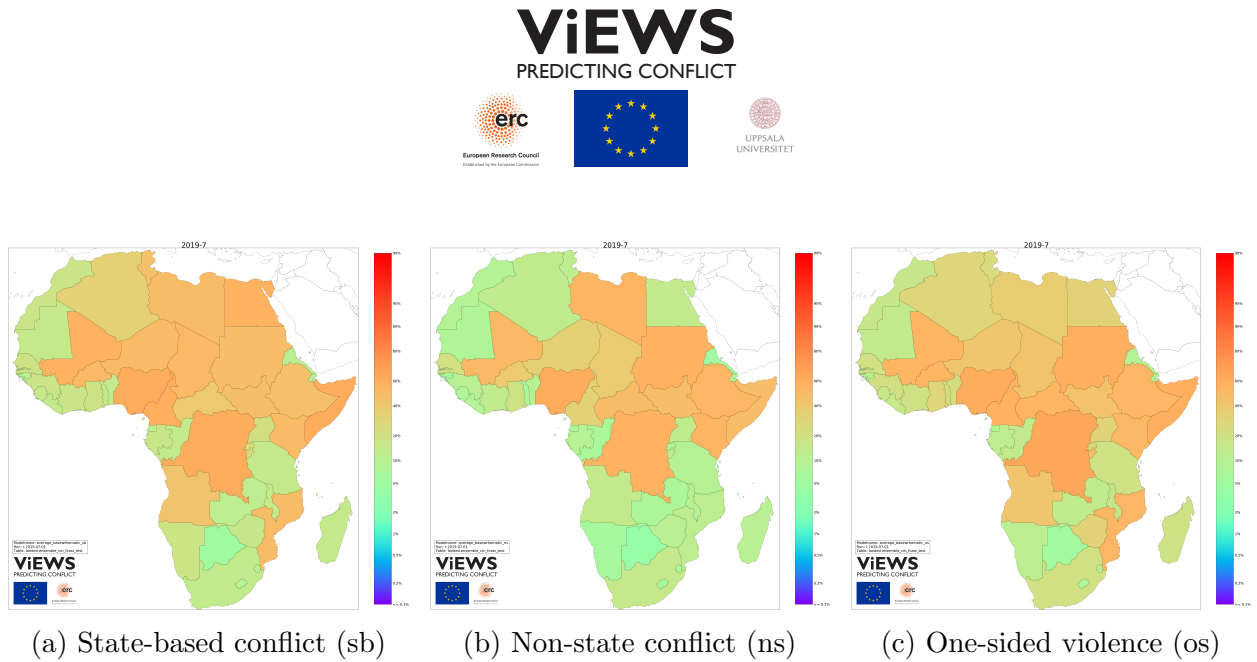
Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for July 2019

This report presents ViEWS forecasts for July 2019 as of 1 July 2019, which are based on data that are updated up to and including May 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

(a) State-based conflict (sb) (b) Non-state conflict (ns) (c) One-sided violence (os)
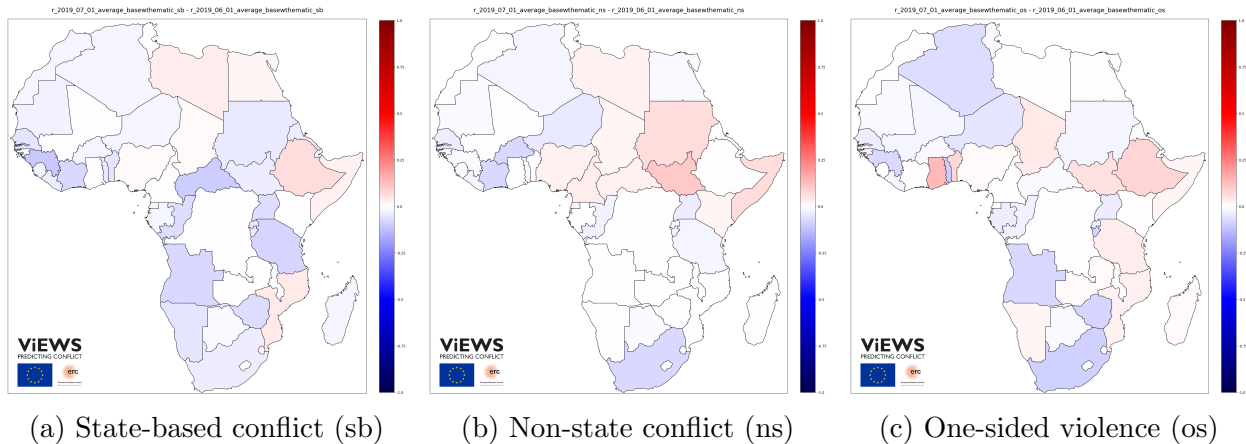
Figure 2: Change maps (cm) for June 2019 to July 2019

the ViEWS introductory article.[1] Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for July 2019, Figure 3 the corresponding forecasts at detailed geographic locations (PRIO-GRID level, or **pgm**)[2], 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 Country-month forecasts for July 2019

The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what do we forecast will happen in July 2019? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in July 2019, based on data up to and including May 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 July 2019 are mostly similar to last month's forecasts. The July 2019 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

1.1 State-based conflict (sb)

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, Nigeria, DR Congo, Somalia,

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[1] `https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022343319823860`.

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

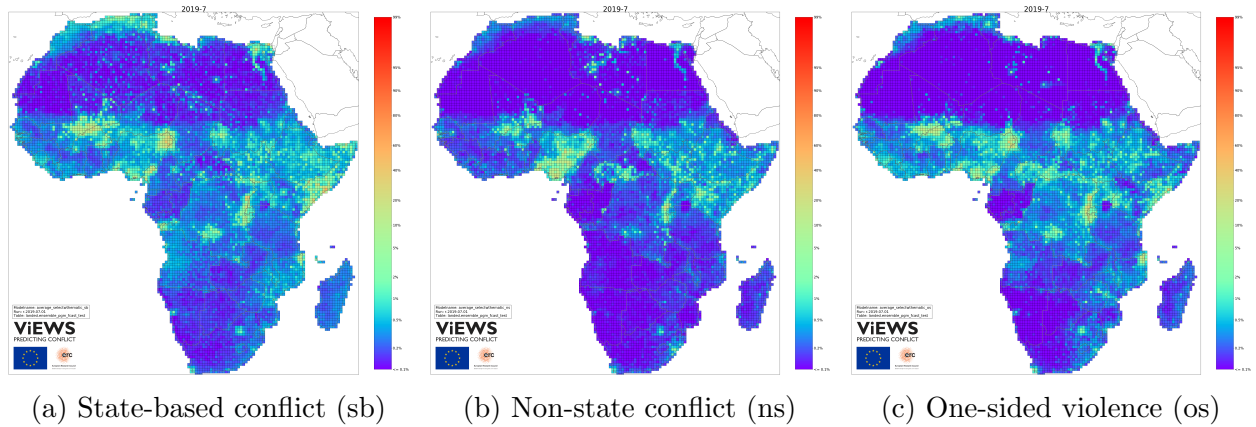(a) State-based conflict (sb)   (b) Non-state conflict (ns)   (c) One-sided violence (os)

Figure 3: Ensemble forecasts for July 2019

(a) State-based conflict (sb)   (b) Non-state conflict (ns)   (c) One-sided violence (os)
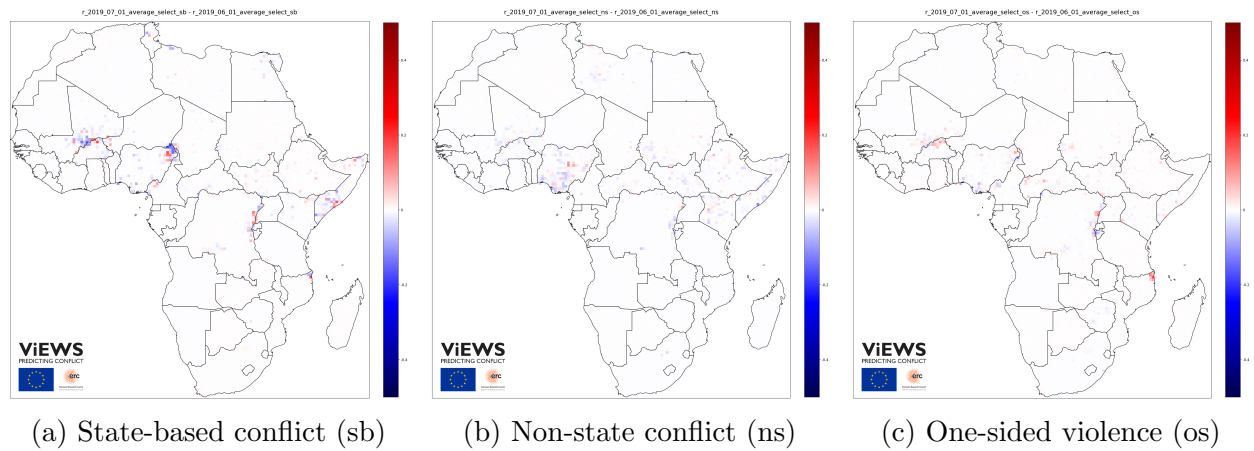
Figure 4: Change maps (pgm) for June 2019 to July 2019

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

Figure 2a) shows that compared to last month's forecast, no drastic increases in the probability of state-based violence have occurred. We do forecast a relevant lower risk of state-based violence in the Central African Republic, despite a spike of attacks on civilians by unidentified militias, along with an increased deployment of government security forces in May.

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[3]See https://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/640.

1.2 Non-state conflict (ns)

The forecast maps for non-state conflict (**ns**) 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 the inverse has recently been true. Mali, Nigeria, DR Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, 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.[4]

Figure 2b shows that compared to last month's forecast, the risk of **ns** conflict has increased in Sudan and South Sudan in particular. In South Sudan, 22 people were killed in clashes between Nuer and Dinka tribes in May,[5] while in Sudan tribal clashes between the Bani Amer and Nuba in El Gedaref led to 8 fatalities and 50 wounded. Somalia, too, has experienced an increased risk of non-state violence given clashes between Al-Shabaab militants and militants formerly allied to Al-Shabaab in Bakol Region. Risk also notably decreased in Burkina Faso, despite intercommunal and inter-religious violence in the country in May. On 12 May, for instance, gunmen attacked a church in Dablo, Sanmatenga Province, killing six, while on 13 May an imam and his son were abducted and killed in Seno Province.[6]

1.3 One-sided violence (os)

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). Mozambique continues to be at high risk of one-sided violence, too, given continued militant civilian killings in Cabo Delgado Province. The risk furthermore continues to be elevated in Burundi, which has experienced recurrent violence against real and perceived political opponents since 2015.[7]

Compared to our June forecast (figure 2c), we find an elevated risk in Ghana this month caused by the killing of a young boy by police at a protest in Agormanya, Eastern Region on 22 May. Risk has also gone up slightly for Benin, where in May security forces clashed with opposition protesters. Ethiopia, too, shows an increase in the risk of one-sided violence

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[4]See https://ucdp.uu.se/#/actor/7072.
[5]See https://ucdp.uu.se/#nonstate/5460.
[6]See https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/may-2019.
[7]See Figure 5c and https://ucdp.uu.se/#country/516.

due to an incident on 2 May that led to 11 civilian pastoralists being killed by Liyu police in Madane, Afar Region.

2 PRIO-GRID-month forecasts for July 2019

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

2.1 State-based conflict (sb)

The densest risk clusters at **pgm** level for state-based conflict continue to be in northeastern Nigeria, the Anglophone region of Cameroon, 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.[8] The risk of violence in Mali and Burkina Faso 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 central Mali and northern Burkina Faso given escalated Jihadi activity, and the northeast of Nigeria given ramped up security operations in the region since April. Interestingly, the risk appears to have declined this month in the northern parts of Borno State, while the risk has decreased in both southern Borno and Cameroon's Far North Province. Nonetheless, the risk remains significant in these regions. The Anglophone areas of Cameroon appear to show a slightly increased risk of state-based violence in June. Moving to DR Congo, risk appears increased again around Lake Kivu, as well as around Butembo (Lake Edouard), while violence has also elevated the risk in South Kivu. Continued clashes with Islamist militants in central Cabo Delgado province of Mozambique produces a continued significant elevation in the risk of state-based violence there, while the northern parts show a reduced risk compared to last month's forecast. In Somalia, finally, we find a clear increase of risk in Mogadishu, but an unclear pattern of increase and decrease around the country's capital. Also in the country's north the risk of state-based violence has shown an increase compared to last month, given fatal clashes between Somaliland and Puntland security forces in the disputed Sanaag region on 21 May.[9]

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[8]See https://ucdp.uu.se/#/actor/7032.
[9]https://ucdp.uu.se/#conflict/4688.

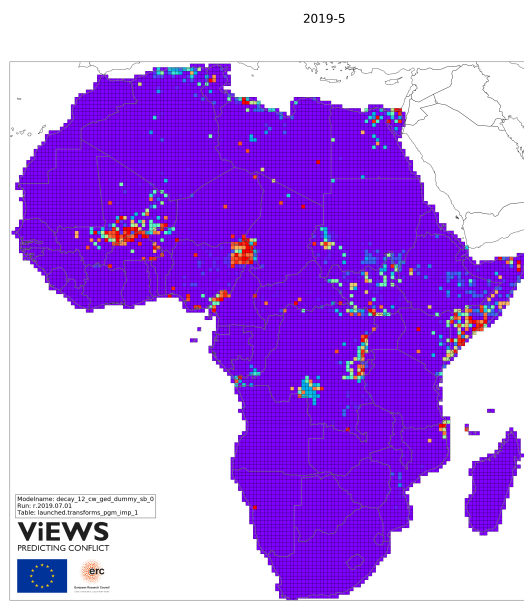## 2.2 Non-state conflict (ns) and one-sided violence (os)

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 since April.

With regard to one-sided violence, northeastern and southern Nigeria as well as neighboring Anglophone Cameroon, the Kivus, and Somalia (Mogadishu area) continue to be primary hotspots in July 2019. Risk has also remained elevated for the northeastern Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique, where attacks on civilians by suspected Islamist militants have continued. Compared to last month (see Figure 4c), the risk in Cabo Delgado has markedly increased further. The risk of one-sided violence has also continued to (lightly) reduce in central Mali, while high risk has moved further into Burkina Faso's north. In Nigeria's South we find a reduced risk this month. Finally, we find a relevant increase of risk of one-sided violence in Nord Kivu yet a decrease in Sud Kivu and Burundi.

3 History of UCDP organized violence

Figure 5 presents the the recent history of violence in each PRIO-GRID cell. Red cells had conflict in May 2019, and purple ones have not seen conflict in many years.
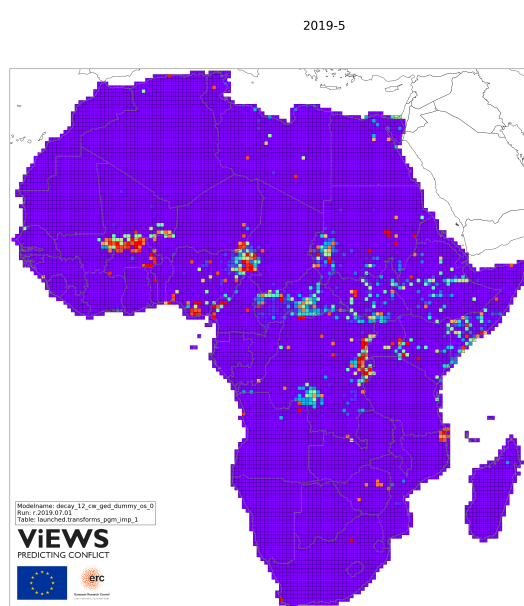
Figures 5a, 5b, 5c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 5d shows data on protests from ACLED (https://www.acleddata.com).
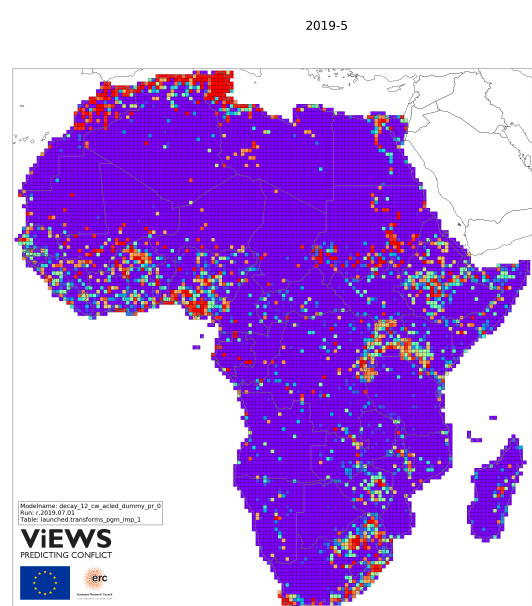
(a) State-based conflict (sb), May 2019
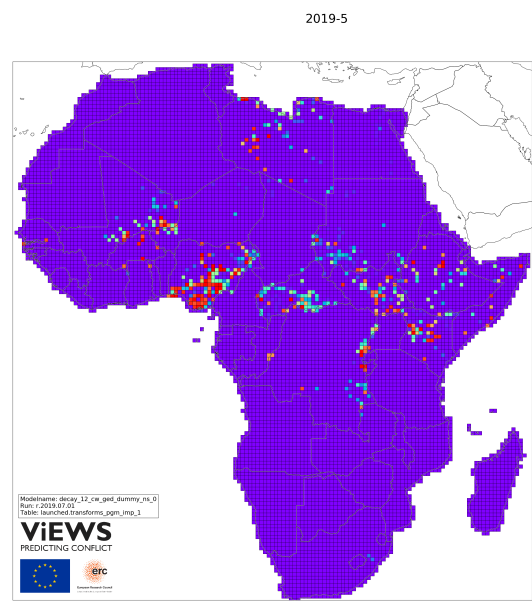
(b) Non-state conflict (ns), May 2019

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

(d) Protests (pr), May 2019

Figure 5: Decay function maps of observed conflict up to May 2019