

# ViEWS monthly forecasts, October 2019\*

## Summary of forecasts

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2019

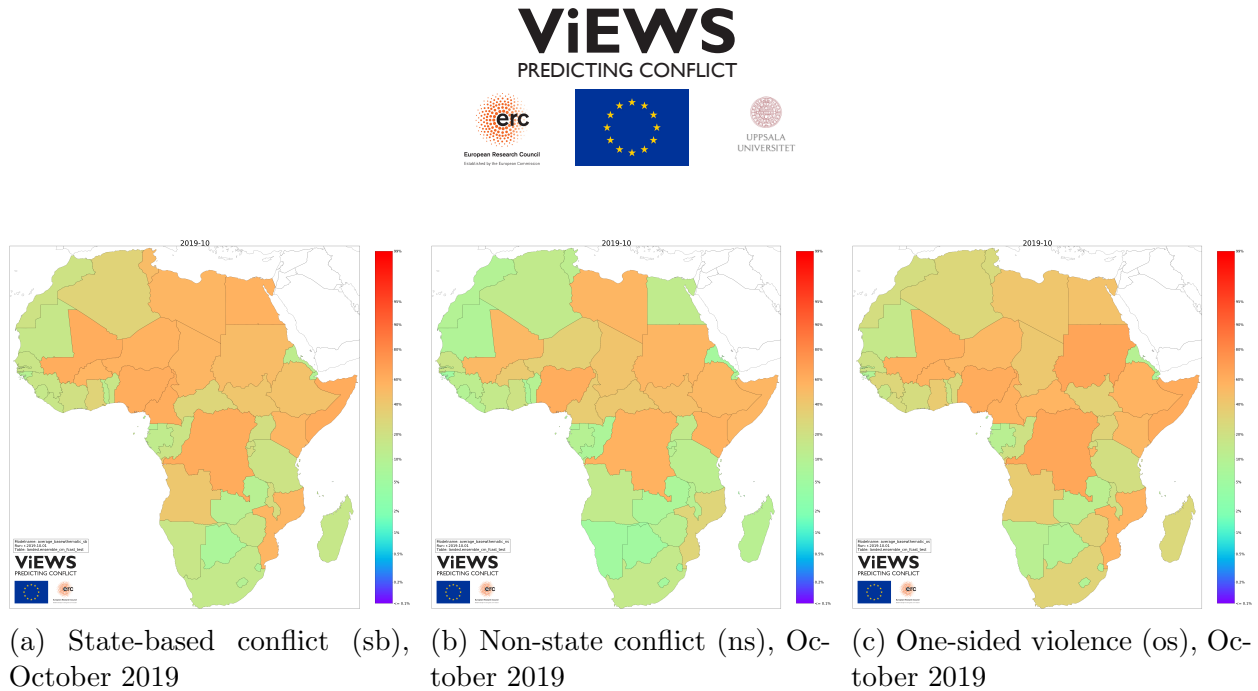


Figure 1: Ensemble forecasts for October 2019

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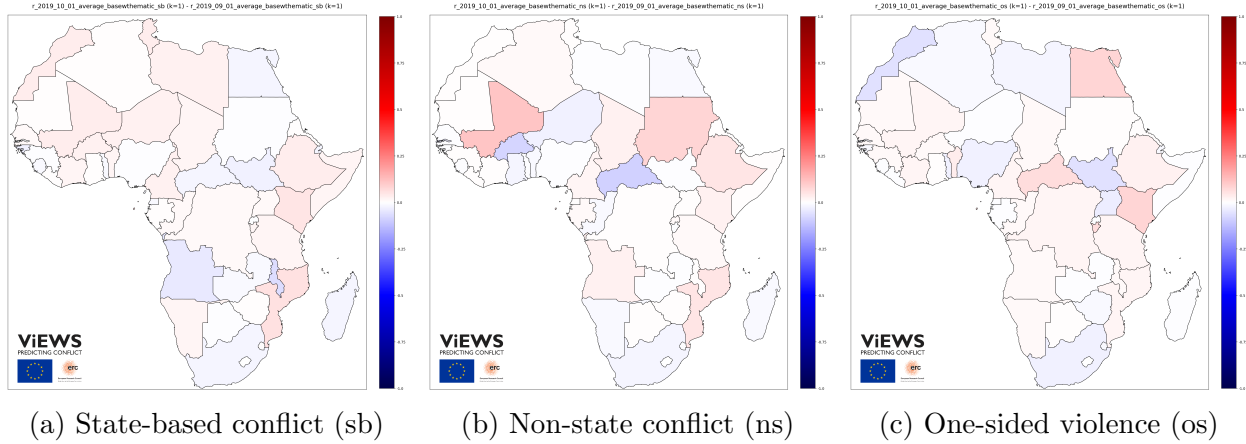


Figure 2: Change maps (cm) for September 2019 to October 2019

the ViEWS introductory article.<sup>1</sup> Figure 1 shows our country-level forecasts for October 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.

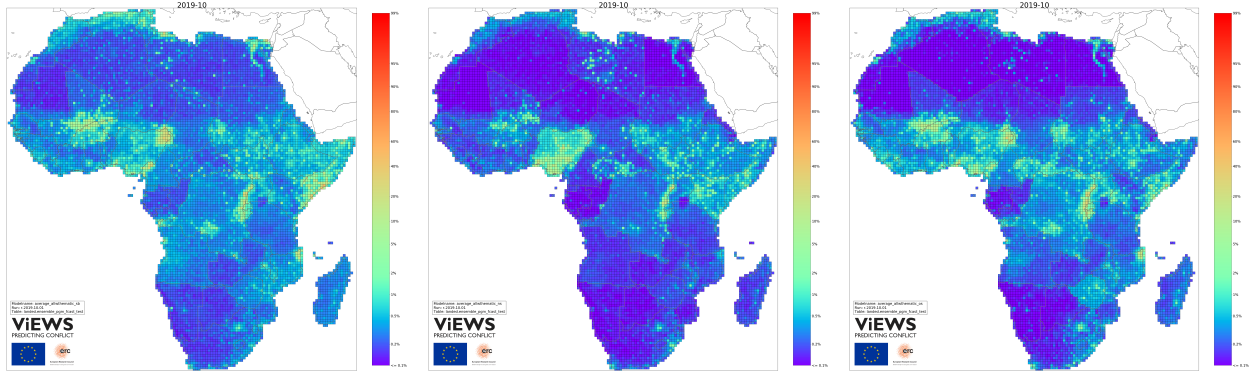
## 1 Country-month forecasts for October 2019

The plots in Figure 1 show the ViEWS country-level forecasts for the immediate future – what will happen in October 2019 according to our forecasts? We show the probability of at least one event in each country in October 2019, based on data up to and including August 2019. Countries with a red color have been assigned with a forecast probability close to 1, whereas purple countries have been assigned with a probability of 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 October 2019 are mostly similar to last month’s forecasts. The October 2019 run is using the same set of models as last month, so only changes to input variables will matter for the forecasts.

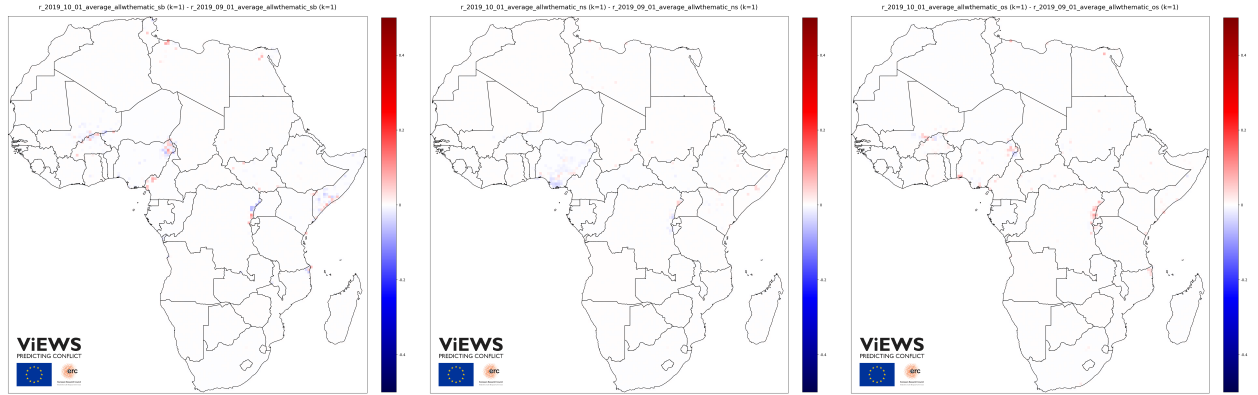
<sup>1</sup><https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022343319823860>.

<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), October 2019 (c) One-sided violence (os), October 2019

Figure 3: Ensemble forecasts for October 2019



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

Figure 4: Change maps (pgm) for September 2019 to October 2019

## 1.1 State-based conflict (sb)

We continue to forecast a high probability of state-based conflict in countries that have a recent history of conflict or protest events. Particularly in Libya, Egypt, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, DR Congo, Somalia and Mozambique, the risk of at least one state-based conflict event is high and over 50%. We also continue 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) proceeds (see Figure 5a).<sup>3</sup>

Figure 2a shows that compared to last month's forecast, the greatest (though mild) increase of the risk of a state-based conflict is in Mozambique, where in August clashes between the country's security forces and the Islamist insurgency in the northern province of Cabo

<sup>3</sup>See <https://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/640>.

Delgado continued. On 7 August, 15 insurgents were killed in a single clash with Mozambican security forces in Ntuleneni village of Palma. We also see a relevant increase of risk in Kenya this month, where in August Al-Shabaab attacks continued. Two Kenyan security forces were killed by Al-Shabaab in Mandera County on 11 August, while one suspected militant was killed by police forces on 30 August.

## 1.2 Non-state conflict (ns)

The forecast maps for non-state conflict follow partly the same patterns as **sb**, but the patterns of past events do differ across conflict types (see Figure 5). Mozambique for instance has experienced little non-state conflict, yet has seen significant one-sided violence, whereas for Libya the inverse has recently been true. Mali, Nigeria, DR Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Libya remain at high risk of non-state violence this month.

Compared to last month's forecast, the risk of non-state conflict has increased in Mali in particular, where in August one person was killed as a result of fighting between JNIM and the Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA). Nonetheless, the recent proliferation of local peace initiatives and signed peace agreements is promising.<sup>4</sup> We also find a relevant rise in the risk of non-state violence in Sudan this month, where between 21 and 26 August 37 people were reportedly killed in intercommunal clashes between Beni Amir and Nuba in Port Sudan.<sup>5</sup> Clashes between farmers and herders in North Darfur furthermore led to four people killed.

## 1.3 One-sided violence (os)

The probability of one-sided violence events remains especially pronounced this month in Mali and Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Cameroon (predominantly given Boko Haram), DR Congo, Sudan, and Somalia (predominantly given Al-Shabaab). Mozambique continues to be at especially high risk of one-sided violence as well, given persistent civilian killings in Cabo Delgado Province by Islamist militants.

Compared to our August forecast (figure 2c) we find an elevated risk in Egypt, given the death of 22 civilians in Cairo following a car bomb attack suspected to have been perpetrated by the Islamist Hasm Movement, though it has denied responsibility. In North Sinai, moreover, two persons suspected to be agents for the Egyptian military were kidnapped and killed by IS militants. Risk also rose in Kenya, where Al-Shabaab has continued its attacks on civilians in the country, killing two in Msambweni, Kwale County on 10 August. In the Central African

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<sup>4</sup>see <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/34-dead-in-port-sudan-tribal-strife>



Republic, suspected members of the armed group Return, Restitution and Rehabilitation (3R) killed at least two children on 5 August. In addition to that, militants suspected to be members of the Polular Front for the Central African Renaissance killed three civilians in Bria, Haute-Kotto on 17 August. Finally, Burundi shows a significant increase in the risk of one-sided violence, in particular caused by the killing of a member of the National Council for Freedom (CNL) by attackers suspected to be youth supporters of the ruling party.<sup>6</sup>

## 2 PRIO-GRID-month forecasts for October 2019

Figure 3 presents forecasts at fine-grained sub-national geographical locations for October 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.<sup>7</sup> 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 the northeast of Nigeria given ramped up security operations in the region since April. The cluster of violence in central Mali and northern Burkina Faso shows an unclear combination of increased and declined risk of violence. The Anglophone areas of Cameroon show a uniformly increased risk of state-based violence in October, while in DR Congo, the risk has this month declined significantly in Ituri province despite the recent large-scale government operation against militias in the region.<sup>8</sup> Between May and September of 2019, 226 people have been killed as a result of state-based armed violence there, mainly as a result of clashes between government security forces and armed factions of the Lendu ethnic group. Interestingly, the risk of state-based violence seems to have moved further south into North Kivu for October 2019.

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/englishnews/cnl-party-member-killed-and-four-wounded-in-muyinga-police-say/>

<sup>7</sup>See <https://ucdp.uu.se/#/actor/7032>.

<sup>8</sup>See <https://www.africanews.com/2019/07/03/drc-president-decries-attempted-genocide-in-ituri-province/>

We furthermore predict an increased risk of state-based violence in northwestern Libya in particular, where fighting in Tripoli between the Government of Libya and Forces of the House of Representatives (LNA) throughout August has led to a high number of casualties. Also in Egypt, we find a small cluster of increased risk in October, where in August government forces raided several militant hideouts in Helena, Cairo and Fayoum south of Cairo, killing 17 suspected militants in total. In Somalia, finally, we again find an unclear pattern of increase and decrease in its southern regions and around the country’s capital.

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

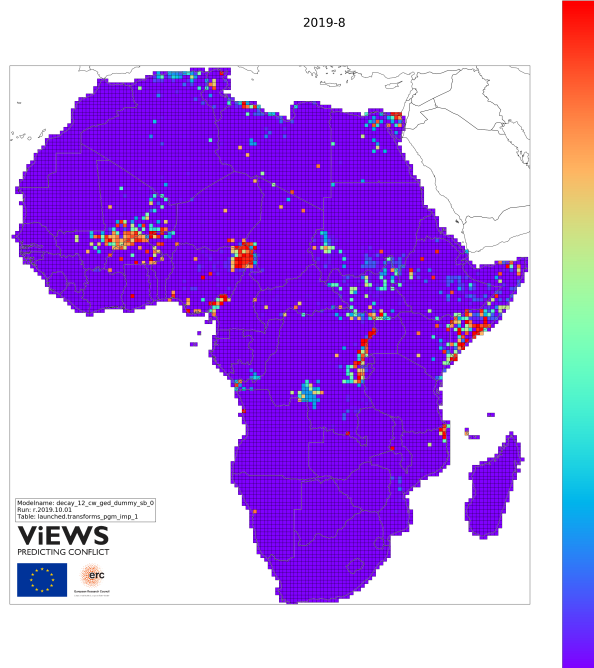
The forecasts for non-state conflict and one-sided violence depend on the same factors although with somewhat different implications. For **ns**, we most notably predict a worsened cluster of non-state violence in the northeastern DR Congo province of Ituri, given escalated ethnic violence in recent months between Lendu and Hema groups. Between May 2019 and September 2019, the UCDP has recorded a total number of 355 people killed as a result of non-state violence in this region.

Compared to last month (see Figure 4b), Nigeria shows a relatively uniform decreased risk of non-state violence in the country’s south in particular. With regard to the risk of one-sided violence, we again find a strong increase in the DRC’s Ituri province given escalated violence against civilians perpetrated by the ADF and other militias, as well as in the Kivus this month. Nigeria’s Borno State furthermore shows a continued rise in the risk of one-sided violence given increased Boko Haram attacks in July and August, while additionally we find a new cluster in the country’s southwest where police shot and killed a pregnant woman in Ijegun on 10 August. Policemen furthermore shot and killed two thieves after their arrest in Igando area on 19 August.

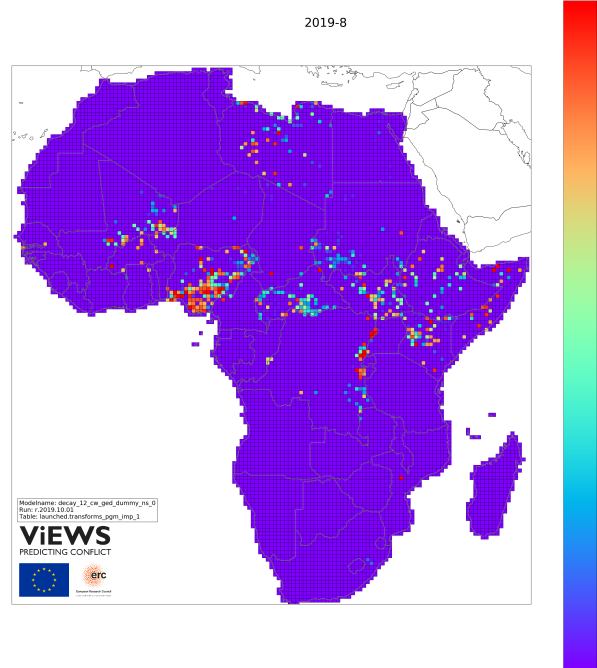
## 3 History of UCDP organized violence

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

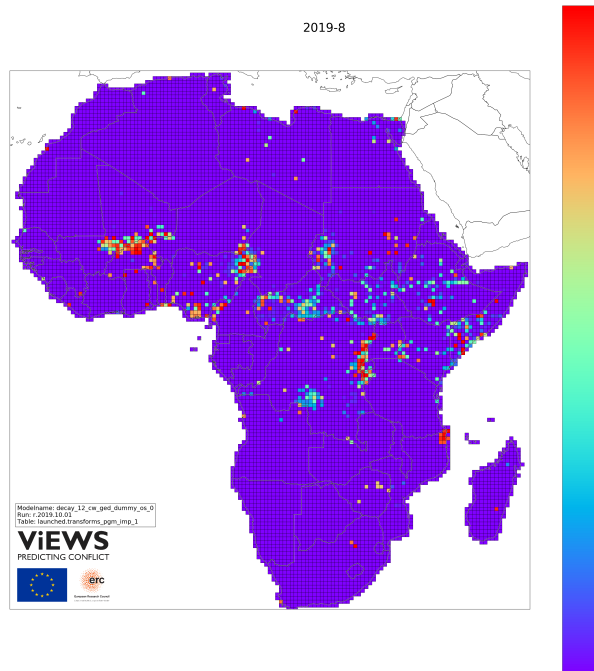
Figures 5a, 5b, 5c show state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence respectively from the UCDP. Figure 5d shows data on protests from ACLED (<https://www.acleddata.com>).



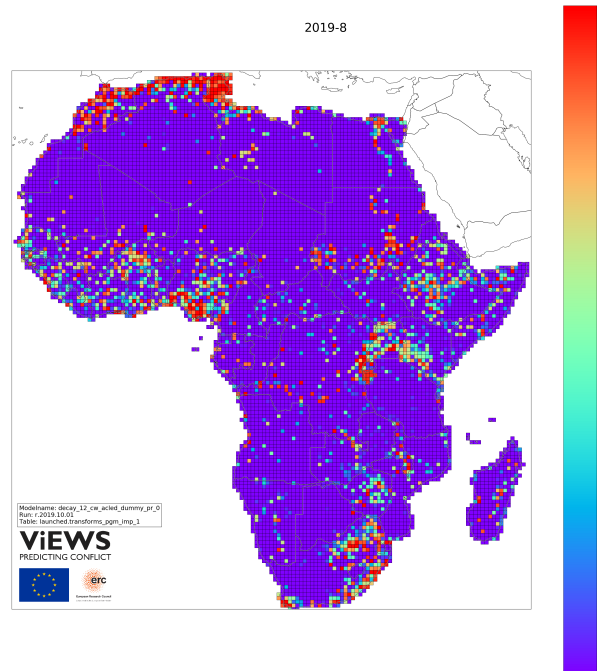
(a) State-based conflict (sb), August 2019



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



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



(d) Protests (pr), August 2019

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