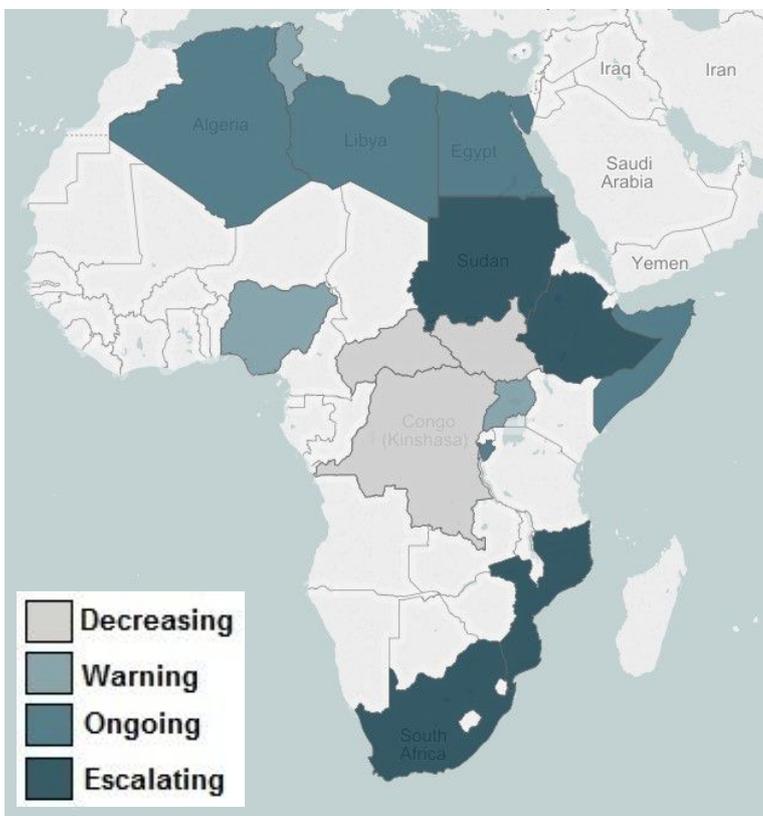


Welcome to the March issue of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project's (ACLED) *Conflict Trends* report. Each month, ACLED researchers gather, analyse and publish data on political violence in Africa in realtime. Weekly updates to realtime conflict event data are published on the [ACLED website](#), and are also available through our research partners at [Climate Change and African Political Stability \(CCAPS\)](#).

This month's issue focuses on ADF and FDLR violence in **Democratic Republic of Congo**, the largely peaceful protests against the expansion of Addis Ababa and the security forces response in **Ethiopia**, territorial gains made by General Khalifah Haftar's military forces in Benghazi, **Libya**, the wide geography of riots and protests by Children of the Liberation Struggle (CLS) in **Namibia**, the peace process in **South Sudan**, spikes in protest and low-level Islamist insurgency in **Tunisia** and election-based violence in **Uganda**.

Elsewhere on the continent, police abuses against political and non-political figures in **Egypt** persist, Boko Haram escalated the intensity of attacks in Borno State, **Nigeria**, and violence continues to decrease in **Central African Republic**.



Conflict Trajectory, March 2016

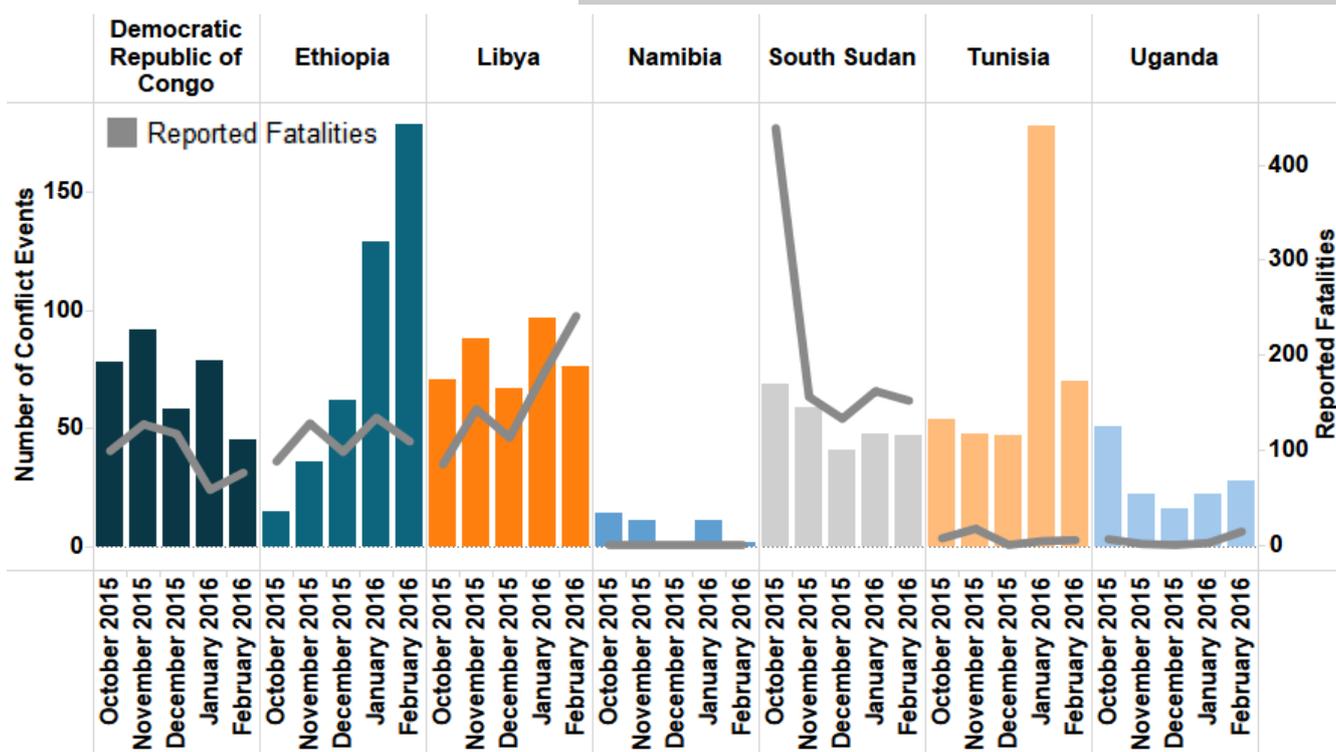


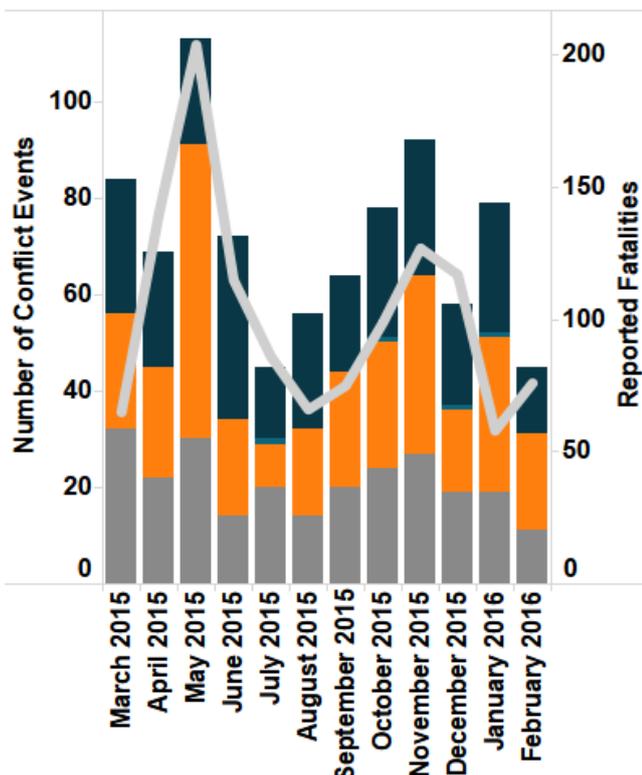
Figure 1: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities by Country, October 2015 - February 2016

Democratic Republic of Congo

In the first quarter of 2016, many of the trends that marked the previous year continue to play out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR-Congo). The past year has witnessed volatility with respect to the number of riots, protests and politically violent events. This includes notable peaks in riots and protests in May and November 2015 (see Figure 2). Also prevalent throughout these months was violence between Bantus and Pygmies; violence against civilians attributed to the FDLR; ongoing military offensives by the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) against the ADF in May, as well as the FDLR and NDC-C in November. May also saw a significant number of protests during a 72-hour strike by MONUSCO staff, while November's profile was more diverse, with roughly equivalent numbers of riots/protests, battles and violence against civilian events (see Figure 2).

Event Type

- Battles
- Remote violence
- Riots, Protests and Non-Violent Events
- Violence against civilians
- Fatalities



The ADF and FDLR continue to be active, particularly in clashes with FARDC and MONUSCO forces and civilian-targeted violence continues to recur, albeit at a diminished rate compared to 2015. Changes in the type of violence both groups are engaged in gives an impression of the effectiveness of the ongoing offensives against them by FARDC and MONSUCO. In the case of ADF, fewer cases of violence against civilians are being reported, especially when compared with the number of battles, suggesting that the pressure being put on them has been effective. However, the ADF's recent killing of at least 16 civilians in mid-February in the Oicha area suggests that this observed dynamic is subject to change ([Premium Times, 15 February 2016](#)).

The FDLR has also come under increasing pressure from multiple conflict agents — not simply from FARDC — despite the considerable success of FARDC in taking back territory from the FDLR since the beginning of the year. In early January, the FDLR was accused of killing at last 14 Nande in the village of Miriki in the Lubero area. Since this incident, the spectre of ethnic conflict has been a running theme in the Eastern DR-Congo following what was considered a retaliatory attack by the Nduma Defence of Congo-Renewal (NDC-R). The NDC-R is seen as aligned with the Nande against the FDLR and the attack resulted in 21 Hutu killed during an attack on Mukeberwa, an FDLR stronghold ([Reuters, 8 February 2016](#)). Whether this will continue to escalate is yet to be seen.

Finally, protests related to President Joseph Kabila's attempts to extend his mandate have also continued, and accounts of a mass grave found which may hold bodies of murdered protestors is casting a long shadow. Significant protests related to the presidential elections have occurred in 2016. These have included demonstrations to mark the anniversary of violently dispersed protests on 19 January 2015. These protests occurred in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Bukavu and Goma, but were largely repressed, collectively resulting in at least 100 arrests by security forces ([Al Jazeera, 28 January 2016](#)). More recently, a national strike was called by the G7 coalition of opposition parties on 16 February, resulting in shut-downs of a number of urban centres, but most notably Kinshasa, Bukavu, Uvira and Goma ([Human Rights Watch, 23 February 2016](#)).

Figure 2: Riots/Protests and Political Violence by Type and Fatalities in DR-Congo, from March 2015 - February 2016.

### Ethiopia

Ethiopia has been subject to a wave of political violence and protest for the past three months. Demonstrations against the Ethiopian government’s ‘Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan’ — a program designed to expand the capital, Addis Ababa, into the neighbouring hinterland — is the reason for this unprecedented civil unrest ([Africa Confidential, 18 December 2015](#)). Violence against protesters and civilians by security forces accounts for 50% of fatalities in 2016. In spite of the severity of the actions of the security forces, the demonstrators have generally not reacted with violence. Over 90% of recorded demonstrations have involved peaceful protesters.

This proposed expansion would come at the expense of the surrounding territory which is currently under the jurisdiction of the Oromo state; this has provoked widespread demonstrations from students and farmers in the Oromo region. The protests started in Ginci where students demonstrated against the sale of Ginci stadium and the clearing of local forest for the proposed expansion ([Africa Confidential, 18 December 2015](#)). The protests soon spread to most major towns across the Oromo region (see Figure 3). This in turn spurred a crackdown by security forces.

Political contestation and violence in Ethiopia has generally been limited to clashes, primarily between weakened ethno-national rebel movements such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) or Ogaden National Liberation Army (ONLA). These events are 40% and 70% of annual activity

for nearly every year between 1999 and 2015 (with the exception of 2006). While these insurgencies can be costly in terms of fatalities, attacks have been sporadic and no insurgent group has mounted a serious challenge to the state.

In contrast, the demonstrations challenge the constitutional arrangement of land, identity and ownership in modern Ethiopia. The 1991 constitution declares land as common property of the nations and nationalities of Ethiopia, in short, no part of the land in Ethiopia belongs to a particular ethnic group though the state owes compensation to the owner of any land seized ([Andargie, 2015](#)). Nevertheless, the scale and distribution of the protests across the Oromo region (see Figure 3) and the composition of the protesters (primarily Oromo students and farmers) has shown the state that much of the public feels differently.

In spite of attempts to cast the protesters as terrorists or agents of the OLF, the ruling Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and its local Oromo coalition partner, the Oromo People’s Democratic Organization (OPDO), have had to acquiesce to the demonstrators demands and cancel the Masterplan ([HRW, 2016](#); [BBC News, 13 January 2016](#)). OPDO has often been perceived as a tool of indirect rule through which the EPRDF can impose its will on Ethiopia’s most populous region ([Gudina, 2007](#)). However, these protests may reverse this relationship with OPDO operating as an intermediary between the government and the Oromo people.

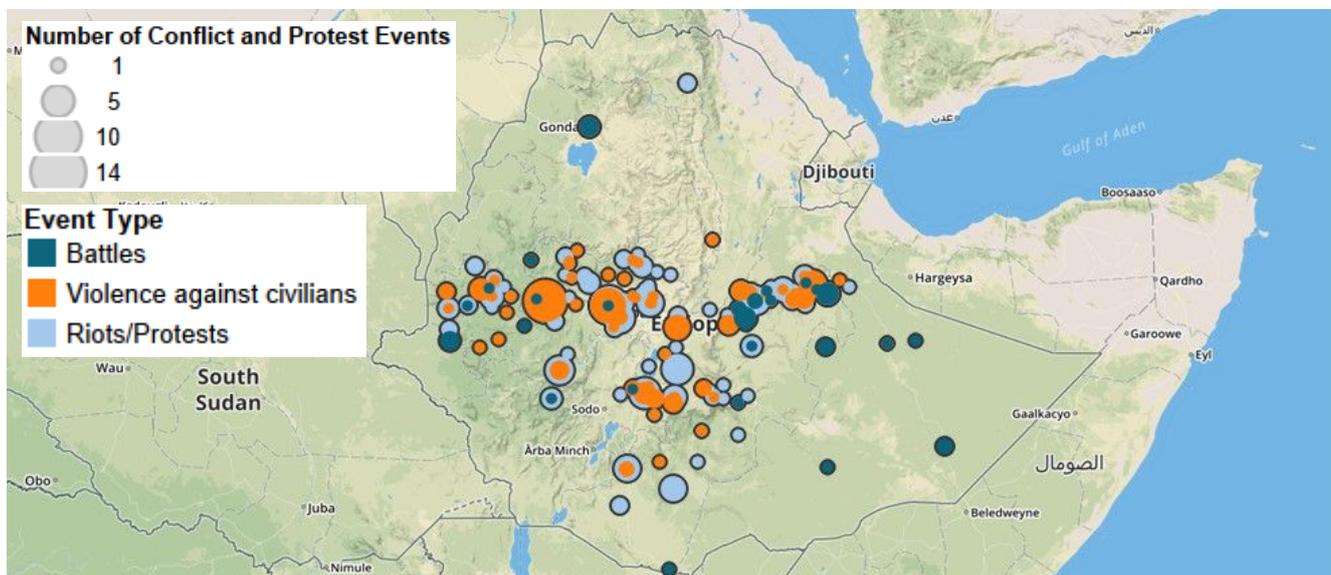


Figure 3: Conflict Events and Protests by Location in Ethiopia, from November 2015 - February 2016.

Libya

Levels of riots, protests and political violence in February remained relatively stable compared to the previous 6 months in Libya, with 71 riots, protests and politically-violent events recorded from 1 - 27 February (the 6-month average is just over 73 events per month). However, changes in the nature of armed clashes saw a significant increase in territorial battles, concentrated in Benghazi, Ajdabiya and Sabratha. Intensified clashes over territory led to a simultaneous escalation in the number of conflict-related fatalities, reaching their highest levels since August 2015. In the week of 28 February, 46% of the 117 reported fatalities across Libya were attributed to battles in which territory was won or lost by government forces (see Figure 4).

Advances into Benghazi by the Libya National Army (LNA) and the Sai'qah Special Forces supported by the Al-Tawheed Salafist battalion led to the liberation of a number of districts in which Ansar al-Sharia and Islamic State (IS) militants have been holed up in over the past two years. Forces under the command of General Khalifah Haftar drove militants out of the districts of Sabri, Leithi, Sidi Faraj, Buatni, Hawari and the Mreisa port, south of

Benghazi, with reports of residents returning to their homes in Hawari district (see Figure 5).

Against the backdrop of fighting and gains made by Haftar's forces, reports were leaked detailing that French Special Forces were deployed and stationed at Benina airbase to support the coalition forces in Benghazi ([Le Monde, 24 February 2016](#)). Whilst the inroads made by the Tobruk-aligned military forces and reports of French boots-on-the-ground have a coincidental timing, some commentators have criticised the international media's short-sightedness in focusing on international actors which could distract analysts from near future conflict dynamics by domestic anti-ISIS groups ([Middle East Eye, 26 February 2016](#)).

These same commentators have pointed to the organic process through which Libyan stakeholders have banded together to confront IS militants. In Benghazi, General Haftar's forces have made the most significant gains in liberating districts in which IS forces operate since Operation Dignity was first initiated. Furthermore, from 23 - 27 February, a myriad of militias that have at different times supported both the House of Representatives (HoR) and

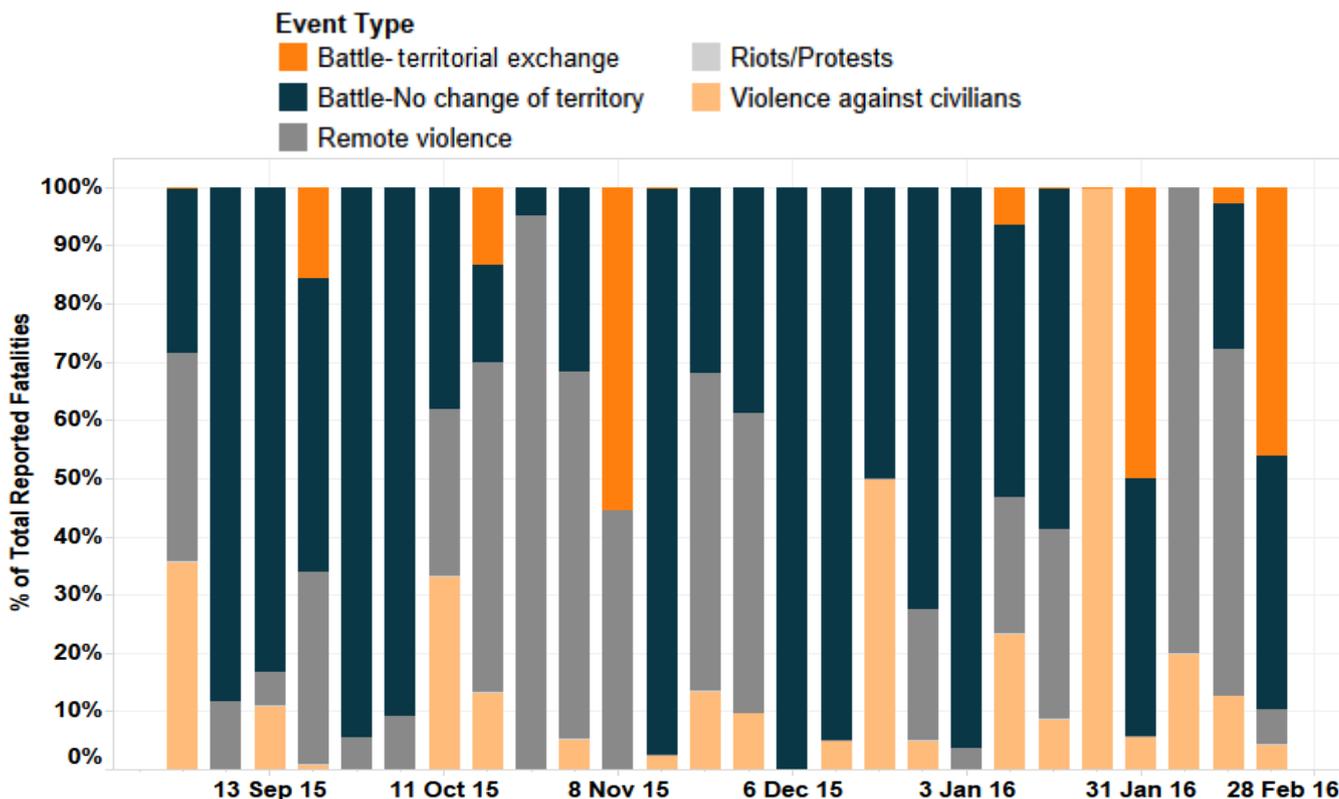


Figure 4: Percentage of Reported Fatalities by Event Type and Week in Libya, from August 2015 - February 2016.

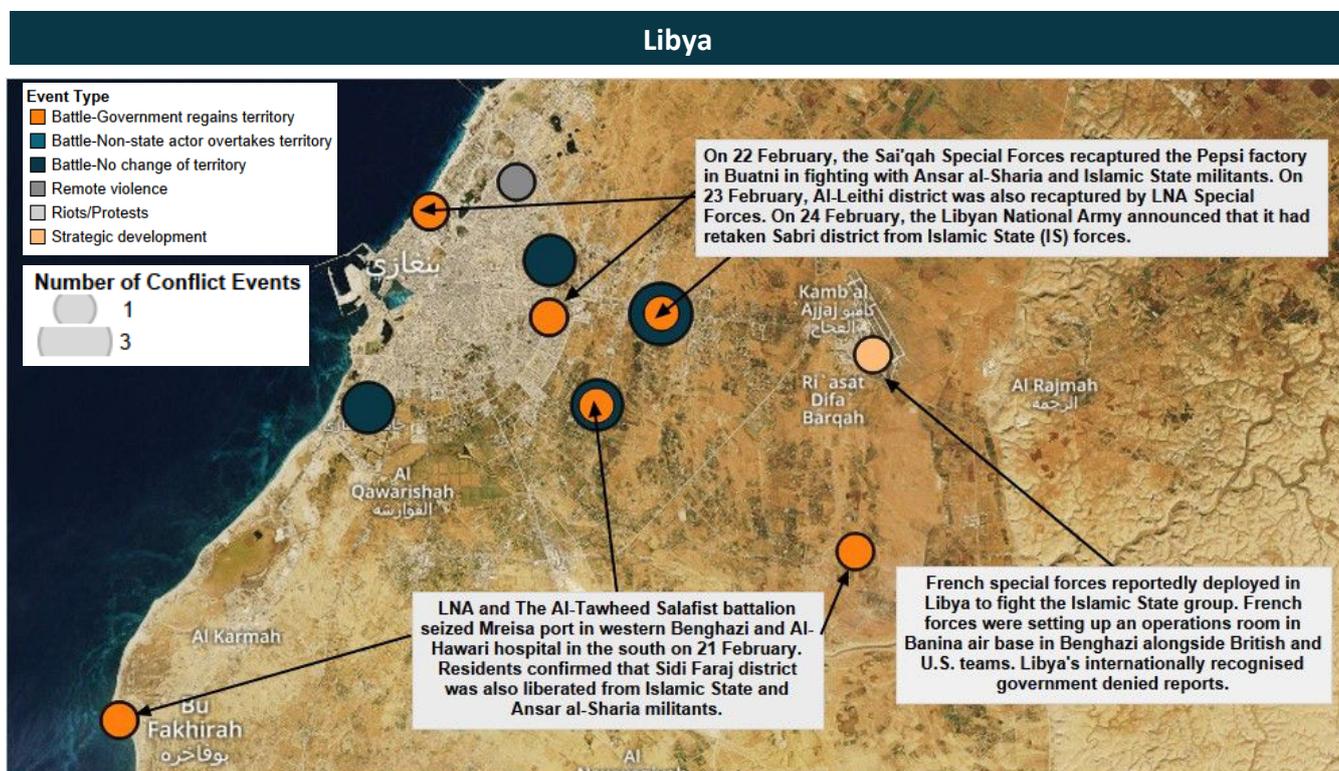


Figure 5: Number of Conflict Events and Riots/Protests by Type and Location in Benghazi, Libya, in February 2016.

the General National Congress (GNC), provided reinforcements to the city of Sabratha to tackle an IS offensive in the city. Libya Herald reported that it was the “first time that pro-GNC and pro-HoR fighters have joined forces” ([Libya Herald, 27 February 2016](#)); an outcome pushed for by UN mediators albeit through political rather than military measures first. And in Derna, Shura Council of Derna Mujahideen fighters repelled another assault by IS with aerial backing from the LNA. Conflict dynamics in early 2016 appear to be underscored by tacit support between multiple agents to confront the common IS enemy and this unpredictability is likely to be the mainstay of military dynamics in coming weeks in Libya.

On 23 February, local brigades fighting under the Sabratha Military Council conducted raids on IS hideouts near Sabratha. IS militants then pushed into the city, briefly occupying the central areas of the city and beheading 12 militiamen ([Le Monde, 24 February 2016](#)). The escalation of violence resulted in 47 deaths and culminated in forces from Western Libya near Tripoli, including Ajlat, Zintan, Zuwara, Zawiya and Rujiban sending reinforcements to tackle the IS putsch. These groups have been locked in inter-communal tensions since the Dignity-Dawn conflict erupted ([ACLED, August 2015](#)); despite numerous failed reconciliations between these western groups over the

past year, the threat of IS activity close to Tripoli appears to be a binding force, in the short-term at least.

This could signal a race against time in which the attractiveness of military alliances between domestic actors competes with the ability of the political establishment to agree on a Government of National Accord (GNA), paving the way for an international coalition to fight IS militants. Despite inflaming tensions between Haftar and Khalifa Ghwell, the prime minister of the Tripoli-based government, the operation in Benghazi is likely to have shored up support for the pro-HoR and Haftar bloc in the Libya Political Agreement (LPA) negotiations, creating further impasse in a process which last week saw the HoR fail to hold a vote of confidence due to a lack of quorum ([Al Jazeera, 23 February 2016](#)). Alternatively, continued failings in the development in the UN process may force the international community's hand in coordinating with non-state groups ([Libya-Analysis, 29 February 2016](#)). If this is the case, questions will be raised about how effective fighting is in generating long-lasting unity without a guiding political framework. If history provides any lessons, then fractious relations between Zintan and Misrata in post-Gaddafi Libya exposes the fragility of building stability on the premise of the “enemy of my enemy is my friend”, serving as an ominous sign for future stability.

Namibia

Over the past six months, Namibia has seen an above average number of riots and protests. The relatively peaceful country generally sees a combined average of 6.5 riots and protests per month (just over 4.5 protests and 2 riots per month). However, there were 13 protests in October, 5 protests and 6 riots in November, and 4 protests and 4 riots in January (see Figure 6). The increase in riots can be attributed to the Children of the Liberation Struggle (CLS), commonly referred to as the ‘struggle kids’.

In October and early November 2015, CLS members held protests in Katura and the capital Windhoek, demanding jobs with government agencies (see Figure 6). In mid-November, CLS members in Eros tried to strangle a staff member of the Namibian Exile Kids Association ([The Namibian, 26 November 2008](#)). In the northern Oshana Region, CLS blocked South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) offices and destroyed water meters in Oshakati,

clashed with police in Okandjenedi, and injured one policeman at a rally. Prior to November, CLS had not reportedly been involved in a riot since August 2014.

Riots continued on 15 - 16 January, as CLS members attacked a farmer with a machete; the farmer fired back, injuring four ([The Namibian, 17 January 2016](#)). On the same day, struggle kids rioted at the Brakwater settlement in Windhoek, demanding relocation; 400 members of the group were moved to Brakwater in October ([Namibian Sun, 8 January 2016](#)). Rioters attacked civilians with pang-a knives, while Special Reserve Forces fired tear gas and rubber bullets.

Since 2008, approximately 500 of the 8,000 registered struggle kids (now adults) have protested for employment and assistance from the SWAPO-led government ([SWAPO Party, 2011](#)). CLS claim a special responsibility is owed because they were raised abroad and forced to repatriate ‘home’ to a Namibian culture of which they knew little. Reports mention that CLS protesters often appear under the age of twenty, meaning they were not born in exile before independence and, therefore, claims to special treatment are groundless. Regardless, recent activity of CLS embodies many of the country’s tensions regarding land and employment for all young Namibians.

Although one of the least densely populated countries, spanning over 825,000 square kilometres, Namibia’s protests often involve land rights by farmers who are dependent on agricultural subsistence living. Though the country has strong mining, fishing, and tourism markets, it also has one of the highest income inequality rates in the world. In the past six months, employees have protested for improved pay and working conditions in nine of Namibia’s 14 regions (see Figure 6).

As of the 27 February, Namibia witnessed a decrease in both conflict events and protests. However, even if CLS activity dissipates, similar grievances by other citizens are not likely to disappear without changes in government policies. President Hage Geingob has asked all youth to be patient, “including both the struggle children and those who were not in exile but are also children of those who fought against apartheid inside the country” ([SWAPO Party, February 2013](#)).

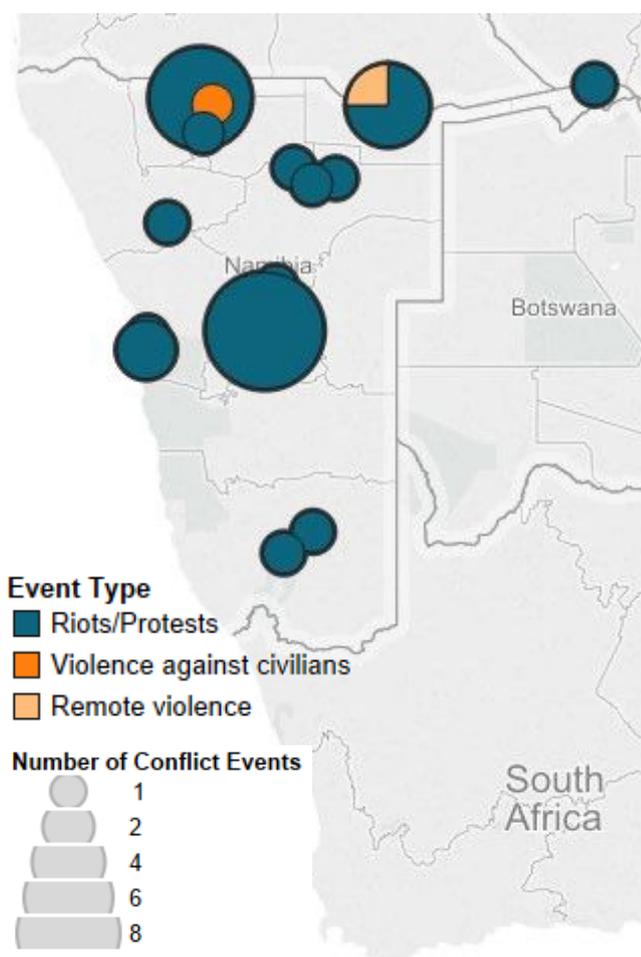


Figure 6: Riots/Protests and Political Violence by Location in Namibia, from September 2015 - February 2016.

South Sudan

Progress was made in the South Sudan peace process. Riek Machar, leader of the rebel Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army – In Opposition (SPLA-IO), returned to government as the First Vice-President on 11 February ([Africa Confidential, 19 February 2016](#)). This marks Machar’s first return to government since he was fired by President Salva Kiir in 2013 in a purge which was the starting point of the ongoing civil conflict ([De Waal, 2015](#)). The peace deal is effective: the number of conflict events has continually dropped since the signing of the deal in August 2015 (*see* Figure 7).

In spite the peace deal, the Machar’s rebels have continued to fight. The SPLA-IO was active in over 20% of violent conflict events in September and December 2015.

There are two possible reasons for this continuation in rebel activity. First, Machar may not have complete control over the rebels. The rebels have, in the past, been described as a ‘loose coalition’ of ethnic rebels, political defectors and rebellious elites ([UNHCR, 2014](#)). The signing of the agreement has also split with SPLA-IO with rebel generals Peter Gadet and Gatoath Gatkuoth cutting ties with Machar due to their opposition of the powersharing deal ([BBC News, 26 August 2015](#)). Key generals advised Kiir not to sign the August peace deal and Kiir’s control over the military command structure is acknowledged to be weak ([UNHCR, 2014](#); [BBC News, 26 August 2015](#)).

Second, the rebel coalition may be continuing its campaign in order to pressure the government to grant more

favourable terms in a post-conflict South Sudan. There is already considerable disagreement over the future administrative structure of the country. The government is attempting to turn convert South Sudan’s ten existing states into 28 new units ([Africa Confidential, 22 October 2015](#)). The aim of this new administrative arrangement is to prevent Machar from getting control of the oilfields in Unity state, his home area, by splitting the state into three (*ibid.*). Kiir has already appointed the governors for the 28 planned which undermines the peace agreement which granted the opposition two out of the ten governorships and legislative parity with the government in the key battleground states of Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile ([Africa Confidential, 6 February 2016](#); [BBC News, 26 August 2015](#)).

The announcement of the 28 states has provoked localised fighting as disparate groups use violence to either gain an advantageous position in the new arrangement or protest against Kiir’s decree. Conflict has increased in Western and Central Equatoria and Bahr-el-Ghalzal, with groups such as the Mundi, Baka and Mundari forming armed militias to fight against the proposed divisions or annexations of their land ([Africa Confidential, 19 February 2016](#); [Sperber, 2016](#)).

Even if the current peace deal contains, if not eliminates, the fight between Kiir’s government and Machar’s rebels, localised disagreements over the administrative division of the country could result in violence persisting in South Sudan long after a unity government is formed.

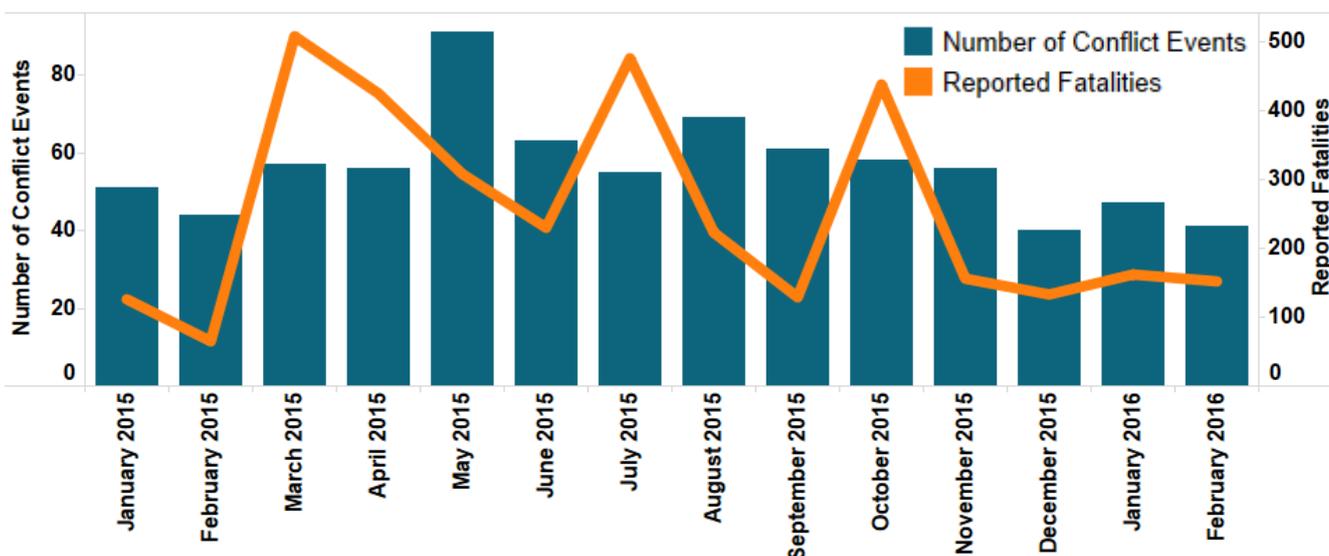


Figure 7: Number of Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities in South Sudan, from January 2015 - February 2016.

Tunisia

The first two months of 2016 saw an unprecedented spike in protest activity in Tunisia. The number of riots and protests recorded by ACLED in January has been the highest since the 2011 uprisings, while mobilisation continued at slightly diminished levels in February. The epicentre of the unrest was the western province of Kasserine, where the self-immolation of a young unemployed in the capital city triggered violent protests across the region ([International Business Times, 29 January 2016](#)). Protests quickly spread to the rest of the country, involving the traditionally turbulent peripheries of Tunis and the southern regions along with the more quiet coastal provinces of Bizerte and Monastir. A police officer died during clashes in the town of Feriana, while at least 100 people among officers and protesters reported injuries.

The revolts vividly reveal the popular dissatisfaction over the outcome of the revolution, especially among the younger generations ([Africa Confidential, 19 February 2016](#)). The youth unemployment rate is estimated at 30%, and there is little hope that economic trends will improve considerably in the near future. For their part, the people of Kasserine have long denounced systematic marginalisation and growing regional inequalities ([Inkyfada, 13 July 2015](#)). The government, led by old allies of former presidents Ben Ali and Bourguiba and crippled by internal divisions, seems thus unable to meet the widespread desire for political and social change.

Tunisia is also facing the continuous threat of Islamist insurgency on its territory. Since the attacks on a tourist resort in Sousse last summer and on a military convoy in central Tunis in November, the government has stepped security measures all over the country. In February only, the army killed four militants in three separate clashes in the provinces of Kasserine and Gabes, whereas a civilian bystander died when caught in a crossfire between military forces and gunmen near Jendouba. Last month, concerned with the possible spillover of insecurity, the government also completed a barrier along the border with Libya ([Al Jazeera, 7 February 2016](#)). The defence system, which consists of sand banks and moats and extends for 200 km from Ras Ajdir to Dehiba, aims mainly at fending off Islamist militants returning from training camps in neighbouring Libya.

Data show that conflict activity in Tunisia has been constantly decreasing since 2013 (see Figure 8). Organised in smaller cells and severely restrained in their operational capacities, armed Islamists are mainly active in the mountainous territories of central and western Tunisia. Although they retain the ability to launch resounding, lethal strikes against civilians and security forces, Islamist militias appear no longer able to engage in insurgent campaigns on a larger scale. The recent wave of protests show nonetheless that the prioritisation of security may have come at the expense of inclusive and well-balanced development.

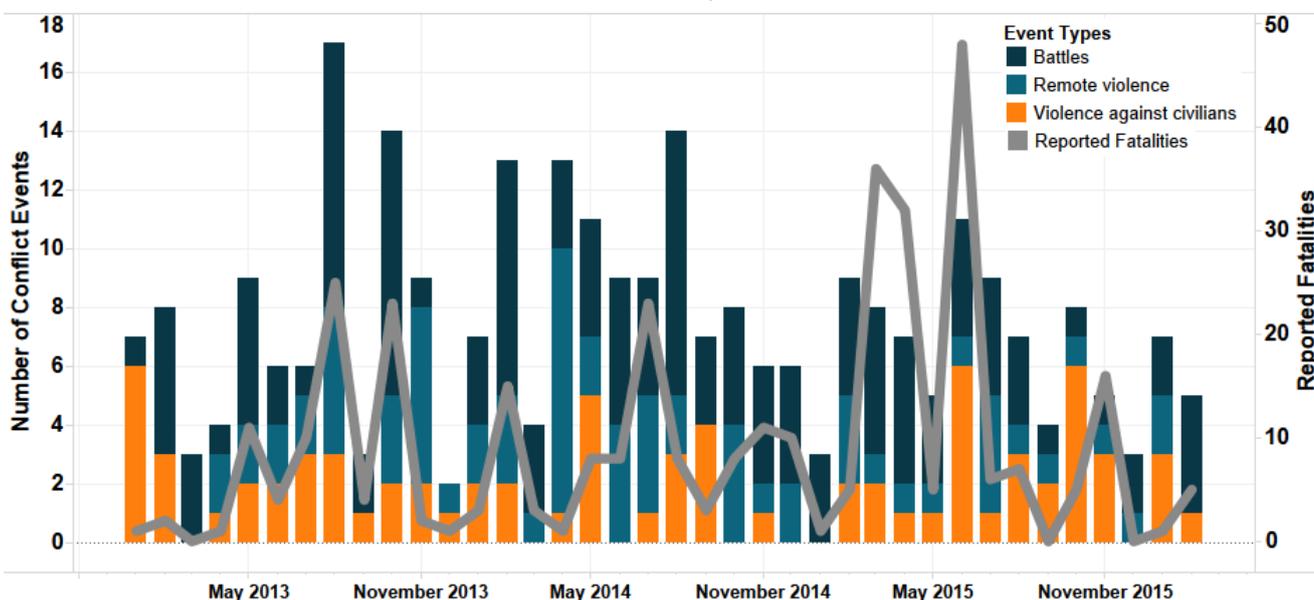


Figure 8: Number of Conflict Events in Tunisia, from January 2013 - February 2016.

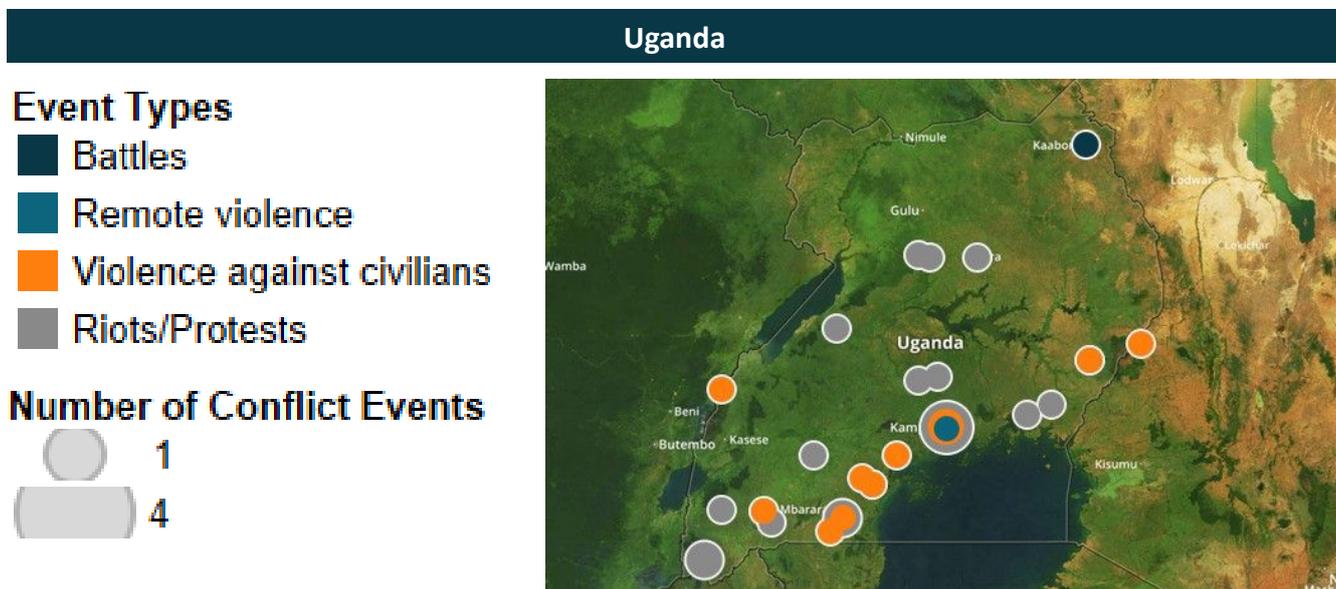


Figure 9: Number of Conflict Events and Riots/Protests in Uganda, from January - February 2016.

The results of the presidential elections in Uganda came with no surprise, as incumbent Yoweri Museveni secured his fifth victory with more than 60% of the votes. The candidate of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Kizza Besigye, came second with 35%, while former prime minister Amama Mbabazi garnered less than 2%. Although there were few doubts over Museveni’s re-election, fears that the opposition could attract more votes and even force the president to a humiliating run-off proved unsubstantiated ([Africa Confidential, 5 February 2016](#)).

Presidential election results nonetheless sparked controversy among international observers and opposition supporters. Without questioning the legitimacy of Museveni’s victory, election observers condemned the lack of transparency of the Electoral Commission and criticised the campaign of intimidation against opposition leaders ([Africa Confidential 19 February 2016](#)). Denouncing electoral frauds and vote rigging, FDC candidate Besigye announced he would challenge the results in court and in street protests. Unsurprisingly, Museveni rejected all allegations in a televised speech on February 21, while at the same time threatening to use force against “troublemakers” ([Jeune Afrique, 21 February 2016](#)).

Uganda saw a slight increase in election-based violence between January and February, especially in Kampala and other districts in the south-east and south-west of the country (see Figure 9). On February 24, twenty people were injured as unidentified gunmen assaulted ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) sympathisers in Mbale, near the border with Kenya. The most violent

event occurred a few days later in the western town of Bundibugyo, where at least six people died in clashes between NRM and opposition supporters.

The majority of riots and protests connected to the electoral contest occurred in the capital city, where opposition engaged in violent clashes with police forces. Police has increasingly resorted to teargas to disperse opposition rallies and demonstrators during the electoral period, renewing widespread allegations of police brutality and violent repression ([ACLED Crisis Blog, 5 November 2015](#); [African Arguments, 22 February 2016](#)). On 15 February, police violently dispersed Besigye’s supporters in Kampala, killing one. On 18 February, security forces fired teargas at disgruntled voters. In a separate episode, police clashed with FDC supporters protesting for the arrest of their leader south of the capital, injuring several people.

Despite his landslide victory, the 71-year-old Ugandan president will face new challenges to his rule. As the current constitution fixes the presidential age limit at 75, Museveni will need to introduce a constitutional amendment if he wants to run again in 2021. However, the experiences of Burundi and the Republic of Congo in 2015 loom large and show the potential risks of extending term limits ([ACLED Crisis Blog, 11 December 2015](#)). Opposition may also mount among NRM party cadres should Museveni designate his wife Janet or his son Muhoozi Kainerugaba as successor. As the president enters his thirtieth year in power, Museveni’s new term in office will tell how he will organise his succession and whether he will fend off these challenges.

Special Focus Topic: Conflict Resilient Investment

Rates of foreign direct investment (FDI) to Africa have been increasing ([United Nations, 2015](#)). When selecting a location, investors place significant weight on stability – an optimal environment is where stability is high and risk is minimal ([African Development Bank, 2012](#)).

The presence of conflict has been found to both have negative effects on FDI inflows, and decrease the likelihood that a state is chosen as an investment location ([Li, 2006](#); [Busse and Hefeker, 2007](#)). Both domestic and transnational terrorism may depress FDI ([Bandyopadhyay, Sandler, and Younas, 2014](#)). Even the perception of risk of future political violence can have an impact on investment flows ([Jensen and Young, 2008](#)).

However, political risk to external investors is different to

what it is for citizens, and not all types of violence are indicative of ‘fragility’ or ‘instability’. ‘Political stability’ can be measured as the likelihood that a government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means; as such, minimizing this likelihood would have an effect of minimizing destabilization (see [Chen, Dollar, and Tang, 2015](#)). As such, certain types of violence – namely, forms of state repression – arguably denote a strong and stable state, as regimes are able to use the resources at its discretion to secure its position, power, and authority. States may use repression as a tactic to enforce their hold on power and to reaffirm their authority, thereby ensuring a form of security ([Escriba-Folch, 2013](#)). African regimes often use repression to eradicate competition and subordinate civilian reform and revolt in order to ensure their

- State Conflict Events
- Distinct Locations of State Conflict Events
- FDI Stock

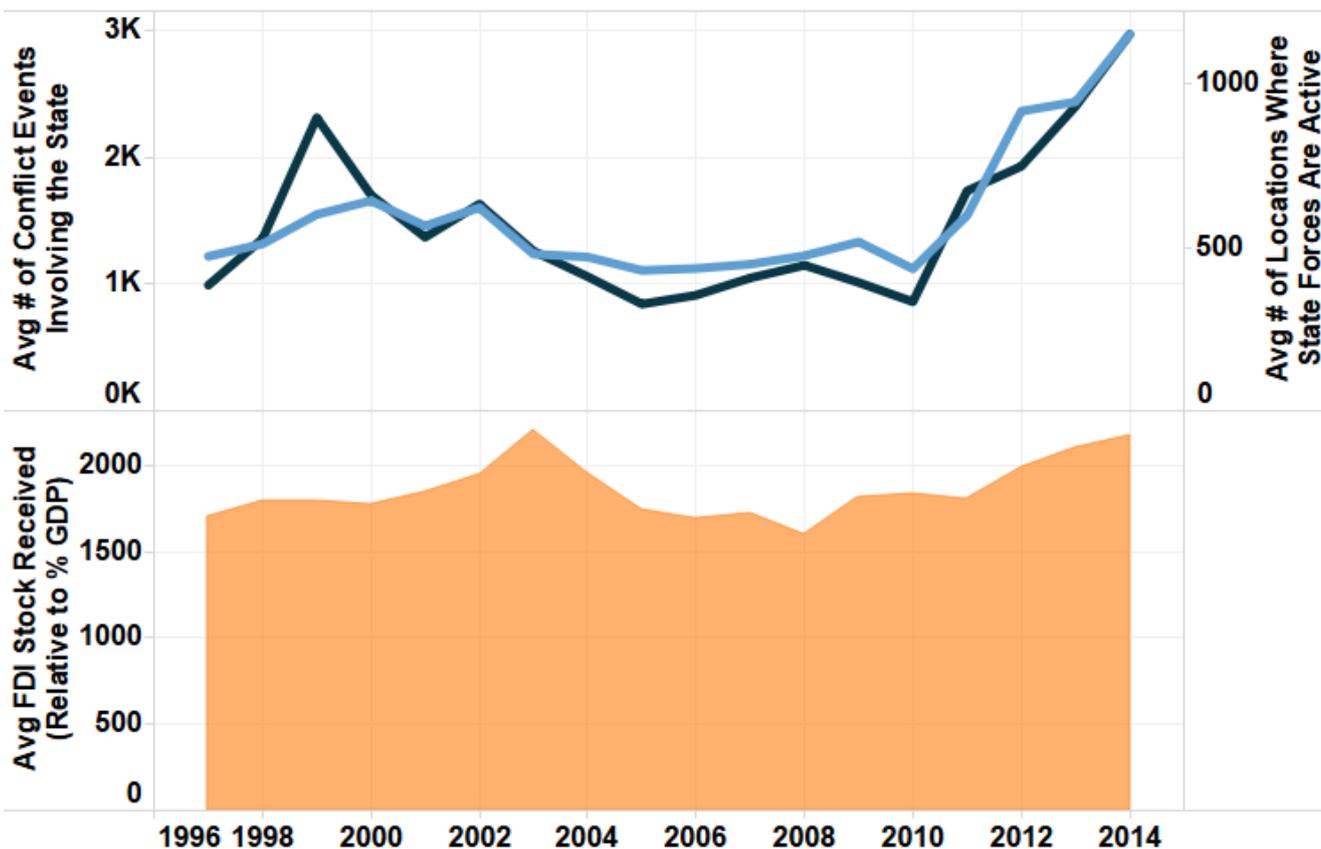


Figure 10: State Repression and Foreign Direct Investment in Africa, from 1997 - 2014.

## Special Focus Topic: Conflict Resilient Investment

survival (see [Clapham, 1996](#)); intimidating, targeting, and/or killing potential opposition is effective in quelling threats from organized groups ([Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski, 2010](#)). Creating an environment where armed opposition against the state is minimized can create a climate of reduced instability and uncertainty. Under these circumstances, violence in the form of repression by the state may in fact have the effect of increasing ‘stability’ in that the repression of competitors insures that ‘uncertain’ violence is kept to a minimum.

A new working paper by Kishi, Maggio, and Raleigh finds that investment can impact conflict through ‘incentivizing stability’. Where states are competing for investment, minimizing perceptions and occurrences of instability can have a positive effect on receiving FDI. As such, states have an incentive to repress opponents and civilians to create an illusion of security and control. Therefore, directly and indirectly, investment can incentivize the state to ‘perform’ security differently to secure economic flows. With increased investment, repression may further increase as the loyalties of the state lie with securing the investments within their borders, especially if they are to ensure future investment.

Figure 10 depicts how state repression – both the average number of conflict events involving state forces, and the expansiveness of state forces (measured as the number of distinct locations in which the state is active in conflict) – and the average rate of FDI received by African states have been increasing in tandem, especially in recent years. Figure 11 maps conflict events involving the state between 1997 and 2014 over the average annual rate of FDI stock received by states (relative to their GDP) during the same time period.

There are several recent episodes across Africa that indicate how the relationships between regimes and investors are given primacy to that of the regime and citizens, and that relationship appears to alter how states operate across their own territory.

For example, the 2012 Marikana massacre in South Africa arose from a strike for increased pay by miners at British-owned Lonmin in South Africa. This strike resulted in South African police forces – working in tandem with Lonmin security and the National Union of Mineworkers – firing live ammunition at strikers. Autopsies of the forty dead miners report most were shot in the back, sug-

gesting they were fleeing rather than attacking ([Laing, 2012](#)). The incident has since been cited as the most lethal use of force by South African security forces against civilians since the end of apartheid ([The Week, 2014](#)).

Another example is the recent Oromo protests in Ethiopia. A string of demonstrations began in late 2015 in response to the Ethiopian government’s ‘master plan’, involving land rights in the Oromia region of Ethiopia. The government sought to expand the borders of the country’s capital into the surrounding rural areas. While the government is legally allowed to do this as it owns all of the land in Ethiopia ([Martin and Warner, 2015](#)), the result would be the displacement of many as the region is home to two million people, largely of the Oromo ethnic group ([Robins-Early, 2016](#)).

Critics of the plan argue that the ‘land grab’ was in an effort to lease large parcels of land to foreign investors from China, India, and the Middle East ([Martin and Warner, 2015](#)). While the government has agreed to scrap the ‘master plan’ ([Chala, 2016](#)), the Oromo people continue to demonstrate, arguing they do not trust the authorities ([Iaccino, 2016](#)). Despite state claims to the contrary, Ethiopian security forces continue to violently suppress the largely peaceful protests in the Oromia region ([Human Rights Watch, 2016](#)). Reports of fatalities suggest that at least 270 have been killed by state forces thus far in the wake of the brutal crackdown on the protests ([Iaccino, 2016](#)), being deemed the “worst ethnic violence [in Ethiopia] in years” ([Schemm, 2016](#)).

While FDI may be touted for its many benefits to developing countries – it can bring skills and technology that can be used in training a local labor force; it can boost exports and improve the competitiveness and efficiency of local producers; and it can facilitate the expansion of fundamentals to growth, such as public infrastructure ([Schoeman, 2015](#); see also, [Rugman and Doh, 2008](#)). It is becoming one of the main sources of capital across Africa, and creating increased competition amongst states to provide the most attractive environments for investors. With minimal accountability to constituencies (see [Koenig-Archibugi, 2004](#); [Hunter and Bridgeman, 2008](#)), while being beholden to their investors, these recent examples have made it increasingly apparent where the loyalties of regimes lie.

Special Focus Topic: Conflict Resilient Investment

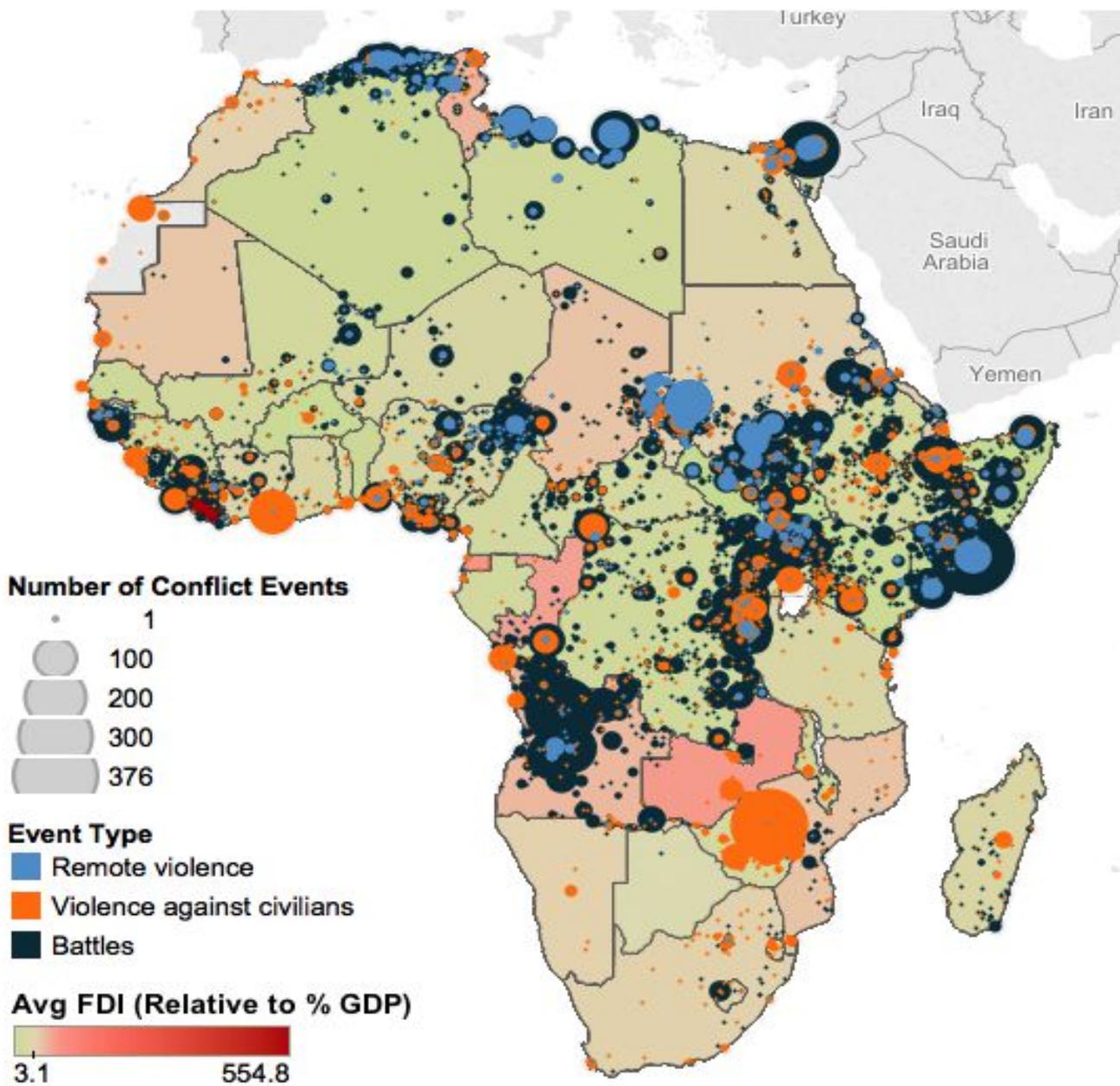


Figure 11: Foreign Direct Investment and Armed Conflict Involving the State in Africa, from 1997 - 2014.

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Sources

Conflict Trends reports are compiled from ACLED data and draw on news sources, civil society reports, and academic and policy analyses. Full details of sources and coding processes are available online on the [ACLED website](http://www.acleddata.com).