



Global Intelligence Summary

REPORTING PERIOD: 11 – 18 SEPTEMBER



Global Intelligence Summary

IN THIS REPORT

Americas (AMER)

Large-scale protests over the scrapping of diesel subsidies are **highly likely** to continue in the short term in **Ecuador**. The unrest will **likely** be marked by violent clashes between protesters and police.

Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA)

The second round of the nationwide strike in **France** on 18 September is **highly likely** to be more disruptive than the first, as unions seek to apply maximum pressure on the new government.

Tensions between **Russia** and **Eastern European** NATO members bordering **Ukraine** remain **highly likely** their highest since 2022 following the Zapad-2025 exercises and a drone incursion into **Romania**.

The **Israeli** offensive in **Gaza City** is **highly likely** to further worsen humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip and will **almost certainly** drive significant unrest both in Israel and abroad.

There is a **realistic possibility** of electoral fraud allegations and civil unrest in **Malawi** following presidential elections marred by low turnout amid mistrust of the government and economic malaise.

Asia-Pacific (APAC)

Concessions after protests in **Dili, Timor-Leste** have **likely** averted continued unrest, but **likely** incentivise future protests. 'Gen-Z'-led anti-corruption protests are a trend which will **highly likely** continue to grow across **Asia**.



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Americas (AMER)



Ecuador: Protests in Quito over fuel subsidy cuts.

Protests started in Quito on 12 September, after the government's decision to remove a USD 1.1 billion diesel subsidy caused fuel prices to spike. Demonstrations have included strikes and road blockades, including one affecting the Pan-American North highway just outside of Quito. In the capital itself, protesters have clashed with police in the vicinity of the Carondelet National Palace.

On 13 September, President Daniel Noboa announced that the presidency would be temporarily moved from Quito to Latacunga. On 16 September, the government imposed a 60-day state of emergency in seven provinces. This will give additional power to police and security forces to proactively disband public gatherings; moreover, the measure suspends freedom of assembly and imposes curfews.

Solace Global Assessment: Fuel subsidies have been in place in Ecuador since the 1970s, and attempts to reform them have historically provoked significant backlash. This occurred, for instance, in 2019 and 2022, when unrest effectively forced the governments of Moreno and Lasso to backtrack on their calls for similar reforms. Noboa likely assesses that his attempt to scrap the subsidies will be met with a similar increase in unrest. Indeed, moving the presidency from Quito to the much smaller Latacunga likely showcases how the government is prepared for a protracted period of protests, and how it assesses that it will be able to outlast the protesters' resolve.

The subsidy-related protests are likely to further add to the political instability of Ecuador, where there are several ongoing protest movements led by a variety of different civil society groups. These include labour union-led protests, with groups like the United Workers' Front (FUT) recently staging demonstrations to protest medicine shortages and poor working conditions, as well as environmentalist-led protests attacking the government's awarding of new mining concessions. Moreover, the government's declaration of a state of emergency for the unrest has the potential to further deepen its tensions with the Constitutional Court, which has opposed several of Noboa's proposed reforms to fight the country's powerful organised criminal groups.



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AMER Summary and Forecast

Politics, Economics and Civil Unrest:

Protests near Machu Picchu, Peru, result in travel disruptions.

On 16 September, local media reported that more than 1,000 tourists have been stranded near Machu Picchu or forced to depart on foot due to protests that have disrupted rail transport, including the Ollantaytambo-Machu Picchu rail line. The demonstrations are linked to local disputes surrounding the award of concessions to bus companies to operate on routes to the Inca monument. Several police officers have been injured in clashes with the protesters, who have also erected makeshift barricades on local roadways. Protests in the Machu Picchu area can easily cut the site off from nearby urban centres, de facto stranding tourists in the small village of Aguas Calientes.

Security, Armed Conflict and Terror:

Wave of bomb threats recorded targeting US colleges, politicians' residences.

Beginning on 11 September, dozens of bomb threats have been reported targeting US college campuses and elected officials in several states, including Oregon, New Mexico, Maryland, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Virginia, and Louisiana. Several of the targeted institutions are historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Some threats were also recorded outside of US borders: on 16 September, the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) scrambled jets in response to a bomb threat targeting Calgary airport, in Canada.

While it is difficult to attribute responsibility for it, the wave of threats is likely linked to the political assassination of US right-wing political commentator and influencer Charlie Kirk on 10 September, which occurred at a university campus in Utah. This is likely indicated by the targets of the threats, which include academic institutions and elected officials. The assassination was also followed by a spike in online disinformation, with Utah Governor Spencer Cox accusing China and Russia of leveraging the killing as part of their information operations aimed at provoking civil strife in the United States.

Disinformation results in shooting at US Naval Academy in Maryland.

On 11 September, one individual was shot and injured during a lockdown at the US Navy facility. The shooting occurred after an anonymous message was shared online claiming that an active shooter scenario was ongoing at the facility. This first triggered a lockdown and a subsequent wave of online speculation, including fake reports. Subsequently, a responding police officer was attacked by Navy personnel, having been mistakenly identified as the "shooter", leading to an exchange of fire that left one midshipman injured.



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The incident occurred only days following a high-profile assassination of a political commentator, a wave of bomb threats targeting US campuses and officials (*see above*) and several school shootings, as well as on the anniversary of the 11 September 2001 terror attack. The shooting is notable as it was driven by the spread of disinformation on online channels and likely showcases how, even in controlled environments such as a military installation, authorities can struggle to control the spread and impact of misleading information online.

US National Guard deployed to Memphis, Tennessee.

On 15 September, US President Donald Trump ordered the National Guard to deploy to Memphis, and to set up a “Memphis State Task Force”. The deployment is aimed at reducing crime and follows previous deployments in Los Angeles and Washington D.C., as well as calls for further actions in Chicago and Baltimore. Memphis, like the other cities mentioned above, is a Democratic Party stronghold, and the deployment is thus likely to result in significant pushback from the opposition, and there is a realistic possibility of civil unrest. On the other hand, unlike in California, the White House can count on the support of Tennessee Governor Bill Lee, and the joint deployment of state and federal resources will likely reduce the municipal administration’s ability to oppose the deployment.

More than 40 people killed in gang attack in Labodrie, Haiti.

Haitian gangs carried out an attack on the night of 10-11 September, targeting the small fishing village north of Port-au-Prince. According to local reports, the attack followed the killing of a gang leader in the area, who was affiliated with the Viv Ansanm gang coalition, the most powerful criminal group in Haiti. Viv Ansanm member reportedly carried out the mass killing in retaliation. The area of Arcahaïe, where Labodrie is located, is currently a hotspot for violence between gangs and police forces, with the former trying to extend their presence in the area from the neighbouring Cabaret. Consequently, by killing civilians, gangs are likely aiming to deter local confidence in the police and erode the state’s authority in the area.

Environment, Health and Miscellaneous:

Tropical Storm Gabrielle forms in the central Atlantic.

The seventh tropical depression of this year’s Atlantic hurricane season strengthened into a storm on 17 September. Gabrielle is the first storm to form after an unusual “lull” that had been ongoing since 29 August. Available weather forecasts indicate that the storm could strengthen into a hurricane during the 18-20 September period. The storm has the realistic possibility of increasing rainfall in Bermuda, possibly inducing floods, as well as some less severe phenomena, such as rip currents, in the northeastern Caribbean and the US Atlantic coast. The Atlantic hurricane season runs between June and late November, and, statistically, hits its intensity peak in September.



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Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA)

France: Second round of “Bloquons Tout” nationwide strike.

On 18 September, the second round of the “Bloquons Tout” (“Let’s shut everything down”) strikes began in France. Unlike the first round of protest, which was first organised online and then received the support of France’s main unions, the 18 September protests have been directly spearheaded by the labour unions. Estimates indicate that more than 400,000 people are expected to attend the protest actions on 18 August, but some estimates claim that total attendance will be closer to one million people.

The first wave of strikes, on 10 September, had more than 400 total recorded actions across France, including road blockades and barricades, acts of sabotage targeting infrastructure, and occupations of university and school campuses. More than 500 people were arrested, and around 50 people were injured, of which around 30 were police officers.

As of the late morning of 18 September, French police and media have reported several protests in large urban centres like Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, as well as at least 40 episodes of road blockades. Several dozen people have been arrested, of whom 22 were in Marseille alone.

Solace Global Assessment: Due to their higher coordination and greater participation of France’s large labour unions, the 18 September protests are likely to be larger than the first wave on 10 September. While the main disruptions during the day will almost certainly be due to organised unrest, cases of direct action, including sabotage of transport infrastructure, remain likely and have the potential to cause significant travel and service disruptions. It is highly likely that the protests, while remaining largely peaceful, will escalate into several cases of clashes between protesters and the police, which could pose a threat to bystanders. The vandalism of private assets, including storefronts and offices, remains a realistic possibility throughout the day.

The 10 September protests, while recording a large attendance, were almost certainly less politically impactful than organisers had expected. This was likely due to the lack of a clear vertical structure and the fall of the Bayrou government two days prior, which removed the immediate threat of the prime minister’s austerity plan, a major driver of the unrest. The new demonstrations are, instead, likely to prove more politically influential. This is because the new prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, has yet to clarify whether he will continue with Bayrou’s austerity reforms or seek to open a path for cooperation with the left. His unilateral scrapping of one of the most unpopular proposals of his predecessor, the repeal of two national holidays, is likely indicative of his openness to the second option, and almost certainly shows considerable political weakness, which protestors may capitalise on to secure further concessions.



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Ukraine & Eastern Europe: Russia-NATO tensions high as air war continues.

Between 12 and 16 September, Russia and Belarus conducted large-scale military drills in the Zapad-2025 joint strategic exercise, which Minsk and Moscow claim is designed to test combat readiness. The Belarusian defence ministry stated that 1,000 Russian military personnel took part in the exercises alongside 7,000 Belarusian troops. Dignitaries from 23 countries were present, such as China, North Korea and Iran, and representatives from NATO members Hungary, Turkey and the US.

On 13 September, a Russian drone reportedly entered the airspace of the NATO member Romania. According to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, the drone penetrated about 10km past the Romanian border and spent roughly 50 minutes inside NATO territory before turning back towards Ukraine. Romanian air defence did not engage the drone. Furthermore, amid the heightened tensions resulting from drone incursions, Poland's State Protection Service (SOP) neutralised a quadcopter drone operating over sensitive government locations, including the presidential palace, in Warsaw on 15 September. Two individuals were detained, a Ukrainian man and Belarusian woman. Investigators reported no evidence of foreign intelligence involvement.

Russian forces have continued aerial strikes, particularly against Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv, where a one-way attack drone directly hit the National Pharmaceutical University. Concurrently, Ukraine has sustained its drone campaign against Russian oil and gas infrastructure. On 14 September, Ukrainian forces launched at least 361 drones, setting fire to the Kirishi oil refinery in Leningrad Oblast, and on 16 September, they struck the Saratov oil refinery in Saratov Oblast.

Solace Global Assessment: Tensions between NATO members in Eastern Europe and Russia remain high following the 9-10 September Russian drone incursion into Poland. The drone incursions coming immediately before the Zapad-2025 exercises, almost certainly pushed border tensions to their highest level since 2022, with Poland deploying up to 40,000 troops along the frontier during the drills.

'Zapad' means West, referring to the primarily NATO-facing western theatre, with the war games (usually held every four years) frequently used as a demonstration of strength by the Kremlin. However, this year's Zapad exercise was markedly smaller than past iterations. This is almost certainly reflective of Russian manpower limitations, losses of key kit and equipment and the lack of a well-trained strategic reserve, with most capable units deployed to Ukraine. In September 2021, the Kremlin highly likely used the Zapad games as preparation for the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and to provide cover for the mass movement of forces, with approximately 200,000 personnel having taken part.



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The Romanian drone incursion is not necessarily indicative of a continued tactic, technique and procedure (TTP) of Moscow following the highly likely intentional Poland incursions, which was likely designed to test NATO resolve, defensive capabilities and reaction times. There have been numerous previous incidents of Russian drones both violating Romanian airspace and crashing near Romanian villages. However, flying into and out of Romanian territory without crashing likely suggests this was intentional and not due to a malfunction or electronic interference. Moreover, the reaction to the incursion from Bucharest has been strikingly distinct from previous incidents. Both Warsaw and Bucharest have previously likely sought to minimise the significance of Russian drone incursions, which have occurred semi-regularly since 2022. This time, Romania's defence ministry has strongly condemned the Russian Federation and stated that the incursion represents a new challenge to regional security and stability in the Black Sea area.

Furthermore, a few days after the incursion, Romania's Prosecutor General released investigations that claimed that Romania was the target of substantial Russian interference operations during the 2024 presidential election. The Kremlin has almost certainly conducted a long-running campaign of clandestine operations against NATO members, including election interference. Typically designed to be sub-threshold, drone incursions would stand out as a Russian TTP for the significantly increased risk of miscalculation and escalation if sustained.

Recent long-range attacks likely indicate a continuation of Russian forces increasingly targeting symbolic civilian buildings. Zelensky announced that in the past two weeks, Russia has launched more than 3,500 drones, 2,500 glide bombs, and 200 missiles at targets in Ukraine. The threat environment in Ukrainian cities remains the highest since the initial stages of the full-scale invasion, with intensified Russian long-range attacks against urban centres almost certain to continue in the short term and likely to escalate as weather conditions impede ground offensives, with the mud season typically starting in October. Ukrainian strikes on Russian oil infrastructure have been highly effective, almost certainly delivering a tangible blow to the Russian war economy. This sector is a key centre of gravity for the Kremlin's war effort. Most critically, oil revenues have enabled the Kremlin to fund the expansion of manpower with financial incentives without turning to politically costly forced conscription. There is a realistic possibility that sustained disruption will limit Russia's ability to entice recruits, with financial incentives becoming increasingly less viable.

The Gaza Strip: Israel begins Gaza City ground offensive.

On 16 September, Israel Defence Forces (IDF) officials officially declared the entirety of Gaza City a "combat zone", calling on all of the remaining occupants to evacuate to the Al-Mawasi humanitarian zone, further south. Plans for an offensive leading to the occupation of Gaza City had been discussed by the Israeli cabinet for weeks in August, and, in the days ahead of the latest development, IDF forces carried out several raids in Gaza City's outskirts, as well as intensified airstrikes on suspected Hamas positions in the city. According to the IDF, approximately 350,000 Palestinians have left Gaza City so far. Two divisions of the IDF, the 162nd and 98th, are engaged in the offensive.



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On 17 September, the West Bank-based Palestinian Telecommunications Regulatory Authority stated that the destruction of telecom infrastructure in north Gaza has resulted in Gaza City losing internet and telephone services. On the same day, IDF officials stated that they would re-open the Sala al-Din street, one of the key roadways in central and south Gaza, for 48 hours to allow for faster civilian evacuation.

Solace Global Assessment: While the offensive formally began on 16 September, Israeli operations in Gaza City have been ongoing for weeks and the IDF has secured large portions of the city's west. The offensive is likely aimed at further restricting the remaining Hamas elements' freedom of operation, dislodging them from their remaining underground and above-ground positions. The offensive will almost certainly further exacerbate the humanitarian conditions of the Palestinians living in Gaza City, and will also contribute to the further overcrowding of the Al-Mawasi zone.

The offensive has the potential to complicate the achievement of Israel's stated war goals of freeing the surviving hostages (around 20, according to available estimates) and defeating Hamas. Attacks near Hamas strongholds in the city will highly likely place the hostages in the line of fire, either increasing the probability of friendly fire or forcing IDF units to resort to small-scale ground actions targeting suspected Hamas positions, which would almost certainly increase IDF attrition. Moreover, it is highly likely that Hamas fighters who are displaced from their positions in Gaza City will seek to infiltrate the Al-Mawasi zone, in turn further decreasing the area's already precarious security situation.

It is highly likely that the offensive will drive large-scale protests in Israel and abroad. The hostages' families, who are an influential political force and have the support of the opposition, are likely to call for further large-scale demonstrations, which will cause severe disruptions in Tel Aviv. Large European cities like London, Barcelona, Brussels and Paris are also likely to have large-scale protests opposing the offensive, particularly in the 18-20 September period.

Malawi: Counting underway for presidential elections, which could see fraud allegations.

On 16 September, Malawians voted in general elections to elect the president, members of parliament, and local councillors. According to the electoral commission, only 51 per cent of Malawi's population voted, down from 64 per cent in 2020. Counting is underway, and while 17 candidates are running, the race is primarily between incumbent Lazarus Chakwera and his predecessor, Peter Mutharika. Both candidates have been accused of cronyism and corruption. Chakwera has run on the platform of fixing the economy and restoring confidence in the government, while Mutharika has pushed infrastructure investment.

Solace Global Assessment: The elections come amid a backdrop of prolonged petrol shortages, regular power cuts, a rising cost of living, hunger, poverty, inequality, and high youth unemployment. The economic situation has been exacerbated by environmental disasters, such as Cyclone Freddy, which killed over 1,200 people and destroyed much of



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Malawi's farmland. Widespread perceptions of institutional corruption have driven significant voter apathy and dissatisfaction. According to the regional polling institute Afrobarometer, a large majority (78 per cent) of Malawians assess that 'some' or 'most' politicians are corrupt, only half consider the last elections to have been free and fair, and only 40 per cent are satisfied with the state of the country's democracy (from 53 per cent a decade ago).

Given the public mistrust in Malawi's electoral process, there is a realistic possibility that election results will be met with accusations of rigging from losing parties and their supporters, which has the potential to drive civil unrest. Following the 2019 general elections, many Malawians alleged electoral fraud and engaged in widespread civil unrest across the country. The protests triggered a severe crackdown from security forces, who used live ammunition and other violent crowd control measures to disperse protesters. In the case of large-scale anti-government demonstrations, security forces will highly likely use similar measures in a move which could exacerbate demonstrations.

EMEA Summary and Forecast

Politics, Economics and Civil Unrest:

Approximately 5,000 people protest in London during Trump's visit to the UK.

On 17 September, approximately 5,000 protesters gathered at Parliament Square to rally against President Donald Trump's second state visit to the UK. The demonstrations were organised under the Stop Trump Coalition, a group of at least 50 unions and charities. Protesters marched from Portland Place towards Whitehall carrying signs including "no to Trump" and "stop arming Israel". At least 1,600 police officers were deployed. Trump is set to visit Chequers in Buckinghamshire on 18 September. Localised protests are likely in Buckinghamshire, and further larger protests are highly likely in London, with Trump set to leave for the US on the same day. Some transport disruption is likely due to road closures, although they are unlikely to be widespread.

Pro-Palestine protests force the early stoppage of Spain's *Vuelta*.

On 14 September, large-scale pro-Palestine protests were held in Madrid, where the 21st and last stage of the *Vuelta*, the main cycling competition in Spain, was being held. The protesters blocked part of the route, forcing the organisers to end the race early, and clashed with responding police. The incident was the third stage of the *Vuelta* to be affected by pro-Palestine protests, following similar episodes during the stages in Bilbao and Galicia. The incident almost certainly constitutes a success for the protesters' direct action methods, and there is a realistic possibility that it will inspire further actions in Spain and elsewhere in Europe as a result.

Moreover, the incident is notable as it represents a rare form of direct action due to its scale. While previous demonstrations targeting high-visibility events were carried out by small and highly coordinated groups of activists,



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usually aimed at causing temporary disruptions while mainstreaming the groups' positions, the *Vuelta* blockades were carried out by hundreds of protesters and were marked by notable levels of clashes with responding police.

Protests in Bratislava, Slovakia, against Fico-Putin meeting.

Large-scale protests were held in Bratislava on 11 September, days after Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing. The protests were also driven by the ongoing debate on austerity measures promoted by the government. As Slovakia continues to represent one of the key voices calling for détente with Russia in the EU, even recently floating the idea of blocking further sanctions packages on Chinese companies aiding Russia's war effort, further unrest remains likely in the short and medium terms.

Romanian presidential candidate Georgescu charged with plotting a coup.

On 16 September, Călin Georgescu and 21 associates were charged by prosecutors with allegedly planning a coup. Georgescu, who is a political outsider and espouses broadly populist and Moscow-friendly positions, unexpectedly won the first round of the late November 2024 presidential election, which was later annulled due to foreign interference.

Georgescu has unsuccessfully campaigned to overturn the constitutional court's decision. According to the prosecutors, Georgescu coordinated with members of a paramilitary group, led by Horațiu Potra, a former French Foreign Legion officer who later operated a private security company in Central Africa, to launch a coup. Potra was briefly detained in late 2024 after being stopped at the head of an armed convoy directed to Bucharest, and later fled the country. Georgescu, despite his political setbacks, maintains a strong base of support. Consequently, it is highly likely that the charges will result in protests in Bucharest during the 18-20 September period.

Protests in Ankara, Turkey, over crackdown on opposition.

On 14 September, a large-scale demonstration was held in the Turkish capital by members and supporters of the Republican People's Party (CHP), the Kemalist group that is the main opposition force in Turkish politics. The rally occurred on the eve of a court decision, expected for 15 September but later postponed to late October, which could have invalidated the party's leadership contest and thus ousted its leadership.

The ruling is part of an ongoing crackdown, carried out by the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, targeting CHP. More than 500 people associated with CHP, including 17 mayors and the Mayor of Istanbul Ekrem İmamoğlu have been detained over the past year, as well as thousands of protesters. While the postponement of the court's decision is likely to reduce the likelihood of violent large-scale unrest in the immediate term, further protests remain highly likely in Turkey, particularly following major developments in the İmamoğlu case or more broadly affecting CHP.



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Guinea set to vote on constitution that would allow junta leader to run for office.

On 21 September, Guinea's population is set to take part in a referendum on a new constitution that would enable junta leader Mamady Doumbouya, who took power in a 2021 coup, to run for office; a move that contradicts his earlier vows not to. The referendum will highly likely be marred by an unfair and likely rigged mechanism to enable Doumbouya's candidacy. Exiled opposition leader Cellou Dalein Diallo urged Guinean citizens to boycott the referendum, calling it a "masquerade". There is a realistic possibility that the referendum results will trigger civil unrest. Periodic protests have been held by opposition parties and civil society organisations, despite the junta's ban on demonstrations imposed in 2022. After the Guinean military junta postponed the elections in December 2024, demonstrations erupted, resulting in a crackdown by security forces that killed a protester during clashes, and resulted in the arrest of hundreds of mostly young people.

Chad's national assembly votes to enable President Déby to run for office unlimited times.

On 16 September, Chad's national assembly voted to endorse constitutional amendments which extend the presidential term from five to seven years and allow the president to run for office an unlimited number of times. President Mahamat Déby has held power since his father, President Idriss Deby, was killed in 2021. Following controversial presidential and parliamentary elections in 2024, which were largely boycotted by the opposition, Déby and his party, the Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS), officially claimed victory.

Protests have periodically erupted against Déby's rule, but have been violently suppressed by security forces, who have typically responded with violent force and live ammunition. Protests against the passing of the constitutional amendments are likely, although the almost certain harsh response from security forces will highly likely dissuade many from demonstrating.

South Sudan Vice President Machar faces treason charges, raising the risk of civil war.

On 11 September, local justice authorities declared that First Vice President Riek Machar faces charges of treason, among other crimes. The charges follow Machar being placed under house arrest in March 2025 amid renewed fighting between government forces and militias ethnically aligned with Machar. The charges significantly increase the risk of the country returning to civil war, with its 2020 peace agreement relying on a power-sharing deal between the rival Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), led by President Salva Kiir Mayardit, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO), led by Machar. Several SPLM-IO members have fled the country over fears of detention, and deep mistrust pervades South Sudan's politics, making the complete dissolution of the power-sharing agreement likely.



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Security, Armed Conflict and Terror:

Polish MEP states his car was hit by air rifle fire in Brussels, Belgium.

On 15 September, Polish EU Parliament Member Waldemar Buda reported that his personal vehicle had been shot several times with an air rifle. The case of vandalism is notable due to its high-visibility target and is likely to have had an intimidatory purpose. The incident occurred only days after the Belgian government began more intensely promoting the idea of deploying armed troops to the capital in an attempt to thwart violent crime. Moreover, it follows several high-profile cases of sabotage and vandalism in Brussels and other large EU cities, some of which have been linked to foreign-sponsored hybrid warfare operations.

Rapid Support Forces (RSF) launch surprise offensive towards Omdurman.

On 17 September, RSF units carried out an attack on the town of Reheid al-Nuba, about 20 kilometres south of Omdurman. The RSF attack reportedly surprised the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) units in the area, which were forced to retreat from the town while taking heavy casualties. While the attack's operational impact is still unclear, it likely represents a notable RSF victory in a region where the group has suffered repeated defeats after being forced to retreat from the capital of Khartoum in May 2025. There is a realistic possibility that the RSF is attempting to overstretch the SAF by forcing them to divert resources from key strongholds such as El Fasher in order to consolidate RSF control in Darfur, where it claims to have established a parallel government.

ISSP launches large-scale attack on JNIM fighters in northeastern Burkina Faso.

On 16 September, local media and analysts reported that fighters of the Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP) launched a major attack on Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) positions between Sebba and Higa villages, near the Burkina Faso-Niger border, killing around 70. The attack likely reflects growing ISSP attempts to expand its presence to the south and west of Dori, where the group has repeatedly clashed with both JNIM and government-backed militias. The Dori area of the Sahel Region of Burkina Faso lacks any notable infrastructure or resources and is thus unlikely to be a strategic priority for JNIM. However, other large-scale attacks resulting in dozens of casualties may drive JNIM to dedicate more resources to counter the increasing threat from ISSP.

Nigerian military kills 11 ISWAP militants.

On 15 September, Nigerian troops killed at least 11 members of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in an ambush on Baga–Cross Kauwa road, Borno State and in an operation in Umbo, Adamawa. In Borno, troops were ambushed by ISWAP militants while patrolling the road, who detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) and fired on the troops. The soldiers repelled the attack, killing eight militants, including two senior field commanders, and recovered numerous supplies. In Adamawa, troops supported by local hunters killed three more ISWAP militants.



According to the military statement, no troops were killed in either incident. Reprisal attacks on Nigeria’s military posts in the region are highly likely.

Environment, Health and Miscellaneous:

At least 23 people killed in flooding in Mali.

On 12 September, Malian authorities released the first casualty figures for the severe floods that have affected multiple locations, including the country’s north and southeast. In addition to at least 23 deaths, the floods have injured dozens and damaged more than 1,000. Malian authorities are almost certainly unable to respond effectively to the severe weather event due to the ongoing militant insurgencies affecting several of the country’s regions. The wet season in Mali usually falls between June and September; however, further severe precipitation could occur until later in October.



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115 Printer Way

PO Box 10055, Grand Cayman
KY1-1001, Cayman Islands



Asia Pacific (APAC)

Timor-Leste: Student-led protests in Dili against perceived corruption.

On 15 and 16 September, student-led protests erupted in Timor-Leste's capital, Dili, over a controversial government plan to purchase 65 new Toyota Prado SUVs for all MPs. The protests were initially peaceful but quickly escalated on 15 September with approximately 1,000 protesters outside the National Parliament building, with demonstrators throwing projectiles and riot police firing tear gas to disperse the unrest. The following day, the protests expanded in size to approximately 2,000 protesters, with demonstrators reportedly burning tyres and again throwing projectiles, resulting in riot police deploying tear gas.

In response to the protests, Timor-Leste's parliament convened and voted to cancel the contentious vehicle purchase plan on 16 September. The primary student activist organisation responsible for the protests, the Estudante Universitário de Timor-Leste (EUTL), expanded demands to include the abolishment of parliamentary lifetime pension benefits among other issues, and announced on 17 September that it will undertake to immediately cease the demonstrations following a commitment from parliamentary leaders to several reform demands.

Solace Global Assessment: While the proposal for vehicle purchases triggered the unrest, underlying socio-economic grievances with perceived corruption, inequality and stagnant development highly likely galvanised the protests into a broader reform movement. The rapid granting of concessions by parliament has likely averted the immediate threat of continuing protests in Dili. However, in the longer term, the concessions likely set a strong precedent for protests to quickly and effectively achieve victory. This will likely incentivise Timorese student activist groups, particularly the EUTL, to renew protests in the future, given the highly likely continuance of many of the socio-economic factors which were underlying causes for the unrest. Moreover, one of EUTL's demands agreed to by parliament is a review of the law on freedom of assembly and demonstrations, which may result in reducing the ability of Timorese riot police to quell unrest.

'Gen-Z'-led protest movements are almost certainly growing in intensity across Asia. The 'Gen Z protests' overthrew the Nepalese government in early September after burning down the parliament building, and Indonesian student-led protests starting in late August (which were partly due to a proposed hike in housing subsidies for members of parliament), led to severe civil unrest. Largely facilitated by social media, Gen-Z and student-led protest movements against corruption in Asia are a trend that is highly likely to continue growing region-wide, driven by increasing frustrations over corruption, worsening economic inequality, limited job opportunities, and disillusionment with traditional political elites.



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APAC Summary and Forecast

Politics, Economics and Civil Unrest:

Taliban suspends internet services in northern Afghanistan.

On 17 September, the Taliban announced its first large-scale internet ban since returning to power in 2021. In a move that could spread to other provinces, the Taliban cut fibre-optic connections to five northern provinces, Kunduz, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Takhar, and Balkh, citing the need to prevent “immoral activities,” although mobile data remains available. The five northern provinces have traditionally been the least loyal to the Taliban and are home to resistance movements like the National Resistance Front (NRF).

The move has likely been implemented to limit opposition groups’ ability to coordinate, spread information and document Taliban abuses, with mobile networks centrally managed, easier to filter and shut down in the event of an emergency. However, the limitation of broadband internet access is likely to disrupt the local economy and fuel further resentment towards the Taliban. The internet ban also follows a series of Taliban restrictions on women, education, and free expression that have drawn sharp condemnation from rights groups and foreign governments.

Nepal names Sushila Karki as interim prime minister after deadly anti-government protests.

On 12 September, the Nepalese President Ramchandra Poudel announced that former Chief Justice Sushila Karki has been appointed as the country’s new interim prime minister, following days of deadly youth protests and the resignation of former prime minister, Sharma Oli. Karki will be the first woman to hold the office in Nepal’s history and is widely seen as the preferred candidate of the Generation Z protest movement, which had mobilised against corruption, nepotism and elite privilege.

Karki has a reputation for integrity and has presided over past anti-corruption rulings, helping her secure an appeal among the protest movement. Her appointment and the promise to hold snap elections in March 2026 will likely ease immediate tensions and lead to a reduction in protest activity. However, sustained support will almost certainly depend on whether the interim government can demonstrate tangible progress on reform and anti-corruption.

Security, Armed Conflict and Terror:

Chinese coast guard fires water cannon at Filipino vessel in South China Sea, injuring one.

The incident that occurred on 16 September was the latest in a series of episodes that have occurred near the contested Scarborough Shoal. The timing of the incident, which involved at least ten Filipino vessels and an unspecified number of Chinese vessels, coincided with ongoing trade talks between Beijing and the United States, a key ally of Manila in the region.



China has significantly increased its patrols, ship presence and enforcement actions in the South China Sea in the last year to reinforce its claims, relying heavily on the Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) and its maritime militia. This forms part of a wider “grey zone” strategy of using non-military vessels and non-lethal weaponry to aggressively assert claims with a reduced risk of triggering direct military confrontation. However, the scale of China’s operations and the frequency of confrontations at flashpoints like Scarborough Shoal almost certainly heighten the risk of miscalculation, particularly as Philippine vessels are operating with growing US security backing.

Thai military fire rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons on Cambodian villagers.

On 17 September, the Thai military fired rubber bullets, water cannons and tear gas at Cambodian villagers during clashes in a disputed area on the international border. Cambodian media claim that at least 29 civilians, including Buddhist monks, were injured in the confrontation, while Thailand has claimed that several soldiers were also injured.

The incident marks the most significant escalation in border tensions since hostilities were paused in July following a ceasefire agreement. Thai sources claim that they were forced to use dispersal tactics after 200 Cambodians advanced on and attempted to dismantle makeshift barriers on the contested border and threw projectiles at Thai soldiers. While the incident appears to have been contained, it almost certainly underscores the fragility of the ceasefire and current tensions that could escalate into broader hostilities in the event of a miscalculation.

Environment, Health and Miscellaneous:

Death toll from monsoon rains in Pakistan exceeds 1,000.

Reporting from Pakistan’s National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on 18 September estimates that over 1,000 people have now been killed across the country following the beginning of heavy monsoon rains in June. The worst-hit regions include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (504 deaths), Punjab (300 deaths), Sindh (80 deaths), Balochistan (30 deaths), Gilgit-Baltistan (41 deaths), Pakistan-administered Kashmir, also known as Azad Jammu and Kashmir (39 deaths), and Islamabad (9 deaths), with an estimated 274 children, 163 women, and 565 men among the dead.

The report also estimates that over 12,000 homes have been damaged and over 2.4 million people have been affected in Punjab alone. The authorities have warned that this year’s floods are the worst since 2022, when record monsoon rains killed almost 2,000 people and caused an estimated USD 32 billion in damages. The scale of the flooding has caused severe economic losses, particularly through crop destruction and infrastructure damage, compounding Pakistan’s already fragile economic position. Widespread criticism of poor disaster preparedness, disaster response and lack of advanced warning has likely increased the chances of public anger evolving into protests.



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At least 15 killed by flash floods in Uttarakhand, India.

On 15 September, severe monsoon rains were recorded in the state of Uttarakhand, located at the foot of the Himalayas and bordering Nepal. Heavy precipitation occurred near Dehradun, where it caused landslides and flash flooding, leading to at least 15 deaths and dozens of injuries. According to Indian media, the landslides have rendered major roadways impassable, including the Sahastradhara–Karligad road, and have entirely blocked access to some remote villages, complicating search and rescue efforts. Available weather forecasts indicate that rain intensity will likely decrease during the 18-21 September period, but heavy rains are forecasted to resume on 22 September, likely resulting in further landslides, flooding and major transport disruptions.

Four fatal cases of the highly deadly Nipah virus in Bangladesh in 2025.

On 18 September, the World Health Organisation (WHO) published a report regarding four confirmed fatal cases of the highly deadly Nipah virus (NiV) in Bangladesh between 1 January and 29 August 2025. NiV is a zoonotic disease transmitted from infected animals such as bats or pigs, which can also be contagious among humans post-infection. The disease has a very high mortality rate, with Bangladesh documenting 347 NiV cases since it first recognised an outbreak of the disease in 2001, with a case fatality rate of 71.7 per cent. The disease has no vaccine or specific drugs capable of effective treatment.

The WHO states that the four 2025 cases do not appear to be linked, which reduces the risk of a major NiV outbreak, and the WHO continues to provide support to Bangladeshi health authorities in identifying and responding to cases. Overall, the WHO classifies the public health risk posed by NiV at the national and regional levels as moderate and the risk of international disease spread as low.

Flooding and landslides across Sabah, Malaysia.

Severe flooding and landslides have taken place in Sabah, Malaysia, since 12 September due to continuous heavy rain across parts of Borneo state. The situation has resulted in the deaths of at least 14 people and at least 3,000 displaced. In response, the state authorities have issued an aid package to support the displaced and the families of the victims.

Additionally, regional Malaysia Day celebrations have been cancelled as the state government focuses on managing the disaster response. The rainfall patterns have come earlier than expected, with the El Niño-La Niña cycle affecting the timing and intensity of the wet season, which typically occurs from November to February. Rapid urbanisation and deforestation have exacerbated the flooding, making the low-lying areas across Sabah particularly susceptible to widespread damage.



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