



PAPR

Point Annuel des Pays à Risques
the SSF annual report on high-risk countries

2024

Summary of alerts
Countries to monitor
Regional analysis
Calendar



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SSF RiskWatcher

2023 was marked by a global resurgence in geopolitical tension and its subsequent repercussions on the security of international travel, such as the fallout of the **war between Israel and Hamas** since 7 October. This breaking point in the long history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has deepened the **growing divide between the Global South and the West**, accused of “double standards” in view of its position with regards to the **war in Ukraine**, which is still ongoing and is getting bogged down, with its consequences for regional security in Europe.

This jump in tension has been combined with persistent socio-political unrest, notably in **Latin America** with regards to the perceived shortcomings of the governments in place (Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru), or even the polarising and radical nature of new leaders (Argentina). The **African continent has also experienced its fair share of instability and socio-political unrest**, with **new conflicts** (Sudan), **military coups** (Niger, Gabon) and **the spread of jihadi activism** (Sahel/Gulf of Guinea), all the while against the backdrop of the **strategic issue of restoring constitutional order and stability** in several countries (Guinea, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali).

Meanwhile, the **growing impact of climate change on security** is becoming increasingly visible, with a **proliferation of extreme events** (storms, heatwaves and fires), especially in the most vulnerable areas (Horn of Africa and South Asia). These upheavals are causing further deterioration to already-fragile situations (**increase in community-based violence; clashes over the management of resources, in East and West Africa, as well as in the Sahel etc.**). In regions typically less exposed to security risks, this situation has notably resulted in an **increase in “violent” militant action by environmental movements** in reaction to the climate emergency, particularly affecting **travel and air traffic, or even the business activities of certain companies (Europe and North America)**.

As 2024 gets underway, the uncertainties and threats surrounding the most important elections scheduled over the course of the year are already on the rise, while more than half of the global population across 76 countries will go to the polls (USA, Indonesia, Russia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Senegal and South Africa, among others), alongside major international sporting events (Summer Olympic Games, UEFA Euro football championship and the Africa Cup of Nations).

National elections could have significant repercussions and profoundly change the geopolitical status quo, whether in Taiwan (potential increase in tension with Beijing and the subsequent consequences on the global economy), or in the **USA**, especially in the event of the victory of former President **Donald Trump** (marked disengagement from Europe and the Middle East; hardening of the confrontation with China; reconsideration of unconditional military aid to Ukraine against Russia). Some scheduled elections will, in all likelihood, still not take place (Libya and Mali), while others will see no political change given the authoritarian nature of the regimes in place (Russia, Belarus, Chad, Venezuela and Algeria).

Amid such an uncertain situation, where we are witnessing an increase in multifactor risks, anticipating and detecting early warning signs in developing security trends likely to have a greater impact on the business activities and reputation of companies, will prove to be highly strategic in the medium-term.

The SSF Strategic Analysis Team

Contents

2023 Summary of SSF alerts	4
10 countries to monitor	5
Assessment of Risk Evolution	6

Regional Analysis

Sub-Saharan Africa	7
North Africa and the Middle East	8
The Americas	9
Asia	10
Europe & CIS	11

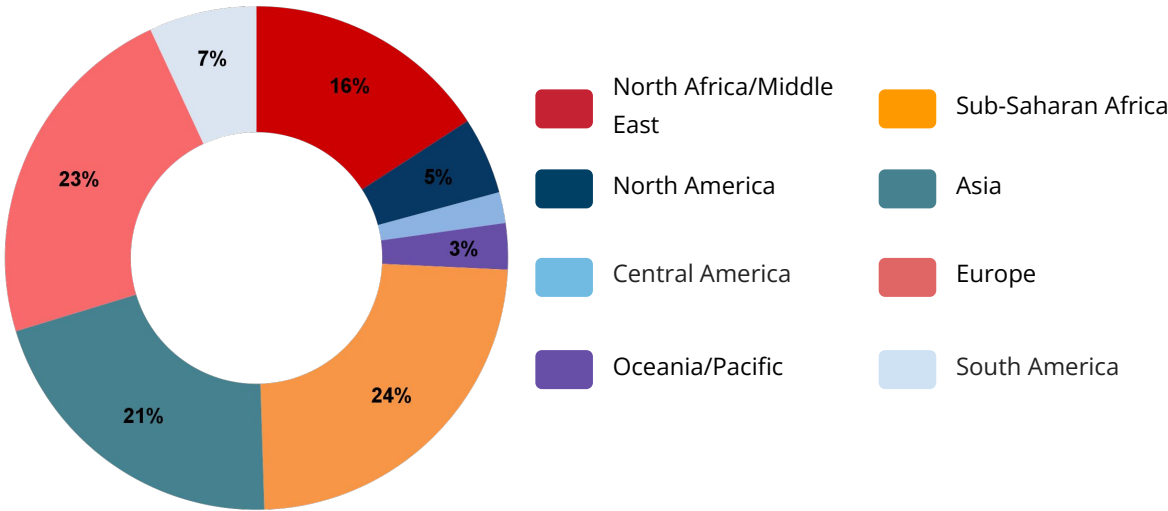
2024 Calendar

Elections and important dates	13
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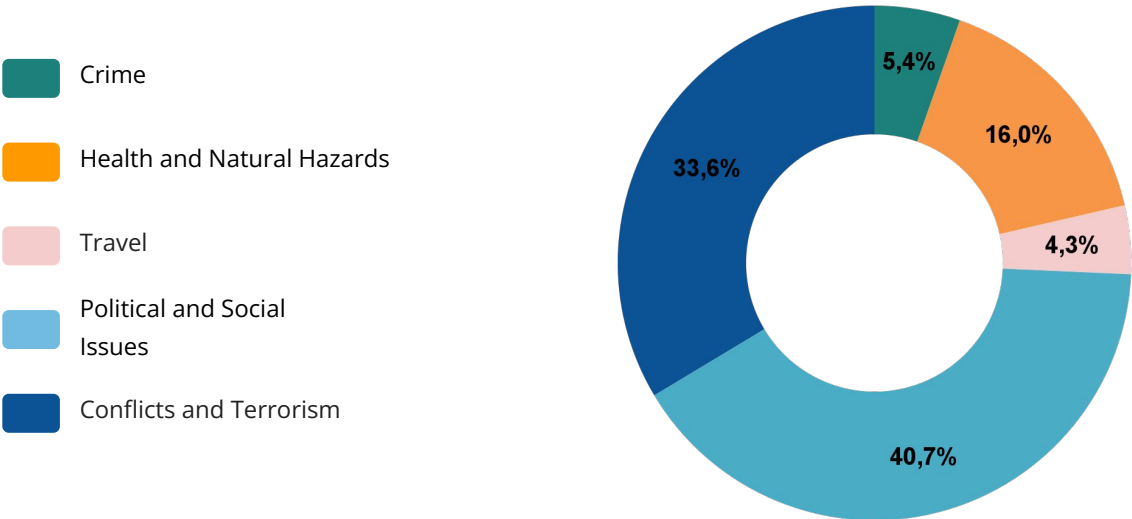
2023 Summary of SSF alerts

The SSF email alert service is available by subscription **24/7**, providing you with the latest information, in both French and English, on any events that might have an impact on your interests and the safety or security of your employees across **203 countries and territories**. In **2023**, SSF issued a total of **10,221 safety-security alerts**, concerning all kinds of risks in **192 countries and territories**.

Geographic Distribution

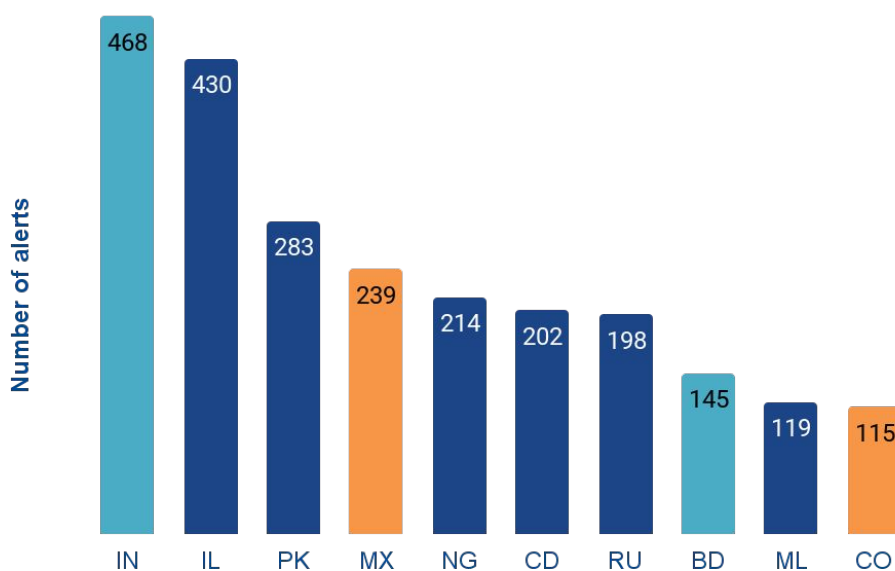


Type of Risk



10 countries to monitor

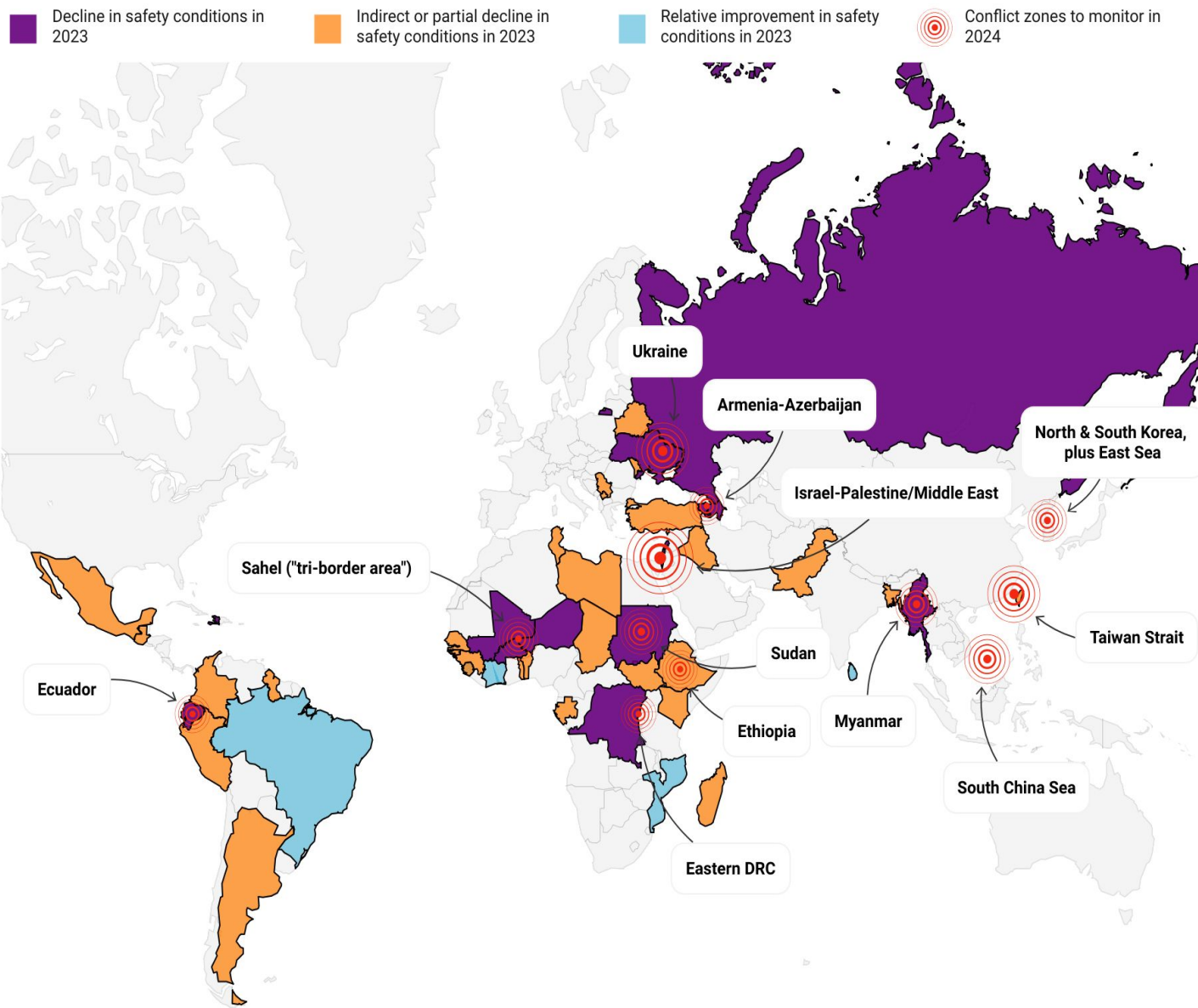
India, Israel and the Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Russia, Bangladesh, Mali and Colombia generated the highest number of SSF alerts in 2023. In total, these 10 countries accounted for 2,413 safety-security alerts, representing 23% of all the alerts sent in 2023. Countries engaged in long-term warfare or with extremely high levels of insecurity in general (Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan and Ukraine) have been deliberately excluded from the list, in addition to countries that do not pose any particular danger, but do generate a high number of alerts (US, France etc.).



Number of alerts issued in 2023 and main risk factor according to country



Assessment of Risk Evolution 2023 - 2024



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Sub-Saharan Africa

A rise in security threats...

- **Resurgence in the threat of terrorism** in the Sahel and in West Africa (following the reorganisation of the international military presence and political changes), despite a relative lull in East Africa (Mozambique).
- **Potential destabilisation in East Africa due to the conflicts underway** in Sudan (growing risk of widespread civil war) and in Ethiopia (insurrections in the regions of Amhara et Oromia), as well as the increase in regional tension, notably after an agreement was signed between Ethiopia and the separatist region of Somaliland.
- **Risk of new zones of open conflict** (northern Niger) and ongoing or recent worsening conflicts (North & South Kivu, DRC, northern Mali).
- **Growing impact of climate change on security**, with a proliferation of extreme events and an increase in community-based violence in East & West Africa and in the Sahel.



Sub-Saharan Africa: assessment of risk evolution 2023

Decline		
	Burkina Faso	Continued deterioration in the security situation; uncertainties surrounding the transition.
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ongoing armed conflict in the east; political violence on the fringes of the elections 20/12.
	Mali	Renewed conflict between community groups from the north and the junta; escalation of jihadist attacks.
	Niger	Military coup in July.
	Sudan	Long-standing conflict between the army and the paramilitaries; unprecedented widespread consequences.
Indirect or partial decline		
	Benin	Resurgence of the jihadist threat in the north.
	Ethiopia	Ongoing armed and community-based violence; renewed insurrection in the Amhara Region.
	Gabon	Election tension and military coup in August.
	Guinea	Increase in tension and uncertainties surrounding the transition.
	Guinea-Bissau	Suspected attempted coup.
	Kenya	Prolonged and violent protest movement (March-July); increase in jihadist attacks in the east.
	Madagascar	Socio-political violence on the fringes of the presidential election in November.
	Senegal	Heightened political tension with the opposition ahead of a strategic presidential election.
	Sierra Leone	Election violence in June and an attempted coup in November.
	Chad	Multiplication of factors of destabilisation; both internally (rebel groups) and regionally (Sudan conflict).
	Togo	Resurgence of the jihadist threat in the north.
Relative improvement		
	Ivory Coast	Drop in political tension; relatively contained terrorist threat.
	Mozambique	Drop in terrorist incidents in the north.

... amid socio-economic instability and ahead of strategic political fixtures

- **Uncertainties concerning the return of constitutional order and political stability in West Africa** (theoretical end of planned military transitions - Burkina, Mali, Guinea and Chad).
- **Highly strategic elections**, especially in Senegal with a risk of related political violence, as well as in South Africa, where the ruling party is likely to lose its absolute majority for the first time since 1994.
- **Deterioration in the socio-economic situation** against a backdrop of inflation, food insecurity, climate change and the socio-economic as well as humanitarian fallout of local conflicts, such as in Sudan, or extra-continental conflicts, such as the Russia-Ukraine war.



North Africa and the Middle East

Global resurgence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the wake of long-lasting strategic shifts throughout the Middle East...

- 7 October 2023, **breaking point** reached in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the **large-scale Hamas attack on Israel**. The immediate repercussions of the outbreak of war illustrate the **strength of Middle Eastern opposition to a *de facto* resolution of the conflict imposed** by the United States, Israel and Gulf countries, amid the **normalisation** of the latter's **relations** with the Jewish state.
- Regional **divisions** highlighted between **political powers** and public opinion, largely in favour of the Palestinian cause.
- **Strategic reinforcement of the proxies in the Axis of Resistance** (Lebanese Hezbollah, Yemeni Houthis, Islamic Resistance in Iraq) under the influence of **Iran**, enabling the latter to keep well away from the scenes of confrontation.
- Consolidation of **new regional balances** centred on the **normalisation of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia**, with a view to **securing the Gulf countries** in the event of a **settlement to the conflict in Yemen**, to the **detriment of stability in the Middle East**.

North Africa and the Middle East: assessment of risk evolution 2023

Decline

	Israel	Outbreak of war in the Gaza Strip following the 7 October attack by Hamas amid a political and institutional crisis.
	Palestine	Serious humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Increase in violence in the West Bank. Power failure of the Palestinian Authority.

Indirect or partial decline

	Lebanon	Regular shelling on south Lebanon in retaliation to Hezbollah strikes on northern Israel. Renewed economic downturn and persistent political crisis marked by a lasting power vacuum.
	Tunisia	Authoritarian drift of power and deterioration in the socio-economic situation.

...to the detriment of populations under the control of the major regional powers

- Continuation of the **war in the Gaza Strip** in the short-term, including the risk of regional expansion remaining contained despite the intensification of **Houthi attacks in the Red Sea** and **clashes in the Lebanese-Israeli border area**.
- Potential increase at a regional level of **targeted assassinations of leaders of the Axis of Resistance and Hamas** by the Israeli security forces, supported by the US, in a bid to securing a **political victory**, which would justify ceasing the hostilities in the Gaza Strip.
- Risk of **territorial fragmentation becoming entrenched** in former war zones (**Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen**), which could **slow down reconstruction** and **fuel strategic regional rivalries** between major powers (**Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey**).
- Ongoing **decline in socio-economic situations (Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey and Iran)** cultivating popular demands, which, in the medium-term, are likely to remain **under the control of the regimes** in place owing to **latent security threats**.












The Americas

A regional environment marked by socio-political instability and dissenting demands...

- **Diverging political dynamics**, with the return of the left in Brazil, Honduras and Guatemala, while a shift towards the conservative right has occurred in Ecuador and Argentina, or has been confirmed in Paraguay. **Persistence of authoritarian regimes**, as in El Salvador, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba. **Reorganisation of certain geopolitical balances**, such as the rehabilitation of the Venezuelan president by his Brazilian counterpart.
- **Ongoing anti-government socio-political protests and escalation of political tensions**, particularly in Guatemala, Bolivia, Argentina and Peru, where the political crisis is continuing.
- **Slowdown in growth and growing economic inequalities**, considerable inflation especially in Argentina.
- **Resurgence of geopolitical tensions** between Guyana and Venezuela over Essequibo Province.
- **Uncertainty surrounding the US presidential election** at the end of 2024, including a risk of political violence and a significant influence on the issue of migration in the region.
- **General elections also scheduled in El Salvador** (under an extended state of emergency), **Panama**, the **Dominican Republic**, **Venezuela**, **Mexico** and **Uruguay**, alongside a risk of rallies and tension.



The Americas: assessment of risk evolution 2023

Decline		
	Ecuador	Increase in gang-related insecurity despite enhanced security measures.
	Haiti	Escalation in crime related to armed gangs, deterioration in the security situation.
Indirect or partial decline		
	Argentina	Economic crisis, social protests following the presidential elections (November 2023).
	Colombia	Resurgence in violence attributed to drug-traffickers, risk of political violence.
	Guatemala	Anti-government protest movement in the wake of the presidential elections (August 2023), high crime rate.
	Guyana	Renewed geopolitical tension with Venezuela over Essequibo Province.
	Mexico	Risk of growing socio-political and anti-government demands.
	Peru	Political instability, rallies in reaction to the failure to agree on the organisation of the general elections.
Relative improvement		
	Brazil	Reorganisation of geopolitical relations, following a divisive policy by the outgoing president, slight fall in the number of homicides in 2023.

... in the face of a criminal threat that remains high and poses major security challenges

- **Increased activity of armed gangs in 2023 and territorial wars in Haiti**, resulting in population displacement, pending an international mission spearheaded by the Kenyan police in early 2024.
- **Huge upsurge in crime** in Ecuador, declaration of a state of emergency, amid an “internal conflict” and unprecedented violence.
- Reorganisation and **extension of the drug-trafficking network** from Mexico (Chiapas Province), or Brazilian networks, such as the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), giving rise to waves of violence (Costa Rica and Ecuador).
- **Ongoing dialogue** in a bid to appease tensions in Colombia, with the third round of talks with the FARC dissidents, against a backdrop of renewed guerrilla violence and a general increase in crime.






Asia

A increasingly polarised regional security environment caused by competition between the US and China...

- Increasing and greater of efforts by **China** to strengthen its position as a **major power in the region**, but this policy is in direct conflict with **Washington's** determination to maintain its own **military domination, through the accumulation of alliances in the Indo-Pacific region**.
- Such **polarisation** is forcing several countries in South East Asia to alter their foreign policy of striking a balance between the two powers (which is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain), by trying to strengthen their **security ties with Washington** while maintaining **strong trade relations with Beijing**.
- Persistent tension and incidents in the South China Sea, the East Sea, around North and South Korea, as well as in the Taiwan Strait.**
- Ongoing internal armed conflict in Myanmar**, including subsequent repercussions on its neighbours (**Bangladesh**).
- Return of civilian rule in Thailand**, which, however, still preserves the interests of the army after nearly a decade in power.



Asia: assessment of risk evolution 2023

Decline		
	Myanmar	Escalation of the internal armed conflict.
Indirect or partial decline		
	Bangladesh	Political tension and large-scale social movements.
	Pakistan	Socio-political unrest and ongoing terrorist threat.
	Taiwan	Geopolitical tension and threat of Chinese invasion.
Relative improvement		
	Sri Lanka	Signs of economic stabilisation following the unprecedented crisis in 2022 - 2023. Drop in socio-political tension.

...against a backdrop of important challenges and elections scheduled in 2024

- Expected continuation of threats for the forced reunification of Taiwan with China** and its potential repercussions on the global economy, with no credible threat of a Chinese invasion over the course of 2024. **Increased risk of military clashes between China and the US** in the area, with a low risk of uncontrolled escalation.
- The political pre-eminence of the military** is expected to continue in several countries, including Thailand, Pakistan and Myanmar, along with its consequences on political tension. Meanwhile, the **legislative arsenal aimed at silencing the opposition is also expected to be strengthened** in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Cambodia, specifically through laws for greater control of information.
- Immensely strategic and high-risk elections are scheduled**, specifically in Bangladesh, Taiwan, Pakistan, India, South Korea and Indonesia, including a credible risk of related political violence and a surge in geopolitical tension.

Europe & CIS

A regional environment scarred by the war in Ukraine and the issue of post-USSR borders ...

- **Ongoing conflict in Ukraine, which became deeply entrenched in 2023 and its regional repercussions.** The economic impact of the war and the widely ineffective Western sanctions on Russia; the war effort must be sustained.
- **Continuation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, now controlled by Azerbaijan. Threat of a new war between Armenia and Azerbaijan** over the control of the south of Armenia and the corridor leading to the Nakhchivan enclave. Consequences of the tense geopolitical situation on **political stability in Armenia.**
- Risk of ongoing violence between Kosovo's Serb community and the Kosovo security forces, amid a **risk of conflict between Serbia and Kosovo.** Ongoing tension especially in the border area should be expected
- **In Europe, the populist and authoritarian wave continues, with several populist and/or far-right governments coming to power or staying in power** (Italy, Hungary, Serbia, Netherlands and Slovakia), despite **electoral setbacks for this political movement in 2023** (Spain and Poland).



Europe and CIS: assessment of risk evolution 2023

Decline

	Armenia/Azerbaijan	Annexation of Nagorno Karabakh by Azerbaijan. Threats to political stability in Armenia.
	Ukraine	Stalemate in the conflict with Russia.
	Russia	International sanctions and war effort to be sustained. Ukrainian strikes on border regions.

Indirect or partial decline

	Belarus	International sanctions, direct impact of the conflict in Ukraine.
	Kosovo	Community-based violence and threat of conflict with Serbia.
	Moldova	Direct impact of the conflict in Ukraine, threat of Russian destabilisation.
	Serbia	Increase in armed violence and political tension, threat of conflict with Kosovo.

... amid slow economic recovery undermined by persistence geopolitical risks

- **Continued stalemate of the war in Ukraine, which could turn to Russia's advantage if Kyiv fails to receive sufficient aid from the West and if no credible solution to the conflict can be negotiated.** In addition, the **US election scheduled in November 2024** is likely to have a major impact on the course of the conflict. **The spread of the conflict geographically to neighbouring countries remains unlikely.**
- **Elections in the CIS, which are likely to be considerably affected by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the threats of Russian destabilisation** (Moldova and Georgia), with no political change expected in Belarus and Russia following the 2024 elections.
- **Plausible victory of Eurosceptics and populists in the June 2024 European elections,** against a backdrop of a downturn in growth and a migratory crisis.
- **Expected rise in tension between centrist European governments and the US in the event of the victory of Donald Trump in the November 2024 presidential elections, especially with regards to the issues of international security and the role of NATO.**
- **Gradual end of the inflationary period** following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and the Covid-19 pandemic, with a **relative improvement in socio-economic conditions,** while **social protest movements** are expected to continue.

2024 Calendar

Bangladesh, 07/01: legislative elections
Taiwan, 13/01: presidential and legislative elections
Ivory Coast, 13/01 to 11/02: Africa Cup of Nations
Comoros, 14/01: presidential election
Finland, 28/01: presidential election
El Salvador, 04/02: presidential and legislative elections
Azerbaijan, 07/02: presidential election
Pakistan, 08/02: legislative elections
Indonesia, 14/02: presidential and legislative elections
Belarus, 25/02: legislative elections
Senegal, 25/02: presidential election
Iran, 01/03: legislative elections
Ireland, 08/03: constitutional referendum
Maldives, 17/03: legislative elections
Portugal, 10/03: legislative elections
Slovakia, 23/03: presidential election
Muslim World, 10/03 to 09/04: Ramadan*
Russia, 15/03: presidential election

South Korea, 10/04: legislative elections
Solomon Islands, 17/04: legislative elections
India, April-May: general elections*
Panama, 05/05: general elections
Lithuania, 12/05: presidential election
Dominican Republic, 19/05: presidential and legislative elections
South Africa, May-June: presidential and legislative elections*
Madagascar, before June: legislative elections*
Mexico, 02/06: general elections
Europe, 06/06 to 09/06: élections européennes
Belgium, 09/06: legislative elections
Germany, 15/06 to 14/07: UEFA Euro football championship
Mauritania, 22/06: presidential election

Croatia, July: legislative elections*
Rwanda, 15/07: presidential and legislative elections
France, 26/07 to 11/08: Summer Olympic Games

Austria, September: legislative elections*
Botswana, October: legislative elections*
Tunisia, October: presidential election*
Lithuania, 06/10: legislative elections
Mozambique, 09/10: presidential and legislative elections
Georgia, 26/10: legislative elections
Uruguay, 27/10: presidential and legislative elections
Mauritius, November onwards: legislative elections*
Guinea-Bissau, November: presidential election*
Jordan, November: general elections*
Romania, November: presidential election*
Namibia, November: presidential and legislative elections*
USA, 05/11: presidential election
Algeria, December: presidential election*
Croatia, December: presidential election*
Romania, December: legislative elections*
Ghana, 07/12: general elections



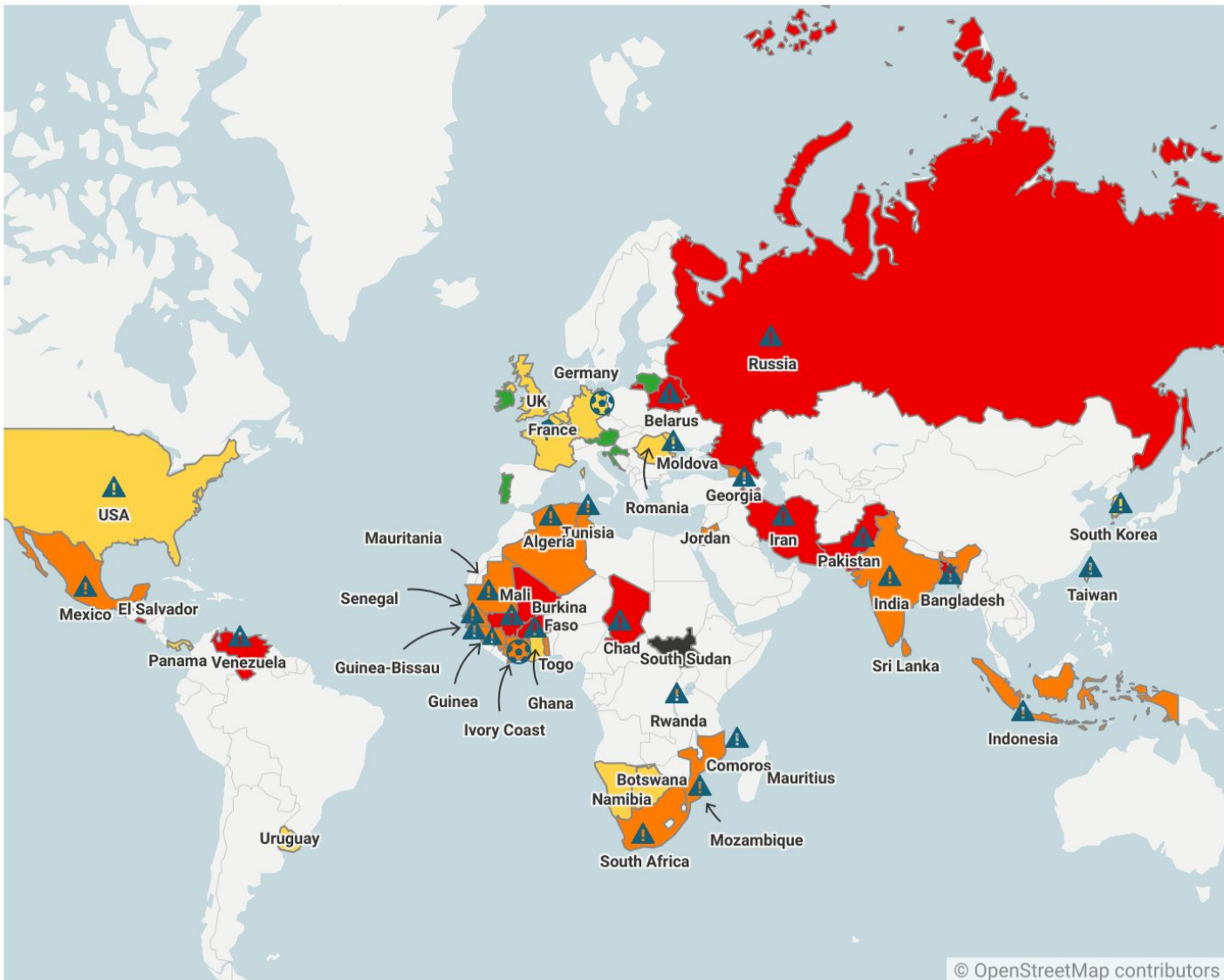
Unconfirmed dates, or actual organisation uncertain

Burkina Faso, first half of the year: elections, uncertain as to whether they will go ahead
Guinea: from the end of 2024
Mali, 2024: presidential election, initially scheduled 04/02 but now postponed
Moldavie, autumn: presidential election
United Kingdom, second half of the year: legislative elections
South Sudan, December: presidential election, uncertain as to whether it will go ahead
Sri Lanka, before September: presidential election
Chad, by October at the latest: presidential election
Togo, announced for between now and the end of March: legislative elections
Venezuela, second half of the year: presidential election

* Exact date to be confirmed

Top events in 2024

-  Sensitive elections
-  Summer Olympic Games (France)
-  Important football championships (UEFA Euro, Germany; CAN, Ivory Coast)
-  SSF Risk Rating: low (1/5) - Austria, Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal
-  SSF Risk Rating: moderate (2/5)
-  SSF Risk Rating: serious (3/5)
-  SSF Risk Rating: high (4/5)
-  SSF Risk Rating: extreme (5/5)



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Map of countries where national elections have been announced in 2024 with their corresponding SSF Risk Rating.

SSF Information & Analysis



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PMPR

Point Mensuel des Pays à Risques: the SSF monthly report on high-risk countries providing a calendar of notable events in the month to come.



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Reports and monitoring targeting a specific area, country or security issue.