

Organized violence 1989–2024, and the challenges of identifying civilian victims

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Abstract

This article examines global trends in organized violence based on new data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). In 2024, the number of state-based armed conflicts rose from 59 to 61, marking the second consecutive year in which the UCDP recorded a historically high number of conflicts. The number of wars increased from nine to 11, the highest count since 2016. The UCDP recorded marginal declines in both state-based fatalities and organized violence as a whole. In contrast, one-sided violence saw a sharp increase, driven primarily by escalating attacks by Islamic State in Africa and widespread killings by non-state actors in Haiti. Non-state conflict declined, both in the number of active conflicts and in total fatalities. In total, the UCDP recorded almost 160,000 deaths in organized violence in 2024. The article also addresses challenges in the classification of casualties, highlighting how limitations in data quality and information access contribute to uncertainty around the civilian-to-combatant fatality ratio. These challenges are particularly acute in cases of organized crime violence, in which the distinction between civilians and combatants is often blurred, and in which indiscriminate types of warfare, such as artillery and aerial bombardment, are used in urban settings.

Keywords

Conflict data, armed conflict, one-sided violence, non-state conflict, civilian-military ratio

In 2024, fatalities in organized violence decreased marginally, from about 160,300 in 2023 to 159,800 in 2024.¹ As depicted in Figure 1, fatalities remain among the highest recorded since the Rwandan genocide in 1994, with only the three preceding years surpassing them. The number of state-based conflicts reached a record high of 61, while fatalities decreased slightly in 2024. Non-state violence decreased, in terms of both conflicts and fatalities, while one-sided violence

increased significantly, recording the second-highest number of actors in the dataset's history, and the highest number of fatalities since 2014.

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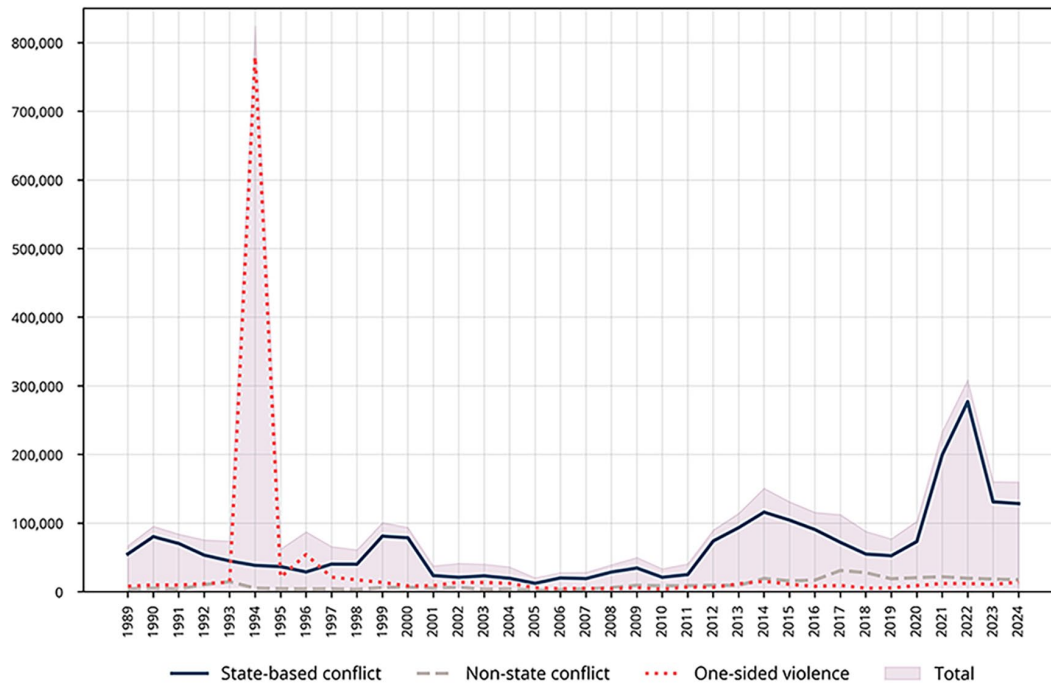


Figure 1. Fatalities in organized violence by type of violence, 1989–2024.

Violence in all three categories of organized violence has increased substantially since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Since 2010, the number of state-based conflicts has almost doubled, from 31 to 61 in 2024. In 2024, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) recorded nearly five times as many fatalities from organized violence as in 2010, despite a sharp decrease from the peak in 2022. Non-state violence increased from 32 conflicts causing 8,700 deaths in 2010, to a peak of 93 conflicts resulting in 31,000 fatalities in 2017. In 2024, the numbers dropped to 74 conflicts and 17,500 deaths. One-sided violence also increased, from 23 actors responsible for 3,700 deaths in 2010, to 49 actors responsible for over 13,900 civilian fatalities in 2024. Since 2010, organized violence has increased by almost any metric, with more countries on average experiencing more and higher intensity conflicts. Asia was the only region to experience less violence in 2024 compared with 2010, due to Afghanistan experiencing a sharp decline after peaking during the Taliban takeover in 2021.

This article presents trends in the three types of organized violence with an emphasis on 2024, beginning with a section on the trends in state-based violence, followed by sections on non-state and one-sided violence, respectively. It ends with a discussion on challenges in classifying casualties as civilians or combatants, important to revealing patterns of ethnic targeting,

human rights violations, and the use of indiscriminate violence.

State-based armed conflict

The number of state-based armed conflicts continued to rise in 2024, from 59 in 2023 to 61 in 2024, marking the second consecutive year in which UCDP documented a record number of conflicts.² This builds on a trend in which relatively few conflicts are resolved; only five conflicts active in 2023 became inactive in 2024, the fewest since 2013. In addition, not a single war—defined as conflicts that resulted in at least 1,000 battle-related deaths during the year—active in 2023 fell below the threshold in 2024.

As seen in Figure 2, UCDP recorded 11 wars in 2024, two more than in 2023, and the highest count since 2016.³ Since 2021, only one war has terminated in a peace agreement (Ethiopia: Tigray) while three dropped below the threshold of war (Afghanistan, Mali, and Yemen); in the meantime, 11 wars have broken out. One more war, the conflict over government in Syria, ended with a rebel victory in 2024, after the Assad regime collapsed in a sudden rebel offensive. The conflict had previously been stagnant with a ceasefire in effect along a stable frontline since 2020.

Fatalities in state-based armed conflicts remained high in 2024. UCDP recorded 128,400 fatalities in

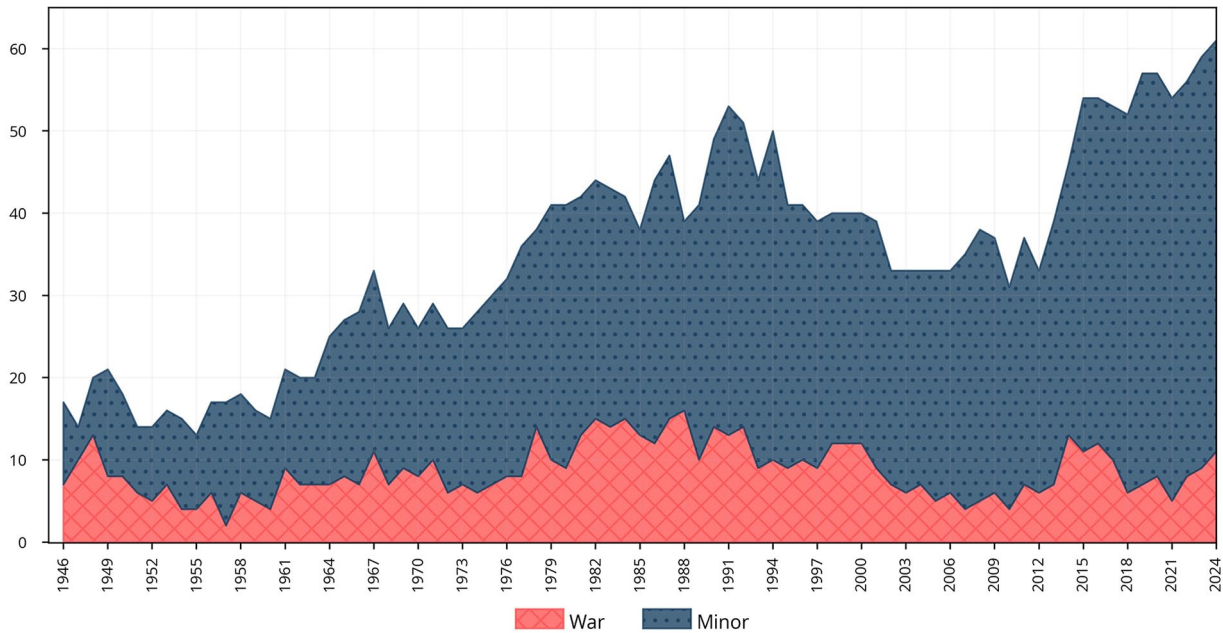


Figure 2. State-based armed conflict by intensity level, 1946–2024.

2024, down slightly from the 131,000 recorded in 2023.⁴ Fatalities remain at some of the highest levels in the post-1989 period, with only the three preceding years more violent. The interstate conflict between Russia and Ukraine remained the world's deadliest conflict, with nearly 75,700 fatalities recorded, responsible for almost 59% of all state-based fatalities during the year, and slightly higher than the 75,200 recorded in 2023. The conflict remained largely unchanged from the previous year, with the major difference being a large increase in fatalities occurring inside Russia, due to the Ukrainian incursion into Russia's Kursk oblast. Combatant fatalities continued to dominate with over 55,000 Russian and nearly 18,000 Ukrainian military losses recorded during the year. These figures are based on named and confirmed deaths available in open-source collections, and should thus be considered minimum estimates. Numbers are expected to increase as more information becomes available and the fate of missing people has been clarified.

As in 2023, the conflict between Israel and Hamas, which flared up in early October 2023, caused the second-highest number of battle-related deaths, with over 21,000 fatalities recorded. Whereas the attacks primarily targeting Hamas in Gaza dropped in intensity, with significantly fewer killed throughout 2024 compared with the last three months of 2023, the conflict had severe spillover effects in the broader region. Israel was involved in two additional interrelated conflicts; a war

against Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon and an interstate conflict against Iran. The conflict with Iran has been active since 2018, but escalated sharply in 2024, with over 500 deaths during the year. It has primarily consisted of Israeli airstrikes against Iranian support networks for its proxies inside Syria, although 2024 was notable for being the first time that Iran struck targets inside Israel from Iranian territory. The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah reignited the day after Hamas's 7 October 2023 attack on Israel. It escalated massively in September 2024, when Israel detonated thousands of Hezbollah pagers and walkie-talkies, followed by extensive airstrikes which killed thousands, including the Hezbollah leader Nasrallah. In October, Israel launched a ground invasion into Lebanon, capturing much of the territory it held prior to 2000, before partially withdrawing after signing a ceasefire in November. Fighting in Gaza resumed in March 2025 after the collapse of a January ceasefire between Hamas and Israel.

Regional trends remained remarkably static, with the most notable change being a 17% drop in fatalities in Africa, from 21,000 in 2023, to 17,400 in 2024. This is the lowest number of fatalities recorded in Africa since 2019, but remains at historically high levels compared with anything seen between the end of the Ethiopian–Eritrean war in 2000 and the start of Ethiopia's Tigray war in 2020. Decreases in fatalities in Burkina Faso and Somalia drove this trend, overshadowing rising violence

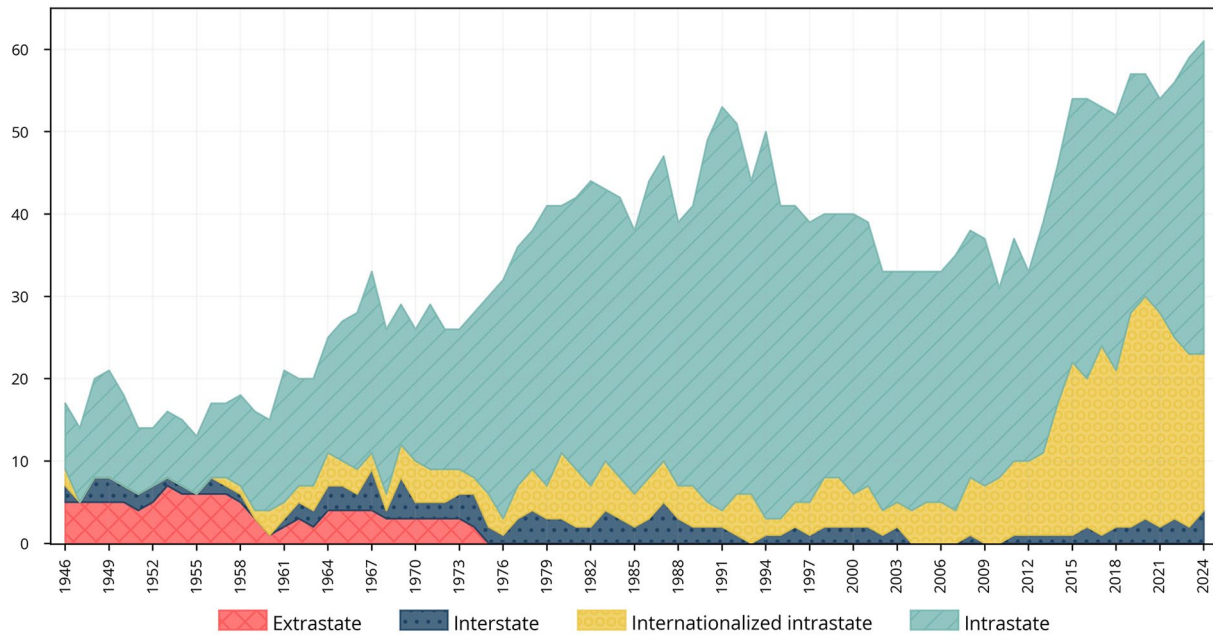


Figure 3. State-based armed conflict by type, 1946–2024.

in Ethiopia's Amhara region and in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

All other regions in the world saw only minor escalations, with the most notable being an increase in Asia from 4,300 fatalities in 2023, to 4,800 in 2024, driven by escalations in the government conflict with the Pakistani Taliban, and in the Arakan conflict in Myanmar. Violence in the Americas also ticked up, as prominent criminal gangs in Haiti formed an alliance with the intent of overthrowing the government, resulting in international security forces being deployed as well as increased one-sided and non-state violence.

The number of interstate conflicts doubled from two in 2023 to four in 2024. Figure 3 shows that this is the highest number recorded since 1987, reflecting a trend in which interstate conflicts have become increasingly common since 2016. The past decade saw 22 interstate conflict years, compared with only five in the decade before. With the exception of 2023, each year since 2020 has had at least one new or reactivated territorial dispute between states, with two such cases recorded in 2024. In 2020, the China–India conflict over the Aksai Chin reignited after decades of quiet; in 2021 the Kyrgyzstan–Tajikistan border conflict became active for the first time in UCDP data; and in 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine.

In 2024, two new territorial interstate conflicts erupted. The first was a flare-up along the contested Afghanistan–Pakistan border, where tensions surged following the Taliban's takeover in 2021. The Durand Line,

drawn by British colonial authorities, divided Pashtun lands and has been contested by Afghanistan since Pakistan's independence in the 1940s. The second new conflict involved the Sanaa-based government in Yemen (Ansarallah, known as Houthis), which declared sovereignty over the international waters in the Red Sea and nearby waters. As Sanaa began attacking commercial vessels, the United Kingdom and United States responded with a bombing campaign inside Yemen to protect access to international waters.

A subset of internationalized intrastate conflict in which external states support non-state actors fighting against governments also increased in the past decade. This constitutes instances of state armies fighting each other outside of interstate conflicts. Whereas only seven such instances occurred throughout the entire first decade of the 2000s, the 2010s witnessed 22. The first five years of the 2020s have already recorded 22 instances, with four in 2020, 2021, and 2024, and five in 2022 and 2023.⁵ Increasing incidents of conflicts involving two state armies are especially concerning, as they carry the potential to be deadlier than other forms of conflict. A notable case is the escalation in eastern DRC, where a Rwanda-backed alliance led by M23 (March 23 Movement) seized large areas. Rwanda has long supported rebellions in DRC, but tensions escalated in recent years due to DRC's growing ties with Uganda and Burundi, threatening Rwanda's position as the main transit market for Congolese minerals.

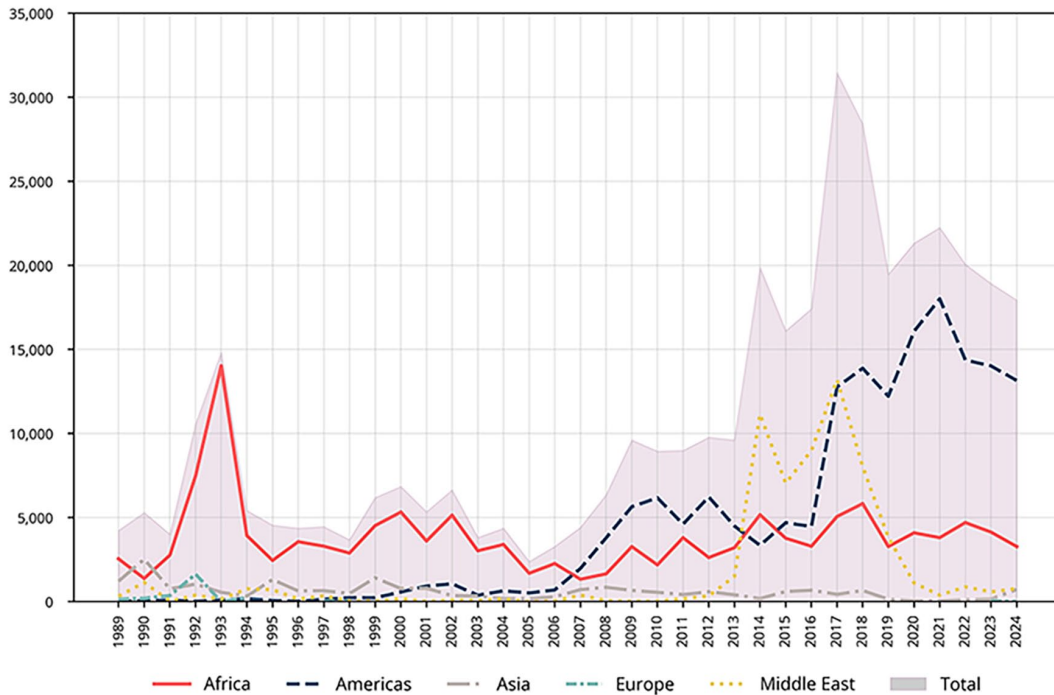


Figure 4. Fatalities in non-state conflict by region, 1989–2024.

Non-state conflict

The number of active non-state conflicts decreased to 74 in 2024, down from 80 in 2023. This marks the second consecutive year of decline, and, along with 2019, represents the lowest number of such conflicts since 2016.

Fatalities also dropped, from over 18,500 in 2023 to nearly 17,500 in 2024. As shown in Figure 4, this marks the third consecutive year of decreases, representing the lowest toll since 2016. The decline is partly attributed to reduced non-state violence in Africa, particularly in Sudan, as well as a decline in the Americas since their 2021 peak.

Both communal conflicts and conflicts between formally organized groups declined in 2024. However, the latter still accounted for most incidents and fatalities. Conversely, violence involving informally organized groups, in the form of political party supporters, increased, driven primarily by the political turmoil in Bangladesh connected to the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in mid-2024. Widespread protests erupted in July and August 2024, sparked by the Supreme Court's decision to reinstate a controversial job quota system favoring descendants of the 1971 'Freedom Fighters'.

The resulting unrest, which included various types of organized violence, led to an estimated 1,400 fatalities, with at least 350 from clashes between Awami League supporters and opposition factions. The police inflicted most fatalities in the protests. However, as the protests were violent in nature, these deaths do not qualify as one-sided violence in UCDP data. Instead, violence between the Bangladeshi state forces and armed⁶ opponents of Hasina fall under the violence in political protests (VPP) category (Svensson et al., 2022).

As a result of the violence in Bangladesh and sectarian conflict between Shia and Sunni Muslims in Pakistan, non-state violence increased in Asia in 2024. Figure 4 illustrates that while non-state violence in Africa and the Americas decreased, fatalities in Asia and the Middle East saw an uptick.

In the Middle East, the collapse of the Assad regime in Syria led to renewed clashes between the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (SNA) and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), supported by the USA. SNA pushed back SDF from key areas in northern Aleppo. Fighting has since centered along the Euphrates River, focusing on critical infrastructure like the Tishrin Dam and Qarah Qawzaq Bridge. These clashes caused at least 570 fatalities in 2024, over 60% of which occurred in December, with violence continuing into 2025.

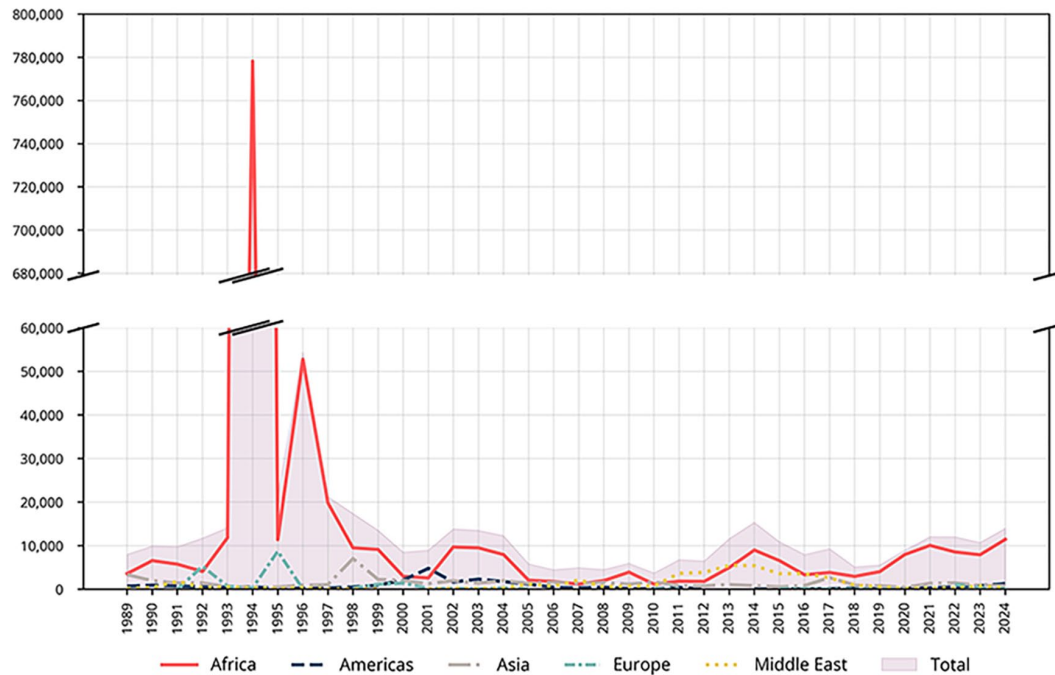


Figure 5. Fatalities in one-sided violence by region, 1989–2024.

For the past decade, the Americas have dominated the trend in non-state conflict, primarily driven by drug cartels and criminal gangs. Figure 4 shows a slight decrease in fatalities in 2024 compared with 2023, although violence remains at high levels consistent with the past decade. Mexico's drug-related conflicts have become increasingly fragmented due to shifting cartel alliances, state crackdowns, and competition over trafficking routes. In 2024, the internal power struggle within the Sinaloa Cartel made headlines after the arrest of its last remaining founder. Following Joaquín 'El Chapo' Guzmán Loera's extradition in 2017, tension between Los Chapitos, led by Guzmán's sons and Los Mayos, led by longtime leader Ismael 'El Mayo' Zambada García resulted in a leadership struggle. On 25 July 2024, Zambada was arrested in the USA, reportedly after being handed over by one of Guzmán's sons (Grant, 2024). The state of Sinaloa subsequently became the epicenter of the violent power struggle between the two cartel factions, resulting in at least 1,000 deaths in 2024.

As the Sinaloa Cartel weakened from within, the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), considered one of the deadliest cartels, continued to assert its dominance and expand into new territories across Mexico. In 2024, non-state violence involving CJNG resulted in at least 7,000 deaths, further exacerbating the region's security crisis.

Four non-state conflicts, all in Mexico, reached the threshold of at least 1,000 direct deaths during one calendar year, a criterion commonly used to define a conflict as a 'war' within the category of state-based armed conflicts.

One-sided violence

In 2024, UCDP reported a notable increase in one-sided violence, with 49 actors responsible for over 13,900 civilian fatalities, compared with 46 actors causing more than 10,600 fatalities in 2023. This marks the second highest number of actors recorded, surpassed only by 50 in 2022. Figure 5 reveals that the number of fatalities is the highest since 2014. Over the past 12 years, non-state actors have consistently caused more one-sided fatalities than state actors have, and in 2024, they were responsible for 74% of these fatalities. Both state and non-state actors increased their attacks in 2024 compared with 2023.

As illustrated in Figure 5, there is considerable variation between regions. Africa has dominated the trend since 2016, accounting for 82% of one-sided fatalities in 2024. The continent also witnessed a large increase compared with earlier years, reaching its highest level since 1997, mainly due to an escalation of killings in DRC, Sudan, Burkina Faso, and Ethiopia. Violence also

increased substantially in the Americas, driven by the political turmoil in Haiti.

IS was the deadliest actor, with nearly 3,800 one-sided killings. The group has held this position for the past decade, and 2024 saw a substantial increase in violence after inflicting fewer fatalities in 2023. Following the fall of the IS caliphate in eastern Syria in 2019, the group's focus shifted to the African continent, where it has capitalized on weak governance and state fragility, and established itself in ungoverned areas.

Over 70% of the IS killings occurred in DRC, where the IS group (formerly ADF), expanded into new regions, and escalated their attacks on civilians there. IS declared that Christians were legitimate targets unless they converted to Islam or paid *jizyah* tax, making them primary targets for attacks (Memri, 2024).

Internationally, IS's Khorasan Province (ISKP), based in Afghanistan, remains a major concern. In January 2024, ISKP killed at least 94 Shi'ite mourners in Kerman, Iran. In March 2024, it attacked a concert hall located in Moscow, Russia, claiming at least 145 lives. IS-linked individuals also carried out a stabbing in Germany and an attack on a church in Turkey. In addition, the group issued threats against major events, such as the Paris Olympics and the Euro 2024. The transnational reach of ISKP highlights the need for international intelligence sharing, which is threatened by increased great power competition.

In many countries, one-sided violence and state-based conflict are closely intertwined. Among the most fatal actors in 2024 were Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the government of Sudan, both implicated in widespread human rights violations during the ongoing civil war. Both sides have perpetrated ethnically targeted violence against civilians suspected of supporting the opposing side. UCDP recorded at least 1,800 killings carried out by RSF, and at least 460 by the government of Sudan.

Similar patterns were observed in Burkina Faso, where Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and government forces killed civilians accused of aiding the enemy. Villagers are often coerced into aiding one group and are subsequently considered legitimate targets by rival forces. JNIM was the third most fatal group in one-sided violence in 2024, after IS and RSF, with almost 1,400 killings. The government of Burkina Faso ranked fourth, with close to 800 civilian deaths.

Organized crime groups have also been responsible for massacres of civilians, particularly in crisis regions such as Haiti. The escalation of violence in Haiti in

2024 included non-state conflicts, one-sided violence, and the emergence of state-based conflict. The formation of Viv Ansanm, a coalition between two powerful gang alliances previously in conflict, marked the beginning of the first state-based conflict in Haiti since 2005. Viv Ansanm has been involved in widespread violence against civilians, driven by territorial disputes and competition over extortion revenues. One of the bloodiest incidents was the execution of at least 207 elders and voodoo practitioners, blamed for the death of a gang leader's son. In total, Viv Ansanm was responsible for almost 550 killings of civilians in one-sided violence last year.

Classifying fatalities: Challenges in identifying civilian and combatant victims in organized violence

High civilian fatality ratios can reveal patterns of ethnic targeting, violations of international humanitarian law, and the use of indiscriminate violence. Civilian fatalities also influence public opinion and international responses. Yet, identifying who qualifies as a civilian is often difficult, particularly in irregular warfare, in which combatants may lack uniforms and the line between combatant and non-combatant roles is blurred. Classification is further complicated by the varying approaches employed in collecting and reporting fatalities.

This section explores the challenges of identifying civilian and combatant fatalities and, drawing on contemporary examples and historical patterns, shows how the information environment, including data sources, classification practices, and framing, shapes our understanding of civilian fatalities in organized violence.

Conflict coverage varies in accuracy and detail, which impacts the possibility to categorize victims. Several circumstances inherent to conflict constrain the information. First, civilian fatalities and the parties' own losses are often highly contested. Second, armed groups may restrict access to conflict zones, preventing third party verification or independent reporting. These challenges can be partly mitigated through source triangulation and data collectors trained in source evaluation. Third, war's destructive impact also weakens media and state institutions' capacity to report, as infrastructure and communications deteriorate. Moreover, the characteristics of the violence, the actors, and the context also matter for the ability to classify fatalities.

UCDP identifies battle-related deaths in three categories; combatants, civilians, or unknown. The unknown

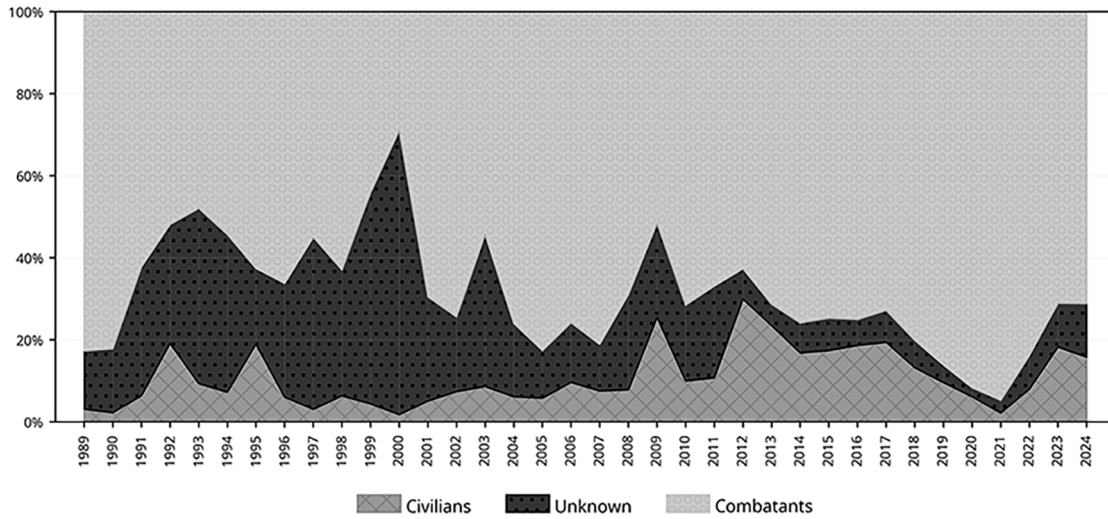


Figure 6. Proportion of civilian, unknown, and combatant fatalities in state-based conflicts, 1989–2024.

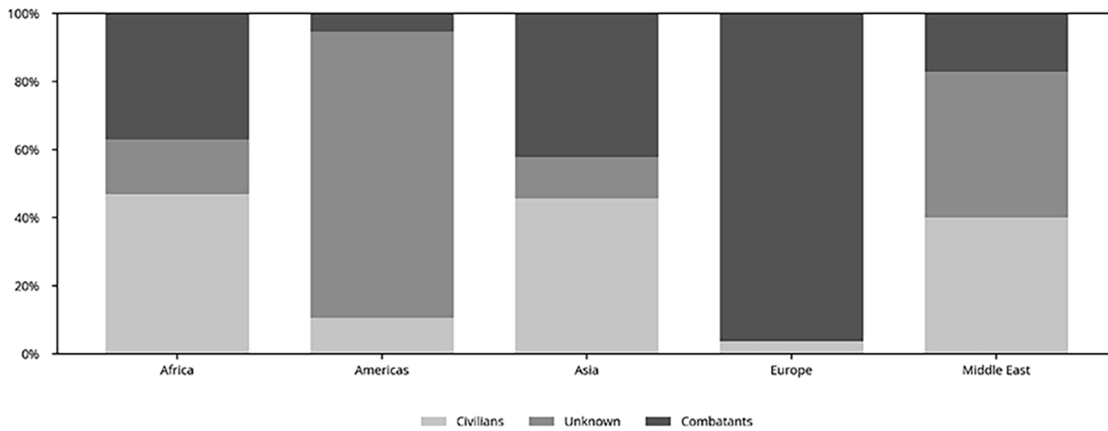


Figure 7. Proportion of civilian, unknown, and combatant fatalities in organized violence, 2024.

category is used when it is unclear whether a victim was a civilian or a combatant, or when we are unable to determine which armed group the victim belongs to.

Figure 6 shows that the proportion of unknown fatalities in state-based conflicts was high throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. In many major wars, especially in the 1990s, reporting was imprecise and incomplete. The high share of unknown fatalities during this period comes from wars like the Gulf War of 1991; Somalia and Angola in the early 1990s; Afghanistan for several years; Congo, the DRC, and Chechnya in the late 1990s; Eritrea–Ethiopia 1999–2000; and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. For many of these wars, fatalities were reported as summary figures, with little to no victim details.

Since 2011, the share of unknown fatalities in UCDP data has declined. An obvious explanation for this is a

changed information landscape with the spread of the internet, cell phones, and social media, which has allowed for broader dissemination of information. This has also enabled the proliferation of fatality reporting organizations focused on individual conflicts, which has facilitated classification of victims.⁷

The regional distribution across categories of fatalities in 2024 highlights how different information environments and conflict characteristics affect classification.

The Americas and Europe stand out in Figure 7; the Americas for its extreme share of fatalities in the unknown category and Europe for its low shares of both civilians and unknown victims.

Organized violence in the Americas is dominated by organized crime. As with most non-state conflict, classification of fatalities is difficult when there is a general blurring of lines between who is a member of an armed

group and who is not. For organized crime the problems with distinguishing combatants from civilians is further complicated by the fact that much of the violence does not take the form of regular battles, but instead includes violent messaging, such as beheadings, torture, and massacres, targeting both civilians and combatants. This illustrates why classifying fatalities according to behavioral criteria rather than identity may be problematic (cf ACLED, 2023: 18). Active targeting of journalists also deters reporting, and journalists reduce information as a way to manage threats (Dorff et al., 2023). In Mexico, of around 11,000 deaths recorded in 2024 from organized violence, almost 97% were classified as unknown. This has been the pattern since violence escalated sharply in 2007 (Davies et al., 2024). Brazil shows a similar pattern, with over 80% of fatalities in 2024 falling into the unknown category.

In Ukraine, the deadliest conflict in 2024, poor access to frontlines, and the high intensity and the character of the fighting means combatant fatality figures are still uncertain, although open-source intelligence efforts have made a difference. After the initial phases of the war, frontlines stabilized and civilians largely vacated the combat zones, making it easier to distinguish civilian casualties, which typically resulted from attacks on civilian areas with a better information situation. Earlier in the war when civilians were caught up in high intensity fighting and fast-moving frontlines, with poor information access, distinguishing civilians and combatants was more difficult. The Russian campaign against Mariupol is a notable example. UCDP recorded 16,000 deaths in the unknown category due to the scale of warfare, the urban landscape, and the lack of independent reporting.

Mariupol illustrates a more general point, i.e. that the type of warfare, as well as physical characteristics of the area where violence occurs, affects the classification of victims. Highly destructive warfare such as aerial and artillery bombardments, particularly in urban environments, often result in difficulties classifying victims as well as establishing fatality numbers. This also explains the higher proportion of unknown fatalities in the Middle East in 2024, which is dominated by the current Israeli campaign in Gaza. The problem of categorizing victims is compounded by restricted access, a decay of reporting infrastructure when health workers and hospitals are hit, and the urban landscape where many victims remain buried under the rubble. Of the over 21,000 deaths recorded in the Israel–Hammas conflict in 2024, about 50% have been

classified as either combatant or civilian; the remainder is listed as unknown.

With time, more information often becomes available and existing information is re-evaluated. Fatality estimates can then be improved, meaning that data must be constantly updated. War crimes tribunals, truth commissions, and fact-finding missions have improved the accuracy of fatality estimates and classification for countries like Bosnia, Rwanda, Burundi, and Colombia. While the identity of the fatalities may not be known for individual events, reconstructions based on other types of data, such as demographic data, hospital data, and/or surveys, can create overall assessments. Such estimates are generally not possible to make while conflicts are ongoing, and come with their own uncertainties (e.g. Spagat, 2024).

Finally, UCDP data on one-sided violence should not be interpreted as a measure of overall civilian fatalities, or civilian victimization more generally (Öberg, 2025: 9–10). It is designed to evaluate theories about *targeted* violence against civilians (see e.g. Schwartz and Straus, 2018 for an overview of central arguments on the strategic targeting of civilians in civil war). The topic of civilian victimization more generally, or indiscriminate violence, is more challenging from a data perspective (see e.g. Kalyvas, 2006). When large shares of deaths are of unknown identity, testing these theories becomes harder. At the event level, it requires the inclusion of civilian battle-related deaths along with some reasoned share of the unknown category. At the aggregate level, other types of data are sometimes better suited.

Conclusion

In 2024, the number of state-based armed conflicts rose from 59 to 61, marking the second consecutive year of historically high conflict levels. The number of wars increased to 11, the highest recorded since 2016. Despite this escalation, overall fatalities declined slightly, with decreases in both state-based and non-state violence. In contrast, one-sided violence surged, driven primarily by IS attacks in Africa. In total, UCDP recorded almost 160,000 deaths in organized violence in 2024. Knowing the civilian toll in organized violence is crucial for revealing patterns of ethnic targeting, human rights violations, and the use of indiscriminate violence. Yet, identifying who qualifies as a civilian is often difficult. These challenges are especially acute in settings where organized crime blurs the lines between civilians and combatants, and in urban warfare settings.

Replication data

Replication data and the Online Appendix for this article can be found at <https://www.prio.org/jpr/datasets/> and <http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>. The complete UCDP datasets updated to 2024, as well as older versions of the datasets, are found at <http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/>. Detailed descriptions of the individual cases are found in the UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia at www.ucdp.uu.se/.


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Notes

1. UCDP collects data on state-based armed conflict, non-state conflict, and one-sided violence. Data for all three categories go back to 1989; for state-based armed conflict, they extend back to 1946. The categories are mutually exclusive and can be aggregated as 'organized violence'. They also share the same intensity cut-off for inclusion—25 fatalities in a calendar year. Appendices 1, 2, and 3 list the active conflicts in 2024. See Online Appendix for definitions.
2. Five conflicts ended or dropped below the threshold for inclusion in 2024: Azerbaijan: Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh); Pakistan: Islamic State; Cameroon: Islamic State; CAR: Logone; and Chad: government. Seven new conflicts started or re-erupted in 2024: Russia: Islamic State; United Kingdom, United States of America - Yemen; Afghanistan - Pakistan; Angola: Cabinda; Somalia: Jubaland; Somalia: Islamic State; and Haiti: government.
3. The wars recorded in 2024 were the conflicts over government in Burkina Faso, Myanmar, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria; the territorial conflicts Nigeria: Islamic State, Israel: Palestine and Israel: Southern Lebanon; and conflicts over government and territory between Russia and Ukraine and in Ethiopia.
4. Due to new information becoming available for the conflicts in Ukraine and Palestine, fatalities in 2023 have been revised upwards from 122,500 in last year's publication (Davies et al., 2024).
5. The four cases in 2024 were the Saudi-led coalition supporting the Forces of the Presidential Leadership Council against the Ansarallah government in Yemen, the Ansarallah government in Yemen supporting Hamas against Israel, Turkish support for the armed opposition in Syria and Rwandan support for M23 against the government of DRC.
6. UCDP defines arms as any material means, e.g. manufactured weapons but also sticks, stones, fire, water, etc.
7. A multitude of such organizations exist across the globe, for example, SOHR (<https://www.syriaahr.com/>), covering Syria, B'Tselem (<https://www.btselem.org/>) covering Israel/Palestine, Iraq Body Count (<https://www.iraqbodycount.org/>), CERAC (<https://www.cerac.org.co>) covering Colombia. For a list of some 60 such organizations, see <https://everycasualty.org/casualty-recording-organisations/>. All accessed 2 April 2025.

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Appendix 1

State-based armed conflicts active in 2024

This list includes all conflicts that exceeded the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths in 2024 and fulfilled the other criteria for inclusion.¹ The column Year shows the latest range of years in which the conflict has been active without interruption. The start year is found in parenthesis in the Incompatibility column, which indicates when the armed conflict reached 25 battle-related deaths for the first time. If a conflict has been inactive for more than ten years or if there has been a complete change in the opposition side, the start year refers to the onset of the latest phase of the conflict. The column Intensity in 2024 displays the aggregated number of battle-related deaths. Thus, if more than one dyad is active in the conflict, the intensity column records their aggregated intensity. Three fatality estimates are given in the table: low, best, and high.

Location	Incompatibility	Opposition organization(s) in 2024	Intensity in 2024		
			Low	Best	High
EUROPE					
Russia	Government (2023)	LSR	24	28	35
Russia	Territory (Islamic State) (2015)	IS	47	53	54
Russia, Ukraine	Government/Territory (Crimea) ² (2022)		68,784	75,686	121,134
MIDDLE EAST					
Iran, Israel	Government ³ (2018)		548	549	549
Iran	Government (2005)	Jaish al-Adl	113	113	113
Iraq	Government ⁴ (2004)	IS	215	217	230
Israel	Territory (Palestine) (1949)	PIJ, Hamas ⁵ , Fatah	21,407	21,465	21,534
Israel	Territory (Southern Lebanon) (2023)	Hezbollah	4,007	4,362	5,184
Syria	Government ⁶ (2011)	Syrian insurgents ⁷	1,453	1,459	1,475
Syria	Territory (Islamic State) ⁸ (2013)	IS	588	629	641
Syria	Government/Territory (Rojava Kurdistan) (2016)	SDF	78	78	78
Turkey	Territory (Kurdistan) (1983)	PKK	205	209	367
United Kingdom, United States of America, Yemen, Yemen	Territory (Red Sea, Bab al Mandab and Gulf of Aden) ⁹ (2024)	Forces of the Presidential Leadership Council ¹⁰	72	117	184
Yemen	Government (2009)		397	779	805
ASIA					
Afghanistan	Government (1978)	NRF	18	28	95
Afghanistan	Territory (Islamic State) (2015)	IS	76	105	145
Afghanistan, Pakistan	Territory (Durand Line) (2024)		51	61	105
India	Government (1991)	CPI-Maoist	319	325	360
India	Territory (Kashmir) (1990)	Kashmir insurgents ¹¹	111	112	114
Indonesia	Territory (West Papua) (2018)	OPM	39	57	63
Myanmar	Territory (Araakan) (2016)	ULA	513	515	941
Myanmar	Government (2021)	NUG, PSLF, PNLO	1,232	1,244	2,363
Myanmar	Territory (Kachin) (2011)	KIO	252	283	522
Myanmar	Territory (Karen) (1989)	KNNU	165	165	459
Myanmar	Territory (Karen) (2021)	KNPP	28	28	82
Myanmar	Territory (Kokang) (2009)	MNDAA	99	99	99
Pakistan	Government (2007)	TTP, HGB	1,284	1,304	1,380

(Continued)

Appendix 1. (Continued)

Location	Incompatibility	Opposition organization(s) in 2024	Year	Intensity in 2024		
				Low	Best	High
Pakistan	Territory (Balochistan) (2004)	BRAS	2019–2024	236	300	675
Philippines	Government (1969)	CPP	1999–2024	125	133	133
Philippines	Territory (Islamic State) (2016)	IS	2016–2024	40	43	43
Thailand	Territory (Patani) (2003)	Patani insurgents ¹²	2003–2024	29	35	35
AFRICA						
Angola	Territory (Cabinda) (1991)	FLEC-FAC-TN	2024	10	25	109
Benin	Government (2022)	JNIM	2022–2024	73	77	83
Burkina Faso	Government ¹³ (2018)	JNIM	2018–2024	2,018	2,136	2,581
Burkina Faso	Territory (Islamic State) (2019)	IS	2019–2024	53	63	67
Burundi	Government ¹⁴ (2014)	RED-TABARA	2019–2024	57	60	108
Cameroon	Territory (Ambazonia) (2017)	Ambazonia insurgents	2017–2024	161	168	174
Cameroon	Government (2015)	JAS	2022–2024	55	63	64
CAR	Government ¹⁵ (2018)	CPC	2018–2024	159	177	448
DR Congo	Government ¹⁶ (2011)	AFC ¹⁷	2016–2024	732	904	2,555
DR Congo	Territory (Islamic State) ¹⁸ (2019)	IS	2019–2024	148	150	251
Ethiopia	Territory (Oromiya) (2019)	OLA	2019–2024	667	685	4,776
Ethiopia	Government/ Territory (Amhara) (2023)	Fano	2023–2024	2,122	2,139	5,539
Kenya	Territory (Northeastern Province and Coast) (2015)	Al-Shabaab	2015–2024	49	52	53
Mali	Government ¹⁹ (2009)	JNIM	2012–2024	753	760	936
Mali	Territory (Islamic State) ²⁰ (2017)	IS	2022–2024	124	128	187
Mali	Government/Territory (Azawad) ²¹ (2023)	FLA	2023–2024	110	123	197
Mozambique	Territory (Islamic State) ²² (2019)	IS	2019–2024	108	151	321
Niger	Government (2021)	JNIM	2021–2024	405	440	508
Niger	Territory (Islamic State) (2015)	IS	2015–2024	397	485	831
Nigeria	Government ²³ (2009)	JAS	2011–2024	179	222	265
Nigeria	Territory (Islamic State) ²⁴ (2015)	IS	2015–2024	1,051	1,163	1,316
Nigeria	Territory (Biafra) (2021)	IPOB	2021–2024	133	197	232
Rwanda	Government (2001)	FDLR-FOCA	2023–2024	37	44	44
Somalia	Government ²⁵ (2006)	Al-Shabaab	2006–2024	2,165	2,193	2,311
Somalia	Territory (Islamic State) ²⁶ (2019)	IS	2024	30	30	34
Somalia	Territory (Jubaland) (2024)	Jubaland State of Somalia	2024	10	75	75
Sudan	Government (1983)	RSF	2020–2024	4,360	4,684	4,974
Togo	Government (2022)	JNIM	2022–2024	46	46	53
AMERICAS						
Colombia	Government (1964)	ELN, FARC-EMC, FARC-Segunda Marquetalia	2018–2024	219	225	229
Haiti	Government ²⁷ (2024)	Viv Ansann	2024	174	193	207
Total number of battle-related deaths in 2024				119,160	128,439	189,525

Unclear cases of state-based armed conflict in 2024

Cases that have been completely rejected because they definitely do not meet the criteria of armed conflict are not included in the list below. For the conflicts listed here, the available information suggests the possibility of the cases meeting the criteria of armed conflicts, but there is insufficient information concerning at least one of the three components of the definition: (a) the number of deaths; (b) the identity or level of organization of a party or (c) the type of incompatibility. The unclear aspect may concern an entire conflict or a dyad in a conflict that is included above.

<i>Location/government</i>	<i>Opposition organization(s)</i>	<i>Unclear aspect(s)</i>
Afghanistan	AFF	Number of deaths
DR Congo	Mobondo, URDPC	Incompatibility
Cameroon	IS	Number of deaths
Myanmar	ABSDF, CNF	Number of deaths

1. See Online Appendix for definitions.
2. Russia supported by troops from North Korea.
3. Israel supported by troops from United States of America.
4. Government supported by troops from France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and United States of America.
5. Supported by troops from Yemen (Houthi government).
6. Government supported by troops from Iran and Russia.
7. Supported by troops from Turkey.
8. Government supported by troops from Iran and Russia.
9. UK and USA supported by troops from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, and Sri Lanka.
10. Supported by troops from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates.
11. E.g. Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizbul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammed.
12. E.g. BRN-C and RKK.
13. Government supported by troops from Niger.
14. Government supported by troops from DR Congo.
15. Government supported by MINUSCA, involving troops from Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Zambia. Russia also supported the Government of CAR through African Corps.
16. Government supported by troops from Burundi, Malawi, South Africa, and Tanzania.
17. Previously known as M23. Supported by troops from Rwanda.
18. Government supported by troops from Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.
19. Government supported by Burkina Faso, Niger, and Russia.
20. Ibid.
21. Government supported by Burkina Faso and Russia.
22. Government supported by troops from Angola, Botswana, DR Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia.
23. Government supported by troops from Chad and Niger.
24. Government supported by troops from Niger.
25. Government supported by AMISOM, involving troops from Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zambia. Also, United States of America contributed troops on the side of the government.
26. Government supported by troops from United States of America.
27. Government supported by troops from Kenya.

Appendix 2

Non-state Conflicts Active in 2024

This list includes all non-state conflicts that exceeded the minimum threshold of 25 deaths in 2024 and fulfilled the other criteria for inclusion.¹ The column Start Year shows the first year when the non-state conflict caused at least 25 fatalities (since 1989). The column Fatalities in 2024 displays the number of people killed, in the low, best, and high estimate.

Location	Side A	Side B	Start Year	Fatalities in 2024		
				Low	Best	High
MIDDLE EAST						
Syria	IS	SDF ²	2015	133	133	146
Syria	SNA ³	SDF	2019	579	579	584
Yemen	AQAP	Forces of the Presidential Leadership Council ⁴	2015	49	57	62
ASIA						
Bangladesh	Opponents of Hasina	Supporters of Awami League	2024	137	353	385
India	Kuldi	Meitei	2023	27	28	32
Pakistan	Shia (Pakistan)	Sunni (Pakistan)	2023	224	231	245
Papua New Guinea	Ambulin, Lungipin, Nenei, Sau, Sau Walep, Yandamau, Yokoend, Yopo	Kaekin, Palinau, Sikin	2024	63	72	72
Papua New Guinea	Piande	Sakar	2024	32	32	32
AFRICA						
Burkina Faso, Mali	IS	JNIM	2020	29	40	41
CAR	AAKG	CPC	2023	27	34	34
Chad	Farmers (Chad)	Herders (Chad)	2022	55	67	67
Chad	Bigid	Kibete	2024	42	42	42
DR Congo	AFC ⁵	VDP	2024	144	150	174
DR Congo	Basonge	Bakwa Luntu (Luba)	2024	32	32	32
DR Congo	Lengola	Mbole	2023	30	46	46
DR Congo	URDPC	Zaire self-defence group	2022	73	94	94
DR Congo	Anuak	Nuer	2002	124	124	124
Ethiopia, Kenya	Fano	OLA	2024	52	52	52
Ethiopia	Guraghe	Mareqo	2024	44	44	44
Ethiopia	Dan na Ambassagou	JNIM	2020	123	123	132
Mali	Dozos (Mali)	JNIM	2018	64	64	64
Mali	FLA	JNIM	2024	42	42	50
Mozambique	IS	Napatama	2022	33	45	49
Nigeria	Agatu	Fulani	2013	77	77	77
Nigeria	Black Axe	Eyic	2011	34	35	36
Nigeria	Black Axe	SVC	2024	40	45	54
Nigeria	Chain Guys	Full Force	2023	45	45	45
Nigeria	Forces of Dan Chaki	Forces of Gwaska Dankarami	2024	40	40	40
Nigeria	Forces of Gwaska Dankarami	Forces of Lamo Saude, Forces of Sami Dangote	2024	40	40	40
Nigeria	Forces of Mai Yankuzu	Forces of Dogo Bali	2024	40	40	40
Nigeria	Fulani	Igala	2024	31	31	31
Nigeria	Fulani	Irigwe	2017	32	35	35
Nigeria	Fulani	Mwaghavul	2023	68	68	68
Nigeria	Fulani	Ron-Kulere	2024	29	30	30
Nigeria	Fulani	Tiv	2011	87	103	103
Nigeria	Fulani, Jukun	Tiv	2024	27	27	27

(Continued)

Appendix 2. (Continued)

Location	Side A	Side B	Start Year	Fatalities in 2024		
				Low	Best	High
Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger	IS	JAS	2021	272	633	633
Somalia	Dir clan	Marehan subclan (Darod)	2004	50	50	50
Somalia	Sa'ad subclan of Habar Gidir clan (Hawiye)	Leelkase subclan (Darod)	2024	62	62	62
South Sudan	Apuk Giir	Marial Wau	2024	26	26	26
South Sudan	Bor Dinka	Murle	2007	0	35	35
South Sudan	Luac Jang Dinka	Pakam Dinka	2023	383	383	383
South Sudan	Luac Jang Dinka	Thiyic Dinka	2015	114	114	114
South Sudan	Murle	Toposa	2024	30	30	30
Sudan	T'wic Dinka	Ngok Dinka	2022	91	91	91
AMERICAS						
Brazil	Amigos Para Sempre	Familia Terror Amapá	2021	78	78	78
Brazil	Bonde dos 13, PCC	Comando Vermelho	2016	56	56	56
Brazil	Bonde dos 40	Comando Vermelho	2021	67	67	69
Brazil	Bonde dos 40	PCC	2022	138	138	138
Brazil	Cartel do Norte	Comando Vermelho	2021	286	288	288
Brazil	Comando Vermelho	GDE	2017	87	87	88
Brazil	Comando Vermelho	PCC	2015	529	585	590
Brazil	Comando Vermelho	Terceiro Comando Puro	2011	31	32	32
Brazil	GDE, PCC	Sindicato do Crime	2020	123	123	128
Brazil	PCC	Sindicato do Crime	2017	59	60	61
Colombia	EGC	ELN, FARC-EMC-Calarcá	2024	22	26	37
Colombia	EGC	Los Pachencia	2023	14	33	53
Colombia	Los Costenos	Los Pepes	2023	105	110	147
Ecuador	Los Choneros	Los Lobos	2021	89	200	288
Ecuador	Los Lobos	Los Saobox	2024	48	61	66
Haiti	G9	G-Pep	2021	159	159	159
Mexico	Caborca Cartel, Sinaloa Cartel - Los Mayos	Sinaloa Cartel - Los Chapitos	2020	40	300	304
Mexico	Cartel Independiente de Acapulco	Los Rusos	2024	201	257	326
Mexico	Carteles Unidos	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	2020	230	664	679
Mexico	Carteles Unidos	Jalisco Cartel New Generation, Los Blancos de Troya, Los de la Virgen, Los Viagras	2024	26	323	326
Mexico	Carteles Unidos	Michoacán Cartel New Generation	2024	0	108	108
Mexico	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	La Barredora (Tabasco)	2024	46	848	848
Mexico	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel	2018	1,016	2,389	2,395
Mexico	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	Sinaloa Cartel	2015	631	3,102	3,106
Mexico	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	Zetas Vieja Escuela	2021	28	32	32
Mexico	Juarez Cartel	Sinaloa Cartel	2004	410	1,690	1,690
Mexico	La Nueva Familia	Los Tlacos	2024	50	76	77
Mexico	Los Ardillos	Los Tlacos	2022	23	50	67
Mexico	Sinaloa Cartel - Los Chapitos	Sinaloa Cartel - Los Mayos	2020	334	1,005	1,033
	Total number of fatalities in non-state conflicts in 2024			8,702	17,471	17,922

1. See Online Appendix for definitions.
2. Supported by troops from United States of America.
3. Supported by troops from Turkey.
4. Supported by troops from United Arab Emirates.
5. Supported by troops from Rwanda.

Appendix 3

One-sided violence in 2024

This list includes all cases of one-sided violence that exceeded the minimum threshold of 25 fatalities in 2024 and fulfilled the other criteria for inclusion.¹ The column Start Year shows the first year when one-sided violence caused at least 25 fatalities (since 1989). The column Fatalities in 2024 displays the number of civilians killed, in the low, best, and high estimate.

Location	Actor	Start Year	Fatalities in 2024		
			Low	Best	High
EUROPE					
Ukraine, CAR, Mali	Government of Russia	1991	134	151	188
MIDDLE EAST					
Israel, Syria	Government of Israel	1989	42	42	42
ASIA					
Afghanistan, Pakistan	Government of Afghanistan	1993	10	37	73
India	CPI-Maoist	2005	52	55	55
Myanmar	Government of Myanmar	1991	421	421	423
Myanmar	ULA	2024	55	106	205
Pakistan	BRAS	2024	39	39	39
Papua New Guinea	I don't care	2024	25	26	63
AFRICA					
Burkina Faso	Government of Burkina Faso	2018	653	795	933
Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Togo, Benin	JNIM	2018	1,106	1,396	1,853
Burundi	Government of Burundi	1991	48	51	53
Cameroon	Ambazonia insurgents	2020	31	34	34
CAR	AAKG	2024	41	44	44
CAR, DR Congo	CPC	2021	98	99	100
DR Congo	Government of DR Congo	1989	51	353	362
DR Congo	AFC	2023	220	242	283
DR Congo	FDLR-FOCA	2002	7	27	27
DR Congo	Mobondo	2023	86	86	93
DR Congo	UPLD	2024	25	65	65
DR Congo	URDPC	2019	298	343	370
DR Congo	VDP	2023	66	67	90
DR Congo	Zaire self-defence group	2020	29	33	56
DR Congo, Nigeria, Niger, Russia, Syria ²	IS	2004	3,626	3,792	4,427
Ethiopia	Government of Ethiopia	1989	301	704	838
Ethiopia	OLA	2020	47	52	161
Ethiopia	Fano	2022	213	271	296
Mali	Government of Mali	1990	17	29	33
Mali	Government of Mali, Government of Russia	2024	233	299	636
Mali	Dozos (Mali)	2017	30	30	60
Mozambique	Government of Mozambique	2020	197	230	297
Nigeria	Forces of Ayongou	2024	19	75	75
Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger	JAS	2010	169	223	225

(Continued)

Appendix 3. (Continued)

Location	Actor	Start Year	Fatalities in 2024		High
			Low	Best	
Somalia, Kenya	Al-Shabaab	2008	90	92	92
South Sudan	Government of South Sudan	2012	0	39	39
Sudan	Government of Sudan	1989	115	465	465
Sudan	RSF	2023	1,512	1,851	1,922
AMERICAS					
Brazil	Comando Vermelho	2021	51	55	67
Colombia	EGC	2021	41	74	95
Colombia	FARC-EMC	2018	62	78	91
Colombia	FARC-EMC-Calaracá	2024	26	30	30
Guatemala	M18 (Guatemala)	2024	25	25	25
Haiti	Government of Haiti	1991	45	45	47
Haiti	Chandelle self-defence group	2024	39	39	39
Haiti	G9	2020	66	66	66
Haiti	Gran Grif	2024	177	179	199
Haiti	Grand Ravine	2023	26	27	27
Haiti	Viv Ansanm	2024	502	549	549
Mexico	Jalisco Cartel New Generation	2022	39	53	55
Mexico	Sinaloa Cartel	2012	34	43	56
Total number of fatalities from one-sided violence in 2024			11,239	13,927	16,363

1. See Online Appendix for further information regarding definitions.

2. The majority of the violence took place in these five countries. However, killings were also registered in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Turkey.