

Peoples under Threat 2009

By Mark Lattimer

Based on current indicators from authoritative sources, Peoples under Threat seeks to identify those groups or peoples around the world most under threat in 2009. This is the fourth year that Minority Rights Group International has compiled the Peoples under Threat table, presenting an index of risk of genocide, mass killing or other systematic violent repression.

How is the Peoples under Threat table constructed?

Recent advances in political science have enabled quantitative researchers to identify the main antecedents to episodes of genocide or mass political killing over the last half century. Current data from authoritative sources is then used to approximate those factors. The resulting index can aid civilian protection by anticipating potential situations where minorities or other groups will be in grave danger.

The overall measure is based on a basket of ten indicators. These include indicators of democracy or good governance from the World Bank; conflict indicators from the Center for Systemic Peace and other leading global conflict research institutes; indicators of group division or elite factionalization from the Fund for Peace and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; US State Failure Task Force data on prior genocides and politicides; and the country credit risk classification published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (as a proxy for trade openness). For citations and further information, see the notes at the end of the table. For a fuller discussion of the methodology, see www.minorityrights.org

In last year's listing in 2008, the most significant risers in the table were Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Iran, Kenya, Lebanon, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Yemen and Zimbabwe. During the following year (2008–9) new, increased or continued violence was experienced in at least 10 of those 12 states, perhaps most devastatingly in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Results in 2009

The highest five states in the table in 2009 are unchanged in position from last year: Somalia, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan and Burma/Myanmar. In each of them violence against minorities of a widespread or systematic character is ongoing, as it is in a number of other states near the top of the list, including the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The most significant risers in the table in 2009 include (rise in rank in brackets): Pakistan (+1), Ethiopia (+1), Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (+46), Zimbabwe (+9), Yemen (+3), Guinea (+8), Georgia (+19), Eritrea (+4), Niger (+12), Kenya (+6), Guinea Bissau (new) and Fiji (new). Note that where indicators are now separately available for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, it is the latter that have been used for the first time this year (causing a disproportionate rise in rank).

Pakistan and Yemen have risen significantly in the table in each of the last three years, and Ethiopia and Zimbabwe in each of the last two.

Pakistan's rise to the sixth position in the table is due to a dangerous combination of a rapidly escalating conflict against different Islamist groups in North-West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the existing use of violent repression to suppress dissidents in other areas of the country, and growing violence in national politics. In Yemen, media attention is focused on the growing role of extremist Islamist groups, but an unresolved sense of grievance among the Zaydi Shia population and the continuing Al Houthi insurgency in the north also combine to threaten stability.

Ethnic aspects of the crisis in Zimbabwe have again not been widely reported, but given rising political violence and the country's previous history of mass ethnic killing, the threat level has increased. Both Ethiopia and Eritrea have also risen in the list this year. Border tensions between the two states remain after the expiry of the mandate of the UN mission last year, with a concomitant threat to Afar communities. Both states also continue to support different sides in the war in Somalia, another important factor in the growth of identity conflicts.

For further information and analysis of Peoples under Threat 2009, please see www.minorityrights.org

Country	Group	Conflict indicators			Indicators of group division			Democracy/governance indicators			Total	
		A. Self-determination conflicts	B. Major armed conflict	C. Prior genocide/politicide	D. Massive movement – refugees and IDPs	E. Legacy of vengeance – group grievance	F. Rise of factionalized elites	G. Voice and accountability	H. Political stability	I. Rule of law		J. OECD country risk classification
Somalia	Darood, Hawiye, Issaq and other clans; Ogadenis; Bantu; Gabooye (Midgan) and other 'caste' groups	4	2	1	9.8	9.5	10	-1.89	-3.01	-2.64	7	23.30
Iraq	Shia, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkomans, Christians, Mandaeans, Yezidis, Shabak, Faili Kurds, Baha'is, Palestinians	5	2	1	9	9.8	9.8	-1.29	-2.82	-1.89	7	22.14
Sudan	Fur, Zaghawa, Massalit and others in Darfur; Dinka, Nuer and others in the South; Nuba, Beja	5	2	1	9.6	10	9.9	-1.73	-2.3	-1.33	7	21.65
Afghanistan	Hazara, Pashtun, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Baluchis	4	2	1	8.9	9.5	8.8	-1.17	-2.37	-2.00	7	20.95
Burma/Myanmar	Kachin, Karenni, Karen, Mons, Rakhine, Rohingyas, Shan, Chin (Zomis), Wa	5	2	1	8.5	9.5	8.7	-2.16	-1.22	-1.41	7	20.62
Pakistan	Baluchis, Hindus, Mohhajirs, Pashtun, Sindhis, Ahmadiyya, Christians and other religious minorities	5	2	1	8.6	9.5	9.8	-1.05	-2.44	-0.93	6	19.82
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Hema and Lendu, Hunde, Hutu, Luba, Lunda, Tutsi/Banyamulenge, Twa/Mbuti	2	2	1	9.2	8.8	8.6	-1.46	-2.26	-1.67	7	19.70
Ethiopia	Anuak, Afars, Oromo, Somalis, smaller minorities	5	2	1	7.5	7.8	8.9	-1.19	-1.72	-0.54	7	18.86
Nigeria	Ibo, Ijaw, Ogoni, Yoruba, Hausa (Muslims) and Christians in the North	5	2	1	5.1	9.4	9.3	-0.54	-2.07	-1.2	6	18.53
Israel/OPT	Palestinians in Gaza/West Bank, Israeli Palestinians	5	2	0	8.1	9	8	-1.28	-2.07	-0.84	8	18.37
Chad	Black African groups, Arabs, Southerners	3	2	0	9.2	9.7	9.8	-1.43	-1.96	-1.4	7	17.95
Sri Lanka	Tamils, Muslims	5	2	1	9	9.8	9.5	-0.39	-1.96	0.06	6	17.76
Zimbabwe	Ndebele, Europeans, political/social targets	2	0	1	9	9.5	9.3	-1.54	-1.3	-1.67	7	16.52
Iran	Arabs, Azeris, Baha'is, Baluchis, Kurds, Turkomans	5	0	1	8.7	7.3	9	-1.52	-1.33	-0.84	6	16.11
Central African Republic	Kaba (Sara), Mboum, Mbororo, Aka	0	2	0	8.8	8.9	9.4	-0.93	-1.78	-1.52	7	15.62
Lebanon	Druze, Maronite Christians, Palestinians, Shia, Sunnis	4	1	0	9	9.4	9.4	-0.45	-2.09	-0.66	7	15.46
Côte d'Ivoire	Northern Mandé (Dioula), Senoufo, Bete, newly settled groups	0	1	0	8.3	9.5	8.9	-1.26	-2.12	-1.54	7	15.00
Burundi	Hutu, Tutsi, Twa	0	1	1	8.2	6.7	7.8	-0.8	-1.42	-1.16	7	14.79
Philippines	Indigenous peoples, Moros (Muslims), Chinese	5	2	1	5.7	7	7.8	0.18	-1.38	-0.59	4	14.71
Nepal	Madheshis (Terai), Dalits, indigenous peoples (Janajati) and linguistic minorities	2	1	0	5.5	9	8.3	-0.89	-2.13	-0.64	7	14.09
Angola	Bakongo, Cabindans, Ovimbundu, Pastoralists, San and Kwisi	4	0	1	6.9	5.9	7.5	-1.11	-0.46	-1.35	6	14.05
Uganda	Acholi, Karamojong	1	1	1	9.3	8.3	7.8	-0.47	-1.15	-0.54	6	13.89

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Russian Federation	Chechens, Ingush, Lezgins, indigenous northern peoples, Roma, Jews	5	1	1	5.4	7.5	8	-1.01	-0.75	-0.97	3	13.84
Indonesia	Acehnese, Chinese, Dayaks, Madurese, Papuans	4	1	1	7.3	5.9	7	-0.17	-1.13	-0.71	5	13.75
Yemen	Zaydi Shia	0	2	0	7.2	7.3	8.9	-1.06	-1.48	-0.94	6	13.63
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Croats, Bosniak Muslims, Serbs, Roma	4	0	1	8	8.5	8.6	0.14	-0.56	-0.52	7	13.50
Syria	Kurds	0	0	1	9	8	7.7	-1.77	-0.61	-0.55	7	13.42
Serbia	Ethnic Albanians, Bosniaks, Croats, Roma, Serbs and other minorities in Kosovo	4	0	1	7.3	7.9	8	0.2	-0.77	-0.57	7	13.38
Equatorial Guinea	Bubi, Annobon Islanders	2	0	1	2	7	8.5	-1.89	0.16	-1.16	7	13.18
Guinea	Fulani, Malinke	0	0	0	7.4	8.5	8.6	-1.23	-2.02	-1.47	7	13.18
Colombia	Political/social targets, Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples	3	2	0	9.2	7.4	8.3	-0.28	-1.65	-0.57	4	13.15
Haiti	Political/social targets	0	1	0	4.2	8	8.9	-0.77	-1.34	-1.542	7	12.79
Georgia	Adzhars, Abkhazians, South Ossetians, Georgians in autonomous regions	5	1	0	6.8	8.1	8.3	-0.19	-0.7	-0.44	6	12.70
Laos	Hmong, other highland peoples	4	0	0	5.7	6.8	8.6	-1.66	0	-0.96	7	12.51
Bangladesh	Ahmadiyya, Hindus, other religious minorities, Chittagong Hill Tribes	3	0	0	7.1	9.7	9.6	-0.563	-1.44	-0.81	6	12.46
Algeria	Berbers, Saharawi	2	1	1	6.8	7.2	6.2	-1.01	-1.18	-0.72	3	12.40
Rwanda	Hutu, Tutsi, Twa	0	0	1	7	8.5	7.8	-1.24	-0.19	-0.65	7	12.34
Uzbekistan	Tajiks, Islamic political groups, religious minorities, Karakalpaks, Russians	1	0	0	5.4	7.1	9.2	-1.91	-1.42	-1.06	6	12.26
Turkey	Kurds, Alevis, Roma, Armenians and other Christians	5	2	0	6.2	7.6	7.5	-0.19	-0.78	0	4	12.02
Eritrea	Afars, Saho, Tigre, religious minorities	0	0	0	7.1	5.6	7.2	-2.15	-1.04	-1.1	7	11.98
Azerbaijan	Armenians	4	0	0	7.8	7.3	7.5	-1.13	-0.69	-0.83	5	11.54
Cambodia	Cham, Vietnamese, indigenous hill tribes (Khmer Leou)	0	0	1	5.7	7.5	7.2	-0.87	-0.43	-1.06	6	11.51
Niger	Djerema-Songhai, Hausa, Tuaregs	3	0	0	6	9.2	6.7	-0.38	-0.55	-0.89	7	11.35
Djibouti	Afars	3	0	0	6.4	5.5	6.9	-1.06	-0.05	-0.51	8	11.25
Kenya	Borana, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Muslims, Turkana, Endorois, Masai, Ogiek, other indigenous groups	0	1	0	8.5	7.6	8.4	-0.06	-1.1	-0.98	6	11.22
Congo, Republic of	Lari, M'Boshi, Aka	0			7.7	6.8	7.2	-1.11	-0.83	-1.26	7	11.19
Tajikistan	Uzbeks, Russians	0	0	0	6.1	6.5	8.6	-1.26	-0.87	-1.13	7	11.17
Kyrgyzstan	Uzbeks, Russians	1	0	0	5.8	6.8	7.5	-0.64	-1.11	-1.19	7	11.17
China	Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongols, Hui, religious minorities	4	0	1	5.1	7.8	7	-1.7	-0.33	-0.45	2	11.05
Ecuador	Afro-descendants, Indigenous peoples	2	0	0	6	6.5	7.9	-0.23	-0.91	-1.04	7	10.96

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Moldova	Trans-Dniester Slavs	4	0	0	4.7	7.3	7.7	-0.38	-0.22	-0.66	7	10.92
Cameroon	Westerners	2	0	0	7.1	7.1	8.2	-0.94	-0.39	-1.09	6	10.90
Thailand	Chinese, Malay-Muslims, Northern Hill Tribes	5	2	0	6	7.7	7.7	0.61	-1.07	0.06	3	10.84
North Korea	Political/social targets, religious minorities	0	0	0	6	7.2	7.6	-2.31	0.35	-1.03	7	10.83
Liberia	Dan, Krahn, Ma, other groups	0	0	0	8.4	6	7.9	-0.35	-1.15	-1.06	7	10.65
Bolivia	Indigenous Highland, Indigenous Lowland, Afro-Bolivians	2	0	0	4.2	7.3	8.5	0.02	-0.99	-0.96	7	10.64
Guatemala	Indigenous peoples, Garifuna	0	0	1	6	6.9	6	-0.3	-0.76	-1.11	5	10.45
Turkmenistan	Uzbeks, Russians, Kazakhs, religious minorities	0	0	0	4.5	6.2	7.9	-2.07	-0.08	-1.33	6	10.33
Belarus	Poles	0	0	0	4.3	6.7	8.5	-1.8	0.2	-1.09	7	10.32
Venezuela	Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants	0	0	0	5	6.8	7.5	-0.58	-1.23	-1.47	6	10.25
Vietnam	Montagnards (Degar), other highland peoples, religious minorities	2	0	1	5	5.3	6.9	-1.61	0.31	-0.53	4	10.20
Togo	Ewe, Kabre	0	0	0	5.6	6	7.5	-1.16	-0.52	-0.94	7	10.18
India	Assamese, Bodos, Nagas, Tripuras, other Adivasis, Kashmiris, Sikhs, Muslims, Dalits	5	2	0	3.2	7	6	0.38	-1.01	0.1	3	10.11
Nicaragua	Indigenous peoples, Creoles	3	0	0	5.7	6.5	7.1	0.1	-0.26	-0.84	7	10.09
Cuba	Political/social targets, Afro-Cubans	0	0	0	4.7	5.5	7	-1.93	0.11	-0.79	7	9.85
Guinea Bissau	Balanta, Fula (Fulani), Manjaco, Papel, Diola	0	0	0	6.5	5.4	7.1	-0.51	-0.41	-1.36	7	9.82
Sierra Leone	All groups incl. Krio, Limba, Mende, Temne	0	0	0	7.4	6.9	7.5	-0.33	-0.3	-1.13	7	9.77
Bhutan	Lhotshampa, Nepalese	2	0	0	7.5	7	7.7	-0.88	0.67	0.49	8	9.42
Papua New Guinea	Bougainvilleans	3	0	0	3.5	8	6.7	0.12	-0.76	-0.85	5	9.15
Fiji	Indo-Fijians, Indigenous Fijians	0	0	0	4	7.5	8.2	-0.51	0.09	-0.37	8	9.07

Compiled by Marusca Perazzi

Notes to Table

Sources of the indicators are as follows:

- *Conflict indicators*: The base data used was Monty G. Marshall, 'Major episodes of political violence 1946–2008' (Center for Systemic Peace, 2009) and, for self-determination conflicts, Monty G. Marshall and Ted R. Gurr, 'Peace and conflict 2005' (CIDCM, University of Maryland, 2005), updated for 2008 using figures from Center for Systemic Peace, MRG and the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research.

Self-determination conflicts in 2008 were ranked on a scale of 0–5 as follows: 5 = ongoing armed conflict; 4 = contained armed conflict; 3 = settled armed conflict; 2 = militant politics; 1 = conventional politics. Major armed conflicts were classified as 2 = ongoing in late 2008; 1 = emerging from conflict since 2005 or ongoing conflict with deaths under 1,000.

- *Prior genocide or politicide*: Barbara Harff, US Political Instability Task Force (formerly State Failure Task Force). 1 = one or more episodes since 1945.

- *Indicators of group division*: Failed States Index, Fund for Peace and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2008.

- *Democracy/governance indicators*: Annual Governance Indicators, World Bank, 2008.

- *OECD country risk classification*: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 'Country risk classifications of the participants to the arrangement on officially supported export credits', April 2009. Where no classification is given, a value

of 8 was accorded.

Indicators were rebased as necessary to give an equal weighting to the five categories above, with the exception of the prior geno-/politicide indicator. As a dichotomous variable this received a lesser weighting to avoid too great a distortion to the final ranking. Resulting values were then summed.

The full formula is:

$$(A/2) + (B \times 1.25) + (C \times 2) + (D + E + F)/6 + (G + H + I)/-1 + (J \times 0.625)$$