



Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research e.V.  
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## Press release "Conflict Barometer 2010"

**Heidelberg institute counts 28 highly-violent conflicts and 126 violent crises worldwide in 2010.**

*Heidelberg, 12/15/2010.* In its "Conflict Barometer 2010", the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK) presents its newest data and analyses on global conflict development. HIK analysts counted 363 conflicts overall, 28 of which were classified as highly violent, i.e. involving the massive use of organized violence and causing lasting destruction. Six of these highly violent conflicts were classified as wars. The Pakistani military conducted a major campaign against the Taliban, which resulted in about 6,800 fatalities over the year. This body count represented an increase of 2,000 fatalities on 2009. The war between the Taliban and the Afghan government caused the deaths of more than 1,200 civilians as well as 700 soldiers of the international forces. These numbers reflect the highest body count ever since the beginning of the US-led intervention in 2001. In Iraq, over 3,000 people died in bomb attacks by militant Sunni groups throughout the year. Moreover, clashes between militant Islamist groups and the Somali government led to 2,200 casualties in Mogadishu alone between January and October. In the Sudanese region of Darfur, 440 people were killed in May alone. Finally, the conflict between the Mexican drug cartels and the government escalated to the first war in the region of the Americas since 2003. All aforesaid conflicts had been carried out on a highly violent level in previous years.

Despite the slight decrease in highly violent conflicts from 33 to 28, the analysts would rate any optimism as premature. Lotta Mayer, member of the board, stated: "The decrease in highly violent conflicts should not be interpreted as an indicator that the world has necessarily become more peaceful within the past 12 months." After all, "the number of violent crisis saw an increase of more than 10 percent on 2009, amounting to 126 violent conflicts. Indeed, crises have the potential for peaceful conflict resolution, but then again, they can also quickly escalate to a highly violent level." Moreover, the continued rise in crime as well as social injustice, poverty and hunger presented the main obstacles for future peace and security.

The Middle East and Asia were the most affected regions, accounting for nine highly violent conflicts each, followed by sub-Saharan Africa with six. All violent conflicts of these regions together formed a conflict belt ranging from the northern African coast via the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, and Myanmar to the Korean Peninsula. All these conflicts not only affected each other in manifold ways, but even had spillover effects on other countries through the smuggling of weapons, drugs, resources, and the transnational cooperation between militant groups.

Since 1991, the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIK) has been devoted to the research, documentation and analysis of intra-state and international conflicts worldwide. The annual publication "Conflict Barometer" offers an overview of the contemporary development of violent as well as non-violent conflicts. The current publication is available for free downloading at [www.hiik.de](http://www.hiik.de) as of 12/15/2010. Please find the current world map of highly violent conflicts in 2010 attached. We will be happy to provide you with additional maps and material.

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