



Assessment

Monthly Geopolitical Report: June 2026

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Scope Note

ZeroFox Intelligence is derived from a variety of sources, including—but not limited to—curated open-source accesses, vetted social media, proprietary data sources, and direct access to threat actors and groups through covert communication channels. Information relied upon to complete any report cannot always be independently verified. As such, ZeroFox applies rigorous analytic standards and tradecraft in accordance with best practices and includes caveat language and source citations to clearly identify the veracity of our Intelligence reporting and substantiate our assessments and recommendations. All sources used in this particular Intelligence product were identified prior to 1:00 PM (EDT) on May 28, 2025; per cyber hygiene best practices, caution is advised when clicking on any third-party links.¹

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Key Findings

- The United States and Iran have likely reduced their negotiation gaps, making a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on ending the war more likely. The Trump administration has likely adjusted its negotiating position to align closer with Iranian demands, led by moving away from an immediate mandate to denuclearize and instead pushing the topic until a later date. However, key differences remain that make a return to conflict unlikely but not improbable—especially if talks collapse or stall into June.
- The unprecedented scale of the 2026 World Cup presents significant logistical, security, and cybersecurity challenges. The geopolitical environment—including the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war with Iran, trade issues between the three hosts, domestic U.S. political tensions surrounding immigration, and Mexico's persistent issues with cartel violence—add layers of complexity that previous tournaments have not faced.
- Both the Group of Seven (G7) Summit in France in mid-June and the 2026 World Cup (which runs from June 11 until July 19) are very likely to inspire issue-driven hacktivism, social engineering, and disinformation. Cyberattacks that include distributed denial of service (DDoS), website defacement, credential theft, and event-themed phishing are very likely against G7 and World Cup infrastructure and sponsors.

¹ Report Purpose: The purpose of this report is to provide monthly updates on significant geopolitical occurrences and logistics developments, as well as potential impacts to the global supply chain.



- The Ukrainian military's recent success against Russia will likely continue in June 2026, gaining leverage for Ukraine that will likely be used in eventual talks to end the war.
- The U.S. indictment of former Cuban leader Raúl Castro mirrors the drug-trafficking charge preceding the seizure of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and is likely a preparatory step before a military operation. However, a definitive resolution to the U.S. blockade of Cuba remains unlikely while the Trump administration remains preoccupied with Iran.
- Continued social unrest is expected in Latin America in June 2026, driven by elections in Peru and Colombia and a roughly even chance that Bolivian protesters will force new elections.
- U.S. military operations in Nigeria likely reflect concern over Jihadist terrorism in West Africa spreading southward to areas with greater Western diplomatic and commercial interests.

| Middle East

Progress on Ending Iran War in the Short Term

The United States and Iran have likely reduced their negotiation gaps, making an MOU on ending the war more likely. The terms of the latest MOU offer Iran economic incentives to relinquish control over the Strait of Hormuz (SoH), enabling the resumption of oil exports through sanctions relief.² While previous U.S. drafts conditioned such relief on denuclearization,³ the Trump administration likely found this agreement acceptable because recent Iranian proposals aligned more closely with the U.S. nuclear position, despite first requiring U.S. concessions. The current MOU dictates that the United States will end the war, lift its naval blockade, and provide economic incentives before addressing nuclear concessions—a development that resolves the impasse regarding the sequence of negotiations even if both sides continue to hold fundamentally different positions on most major issues.

- **Nuclear Program:** The latest MOU maintains that Iran must eliminate its highly enriched uranium but defers enforcement of this requirement. While Iran has recently shown flexibility regarding its nuclear program, it remains highly unlikely to accept the total elimination of its enriched uranium. Consequently, there is a roughly even chance that this issue derails a long-term agreement. Based on previous Iranian proposals, a more likely long-term outcome would involve Iran pausing Iranian enrichment for a longer period of

² [hXXps://thesoufancenter\[.\]org/intelbrief-2026-may-26/](https://thesoufancenter.org/intelbrief-2026-may-26/)

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[hXXps://www.wsj\[.\]com/world/middle-east/iran-talks-bog-down-over-nuclear-program-sanctions-relief-31702b6f](https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/iran-talks-bog-down-over-nuclear-program-sanctions-relief-31702b6f)



time (less than the U.S. demand of 20 years but more than Iran's demand of three to 10 years), eliminating most of its existing enriched uranium, and permitting international inspections of its nuclear sites.

- **Sanctions:** The United States will very likely condition full sanctions relief on concrete nuclear commitments over the medium term. Although initial sanctions relief is anticipated, the full unfreezing of Iranian assets and comprehensive relief will likely be tied to either an Iranian commitment not to develop nuclear weapons or an enrichment pause.
- **SoH:** U.S. President Donald Trump stated that the MOU will lead to the reopening of the SoH alongside the lifting of the U.S. naval blockade,⁴ though he did not specify the terms of Iranian compliance. Past Iranian proposals that were previously rejected by the United States suggested a phased relaxation of Iranian control over the SoH in exchange for incremental sanctions relief. Iran is unlikely to remove all SoH restrictions and is very likely to move forward with plans to formalize transit fees across the strait. While there is a roughly even chance that Iran drops these fees in exchange for sanctions relief that provides a comparable economic stimulus, it is almost certain to maintain its military capability to threaten shipping. For its part, the United States remains very unlikely to lift all sanctions without a long-term nuclear agreement and a significant reduction in Iranian control over the SoH.
- **Israel/Hezbollah:** Throughout its recent ceasefire in Lebanon, Israel has refused to end military operations or withdraw from southern Lebanon. Similarly, Hezbollah has refused to abide by the ceasefire without a full Israeli withdrawal. The MOU reportedly includes a cessation of hostilities across all conflict zones.⁵ Operations in Lebanon represent the primary short-term risk to formalizing an end to the war.
- **Looking Forward:** While the ceasefire remains fragile and numerous issues between the United States and Iran are unresolved, the latest MOU finally establishes a framework for talks. This begins with reopening the SoH and developing a long-term timeline for outstanding security concerns. However, the risk of renewed conflict persists and will likely escalate if talks stall into June, particularly with ongoing fighting in Lebanon and sporadic operations around the SoH threatening the short-term stability of the truce. Long-term peace is less certain, as the MOU reveals that both sides agree on little beyond a 60-day lull alongside the SoH reopening. Without meaningful progress on the nuclear issue, the threat of renewed fighting will remain.

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[hXXps://www.abc\[.\]net\[.\]au/news/2026-05-28/iran-war-us-draft-peace-deal-memorandum-hormuz-blockade/106730174](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-28/iran-war-us-draft-peace-deal-memorandum-hormuz-blockade/106730174)

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[hXXps://www.aa\[.\]com\[.\]tr/en/middle-east/factbox-iranian-us-versions-of-potential-agreement-proposals/3947540](https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/factbox-iranian-us-versions-of-potential-agreement-proposals/3947540)

Israeli Politics

On May 15, 2026, U.S. officials announced the extension of a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah for an additional 45 days. However, as has been the case since the beginning of the truce, regular fighting between Hezbollah and Israel has continued unabated, with each side typically launching several strikes a day, a significant portion of which result in death and injuries.^{6,7,8}

Also on May 15, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed that Israel now occupies 60 percent of the Gaza Strip (up from 50 percent at the time of the October 2025 ceasefire agreement).⁹ On May 20, the Israeli parliament (Knesset) voted 110-0 to move forward with a government-supported bill to dissolve the Knesset, thus necessitating early elections.¹⁰

- **Gaza:** Along with Hamas' consistent refusal to disarm,¹¹ Israel's expanded presence in Gaza reflects the lack of progress towards finding a permanent end to the conflict.
- **Early Elections:** The Knesset decision represents the first step in a process that is likely to lead to early elections (it must pass three more votes). However, given that a minimum of 90 days must pass between the legislation coming into law and new elections, it is likely that the general election will be held in September or October 2026—not far ahead of the previously scheduled date of October 27, 2026.^{12,13}
- **Hezbollah Drones:** Over the last several weeks, Hezbollah has also notably increased its use of armed, first-person view (FPV) drones—particularly those of the fiber optic variety, which are immune to electronic jamming. This development has reportedly triggered widespread and growing consternation among Israeli defense officials. After numerous deadly drone strikes on Israeli military targets in Lebanon and northern Israel in late April

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[hXXps://www.naharnet\[.\]com/stories/en/320251-hezbollah-says-fierce-resistance-in-haddatha-forced-israeli-troops-to-retreat](https://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/320251-hezbollah-says-fierce-resistance-in-haddatha-forced-israeli-troops-to-retreat)

⁷ [hXXps://www.theguardian\[.\]com/world/2026/may/20/deadly-israeli-strikes-lebanon](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/may/20/deadly-israeli-strikes-lebanon)

⁸ [hXXps://t\[.\]me/s/rasedal3ado138e](https://t.me/s/rasedal3ado138e)

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[hXXps://www.timesofisrael\[.\]com/ministers-set-to-discuss-renewing-gaza-war-as-hamas-refuses-to-disarm-report/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/ministers-set-to-discuss-renewing-gaza-war-as-hamas-refuses-to-disarm-report/)

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[hXXps://www.reuters\[.\]com/world/middle-east/israeli-vote-dissolve-parliament-may-bring-elections-forward-2026-05-20/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-vote-dissolve-parliament-may-bring-elections-forward-2026-05-20/)

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[hXXps://www.timesofisrael\[.\]com/ministers-set-to-discuss-renewing-gaza-war-as-hamas-refuses-to-disarm-report/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/ministers-set-to-discuss-renewing-gaza-war-as-hamas-refuses-to-disarm-report/)

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[hXXps://www.i24news\[.\]tv/en/news/israel/politics/artc-israeli-knesset-passes-preliminary-vote-to-dissolve-itself-setting-the-stage-for-early-elections](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel/politics/artc-israeli-knesset-passes-preliminary-vote-to-dissolve-itself-setting-the-stage-for-early-elections)

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[hXXps://www.reuters\[.\]com/world/middle-east/israeli-vote-dissolve-parliament-may-bring-elections-forward-2026-05-20/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-vote-dissolve-parliament-may-bring-elections-forward-2026-05-20/)

and May 2026, Prime Minister Netanyahu reportedly stated that the Israeli military has been granted an "unlimited budget" to counter the threat. However, the attacks have persisted.¹⁴¹⁵

Europe

Russia–Ukraine Conflict

Following a period of relative stagnation on the frontlines, two notable shifts occurred in May that will likely continue into June. Ukrainian forces re-gained territory in western Zaporizhzhia and towards Kupyansk, driving a net gain of 100 square miles in the four weeks between April 28 and May 26.¹⁶ This builds on net gains of 26 square miles from the previous four-week period.¹⁷ This data reflects sustained Ukrainian gains throughout May at the highest rate since its 2023 offensive; Ukrainian forces will likely continue advances into early June. Ukraine’s advances throughout May signal that it is likely regaining the tactical initiative in Kupyansk and western Zaporizhzhia.¹⁸

Meanwhile, Russian forces renewed operations in Sumy Oblast, likely as part of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s previously stated desire for a buffer zone along the northeastern border region.¹⁹ In mid-May, Russia gained control of four settlements in Sumy, despite Ukrainian counterattacks. This effort will likely stretch Ukraine’s defenses further north, diverting resources away from other areas of the front.

- Putin’s Strength:** Numerous Western and Russian-opposition media outlets have speculated that Putin’s position among the Russian elite is weakening following a series of government shakeups in 2024 and 2025 that disrupted relations among the ruling clans. Some have suggested Putin is growing increasingly paranoid and desperate to end the war.²⁰ Kremlin politics are highly opaque; while it is difficult to determine if Putin’s position is in fact weakening, there has been no observable battlefield evidence the Russian president is preparing to de-escalate.

¹⁴ <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-896472>

¹⁵

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/10-soldiers-including-brigade-commander-hurt-in-separate-hezbollah-drone-attacks/>

¹⁶

<https://www.russiamatters.org/news/russia-ukraine-war-report-card/russia-ukraine-war-report-card-may-27-2026>

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸

<https://understandingwar.org/research/russia-ukraine/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-may-20-2026/>

¹⁹ <https://deepstatemap.live/>

²⁰ <https://edition.cnn.com/2026/05/04/europe/putin-russia-security-intelligence-intl>



- **Hybrid Measures:** On May 7, 2026, Lithuania reported a Ukrainian drone incursion, following similar reports from Estonia the day before and Latvia a week earlier. The drone incident was almost certainly the main contributor to Latvia's prime minister resigning and likely signals concerns about air defenses that Russia would attempt to exploit in the event the war expands beyond Ukraine. Russia is likely jamming and diverting Ukrainian drones into nearby states that support Ukraine. By diverting the drones, Russia likely weakens support for Ukraine, as affected citizens in neighboring countries see the war impacting their lives.

G7 Summit in Evian, France: June 15–17, 2026

The Group of Seven Summit brings leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States together in Evian-les-Bains, France (the same town that hosted the 2003 G8).²¹ The threat picture will very likely be shaped by the active conflicts in Iran and Ukraine.

- **Cyber Risk:** The cyber risk to the summit is elevated. Iranian-aligned actors have been targeting this year's G7 Summit since March 2026, and pro-Russian collectives have a long history of targeting the event since Russia was removed from the grouping in 2014.²² Since then, Russian-aligned actors have frequently targeted the government, banking, and transportation infrastructures of G7 members in retaliation for their support of Ukraine. Cyberattacks against G7 infrastructure, sponsors, and delegations—including DDoS, website defacement, credential theft, and event-themed phishing—are very likely. Russian-linked disinformation operations targeting France's information environment are almost certain.
- **Terrorism:** ZeroFox assesses the threat of an organized terror attack at the Hôtel Royal estate is very unlikely. A lone-actor incident in central Evian or Thonon-les-Bains, at cross-border transit points, or in Geneva or Lausanne over the summit window is more probable. The primary concern for G7 security planners is likely radicalized lone actors who have been indoctrinated online rather than individuals or groups who have received formal training. A lone-wolf terrorist attack would most likely involve the use of easily accessible materials, such as bladed weapons, firearms, or rudimentary improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Vehicles will also likely be used as weapons to target spectators or related events that are not protected by road closures.
- **Protests:** France's protest culture is among the most active in Europe. The 2026 G7 Summit will almost certainly inspire mobilization from multiple coalitions, including anti-G7 groups, climate activists, pro-Palestinian groups, anti-European Union (EU) movements, and domestic political groupings in France led by the Yellow Vests.

²¹ <https://www.elysee.fr/en/G7evian>

²² https://www.spf.org/iina/en/articles/osawa_04.html



Americas

2026 World Cup: June 11–July 19, 2026

The 2026 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup will take place across the United States, Mexico, and Canada from June 11 to July 19, 2026. This will be the first World Cup hosted by three nations simultaneously and the first to feature 48 teams (up from 32), resulting in 104 matches across 16 cities. Millions of fans are expected to attend matches and fan zones throughout the 39-day event.²³ The unprecedented scale of the tournament presents significant logistical, security, and cybersecurity challenges. The geopolitical environment—including the ongoing U.S.–Israeli war on Iran, trade issues between the three hosts, domestic U.S. political tensions surrounding immigration enforcement, and Mexico’s persistent issues with cartel violence—adds layers of complexity that previous tournaments have not faced.

The recent FIFA Club World Cup (CWC) 2025 and COPA América 2024, both held in the United States at many of the same stadiums, served as a partial test-run for the 2026 event, surfacing issues around ticketing scams, protest activity, cybersecurity threats, and the impact of U.S. immigration policies on foreign attendees. ZeroFox assesses that many of the threat vectors observed during the CWC will recur at an amplified scale during the 2026 World Cup.

- Logistics:** The three-country format creates unprecedented logistical challenges. Fans following their teams will need to cross international borders, and inconsistencies in visa eligibility between the United States, Canada, and Mexico will likely hinder them from attending matches in multiple countries. Each host nation’s team is scheduled to play its group-stage games within their own country, but knockout-round games will require cross-border travel. The U.S. government shutdown (ending April 30, 2026) created a 76-day disruption to multiple aspects of security preparations. The shutdown’s impact is led by TSA staffing deficiencies, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) security funding delays, and cancelled training/surveillance programs.²⁴
- Immigration:** U.S. immigration policies likely present a significant threat to international attendance at the 2026 World Cup. The Trump administration has implemented tiered visa restrictions affecting dozens of countries, creating three distinct categories of impact for fan attendance.²⁵

²³ <https://www.fifa.com/en/tournaments/mens/worldcup/canadamexicousa2026>

²⁴

<https://www.aljazeera.com/sports/2026/3/20/fifa-world-cup-2026-security-concerns-grow-in-us-as-funding-stalls>

²⁵

<https://forumtogether.org/article/explainer-impact-of-travel-and-immigration-restrictions-on-the-2026-fifa-mens-world-cup/>



- **Mexico Security Concerns:** In Mexico, the biggest risk very likely remains ubiquitous cartel-related crime. While cartels are unlikely to directly target the World Cup, there is an unlikely chance their operations spill over into areas frequented by tourists.^{26,27}
- **Iran War Impacts:** ZeroFox has not identified any specific, credible terrorism threat targeting the 2026 World Cup. However, the geopolitical environment elevates the general risk of terrorism by domestic and international actors. The ongoing U.S.–Israeli war with Iran, which began on February 28, 2026, has significantly elevated the threat environment.²⁸ Iran’s national team is scheduled to play all of its group-stage games on the U.S. West Coast (two in Los Angeles, one in Seattle). Iran’s scheduled group-stage matches are very likely to draw both pro-Iranian and pro-U.S./Israel demonstrators, particularly if the ceasefire collapses before or during the tournament.
- **Cyber:** Cybercriminals will likely increase counterfeiting of World Cup-related goods and garments, using e-commerce and social media platforms to sell fake goods. Criminals will also likely impersonate FIFA officials to launch targeted malware or phishing attacks on organizations affiliated with the tournament. Vulnerabilities that have the potential to impact critical infrastructure and World Cup organizing bodies are likely generating significant interest from threat actors in the lead-up to the event.

Peru: Ninth President in Span of a Decade to be Elected in June 7 Runoff

Following the first round of Peru’s presidential election on April 12, 2026, Keiko Fujimori and Roberto Sánchez will face a runoff on June 7. Current polls project Fujimori, the leader of the People’s Force party, will defeat Sánchez. Fujimori, daughter of former President Alberto Fujimori, is expected to win by a large margin in the capital of Lima, which holds nearly one-third of the country’s population. Conversely, Sánchez, a congressman and former Minister under Pedro Castillo (who previously defeated Fujimori in 2021), leads by a one-point margin in other cities and by a 23-point margin in rural areas.²⁹

- **Political Instability:** The winner will become the ninth Peruvian president in roughly a decade and is set to take office on July 28. While the new president will likely aim for stability by addressing insecurity and corruption, the uncertainty of the first-round results—marked by logistical issues that delayed the count for almost a month³⁰—makes electoral challenges almost certain. While Peru’s political instability is unique, Latin

²⁶ [hXXps://ackermangroup\[.\]com/special-security-assessment-fifa-world-cup-2026/](https://ackermangroup.com/special-security-assessment-fifa-world-cup-2026/)

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[hXXps://www.espn\[.\]com/soccer/story/_/id/48760094/2026-world-cup-visa-bonds-tickets-fans-trump-administration](https://www.espn.com/soccer/story/_/id/48760094/2026-world-cup-visa-bonds-tickets-fans-trump-administration)

²⁸ [hXXps://ackermangroup\[.\]com/special-security-assessment-fifa-world-cup-2026/](https://ackermangroup.com/special-security-assessment-fifa-world-cup-2026/)

²⁹ [hXXps://www.as-coa\[.\]org/articles/poll-tracker-perus-2026-presidential-election](https://www.as-coa.org/articles/poll-tracker-perus-2026-presidential-election)

³⁰ [hXXps://www.americasquarterly\[.\]org/article/perus-chaotic-election-and-some-reasons-for-hope/](https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/perus-chaotic-election-and-some-reasons-for-hope/)



American election chaos is not. There have been notable incidents of losing candidates challenging electoral results, as evidenced in recent controversial elections in Honduras that saw allegations of U.S. interference after the Trump-endorsed and now-Honduran President Nasry Asfura won a tightly contested vote mired in logistical and technical issues.³¹

- Social Unrest:** The prospect of social unrest in Peru is elevated, almost certainly driven both by the electoral chaos and the polarizing nature of the candidates. Former President Dina Boluarte’s removal from office in October 2025 over her perceived inability to control Peru’s crime wave came shortly after a shooting at a concert that sparked major protests across Peru. The subsequent ascension of Interim President Jose Jeri was also met with widespread protests over myriad controversies surrounding him; he was replaced after four months by Peru’s current leader, Jose Maria Balcazar.^{32,33} A projected win for Fujimori, who has previously lost three runoffs and has spent time in prison over political corruption,³⁴ is likely to be met with resistance from Peru’s rural base. The previous election winner, Pedro Castillo (an ally of Sánchez), was arrested in 2022, leading to indefinite protests across the country that included mine and road blockages in the south.³⁵ There is a roughly even chance a similar dynamic emerges post-election if Sánchez claims electoral fraud following his projected defeat.
- Voter Priorities:** Polls place insecurity and corruption at the top of voters’ concerns, benefitting Fujimori, who has campaigned on a tough-on-crime stance.³⁶ Another key factor that will likely define Sánchez’s runoff success pertains to Fujimori’s ability to consolidate the conservative vote. Sánchez, who espouses a narrative of deep socio-economic change that very likely heavily resonates with Peru’s poorer demographic narrowly beat the conservative Rafael López Aliaga in the first round, and the majority of Aliaga votes will almost certainly go to Fujimori in the final round.³⁷

Cuba: Escalating U.S. Pressure and Signaling

The humanitarian situation in Cuba continues to deteriorate, with the Cuban Energy Minister stating the country has no fuel or diesel. Cubans still experience frequent blackouts of more than

³¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp39v8wd7glo>

³²

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/peru-at-a-breaking-point-how-ten-years-of-political-chaos-opened-the-door-to-organized-crime/>

³³

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/jose-geri-perus-ousted-president-was-one-worlds-youngest-heads-tate-2026-02-18/>

³⁴ <https://www.ec2-34-214-86-224.us-west-2.compute.amazonaws.com/keiko-fujimori/>

³⁵ <https://www.time.com/6251586/peru-protests-lima-castillo/>

³⁶ <https://www.ipsos.com/es-pe/encuesta-peru-21-ipsos-mayo-2026-situacion-y-percepciones-politicas>

³⁷ <https://www.americasquarterly.org/article/peru-meet-the-candidates-2026-2/>



12 hours, with water, food, and healthcare services significantly curtailed.³⁸ The U.S. pressure campaign is likely intensifying beyond economic sanctions into legal and military signaling. Significantly, former Cuban leader Raúl Castro was indicted for his alleged role in the 1996 shooting down of two planes, which killed four people.³⁹

- **Indictments:** The indictment echoes similar steps taken before the seizure of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January, who was charged with drug-trafficking.⁴⁰ Developments such as these indictments are likely steps being taken before a military operation.
- **Cuba Responds:** Cuba has begun to warn of significant consequences in the event of military action as they continue to attempt to navigate a diplomatic solution.⁴¹ Cuba has reportedly acquired more than 300 military drones and has begun discussing plans to use them to attack U.S. military assets, according to leaked intelligence.⁴² While Cuba denies this, the Trump administration has almost certainly used this report as a basis to further pressure Cuba and argue that it represents a strategic threat to the United States.⁴³ More likely, Cuba has obtained some offensive military capabilities, such as drones, that would be used to increase the economic and military costs on the United States were it to attempt a military invasion.
- **Looking Forward:** The trajectory has shifted as the United States signals a military escalation and increased tensions. The most likely near-term outcome remains a prolonged stalemate, with Cuba offering incremental concessions to avoid further U.S. escalation. As Cuba continues to significantly deteriorate, there is a roughly even chance that the country itself collapses before any significant U.S. military action.

Colombia: June Runoff Following May 31 Presidential Election Likely

On May 31, 2026, Colombia will hold its first-round presidential elections. Ivan Cepeda, a senator from the ruling Historic Pact coalition, and conservative candidates Abelardo De La Espriella and Senator Paloma Valencia are heading the first round. As per the latest polls, Cepeda is projected to win with around 34 percent of the vote, closely followed by De La Espriella (31 percent) and

³⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/25/world/americas/cuba-blackouts-fire-energy-oil.html>

³⁹

<https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/raul-castro-indicted-in-brothers-to-the-rescue-shutdown-here-are-the-charges-he-faces/3811534/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwyndnqqey5o>

⁴¹

<https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/cuba/cuba-warns-of-bloodbath-as-u-s-pressure-campaign-intensifies/3813647/>

⁴² <https://www.axios.com/2026/05/17/us-military-drones-cuba>

⁴³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckgpzwkn5jko>



Valencia (12 percent).⁴⁴ With candidates needing 50 percent of votes to win outright, a June 21 runoff is almost certain.

- **Leading Coalition Criticism:** Growing discontent associated with President Gustavo Petro's perceived inability to curb armed-group violence will almost certainly influence voter behavior, particularly as conservative candidates have leveraged recent violent events and broader insecurity fears in their campaigns against current top candidate Cepeda, who is largely seen as Petro's political heir.⁴⁵ Much of Cepeda's race has been framed as a continuation of Petro's tenure; his chance of success is very likely tied to Petro's popularity and Cepeda's signature "Total Peace" strategy to stop gang-related violence by means of dialogue.⁴⁶ Petro's relatively improved approval ratings, if accurate, will almost certainly benefit Cepeda in his race.
- **June 21 Runoff:** In the likely scenario of a June runoff, De La Espriella is polling to beat Cepeda as he continues to appeal to the top voter concern in Colombia: security. Both De La Espriella and Valencia have challenged Cepeda and his party on the basis of allegedly failed attempts to control gang proliferation, as well as Cepeda's central role in shaping the Total Peace plan.⁴⁷ De La Espriella, who frames himself as a security-first figure rejecting the Total Peace approach and promises to end dialogue with Colombia's numerous armed groups, has experienced a recent surge in popularity that places him roughly eight points above Cepeda in the potential runoff, according to a recent poll.⁴⁸ Recent high-profile violent events perpetrated by armed groups, such as a highway bombing and the killing of a former mayor and De La Espriella ally, have likely contributed to De La Espriella's bolstered support.^{49,50}

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[hXXps://cnnespanol.cnn\[.\]com/2026/05/24/colombia/encuestas-favoritos-elecciones-cepeda-espriella-valencia-orix](https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2026/05/24/colombia/encuestas-favoritos-elecciones-cepeda-espriella-valencia-orix)

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[hXXps://www.reuters\[.\]com/world/americas/colombias-ruling-left-set-extend-time-power-cepeda-leads-poll-shws-2026-04-27/](https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombias-ruling-left-set-extend-time-power-cepeda-leads-poll-shws-2026-04-27/)

⁴⁶ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]com/mundo/articles/cx21xzrr4xro](https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articles/cx21xzrr4xro)

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[hXXps://www.infobae\[.\]com/colombia/2026/04/27/nueva-encuesta-sacude-la-carrera-presidencial-y-revela-qui-en-le-compite-mejor-a-ivan-cepeda-en-segunda-vuelta/](https://www.infobae.com/colombia/2026/04/27/nueva-encuesta-sacude-la-carrera-presidencial-y-revela-qui-en-le-compite-mejor-a-ivan-cepeda-en-segunda-vuelta/)

48

[hXXps://www.reuters\[.\]com/world/americas/colombian-right-wing-presidential-hopeful-leads-poll-runoff-vote-2026-05-23/](https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombian-right-wing-presidential-hopeful-leads-poll-runoff-vote-2026-05-23/)

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[hXXps://apnews\[.\]com/article/colombia-mayor-shooting-election-violence-f1fb4c6e3ece4cdfaf3adc9698cdeee9](https://apnews.com/article/colombia-mayor-shooting-election-violence-f1fb4c6e3ece4cdfaf3adc9698cdeee9)

⁵⁰ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]com/news/articles/ckgx5kyjy8do](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckgx5kyjy8do)



Bolivia: Major Protests Likely to Persist in June and Worsen Economic Crisis

In early May 2026, widespread violent protests erupted across Bolivia in rejection of President Rodrigo Paz and his administration’s economic measures. Paz’s reforms, which have ended certain state subsidies, have been broadly unpopular. Protesters have set up road blocks and barricades and engaged in violent clashes with security forces, paralyzing Bolivia’s already-hampered economy.⁵¹ Bolivia has a recent history of indefinite protests going on for months, and battle-hardened protesters are unlikely to end their protests without concessions.

- **Socioeconomic Unrest:** The demonstrations have reportedly been organized by miners, schoolteachers, indigenous groups, and unions, who are calling for Paz’s resignation over perceived economic mismanagement. Paz’s implementation of policies ending the decades-long fuel subsidy and privatizing state-owned companies has worsened his approval ratings since being elected in October 2025. The administration has reportedly blamed the roadblocks for cutting off key supplies to cities, driving up food prices and causing serious resource shortages.⁵² As of reporting, the monetary losses of Bolivia’s economy being halted are estimated at USD 50 million per day.⁵³
- **Diplomacy:** On the diplomatic front, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio expressed support for the Paz administration, suggesting the protests are a coup d’etat financed by criminal groups and drug traffickers. Further, on May 20, Paz ordered the expulsion of Colombia’s ambassador over critical remarks made by President Gustavo Petro.⁵⁴ Argentine President Javier Milei’s administration delivered humanitarian aid to Columbia, with Milei himself condemning the protests and describing them as anti-democratic.⁵⁵ Together, the support from Rubio and Milei signals the Paz administration remains a priority for the United States, increasing the likelihood of U.S. economic or military support.
- **Evo Morales:** As the protests were escalating, an arrest warrant was re-issued for former President Evo Morales, who was barred from running in the last election. Morales remains in the northern Chapare province, reportedly protected by supporters who prevent police and military from arresting him. Paz’s government accuses the former president of stirring up unrest to obstruct his prosecution, allegations Morales denies and has blamed on Paz’s economic mismanagement.⁵⁶

⁵¹ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]com/news/articles/clyp7w035d5o](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/clyp7w035d5o)

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[hXXps://www.aljazeera\[.\]com/gallery/2026/5/16/bolivia-launches-early-morning-crackdown-on-roadblocks-outside-la-paz](https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2026/5/16/bolivia-launches-early-morning-crackdown-on-roadblocks-outside-la-paz)

⁵³ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]co\[.\]uk/news/articles/clyp7w035d5o](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyp7w035d5o)

⁵⁴ [hXXps://www.theguardian\[.\]com/world/2026/may/20/bolivia-protests-coup-paz-pereira](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/may/20/bolivia-protests-coup-paz-pereira)

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*



- Looking Forward:** On May 27, Bolivia’s congress passed a bill facilitating the deployment of the military in the event of a designated state of emergency. Paz likely aims to leverage the military to end the chokehold effect the protests are having on Bolivia’s economy.⁵⁷ However, further military presence is likely to lead to increased clashes in Bolivia’s streets, which in turn will almost certainly worsen Paz’s approval.

Africa

Abiy Ahmed Set to Win Ethiopia Election Despite Internal Insecurity

On June 1, 2026, Ethiopia will hold a general election, with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed almost certainly guaranteed a victory. Abiy Ahmed will be leading the Prosperity Party (PP) completely uncontested in 64 of Ethiopia’s 547 constituencies. Like in the last election, no voting will occur in the Tigray region, where tensions are still high between Tigray leaders and the central government following a two-year civil war from 2020–2022. The biggest opposition party, Ezema, will field candidates in just 293 seats, hoping to add to its current total of four Members of Parliament (MPs). One of Ezema’s members has a ministerial post in the current government, making it unclear if the party is considered opposition.⁵⁸

While the election process appears to be open and credible, multiple parties have reported that it was impossible to organize rallies—either due to insecurity or the restrictions imposed by the authorities. Abiy Ahmed has reportedly centralized power, such as the sovereign wealth fund established in 2021, and has established a security “task force” to oversee the election. There are also reports that he is favoring the Oromo, his own ethnic group—further signaling Abiy Ahmed and the PP’s anticipated election win.⁵⁹

- Tigray:** Since February 2026, Ethiopia’s government has re-deployed federal troops to northern Tigray and accused Eritrea of aggression and of coordinating with a faction of the Tigray People’s liberation Front (TPLF).⁶⁰
- Other Militias:** Beyond Tigray, militias that initially fought alongside the government during the last civil war, such as the Fano group in the Amhara region, have turned against it in response to federal plans to disband and absorb them into the Ethiopian National Defense Force.⁶¹ Moreover, in Ethiopia’s largest state of Oromia, federal troops and drones are

⁵⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/uk/news/articles/c8932y4d4w7o>

⁵⁸ <https://www.africanews.com/2026/05/26/ethiopia-opposition-brace-for-ruling-party-election-landslide/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.africanews.com/2026/05/24/ethiopia-heads-for-one-of-least-competitive-elections/>

⁶⁰

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tigray-party-restore-pre-war-administration-jeopardising-northern-ethiopia-peace-2026-04-20/>

⁶¹ <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/africasource/ethiopia-and-eritrea-are-on-the-brink-of-war-again/>



deployed against the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA).⁶² Therefore, the threat of violent insurgencies disrupting the election process remains. Election results in favor of Abiy Ahmed will likely result in further internal tensions, particularly in the Tigray region, raising the likelihood of renewed fighting.

- **Geopolitical Outlook:** Ethiopia is known for its decentralized government, and Abiy Ahmed is just the latest leader to attempt to divert control away from powerful state governments (such as those in Tigray, Amhara, and Oromo) in favor of a centralized government. Abiy Ahmed is likely additionally aiming to restore Ethiopia’s direct access to the Red Sea, lost to Eritrea in 1993.⁶³ Given that Ethiopia imports 97 percent of its fuel from the Middle East and the closure of the SoH has resulted in diesel shortages in the capital,⁶⁴ it is likely that Abiy Ahmed’s goal is to regain lost territory over the long term. In such a scenario, there is an elevated risk of a war starting between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Although unlikely, Ethiopia has recently been accused of intervening in neighboring Sudan’s civil war, supporting the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). In turn, this raises the risk of Sudan’s Army joining forces with Eritrea.

Jihadist Spread in Nigeria and Mali

Nigeria continues to suffer from jihadist attacks across its northern and central regions, but a joint Nigerian–American response has likely put these groups on the defensive.⁶⁵ A strike on May 15 killed the deputy leader of the Islamic State’s West Africa Province, Abu Bakr al-Mainuki, whom Nigeria’s military described as “the world’s most active terrorist.”⁶⁶ Other strikes have reportedly taken out large numbers of terrorists. The joint strikes appear to have been much more effective than those directed solely by Nigeria’s military, which recently conducted multiple airstrikes that mistakenly struck civilian targets such as marketplaces, killing scores of innocent people.

A new alliance between the major rebel factions in Mali announced itself with a massive attack across the country that captured significant territory, including the city of Kidal. Ethnic Tuaregs, fighting a separatist conflict for independence over the northern half of Mali, have once again allied with jihadist forces of Jamyat al-Nusra (JNIM) to combat the central government.⁶⁷ The ruling government’s defeat in these battles, alongside the poor performance of its main external

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[hXXps://www.omct\[.\]org/en/resources/statements/ethiopias-7th-general-election-civic-space-and-security-at-risk](https://www.omct[.]org/en/resources/statements/ethiopias-7th-general-election-civic-space-and-security-at-risk)

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[hXXps://www.economist\[.\]com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/05/25/abiy-ahmed-dreams-of-remaking-ethiopia-in-his-image](https://www.economist[.]com/middle-east-and-africa/2026/05/25/abiy-ahmed-dreams-of-remaking-ethiopia-in-his-image)

⁶⁴

[hXXps://www.ethiopiaobserver\[.\]com/2026/05/27/abiy-ahmed-dreams-of-remaking-ethiopia-in-his-image-the-economist/](https://www.ethiopiaobserver[.]com/2026/05/27/abiy-ahmed-dreams-of-remaking-ethiopia-in-his-image-the-economist/)

⁶⁵ [hXXps://www.dw\[.\]com/en/us-and-nigerian-forces-kill-20-jihadists-in-northern-region/a-77201201](https://www.dw[.]com/en/us-and-nigerian-forces-kill-20-jihadists-in-northern-region/a-77201201)

⁶⁶ [hXXps://www.dw\[.\]com/en/trump-says-is-second-in-command-killed-in-nigeria/a-77178187](https://www.dw[.]com/en/trump-says-is-second-in-command-killed-in-nigeria/a-77178187)

⁶⁷ [hXXps://www.dw\[.\]com/en/mali-fighting-attacks-kidal-tuareg-separatists/a-76942012](https://www.dw[.]com/en/mali-fighting-attacks-kidal-tuareg-separatists/a-76942012)



support network of Russian defense contractors, makes territory loss and even a government collapse more likely.

- **American Coordination** : Under President Trump, the United States has generally reduced its footprint in Africa. Nigeria has been the exception to this rule, as domestic pressure to aid Christians who are allegedly being persecuted by Muslims has translated into direct action. This means any other American engagement on the continent (security or otherwise) is likely to run through Nigeria rather than occur in Mali, where the terrorist groupings are even more powerful.⁶⁸
- **Lead-up to Nigerian Election**: Nigeria's President, Bola Tinubu, is up for re-election in 2027. His term has been marked by two main platforms: economic reforms and a commitment to improving national security. The economic reforms have primarily resulted in higher levels of inflation and are unpopular; this means that Tinubu is very likely under heavy pressure to make real gains with regard to security. However, high-profile kidnappings of school children across the country, including in areas generally perceived as more safe, have blemished his image.⁶⁹
- **Mali Central Government Weakness** : Mali had already been struggling to contain the jihadist threat it faces. Over the last year, JNIM has increasingly reduced the Malian military's ability to control broad swathes of territory, pressing them into a set of isolated strongholds. Likely most significantly, the jihadists implemented a blockade of fuel shipments that caused interruptions to schooling, work, and transportation—even in the capital of Bamako.⁷⁰ Mali's inability to limit attacks has almost certainly contributed to the spread of jihadism in neighboring Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Togo.
- **Jihadist Spread**: The uncontrolled spread of jihadism in West Africa likely presents a risk of it radiating further south, where more Western diplomatic or commercial interests are located. For now, the United States is very likely prioritizing working with the Nigerian government; however, going forward, there is an increased likelihood of U.S. military intervention elsewhere.

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[hXXps://foreignpolicy\[.\]com/2026/05/27/us-nigeria-joint-strikes-military-insurgency-boko-haram-iswap-security-africa/](https://foreignpolicy.com/2026/05/27/us-nigeria-joint-strikes-military-insurgency-boko-haram-iswap-security-africa/)

⁶⁹ [hXXps://www.bbc\[.\]com/news/articles/c202vrxlwqgo](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c202vrxlwqgo)

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*



Appendix A: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

	Red	Amber
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:RED when information cannot be effectively acted upon by additional parties and could lead to impacts on a party's privacy, reputation, or operations if misused.	Sources may use TLP:AMBER when information requires support to be effectively acted upon but carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may NOT share TLP:RED with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.	Recipients may ONLY share TLP:AMBER information with members of their own organization and its clients, but only on a need-to-know basis to protect their organization and its clients and prevent further harm. Note that TLP:AMBER+STRICT restricts sharing to the organization only.
	Green	Clear
WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?	Sources may use TLP:GREEN when information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations, as well as with peers within the broader community or sector.	Sources may use TLP:CLEAR when information carries minimal or no risk of misuse in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release.
HOW MAY IT BE SHARED?	Recipients may share TLP:GREEN information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.	Recipients may share TLP:CLEAR information without restriction, subject to copyright controls.



Appendix B: ZeroFox Intelligence Probability Scale

All ZeroFox intelligence products leverage probabilistic assessment language in analytic judgments. Qualitative statements used in these judgments refer to associated probability ranges, which state the likelihood of occurrence of an event or development. Ranges are used to avoid a false impression of accuracy. This scale is a standard that aligns with how readers should interpret such terms.

Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain
1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%

