

ZeroFox Intelligence Geopolitical Brief for May 2023

TLP: CLEAR

B-2023-04-28a



Executive Summary

Anti-incumbent parties are expected to do well in at least three major elections in May 2023: Thailand, Greece, and Turkey. In Turkey, a victory for the opposition candidate will likely coincide with painful economic policy changes that could reduce foreign investment and lead to unemployment. However, defeat for long-term leader Recep Erdogan is not assured, and political instability is likely—especially if the elections are close. Social unrest is also possible in Thailand, where the opposition party holds a wide lead, but the constitution permits Thailand's incumbent military rulers to control government formation. The military has a history of intervening in elections, and there have been recent bouts of anti-military protests that could resurface during the elections. In Greece, there is a high likelihood of political instability because an unstable coalition is likely to emerge from the elections. This could lead to a series of elections in Greece.

A possible civil war in Sudan is of strategic concern to clients across multiple industries—despite Sudan's decades of international isolation on par with countries like Cuba, North Korea, and Iran. Unlike those nations, Sudan is located close to two of Africa's largest economies: Ethiopia and Egypt. Sudan's population is expected to grow into one of the world's largest by 2050, and it also possesses key resources and trade capabilities. This explains why Western financial services firms returned to the country in 2021 ahead of an expected transition to civilian rule that never materialized. That transition is now likely years away, but a civil war and refugee crisis that could implicate the power and economic centers of North and East Africa as well as the Gulf states is potentially of greater immediate concern. Therefore, expect major peacemaking initiatives over the next month.

Japan is hosting one of the most consequential Group of Seven (G7) meetings in years. Not only is it occurring at the peak of hostilities between the West on one side and Russia and China on the other, there are also credible rumors that the United States likely will propose a ban on all exports to Russia as well as a second embargo on investment in China. Both initiatives are likely to be delayed due to a lack of Western consensus, but they are expected to emerge in some form in 2023. Despite some disagreement between allied Western states, there is broad consensus on the need to isolate Russia and limit China's expansion in the fields of science and technology. This will continue to impact clients—particularly those that do business with China, where forming an effective counter-alliance to Western trade restrictions has gained ground in recent weeks. Expect continued Chinese-led efforts to reduce the dominance of the U.S. dollar in global trade, which have already brought in key U.S. allies like Brazil and Argentina, as well as India and some Gulf states. For its part, Russia will likely abandon a key grain cooperation deal with Ukraine if further sanctions are announced.

In Europe, travel disruptions and physical protests are likely, particularly in early May 2023. The United Kingdom (UK) will hold consequential local elections, followed shortly afterwards by King Charles' coronation. The cost-of-living crisis has also made May Day 2023 more consequential than normal, with French anti-pension reform protests likely to be the largest.

Key Findings

- Sudan has enormous strategic value, and global powers will converge to try and avert civil war there.
- Chile nationalized its world-leading lithium industry, which could see more nations take greater control of natural resources needed in the energy transition.
- Power outages in South Africa could worsen as peak energy demand approaches in the winter of 2023.
- Greece's center-right government could lose elections, with an unstable coalition government replacing it.
- Incumbent President Erdogan is polling to lose in Turkey, but this outcome is far from certain.
- The ruling military-backed leader of Thailand is expected to lose the May elections but could block efforts to form a new government
- Early May 2023 will see a series of travel disruptions in Europe with May Day protests on May 1.
- The UK holds midterm elections on May 4, followed by King Charles' coronation, which will cause travel disruptions from May 6-8.
- India Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected in the tech hub of Bangalore and Karnataka state through early May because of consequential state elections.
- A ban on all Western exports to Russia is possible but unlikely in May 2023.
- A key initiative to limit foreign investment in China will be proposed in 2023 as well.
- The U.S. dollar will lose more dominance in global trade in May 2023.
- Golden Week in China and Japan will impact the global economy in May 2023.
- EU-based and businesses that sell to the European Union (EU) will be subject to new environmental regulations in May.

Key Threats and Developments



Japan hosts the G7 summit from May 19-21, 2023.



Sudan's possible civil war will impact the entire region.



Colombia is hosting a series of key peace and political negotiations in May 2023.



Chile's nationalization of its lithium industry could see other state control of key mineral exports.



Violence in the Sahel region of Africa is worsening.



The Russia-Ukraine grain accord could be abandoned in May 2023.



May Day protests will likely be largest in Europe.



India's tech-hub holds a key state election.

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Russia-Ukraine Conflict

As of April 2023, ZeroFox assesses Russia's winter offensive largely failed to accomplish a key objective of retaking significant territory in Donetsk Oblast. Russian forces made modest gains along several axes but failed to transform these efforts into meaningful advantages. However, Russian and Wagner forces have made steady gains in Bakhmut throughout April. Pro-Russia sources claim Russian troops control 75-90 percent of the city; however, Ukrainian officials contest these figures.

The Ukrainian military continues to hold largely defensive positions as it readies itself for its much-discussed spring offensive. The military is preparing nine brigades for the effort—over double the four it used during the Kharkiv offensive—and is integrating Western military supplies into offensive units.[1] The offensive will likely begin between May and June. Some reports suggest the recent U.S. Pentagon intelligence leak pushed back Ukraine's plans until June, although Ukrainian officials have denied the leak altered any plans.

Forward Look:

ZeroFox assesses Russia may withdraw from the Black Sea Grain Initiative on May 18. Since the latest extension to the deal on March 18, Russia has made more concrete threats to pull out of the agreement than ever before. On April 23, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev claimed Russia would withdraw from the Initiative in the event of a Western ban on all exports to Russia.[2] On April 24, the Russian Defense Ministry also warned drone attacks in Crimea would prompt Russia to withdraw from the Black Sea Grain deal.[3] Additionally, Russia halted ship inspections on April 12 and for two days from April 17 to 19, disrupting the flow of grain during these times.[4] Analyzed in the aggregate, these developments suggest Russia is taking a more hawkish stance towards the agreement.

Elections in Greece

- First round elections are on May 21, 2023.
- A second round election is highly likely in 2023.
- A center-right government could be replaced by an unstable coalition government.

Forward Look:

- On May 21, 2023, Greece will hold general elections following the president's approval of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis' request to dissolve the parliament on April 23, 2023. The election will be held using a proportional representation voting system in the 300-seat Parliament, making it difficult for any party to gain a majority. According to polls, neither Mitsotakis' New Democracy party nor Syriza, the main opposition party on the left, will be able to secure the votes needed for a parliamentary majority. First-round voting will likely not produce a clear winner; if the elected parties cannot form a coalition government, a second election will be held in early July.[5]
- The second round could see an unstable coalition government formed by parties across the political spectrum. This increases the likelihood of short-lived governments, which could lead to more than one general election in 2023.

European Protests and Policy Updates

- **UK:** Disruptions during local elections and King Charles' Coronation from May 4-8, 2023[6]
- New package of **EU** climate measures impacting business
- **UK:** Continued strikes from April-July 2023
- **Spain:** Local elections to be held on May 28, 2023

Forward Look:

- On May 4, 2023, the UK holds local elections wherein the opposition Labour party is expected to gain hundreds of seats, which will have major implications on the 2024 general elections. Then on May 6, the capital, London, will host the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Expect major disruptions, especially during the King's Procession that will begin at 11:00 AM at Buckingham Palace, travel along the Mall through Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square, and end at Westminster Abbey. There will then be a larger parade that runs along the same route but in reverse. There will also be viewing events at Hyde Park, Green Park, and St. James's Park in London, with similar events nationwide. Finally, there will be a coronation concert on May 7 at Windsor Castle. Expect major travel disruptions from May 6-8, with thousands of extra passengers on trains and major road closures.
- Starting October 1, 2023, EU-based businesses and those who sell to the EU will be subject to two additional climate change regulations. One of them is the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which is designed to make sure that non-EU-based businesses that sell into the EU either have the same emissions requirements or pay heavier import tariffs. This insures that foreign businesses do not undercut EU-based businesses on price, as domestic entities have additional costs because of their climate commitments.[7]
- Parliament also adopted the reform of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) and the Social Climate Fund. The ETS is a carbon market that forces power plants and factories to buy CO2 permits when they pollute. The reform has expanded the ETS to other industries, including ocean shipping and food production. It will also start charging for car and building emissions by 2027.
- The UK is likely to continue experiencing disruptive public sector strikes through the summer of 2023. Teachers unions have already confirmed work stoppages for April 27 and May 2 and have also agreed to further strikes on unannounced dates in June and July. Previous strikes in February and March left most UK schools non-operational. Teachers are part of a long list of striking workers—including aviation and passport workers—who are targeting the busy travel season by striking. Similar public sector strikes are occurring across Europe, particularly in France and Germany, which will make travel difficult.
- On May 28, 2023, Spain will hold municipal and regional elections. This includes voting for councilors in each municipality and electing deputies for 38 provincial councils. In addition, voters in 12 autonomous communities will choose their representatives. It is expected that the left-wing Socialist Party (PSOE) and center-right People's Party (PP) will win a plurality of the overall vote. [8]

FOOTNOTES

- [1] <https://understandingwar.org/background/ukraine-conflict-updates>
- [2] <https://meduza.io/news/2023/04/23/medvedev-prigrozil-cto-rossiya-vyydet-iz-soglasheniya-po-ukrainskomu-zernu-v-sluchae-totalnogo-zapreta-eksporta-v-rf>
- [3] <https://meduza.io/news/2023/04/25/minoborony-rf-zayavilo-ob-ugroze-prodleniya-zernovoy-sdelki-iz-za-atak-bespilotnikov-v-anneksirovannom-krymu>
- [4] <https://mtu.gov.ua/news/34207.html>
- [5] <https://www.politico.eu/article/greece-katerina-sakellaropoulou-kyriakos-mitsotakis-legislative-election-confirmed-for-may-21/>
- [6] <https://www.igcplus.com/politics/governance-and-structure/rallings-thrasher-tory-losses-could-top-1000-seats-20-03-2023/>
- [7] <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/04/18/european-parliament-approves-mega-package-of-eu-climate-measures>
- [8] <https://okdiario.com/espana/pp-ganara-municipales-tres-puntos-psoe-lastrado-imagen-sanchez-10361977>



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Sahel Instability

- Jihadist violence has seen an upsurge in recent months, with dangerous consequences for civilians living across the Sahel region.
- **Mali** saw the most significant activity, with Islamic State now nearing full control of the country's northeast region.[9]
- **Burkina Faso** announced a full mobilization to bolster its armed forces. Attacks against soldiers claimed many lives and may have served to prompt a retributory attack against civilians, killing more than 150 people.
- **Togo** extended a state of emergency in its far north due to the threat of terrorist attacks.[10]
- **Nigeria** saw at least 29 people abducted at gunpoint from a village in the capital territory of Abuja.
- **Ghana** deployed 1,000 special forces members to an area close to the border with Burkina Faso.[11]

Forward Look:

- The expulsion of French and other capable militaries from certain Sahelian territories (notably Mali and Burkina Faso) in favor of Russians from the Wagner Group places higher demands on local militaries to address the terrorist threat.
- If mass mobilization proves insufficient to restore security, there are no clear alternatives for local governments to halt insecurity.
- Instability in Mali and Burkina can and will spill over into neighboring countries.

French May Day Protests

- President Emmanuel Macron's pension reform was approved by the Constitutional Council on April 14, 2023. This governmental body also declined a proposal for a national referendum on the issue.
- The reform of the retirement system was signed into law by President Macron on April 15, 2023, and will enter into force in September 2023.
- The main French labor unions have called for another round of nationwide strikes and demonstrations to take place on May 1, 2023. This action is intended to both mark International Workers' Day and protest against the government's decision to raise the retirement age.

Forward Look:

- The proposed change to the retirement system remains deeply unpopular, and it is likely that France will experience more countrywide strikes and demonstrations in May. Labor actions at refineries and ports will continue to cause supply chain disruptions.
- Even though this reform successfully passed in the legislature, France's major labor unions and activist groups have vowed to continue the fight, citing successful past actions. For instance, in 2006, nationwide protests forced Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin to revoke new labor rules that had already been written into law.[12]
- Ongoing unrest also has the potential to disrupt and delay preparations for the next Olympic Games, which are scheduled to take place in Paris from July 26 to August 11, 2024. Since the implementation of the pension reform into law, a slogan has emerged on social media: "No retirement, no Olympics" #PasDeRetraitPasDeJO.
- Of note, some anti-government groups have suggested aiming at other notable events that take place this year, in particular Roland-Garros, the Tour de France, the Rugby World Cup, and even the Cannes Film Festival.

Latin American Political Updates

- **El Salvador** eliminates taxes on tech companies in May 2023.[13]
- **Chile:** President Boric nationalizes the lithium industry.[14]
- **Argentina:** New host of U-20 World Cup from May 20-June 10, 2023, after Indonesia removed.
- May 2023: **Brazil** and **Argentina** will conduct trade with **China** in their own currencies rather than the U.S. dollar.
- **Peru:** State of emergency declared at border crossings in May 2023.

Forward Look:

- The bill proposed by President Bukele exempts companies involved in programing, artificial intelligence, cloud-related services, and tech manufacturing from paying taxes for 15 years. The bill also exempts companies from import duties on goods that they need. El Salvador will struggle to attract companies given a major skills shortage, rampant violent crime, and a struggling economy.
- President Gabriel Boric announced Chile was nationalizing its lithium industry and creating a state-owned company to help boost the economy. Chile is the world's second largest producer of lithium, which is expected to grow in importance due to its utility in advanced technologies like batteries. This could see foreign investment in Chile's lithium sector move elsewhere, particularly to Australia. Neighboring Argentina and Bolivia also have large lithium deposits, and there is a good chance those countries will make similar moves, particularly Bolivia. Chile's move could inspire other countries that possess metals needed in the energy transition and advanced technologies to seek greater control of them. Metal producers like Chile, Indonesia, and the DRC are leaving revenues on the table because they extract the metal but allow it to be processed into usable goods like computers by wealthier countries.
- Allies of China as well as their major trading partners are denting the use of the U.S. dollar in global trade. The new currency agreements however have a ceiling due to Chinese state control of its currency and while the USD will lose some of its dominance, will still remain by far the largest currency in global trade

Colombia as Regional Peace Negotiator

- Bogota, Colombia: Election-related talks between Venezuela and opposition after Easter 2023
- Peace talks between FARC dissidents and government on May 16, 2023

Forward Look:

- Colombian President Gustavo Petro is reportedly organizing a summit between the Venezuelan President and the opposition parties in May. Talks will be held in Bogota and reportedly have the approval of both sides, as well as the EU and the United States, which have been key players in other ongoing talks being held in Mexico City.
- Venezuela holds general elections in 2024, and the opposition is eager to secure electoral guarantees following credible allegations of electoral fraud in previous elections. The Mexico City talks have resulted in some concessions, but they have been insufficient in general. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is as secure in his leadership as he has been in years and is unlikely to concede anything that threatens his electoral victory. However, his position will be vulnerable if the Venezuelan economy is under international sanctions; he may be willing to make election guarantees in exchange for the lifting of sanctions on Venezuelan oil production, especially as the opposition is fragmented and poses little risk to him even under fair elections.

FOOTNOTES

[9] <https://news.un.org/fr/story/2023/04/1134517>

[10] <https://fr.africanews.com/2023/04/07/le-togo-prolonge-letat-durgence-de-12-mois-dans-la-region-des-savanes/>

[11] <https://www.adiac-congo.com/content/ghana-le-debordement-djihadiste-venu-du-sahel-redoute-travers-le-pays-147477>

[12] <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2023/03/23/the-trouble-with-emmanuel-macrons-pension-victory>

[13] <https://www.dtf.cl/empresas/mineria/boric-anuncia-cinco-ejes-de-la-estrategia-nacional-del-litio-estado>



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Africa Political Developments

- **South Africa's** energy shortages expected to worsen from June–September 2023 during demand surge
- **Kenya:** Opposition party to resume protests in Nairobi on May 2, 2023[15]

Forward Look:

- Supply shortages affecting South Africa's state-owned energy provider, Eskom, have resulted in hours-long daily nationwide power cuts for residents.[16] The energy shortages are expected to worsen, particularly in the winter months from June–September 2023 due to higher energy demand coupled with Eskom's limited supply. South Africa primarily relies on coal to produce energy, but officials have been investing more in sustainable energy resources to meet demands. However, sustainable energy investments have not offset the supply deficit, and privatization efforts have stalled. President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that Eskom may delay the decommissioning of more than 12 coal power plants and invest in furthering the lifespan of existing coal-powered energy to limit the intensity of the anticipated power cuts in the coming winter months when demand is highest. [17]

Sudan's Possible Civil War Could Destabilize Entire Region

- Despite an Eid ceasefire, fighting is expected to continue in May 2023.
- A major diplomatic initiative to resolve the crisis is highly likely.
- Sudan is of strategic interest globally; expect political and possible military intervention from world powers.

Forward Look:

- Since April 15, there has been near-constant urban warfare between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia and the military, whose leaders are the two most powerful men in the country. There is a high risk of a civil war with both groups heavily armed. Normal operations are impossible to perform in Sudan, which is not uncommon; the country has seen two coups since 2019 and has been under international sanctions for decades. However, a continued conflict will likely harm the entire region, as Sudan shares lengthy borders with two of Africa's most advanced economies, Ethiopia and Egypt—which are also major population centers. A refugee crisis from Sudan could destabilize the entire region. There are also numerous outside players in the conflict as Sudan's population is expected to surge in the coming decades, and the country has trade potential through the Port of Sudan. The United States had been hoping to use a possible democratic transition to gain ground in the country. Egypt is also a long-term ally of the military rulers, while Saudi Arabia has links with both the military and the RSF. Russia and the UAE reportedly have close ties with the RSF; however, all sides would prefer a peace agreement instead of continued fighting. An agreement will likely require continued power-sharing between the two sides, which allows both to maintain valuable revenue streams and protection from legal accountability. The alternative is total defeat of one of the two sides. This will make a more formal transition to civilian democracy difficult, but it could halt the fighting. An agreement is unlikely without diplomatic pressure from the major competing powers.
- Tentative peace talks led by Gulf states and the United States are set May in Juba, South Sudan.[18]

China Labor Day Long Weekend (4/29–5/3)

- China to launch more trains for holiday rush
- Ends PCR testing on arrival to boost tourism both ways from April 29, 2023
- Outbound travel at three-year high while flight capacity remains low

Forward Look:

- Golden Week in China, where it is now referred to by some as Labor Day Long Weekend, is key to Chinese and global economic recovery.
- At least 10 times as many passengers are expected to travel in China this Golden Week compared to 2022 when there were only nine million passengers; in 2019 it was 170 million. Removing PCR testing requirements for inbound travellers just before the start of the holiday is key to increasing international flights into China.[19]
- China's economy is set to be one of the few that will grow significantly in 2023. However, growth to the level that will offset the global economic decline is unlikely. External demand for goods produced in China is likely to remain weak. Western nations are trying to limit business to China, and its central banks are similarly trying to reduce overall demand. Other key drivers of the Chinese economy—like the property sector, which accounts for much of the revenues for small and medium-sized jurisdictions—is likely to grow marginally. Therefore, the third pillar of the Chinese economy, domestic consumption, is similarly only going to grow modestly. Taken together, this will also limit the Chinese state's ability to stimulate the economy.

Thailand Elections

- Thailand holds general elections on May 14, 2023.[20]
- Incumbent PM Prayuth Chan-ocha trails opposition leader Paetongtarn Shinawatra.
- The large protest movement of 2020–2021 is likely to re-emerge, which could see a military crackdown.
- Expect more promises of economic stimulus by candidates. The ruling party is planning a payout to all farmers, while Shinawatra is planning a one-time stimulus to young adults.

Forward Look:

- On May 14, 2023, Thailand will hold general elections to determine the 500 members of the lower house as well as the prime minister. Thailand experienced four waves of anti-government protests from 2020 to 2021 linked to the anti-democratic policies of Prime Minister Prayuth, who came to power in a coup years earlier. PM Prayuth is trailing in the polls behind Paetongtarn Shinawatra of the opposition Pheu Thai Party (PTP). Thailand's military has historically played a role in politics and has overturned or staged coups when they feel their influence has been diminished. That could again occur after this election, as the Thai constitution gives the military control of government formation.
- The 2020–2021 pro-democracy protest movement calling for the end of the monarchy and a reduced political role for the military is likely to resurface, possibly accompanied by a return of a military crackdown on protests. Protests will likely be largest in the capital Bangkok but are also expected to be sizeable in other urban centers.

FOOTNOTES

[15] <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/kenya-opposition-says-it-will-resume-protests-may-2-2023-04-24/>

[16] <https://www.biznews.com/energy/2023/04/24/south-africa-winter-stage-11-loadshedding>

[17] <https://abcnews.go.com/international/wireStory/blackout-beset-south-africa-delay-closing-coal-stations-98806910>

[18] <https://www.rfi.fr/en/middle-east/20230427-renewed-air-strikes-rock-sudan-truce>

[19] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-04-23/busy-skies-over-china-in-golden-week-could-boost-crude-oil-prices>

[20] <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/06/thailand-upcoming-election>



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Asia-Pacific Updates

- **Pakistan:** Social unrest averted as elections set for May 14, 2023[21]
- **India:** Karnataka state legislative assembly elections on May 10, 2023, with results announced on May 13
- **China** announces stimulus measures to support trade sector amid decreasing global demand in May 2023
- **South Korea:** Six U.S. advanced technology firms announce plan to invest USD 1.9 Billion
- **China** to amend anti-espionage law to crack down on foreign spies in May 2024[22]

> Forward Look:

- The Supreme Court sided with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party of former Prime Minister Imran Khan against the government of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, ordering provincial elections in Punjab province to be set for May 14, 2023. The government postponed the April 30 elections until October 8, when general elections are due, over security concerns. However, the Supreme Court sided with PTI, saying that the constitution states that provincial elections must be held within 90 days of the dissolution of parliament.
- The Supreme Court decision is a victory for Khan, as he had pushed his PTI members in both Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces to dissolve local parliaments back in January in order to usher in early elections that would likely be won by the PTI. The national government, which worked to oust Khan as PM back in April 2022, likely wanted to postpone the elections to avoid boosting Khan's power and popularity ahead of the general elections. The Supreme Court decision will likely avoid short-term social unrest in Pakistan, as the PTI will not go ahead with protests. However, protests and campaigning ahead of the May 14 elections could turn violent. Also, the general elections will likely trigger bouts of social unrest, as the courts still need to decide Khan's eligibility to run. Khan is currently ineligible and was then shot at during a large protest against the ruling that made him ineligible. Expect protests if Khan is not allowed to run. There are also continued rumors that the government may postpone general elections as well.
- In Karnataka, campaign rallies are likely in large population centers, including the state capital of Bengaluru, in the lead-up to the poll. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be appearing at numerous rallies, which could swell their turnout and spur increased security.
- Karnataka is the only southern state controlled by Prime Minister Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP will be looking to expand its legislative majority, while the rival Indian National Congress and Janata Dal Secular parties hope to flip the state to their control. Violent unrest around the election is unlikely but cannot be ruled out.
- The anti-espionage law is considered China's most potent tool to crack down on external interference. The latest revision lists cyberattacks as an act of espionage for the first time and includes intrusions, interference, control, and destruction by foreign spies as espionage activities. In practice, the changes will increase administrative costs and make foreign individuals and businesses subject to stricter scrutiny.

Israel Protests

- During the Knesset's Passover recess (April 2-30), Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a number of statements seemingly intended to placate those opposed to his government's proposed judicial overhaul, including an assurance that he does not support changes allowing Parliament the ability to override the decisions of the Supreme Court, a central part of the original proposal. Netanyahu also claimed the government will not "immediately resume" its attempts to pass the reform package in the Knesset's new session.[23] Despite these pledges, anti-government protests continued over the past several weeks, although on a somewhat smaller scale.

> Forward Look:

- Sustained opposition demonstrations, which appear entrenched for the medium term, indicate a lack of trust in Netanyahu's stated intentions to moderate the reforms. This skepticism has likely been strengthened by the Prime Minister's reported backing of a "Million Person Rally" held in Jerusalem on April 27, 2023, in support of the overhaul.[24]
- Netanyahu's government continues to risk collapse, as it remains unclear how he will retain support from the far-right-wing members of his coalition who are most in favor of the reforms while simultaneously appeasing the majority of the country that remains opposed to the overhaul.

G7 Summit

- On May 19-21, 2023, the G7 Summit will be held in Hiroshima, Japan. During this time, leaders such as Fumio Kishida (Japan), Giorgia Meloni (Italy), Justin Trudeau (Canada), Emmanuel Macron (France), Joe Biden (United States), Rishi Sunak (United Kingdom), and Olaf Scholz (Germany) will gather to discuss the world's economy, regional affairs, and global problems.[25]
- Recently, a suspect was arrested for throwing an explosive device near Japanese Prime Minister Kishida. Shortly after this event, Kishida promptly announced that Japan would review its security measures to ensure foreign guests' safety for the G7 summit.

> Forward Look:

- Due to the recent attempted attack on Kishida and last year's assassination of former PM Shinzo Abe, expect an increase in physical security measure for G7 guests in the Hiroshima area. Due to the G7 Summit, traffic restrictions of local streets and the expressway will be implemented around Hiroshima Airport and Hiroshima City. Delays in departures and arrivals of commercial scheduled flights at Hiroshima Airport are expected.
- Leading up to the summit, the United States proposed that G7 countries ban all exports to Russia, but the EU and Japan declined this motion. It is possible that updated policies on sanctions against Russia will be made during this summit.
- G7 member will further voice their opposition against China's attempt to change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.

FOOTNOTES

- [21] <https://www.dawn.com/news/1745666/sc-to-announce-all-important-verdict-on-pti-petition-challenging-delay-in-punjab-polls-tomorrow>
- [22] <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/China-s-planned-changes-to-espionage-law-alarm-foreign-businesses>
- [23] <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/04/16/benjamin-netanyahu-israel-judiciary-00092225>
- [24] <https://www.timesofisrael.com/pm-drums-up-support-for-right-wing-million-person-rally-but-wont-take-part-report/>
- [25] <https://www.g7hiroshima.go.jp/en/>



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Turkey Election

- Turkey's national presidential and parliamentary election remains on track for May 14, 2023. Most polls show main opposition presidential candidate Kemal Kilicdaroglu with a slight lead over incumbent President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The election will likely go to a runoff if a pair of minor-party candidates attract enough votes to prevent either Kilicdaroglu or Erdogan from reaching 50 percent.[26]
- Last week, Turkish authorities arrested over 100 individuals on suspicion of collaborating with the insurgent Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which the government has been fighting for decades. The main Kurdish political party, the HDP, has tacitly endorsed Kilicdaroglu for the presidency.[27]

Forward Look:

- No matter who wins the presidency, Turkey is expected to move towards more orthodox economic policies in the election's aftermath. This would likely be strengthened by a Kilicdaroglu victory.[28]
- A Kilicdaroglu victory would also bring a more West-friendly foreign policy, though he may continue to leverage Turkey's military to intervene in regional conflicts as President Erdogan has done.[29]
- Erdogan may escalate efforts to intimidate political opponents and inflame ethnic divisions in the lead-up to the election. Kurdish organizations and critics with large followings are particularly susceptible to such repression.
- Turkey's normally-fractured opposition has united behind Kilicdaroglu, but there is no guarantee it will remain united during a Kilicdaroglu presidency. If President Erdogan's AKP party loses its parliamentary majority, the opposition may have difficulty forming a coalition or agreeing on legislative measures.
- Violence surrounding the election cannot be ruled out, especially if a runoff is held.

ABOUT ZEROFOX

ZeroFox (Nasdaq: ZFOX), an enterprise software-as-a-service leader in external cybersecurity, has redefined security outside the corporate perimeter on the internet, where businesses operate and threat actors thrive. The ZeroFox platform combines advanced AI analytics, digital risk and privacy protection, full-spectrum threat intelligence, and a robust portfolio of breach, incident, and takedown response capabilities to expose and disrupt phishing and fraud campaigns, botnet exposures, credential theft, impersonations, data breaches, and physical threats that target your brands, domains, people, and assets. Join thousands of customers—including some of the largest public-sector organizations as well as finance, media, technology, and retail companies—to stay ahead of adversaries and address the entire lifecycle of external cyber risks.

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Cyber Updates

- Iranian hackers targeting U.S. critical infrastructure
- Japan's National Police Agency and the Cyber Security Center of the Cabinet Secretariat issue reminder to Japanese businesses to prepare for cyberattacks during Golden Week (April 29, - May 5, 2023)
- Switzerland: Hackers attack major newspaper
- Russian hackers linked to attacks on EU and NATO ahead of Key NATO summit in July 2023
- Pro-Russia cyber threat actors target the European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation
- China tip-off system to remove online illegal political content
- Russia claims just 1 percent of disinformation accounts are detected
- China to require security assessment for AI tools similar to ChatGPT[30]

APPENDIX: Traffic Light Protocol for Information Dissemination

TLP: RED

HOW IT IS 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.

HOW IT IS SHARED

Recipients may NOT share **TLP: RED** with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it is originally disclosed.

TLP: AMBER

HOW IT IS USED

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 IT IS SHARED

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.

TLP: GREEN

HOW IT IS 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.

HOW IT IS SHARED

Recipients may share **TLP: GREEN** information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community but not via publicly accessible channels.

TLP: CLEAR

HOW IT IS USED

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 IT IS SHARED

Recipients may share **TLP: CLEAR** information without restriction, subject to copyright controls.

FOOTNOTES

[25] [hXXps://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/breakaway-candidate-could-give-erdogan-lifeline-tight-turkey-election-2023-04-04/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/breakaway-candidate-could-give-erdogan-lifeline-tight-turkey-election-2023-04-04/)

[26] [hXXps://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65385119](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65385119)

[27] [hXXps://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/foreign-investors-set-sights-turkey-after-elections-2023-04-19/](https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/foreign-investors-set-sights-turkey-after-elections-2023-04-19/)

[28] [hXXps://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/state-policies-on-foreign-ties-security-will-be-maintained-chp-leader-182421](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/state-policies-on-foreign-ties-security-will-be-maintained-chp-leader-182421)

[29] [hXXps://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3216691/chinas-internet-watchdog-proposes-rules-security-assessment-ai-tools-similar-chatgpt](https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3216691/chinas-internet-watchdog-proposes-rules-security-assessment-ai-tools-similar-chatgpt)

