



Remote Violence

What is remote violence?

'Remote violence' refers to events in which the tool for engaging in conflict did not require the physical presence of the perpetrator. These include bombings, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks, mortar and missile attacks, etc. In events classified as 'Remote violence', a spatially removed group determines the time, place and victims of the attack. Remote violence can be waged on both armed agents (e.g. an active rebel group; a military garrison) or on civilians (e.g. a roadside bombing).

This definition breaks down into a few key factors:

- There needs to be significant spatial difference between the perpetrator of the violence and the area of attack. The perpetrator must not be close enough to be harmed by the attack. If the attackers remain in close proximity to the target while the attack is being carried out, then it cannot be coded as remote violence.
- The use of 'Remote violence' needs to be the sole method of attack within the individual event. If a bomb, aerial strike or mortar attack is used as part of a battle or close proximity violence (small-arms, guns, bladed or blunt weapons) involving the same actors, date and location, then the event cannot be coded as remote violence.
- The attack needs to actually be executed. Should a bomb/missile/mortar be defused or fail to detonate/launch, then the event is counted as a 'Strategic development'.
- If fatalities result from a remote attack, then a second actor must be included. If a bombing is targeted towards a position of an armed, organized group, this group is the second actor. However, if civilians are also hurt, they should be listed under "associated/allied actor 2" column and the joint fatalities recorded.
- In cases where a neighbourhood or town is bombed but where the perpetrator had a vague assessment of enemy control, and civilian fatalities are the only ones recorded, civilians are the second actor, and the militant group can be the "associated/allied actor 2". This should be acknowledged in the notes.

Below is a list of examples of 'Remote violence':

1. *A child was killed by a regime landmine in the vicinity of Shiha village.*

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Remote violence	Military Forces of		1	Civilians (Syria)		7	17



	Syria (2000-)						
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2. A storage tank in the southern part of the Libyan oil port of Al-Sidrah caught fire and exploded after that forces loyal to Maj-Gen Khalifah Haftar carried out air strikes on Al-Sidrah and Bin Jawad using cluster bombs. No casualties reported.

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Remote violence	Military Forces of Libya (2011-)		1			0	10

3. Ansar Dine has claimed a rocket attack on a joint-MINUSMA/Operation Barkhane (French) base. No casualties were reported.

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Remote violence	Ansar Dine		2	MINUSMA: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (2013-)		8	28

In none of the examples above are the actors in close proximity or directly engaging each other with close range attacks. In the last two examples there were no casualties, however the attacks were successfully executed (the rocket successfully fired, the airstrike was successfully launched and the mines detonated) meaning that the event is 'Remote violence'. This is because non-fatal instances of remote violence often serve a purpose such as political intimidation, the tactical destruction of infrastructure or highlighting the inability of certain political agents to provide security.

What is not 'Remote violence'?

The critical criterion of defining remote violence is the physical presence of the perpetrator. This means that events involving explosives, such as grenades or petrol bombs, are excluded. The below example would, therefore, not count as 'Remote violence':



1. *Rioters burnt tyres and hurled petrol bombs at an armored personnel carrier during a demonstration in the village of Eker. Regime forces used stun grenades as well as tear gas to break up the protest.*

In the above event, the rioters using the petrol bombs are in close proximity to their opponents, the police. As a result, the event would be coded as a riot.

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Riots/Protests	Rioters (Bahrain)		5	Police Forces of Bahrain (1999-)		1	15

This also means that suicide attacks are also excluded. Attacks involving bombs stored upon the person or car bombs which detonate when the driver is still inside cannot be counted as remote violence.

1. *State of Sinai operatives drove a car laden with explosives into central Cairo. The car failed to stop at a check point at which point military personnel fired upon the vehicle, prompting the occupant to detonate the explosives.*

In this example, the bomber was not removed from the area of the bomb attack. Furthermore, both the police were close enough to the bomber to shoot at him. The bomber reacted to being shot at by detonating the explosives, making the event a direct engagement. The event would be coded as a battle:

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Battle-No change of territory	State of Sinai		3	Police Forces of Egypt (2011-)		1	13

Events in which bombs, IEDs, shells, etc. are defused or fail to detonate are coded as 'Strategic development'. For example:

2. *Two bombs were placed near the homes of two intelligence officers in Sanaa but were defused by the Yemeni army before exploding. A group calling itself "Sympathizers of the al-Qaeda Organization" has claimed responsibility.*



Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter 1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter 2	Interaction
Strategic development	Sympathizers of Al-Qaeda		3	Police Forces of Yemen (1990-)		1	13

The presence of technologies that are associated with remote violence does not necessarily mean that the event should be coded as remote violence. Rockets, fighter jets, bombs, mines and artillery can all be used within the context of a pitched battle. Below is an example:

- Puntland forces and al Shabaab fighters clashed in Madashon near Galgala (58km SW of Bosasso) in the afternoon of 27/12. The two sides reportedly engaged in a fierce fighting. Reports indicate that US war planes took part in the offensive by bombing Al Shabaab positions during the offensive by Puntland forces.*

In this example, a plane is conducting a bombing run as part of a larger offensive involving battle tactics. Both belligerents in the battle are physically present, although one has air support. The event would be coded as:

Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Battle-No change of territory	Military Forces of Puntland (1998-)	Military Forces of the United States	1	Al Shabaab		2	12

Another example would be:

- Civilians were killed in Eastern DRC near the town of Beni in a landmine attack by ADF-NALU. The militants uprooted a commercial bus with a landmine and then killed the survivors with small arms fire.*

Again, here a technology that is often associated with remote violence is used as a tool to engage in close proximity violence against civilians. Both of the relevant actors are physically present at the scene of the event. The event would be coded as:



Event Type	Actor 1	Ally Actor 1	Inter1	Actor 2	Ally Actor 2	Inter2	Interaction
Violence against civilians	ADF-NALU: Allied Democratic Forces- National Army for the Liberation of Uganda		2	Civilians (Democratic Republic of Congo)		7	27