



PRESS RELEASE: ACLED Expands Coverage to Central Asia and the Caucasus

24 October 2019: The [Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) is pleased to announce the expansion of real-time coverage to Central Asia and the Caucasus. The new [data](#) span eight countries — Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan — and add nearly 17,000 political violence and protest events to the ACLED dataset. Coverage extends from 2018 to the present, including conflict along the Azerbaijan-Armenia border, state repression in Kazakhstan, the 2018 Armenian Revolution, and more.

Political Violence and Protest in the Caucasus and Central Asia

- From 1 January 2018 through 19 October 2019, ACLED records nearly 17,000 political violence and protest events in the region
 - More than 14,300 are organized political violence events (battles, explosions/remote violence, and violence against civilians)
 - Most of these events are battles, particularly armed clashes on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia involving state forces
 - Nearly 2,500 are demonstration events
 - The vast majority of these events are peaceful protests without intervention
- Political violence is linked to over 230 reported fatalities in the region since the start of 2018
 - Nearly half are recorded in Tajikistan, where over 110 fatalities have been reported in connection with violence against civilians and state clashes with rioters
 - Despite the high battle count in the region, fatalities are low. Demonstrations and violence against civilians have resulted in almost twice as many reported deaths
- Overall, political violence and protest activity has decreased from the start of 2018 through late 2019
 - This decrease is largely due to a drop in battles, stemming primarily from a decline in skirmishes reported in the contested territory between Azerbaijan and Armenia (*see In Focus section below*)
 - Demonstration activity has fluctuated throughout this period, with a spike during the Armenian revolution in April-September 2018 before a region-wide peak in September 2019
 - ACLED records 176 events in September 2019, rising from 101 events in August, due in large part to a wave of anti-China protests in Kazakhstan

In Focus: Azerbaijan-Artsakh-Armenia Border Clashes

Since 1991, Azerbaijan has fought a border conflict with the breakaway Republic of Artsakh (also known as Nagorno-Karabakh), which is supported by Armenia. Daily violations of the 1994 ceasefire agreement are reported along the entrenched frontlines, which have remained static since the beginning of ACLED's coverage in 2018. Following the 2018 Armenian Revolution and the start of reconciliatory talks between the Azerbaijani government and the new Armenian government, the average number of weekly clashes has dropped to nearly 100 events.

- ACLED records approximately 14,000 violent events in the border region since 2018
- Starting in late September 2018 — with the beginning of reconciliatory talks, which were made possible with the government change in Armenia after the revolution — the number of events dropped significantly, from an average of about 200 per week to an average of approximately 100 per week
 - The majority of events are battles, with roughly 1% consisting of explosions/remote violence events
 - Border clashes mainly involve small arms and heavy machine gun fire resulting in few reported fatalities



In Focus: Protests in Kazakhstan

In February 2019, a spike in women-led protests calling for better living conditions led to the resignation of Kazakhstan's cabinet. While the number of protest events decreased in the following months, the resignation of longtime authoritarian ruler Nursultan Nazarbayev in March revived demonstrations after the election of his handpicked successor, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in June. Protest activity steadily increased throughout the summer, with nearly double the number of protest events recorded in July compared to February. The state crackdown on demonstrations resulted in public outcry, forcing the new government to allow peaceful protests in August. In the weeks since, protest activity has skyrocketed. In September, the country was roiled by a wave of mass protests demanding the reduction of Chinese involvement in Kazakhstan, and action against China's repression of minorities in Xinjiang.

- ACLED records nearly 200 demonstration events from February-September 2019, with the number of protest events rising from just four in April to 60 in September
 - Over the eight months prior to this increase, just over 30 protest and riot events were reported
- Demonstration events are recorded in nearly 25 locations across Kazakhstan since February, though concentrated in Nur-Sultan, the capital, and Almaty, the largest city in the country
- A majority of these demonstration events were peaceful protests, yet more than 50 events faced intervention by state forces

In Focus: The Armenian Revolution

In April 2018, mass protests broke out in Armenia when President Serzh Sargsyan attempted to cling to power through a series of political maneuvers that made him Prime Minister. Uniting under the leadership of Nikol Pashinyan, opposition parties and other Armenians organized demonstrations across the country demanding the Prime Minister's resignation, with more than 60 events recorded over the course of the month. Approximately 10 of these events were met with police intervention and mass arrests during the first days. Following media reports that soldiers were joining the demonstrators, police interventions ceased and protests continued peacefully through to Sargsyan's resignation on 23 April 2018.

- ACLED records 130 demonstration events over April-May 2018, 8% of which faced state intervention
- Nearly 20% of events were associated with the 'My Step Alliance,' an opposition civil society group
- Demonstration events occurred across 35 locations, with over 50% reported in Gyumri and Yerevan, the two largest cities in the country

A US-based 501c3 established in 2014, [ACLED](#) is the highest quality, most widely used, real-time data and analysis source on political violence and protest around the world.

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