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# Introduction

The PGI Quarterly Report assesses countries that have experienced a changing threat environment in the past three months and provides a forecast for those exposed to changing security or business risks in the next quarter.

The report is structured by region, and analyses trends. Content is produced by regional specialists from the PGI Intelligence department. The report covers:

**Threat Changes:** An assessment of a change in the quantitative risk score given to a country in the past quarter.

**Watch List:** Current or forecast trends or upcoming events that could change the threat environment within a country during the next quarter.

## PGI Risk Portal

The PGI Risk Portal provides subscribers with up-to-date information and analysis of geo-political events, security incidents and business-continuity threats worldwide. It is central to PGI's belief that Risk Management should be Intelligence led. For further information and to register and to register for your FREE 1-month trial visit <https://riskportalpgitl.com>



Incident feed | Kill former policeman in Palawan province | Yemen: Saudi-backed forces capture Hodeidah airport | Indonesia: Update: Number of missing persons from ferry accident rises to 100 | Yes

PGI Risk Portal

Time Filter  
Map Toggle  
Incident Threat  
Map Filter

THE PGI RISK PORTAL  
| YOUR GLOBAL DASHBOARD



Our coverage spans  
130+ markets and over  
70,000 incidents covering:

- Regulatory Environment
- Medical
- Maritime
- Fraud and Corruption
- Environment
- International Relations
- Civil Unrest
- Crime
- Kidnap
- Political Violence
- Infrastructure



# Lebanon

Medical, **3** to **4**

Lebanon’s historically well-regarded health care system has deteriorated significantly since 2019 due to a severe financial crisis, a surge in COVID-19 cases since August and the fallout from an explosion at Beirut port in August. The local health care system has been badly damaged by the ongoing economic crisis, which includes a 60 percent devaluation of the local currency since 2019. The government owes more than USD 1.3 bn in unpaid debts to hospitals, which has significantly impacted their ability to pay staff and purchase equipment.

As public hospitals are chronically underfunded, private hospitals account for 85 percent of the health care system and have historically underpinned the sector. However, in July the head of the Physicians Union warned that some private hospitals would have to close after persistent power cuts, lack of access to supplies and a surge in patients. That same month, Lebanon’s largest hospital, the American University of Beirut Medical Centre, fired hundreds of employees it could no longer afford to pay.

COVID-19 has put further stress on the already ailing sector, with more than 740 health care workers having contracted the virus since February. While authorities were initially able to control cases to under 100 per day until July, the number of new infections jumped after the reopening of the airport and the resumption of economic activity. Officials have confirmed more than 45,000 cases of COVID-19 and 400 associated deaths.

The 4 August Beirut port explosion has pushed Lebanon’s health care infrastructure nearer to collapse. The WHO reported that more than half of the capital’s 55 health care facilities were non-functional after the blast. COVID-19 cases rose sharply following the explosion as social distancing measures were difficult to adhere to, which has placed further strain on the sector.

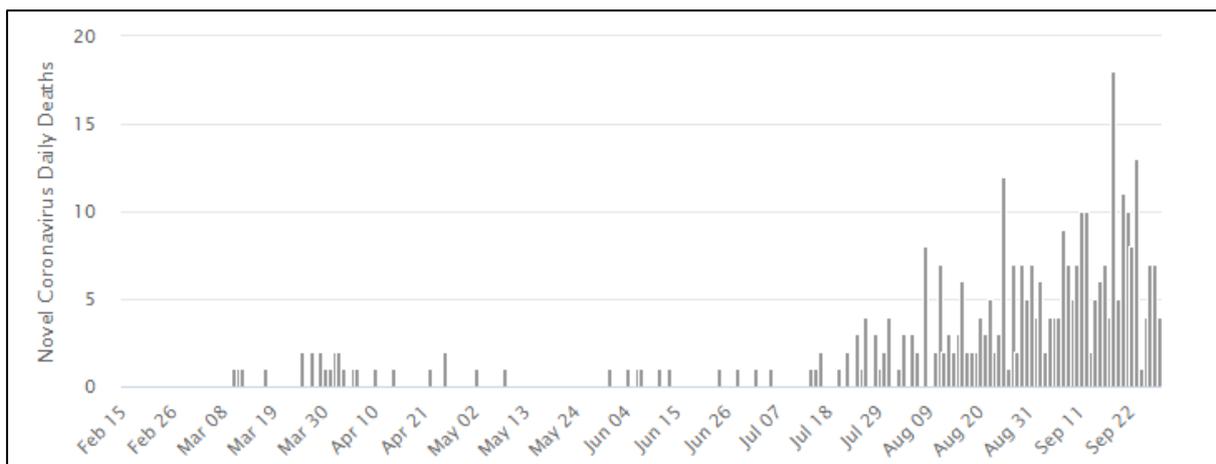


Figure 3: Daily reported COVID-19 deaths in Lebanon since February. Source: Worldometers.



# Libya

## Political Violence, 9 | Improve

Political violence in Libya has decreased in the last month as a consequence of [concurrent ceasefires announced](#) by the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and the eastern-based House of Representatives in Tobruk on 21 August.

Despite occasional rocket fire from Libyan National Army (LNA) forces affiliated with the eastern parliament towards GNA positions, there has been no major military escalation since the ceasefire was implemented. If the ceasefire holds, it may allow for an increase in trade between Libya and neighbouring countries.

The latest announcements, which come after a two-month military stalemate around the central Libyan city of Sirte, lay out basic positions for negotiations over a more substantial political agreement to end the Libyan conflict, including plans for a demilitarised zone in central Libya, calls for national elections in March 2021 and plans to lift the oil blockade imposed by the LNA in January 2020.

While there have already been moves to restart oil production at facilities that do not have a military presence, broader political negotiations are likely to be fraught. The announcement by GNA Prime Minister, Fayeze al-Sarraj, that he will step down in October is likely to generate further instability in an already fragile coalition of GNA militias and factions and make a unified negotiating position difficult. Similarly, it is not clear whether the head of the LNA, Khalifa Haftar, and his most stalwart foreign supporters, the UAE and France, will support negotiations that could marginalise him and strengthen the head of the Tobruk-based House of Representatives, Aguila Saleh. Given the multitude of actors that will need to subscribe to any political agreement, the risk of failure is relatively high and the prospect of a re-escalation in political violence in the medium term remains significant.

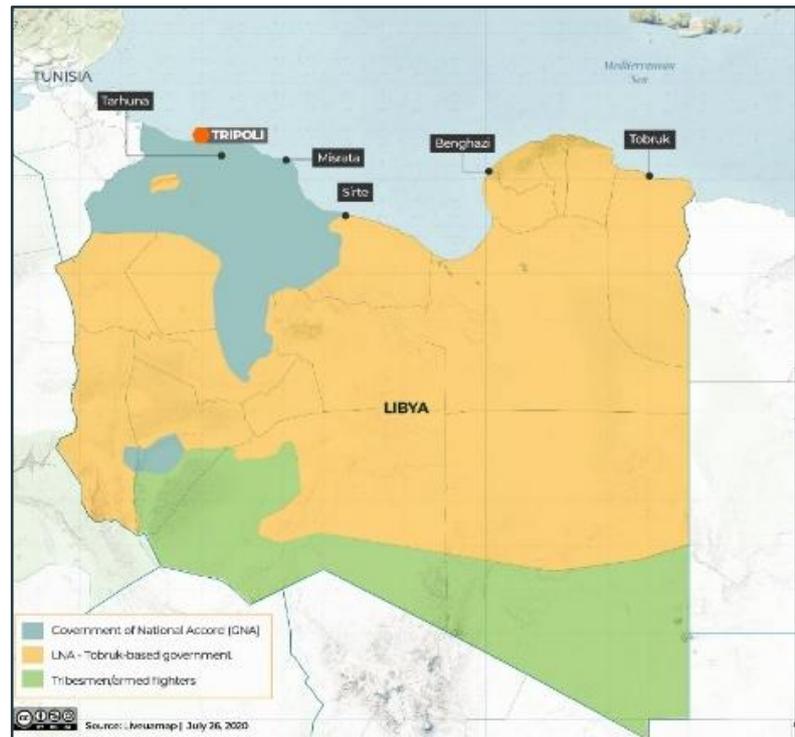


Figure 5: Territorial positions of the main parties to the Libyan conflict prior to the August ceasefire. Sources: Al Jazeera, Liveuamap.



## Belarus

Civil unrest, **4** to **7**

**An unprecedented number of people have gathered at nationwide protests since the re-election of President Alexander Lukashenko for a sixth term in a disputed 9 August vote.** Unrest driven by both political and economic grievances is likely to continue and may worsen.

**A continued government crackdown on opposition leaders and protesters will mean demonstrations continue.** Several opposition leaders have fled the country or reported being forcibly expelled. Police have arrested thousands of protesters and used violence against both demonstrators and detainees. However, neither tactic has so far impacted either the frequency or turnout of demonstrations.

**Protests are likely to continue until Lukashenko makes significant political concessions or steps down.** The president's rhetoric indicates he is unlikely to cede power in the short-term. Lukashenko has hinted at minor constitutional reform and said he has not ruled out bringing forward presidential elections. However, he has avoided setting a timeline for either and has refused to hold talks with opposition politicians. Lukashenko will attempt to hold onto power for as long as possible, provided he has the support of his security apparatus and Moscow.

**Facing EU sanctions, Lukashenko will likely continue seeking closer relations with Russia which could in turn fuel further unrest.** Moscow has been pressuring Minsk to accept deeper economic and political integration, including reviving a 1999 treaty calling for the unification of Belarus with Russia. Anti-Kremlin sentiment has played a minor role in opposition protests and in opposition-run media outlets but may grow should Moscow be perceived as intervening too heavily.

**The perceived incompetence of the government to manage the COVID-19 outbreak and economic crisis may entrench opposition to Lukashenko's rule.** Belarus lost 15.7 percent in foreign reserves in August to support the plunging of its currency amid the unrest. The economy is forecast to contract by between 4 and 6 percent by the end of the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The country's COVID-19 outbreak may worsen under a government policy that rejects implementing lockdown measures.

# Asia Snapshot



## Ratings Changes

An assessment of a change in the quantitative risk score given to a particular threat category of a country in the past quarter.

## Watch List

Current or forecast trends or upcoming events that could change the threat environment within a country during the next quarter.

**Ratings Change**

**India**

Medical 5 to 7

**Watch List**

**India**

International Relations 6 ↑

**Watch List**

**China**

International Relations 7 ↑

**Watch List**

**Thailand**

Civil Unrest 6 ↑

**Ratings Change**

**Philippines**

Medical 6 to 7

**Ratings Change**

**Indonesia**

Medical 6 to 7

**Watch List**

**Australia**

International Relations 3 ↑  
Regulatory Environment 2 ↑

## Overall risk ratings



↑ Potential deterioration  
↓ Potential improvement  
↕ Potential for either





# Australia

International Relations, 3 | Worsen

Regulatory Environment, 2 | Worsen

Australia’s International Relations and Regulatory Environment threat ratings could deteriorate in the coming quarter amid worsening relations with its largest trading partner, China. A bill intended to crack down on Beijing’s alleged efforts to influence Australian politics and gain control of critical infrastructure is expected to be passed into law by the end of 2020. The proposed legislation would enable the federal government to veto new and previously signed agreements made by local governments and public organisations with foreign states if these are assessed as being inconsistent with Australian foreign policy.

The move is widely seen as an attempt to block investments linked to China’s Belt and Road infrastructure scheme, though the new law could also affect another 130 agreements that government entities have reached with at least 30 different countries. If Canberra uses the new law to retroactively terminate any such agreements, it could encourage China, and possibly other countries, to respond with countermeasures or sanctions against Australian interests.

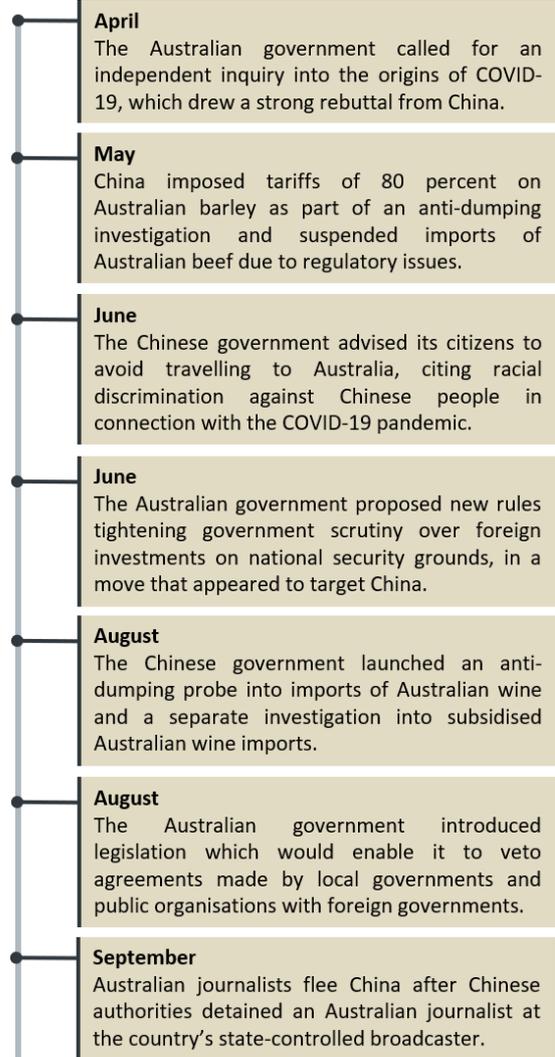


Figure 6: A timeline of Australia's deteriorating relationship with China since April 2020. Source: PGI.

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