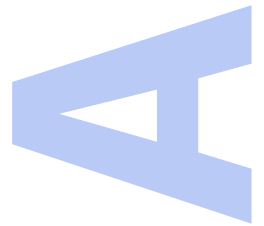


F A S T Update

Afghanistan

Semi-annual Risk Assessment
June to November 2006



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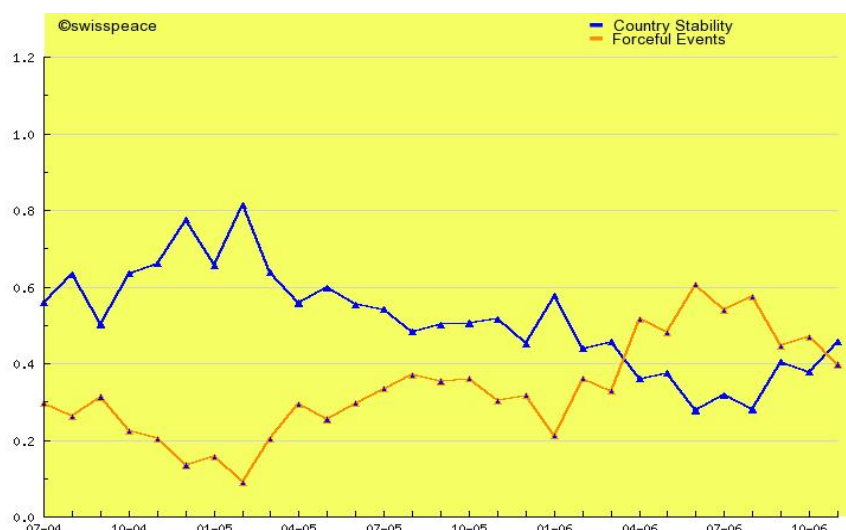
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Country Stability and Forceful Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 179

Indicator description: see appendix

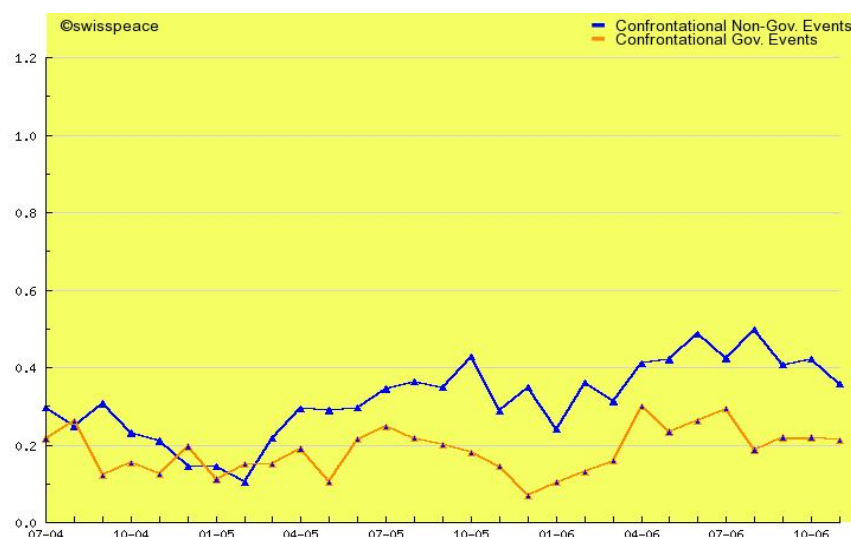
Risk Assessment:

- Over the whole year the security situation was worse than ever since the ousting of the Taliban in 2001. Within the reported period the number of Forceful Events maintained a very high level and, though they dropped significantly with the onset of the fall, the Country Stability Index hardly exceeds the number of Forceful Events. The level of the Country Stability Index was never as low in the past years as in 2006 and the Forceful Events never as manifold. That means the situation is now, in the alleged calm winter period more severe as during the active spring/summer periods during the last years.
- 2006 is characterised by the highest civilian death toll since 2001. In the course of the year more than 3.900 Afghans and 182 soldiers of the international forces died already. American soldiers killed in action account for roughly half of total, followed by Canadians with 25 percent and British with 15 percent. US Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) troops, but also British and Canadian troops of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) were almost daily engaged in battles. During NATO-led Operation Medusa in mid-September around 1.000 insurgents were allegedly killed in Kandahar province. This overall development hampered the reconstruction work and heavy use of artillery and air raids claimed an increasing number of innocent civilians. Both facts led to diminishing popular support for the Karzai government and rising anger towards the International Forces.
- Within the last six month more and more districts in the south and southeast (especially within the provinces of Helmand and Kandahar) came under at least timely or partial control of the Taliban. A strong increase in open battles and a significant rise in the size of operating units of the Taliban could be observed. This strategic change can be attributed to the shift in command from OEF to ISAF. The Taliban are testing the strength of the ISAF forces and try to drive one ISAF nation out of Afghanistan in order to win an information victory they can capitalize on in the perception of the population. Their strong push towards Kandahar fits into this strategy. NATO-led Operation Medusa was a last resort to bring relief of the strain and prevent the occupation of Kandahar.
- The War on Terror continued again to dominate the reporting period, reaching a level of intensity that in parts outclassed Iraq in regard to international soldiers killed. Between June and September approximately 5 ISAF soldiers have been killed every week, twice the level during the battles in Iraq and approaching the level faced by the Soviet forces during their occupation of Afghanistan. In addition to severe ground battles/combat the intensity of fighting in Afghanistan is visible in the number of close-air support operations in the last months. In November between 40 and 60 operations were conducted per

day on average. This compares to a significantly lower number in Iraq and a planned 200 operations by the NATO Response Force in case of a symmetrical warfare.

- The insurgents launched on average more than 20 attacks/day but the number dropped in November to below 10/day except the last week of the month. In late November, in the run-up to the NATO-summit in Riga (27/28 November), 8 suicide attacks were conducted within one week accompanied by a new surge of attacks. One specific deadly suicide attack occurred in Orgun district in Paktia, where 15 people were killed and 25 injured. Among the 80 conducted or attempted suicide attacks the following were specifically deadly: On 3 August 21 people were killed on a market in Panjwai district (Kandahar). In Lashkar Gah (Helmand) 17 died and 47 were injured on 28 August. On the 8 September 16 people including 2 US soldiers were killed and more than 30 injured near the US embassy in Kabul, and in Lashkar Gah 18 Afghans were killed on 26 September. On 30 September 12 people were killed and 42 injured in front of the Ministry of Interior in Kabul.
- Government officials have been increasingly targeted by this kind of violence. Hakim Taniwal, the governor of Paktia province in eastern Afghanistan was killed along with two others by a suicide attack on 10 September. At his funeral, which was attended by several cabinet ministers, another suicide bomber blew himself up, killing six police men. Safia Ama Jan, head of the Department of Woman's Affairs was shot dead in Kandahar on 25 September and on 21 November the husband of a female member of the Provincial Council in Kandahar was killed. Especially government officials and members of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) were attacked. Juma Khanm, the district chief in Nimroz province, was gunned down on 31 August, in Nangahar the chief of Khogani district as well as the police commander and his intelligence chief were killed on 9 October. On 2 November Mohammad Sediq, police chief of Adraskan district of Herat was killed. Attacks on ANA/ANP nearly quadrupled compared to 2005.
- Furthermore, also NGOs and international personnel were increasingly targeted. The leadership of the Taliban published a rulebook (Layeha) that states in regard to NGOs: "The NGOs that came in the country under the infidel's government are just like of the government. They came here under the slogan of helping the people but in fact they are part of this regime. That's why their every activity will be banned, whether it is building a road, bridge, clinic, school or madrassa or anything else. If a school matches these conditions it should be burned."
- The insurgents clamp down merciless against perceived collaborators with the Afghan government or International Forces. This procedure effectively neutralises the majority of the Afghan population. The methods used include night letter campaigns and the killing of outspoken pro-governmental elders, mullahs and teachers, a technique observable more often is the beheading of the alleged spies.
- Tensions between competing warlords again led to factional fighting. Among many small scale clashes two incidents are especially important: In August militias of Rashid Dostum and Abdul Malik, who have a long history of conflicts with each other, fought consecutive battles in Faryab. These led to the death of at least four persons and the displacement of hundreds of people. The fightings ceased only after the intervention of the government and a considerable backup of ANA, ANP and ISAF. A clash in Shindand district (Herat) on the 23 October claimed the lives of at least 32 people, among them Amanullah Khan, the commander of one of the militias involved. The other party is said to be loyal to Ismael Khan, the former governor of Herat and nowadays Minister of Water and Energy in Kabul.
- As winter conditions favor the ANA and coalition forces, the insurgents will most likely resume open attacks and refer to improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombings in urban areas. Therefore an increase of attacks in Kabul, but also in the west and north is foreseeable. Many developments and events indicate a further deterioration of the security situation for the next year. If no major changes in strategy are made key cities might come under control of the insurgents for certain times. Such a development may be accompanied by growing frustration within the population linked with uncertainty whether the international community will stay or not, rampant corruption within the government, grievances about the high number of civilian casualties and the improved situation for the insurgents in Pakistan after the peace deals in North Waziristan.

Confrontational Government and Non-Government Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 179

Indicator description: see appendix

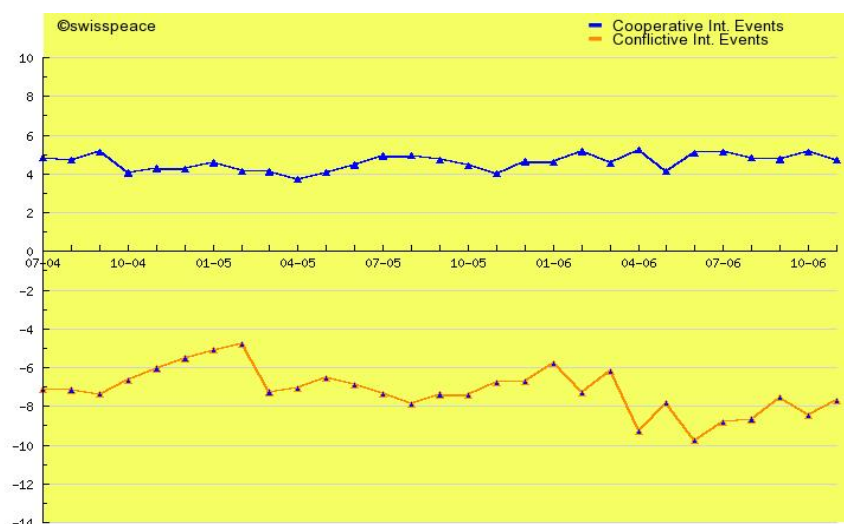
Risk Assessment:

- Both Confrontational Government and Non-Government Events maintained their distant throughout the reported period. While Confrontational Non-Governmental Events reached a new all time high during the summer months, it dropped significantly towards the end of the reported period. Anyhow, even its current level was surpassed only once in 2005. Confrontational Governmental Events corresponded on a lower level roughly with the Confrontational Non-Governmental Events. Since August it remained a constant level.
- After the encouraging reduction of area under poppy cultivation by 21 percent in 2005, the recent Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006 by the UNODC indicates an increase in opium cultivation by 59 percent, which translates into 165.000 hectares cultivated this year. This as well as the production of 6.100 tonnes of raw opium mark the highest level ever reached in Afghanistan. It accounts now for an estimated 92 percent of the global production. This is even more striking, as 15.300 hectares were eradicated in 2006 compared to only 5.000 in 2005 and drought conditions resulted in a 6 percent reduction in average yield. On 21 November, in reaction to the increased opium production the Afghan Counter Narcotics Ministry announced the creation of a development fund of 500.000 US\$ for each of the remaining six poppy free provinces. This money is meant to provide a reward to the prohibition against poppy cultivation, and it sets an example and incentive for other provinces that are not yet strong performers. This action breaks the circle of giving money to poor performers in order to encourage them to do better. Just two weeks earlier the same ministry announced aerial spraying of poppy fields as a last resort against the increasing opium production.
- The feared deadlock between administration and Parliament did not materialize in the second half of 2006. After the rejection of the hard-line conservative cleric Fazel Haidi Shinwari in May, the Parliament approved the presidential nominees for a new Supreme Court chief justice and five other judges amid calls for wide-ranging reforms to stamp out corruption and political interference in the judiciary. The new Supreme Court chief justice is the US-educated Abdul Salam Hazami, once deputy head of the commission that drew up Afghanistan's new constitution. The Parliament also approved the five candidates Karzai nominated as ministers to replace the ones rejected before by the *Wolesi Jirga* (Lower House). With Hosn Banu Ghanzanfar the Ministry for Women's Affairs is again headed by a woman. Sibghatullah Mujadidi resigned as President of the *Meshrano Jirga* (Upper House) on 12 October to protest against the appointment of "undesired people" to senior posts against his advice. Anyhow, he will continue his job as the head of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC). While the insurgents

face no problem in recruiting new fighters, some also surrender to the NRC. On 16 June more than 100 surrendered in Kandahar, on 23 August 80 in Herat, on 16 October 500 dissident's denounced violence in Kabul and on 5 November 130 more in Kabul. Giving up his former stance, President Karzai invited the Taliban leadership (including Mullah Omar) and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (head of *Hizb-i Islam*) to join the political process and offered amnesty.

- Tribal elders are increasingly incorporated in activities to provide stability and security. In addition to the agreement in Musa Qala, an initiative of tribal elders to provide security for schools is under way in Helmand. More than 20 schools that were closed before due to fear of attacks reopened in November in Sangin, Nawzad and Nad Ali district.
- Several protests sparked by the manner of commanders and warlords in Afghanistan. On 2 and 29 July, demonstrations were staged against Abdul Rab Rasul Sayaf and his commanders in response to their involvement in illegal land grabbing. While the first demonstration focused on commanders loyal to Sayaf, the second, which involved some 400 people, was against Sayaf himself. In Taloqan (Takahr) thousands went on the streets on 2 October to protest against armed commanders, and the presence and reorganization of private militias. Again, in Badakhshan 700 persons staged a protest on 20 November against commanders of that area since civilians are frequently targeted by armed clashes.
- There is growing anger within the inhabitants of Kabul about the lack of electricity. The situation may further deteriorate in the following months as the US, contrary to its usual practise, stopped the purchase of diesel supplies for this winter. It is thus likely that the insurgents will refer to the strategy of the anti-soviet war by sabotaging the supply lines to Kabul in order to fuel this anger. If this happens, the road between Jalalabad and Kabul will be in the centre of attention. In case of an implementation of the plan to spray poppy fields with pesticides next year, this, again, is very likely to spark massive and violent protests, which might gain enough strength to drive out the government from parts of the country. The new rulebook of the Taliban seems to anticipate such a development and promises to protect the property of everyone who joins them. Another potential threat lies in the possibility to alienate former members of the northern alliance due to the increased incorporation of Pashtun tribal structures into the security framework in the south. Trends to rearm private militias in the north and soaring arms prices are serious indicators to this development.

Conflictive and Cooperative International Events (average weighted)



Average number of reported events per month: 179
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- According to its past performance, the Cooperative International Events curve remained on a medium level, fluctuating only slightly. Conflictive International Events, in contrast, increased significantly during the period under review and reached the highest values ever observed in the last few years.
- The relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan remained tense during the past six months. Public accusations by the governments of the two countries concentrated on allegations against Pakistan, which was said to support or at least not to do enough against insurgents operating in Afghanistan and, against Afghanistan respectively for not abetting the Baluch insurgency. As a result of a shared meeting under the auspices of US President George Bush on 28 September, Karzai and Musharaf publicly declared their commitment to share intelligence to a greater extent. Few days later they announced the plan to hold *jirgas* on both sides of the border to address the security situation. These gatherings are expected to take place in January 2007 and to consist of up to 1600 people each, including the Afghan and the Pakistan presidents. Discord exists whether the Taliban should be invited or not. Similar dissension was seen in contradictorily statements issued by the Taliban about their intention to participate or not. In order to increase Kabul's influence in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Karzai's government has restored monthly stipends for leading tribal elders in those areas. A similar practise was stopped in 1992 after the fall of Najibullah.
- With the consecutive overtaking of control in the south of Afghanistan on 31 July and in the remaining eastern region on 5 October ISAF is now responsible for security in all Afghanistan. It numbers 31.000 soldiers while OEF, tasked with counterterrorism, still maintains 8.000 mainly US troops. The Defence Ministers of the ISAF-countries agreed on a meeting on 29 September to expand the area under ISAF-command by early October instead of end 2006 in order to facilitate more flexible force deployments. Calls for reinforcement by NATO were not met so far. Especially in the run up to the NATO summit in Riga (28/29 November), which heavily focused on Afghanistan, national caveats constricting the employability of troops led to severe disagreements. In February 2007 a US commander will take over the lead of the ISAF forces in whole Afghanistan.
- The rising number of civilian casualties during counterinsurgency operations conducted by the International Forces has led to growing tension between the Afghan Government and the International Forces. President Karzai accused ISAF not to take adequate care to avoid civilian casualties. Many civilians died during a series of offensives in Kandahar and Helmand provinces that led to the displacement of 80.000 – 90.000

people in the districts of Panjwai and Zhare Dasht. But collateral damages were reported from other regions in Afghanistan as well. Ten police officers were killed in Paktia when a US warplane mistook them as insurgents and dropped a bomb on 17 August. In Kunar 8 persons were killed in a US raid on 24 August and ten civilians died from an air strike in Tirin Kot district in Uruzgan on 10 July.

- The Pakistan government agreed to a peace accord with pro-Taliban militants in North Waziristan Agency that borders Afghanistan. A similar deal was reached in South Waziristan in April 2004. Brokered with the help of the pro-Taliban *Jamiat Uleama-e- Islam* (JUI) party and endorsed by the Taliban leadership (inter alia Mullah Dadullah), the accord resembles more a capitulation of the Pakistan state with a retreat of its troops, the release of militants and the handover of heavy weapons. This development provides greater freedom of movement to the insurgents in Afghanistan, simplifies their logistics, coordination, and communication as well as exempts fighters engaged before in operations against the Pakistan army. In spite of the fact that the agreement prohibits cross-border operations from North Waziristan, attacks in the border areas have tripled and prove exists that Pakistan fighters are involved in those.
- A Danish contingent of 100 troops pulled out of its base in Musa Qala (Uruzgan) end of August after suffering daily Taliban attacks. The Danish troops have been replaced by British forces and Afghan soldiers. On 1 October the battling British and Taliban fighters have for the first time struck a peace deal of their own in Afghanistan, although the British denied direct talks with the Taliban. Under the agreed deal both the British troops/ANA/ANP and Taliban fighters withdraw from the area after local people/tribal elders stood as guarantors to the peace arrangements. The British troops retreated on 17 October and local tribes took over responsibility for security. After the withdrawal of ISAF and governmental forces, the killing and beheading of Haji Ahmed Shah, a former chief of a neighbouring district living in Musa Qala questioned the intention of the Taliban to stick to the agreement. On 3 December an ISAF patrol was attacked by insurgents and 70-80 militants allegedly died in fierce fighting with air support called in by ISAF.
- Afghanistan's major creditors (Russia, USA, Germany) announced on the 22 July the acquittal of 10.4 billion US\$, representing 92 percent of Afghanistan's outstanding debt. A project financed by the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank to bring 150 Megawatt from Central Asia to Afghanistan via overhead transmission lines started in the summer and is expected to be finished in 2008. In the middle of November the Afghan government accepted bids of nine foreign companies to exploit one of the biggest copper reservoirs in the world, situated in Logar.
- Plans about the reestablishment of the Vice and Virtue Department led to International protests. The "Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice" unit that operated under the 1996-2001 Taliban was notorious for its ferocity and ensured strict religious rules. The Afghan government assured the public the department would not resemble the Taliban version. At the end of September a "morals and rules commission" headed by the religious ministry director Mawlawi Aizharudin of Khost province started their work in Khost without approval of the central government.
- The peace deals in Pakistan's tribal areas and in Helmand might be used by the insurgents to consolidate their control over the local population and to prepare themselves for a large-scale spring-offensive. The insurgents might exploit NATO's disagreements over the increase of forces and capitalize on the demoralization within the Afghan population, as this is seen as a lack of commitment and most likely the beginning of retreat. This perception is suitable to destabilize the whole country as other actors will start to prepare for the coming struggle for power. With the continuing insurgency and growing frustration on the Afghan government side the relations with Pakistan will remain very fragile and are likely to deteriorate further.

Appendix: Description of indicators used | Page 9

Country Stability	The Country Stability index reflects three independent factors: (i) challenges by non-government actors to the state's monopoly of force; (ii) state repression; and (iii) violence entailing physical force against persons or property. The index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability.
Cooperative International Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.
Conflictive International Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.
Confrontational Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize' and 'Force' and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a non-government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Confrontational Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize' and 'Force' and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Forceful Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that entail the use of physical force against persons or property divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.

*The IDEA cooperation-conflict scale is a general weighting scale that attaches a weight to every event. The scale has a range from -13 to +8. Event types that are regarded as cooperative have positive values, conflictive event types have negative values.

Who are we?

FAST International is the early warning program of swisspeace, based in Bern, Switzerland. The program is funded and utilized by an international consortium of development agencies consisting of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

What do we want to achieve?

FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their offices' ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST International uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the combination of methods being determined in each case by customer needs. The centerpiece of FAST International is the collection of single cooperative and conflictive events by means of a web-based software, applied by local staff using a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. The monitoring by FAST International is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing for a constant influx of information. This information is collected by FAST International's own Local Information Networks (LINs). The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators developed within the IDEA framework. Since even the most profound quantitative analysis requires interpretation, FAST International cooperates with renowned country/area experts.

What are our products?

FAST International offers different early warning products tailored to customer needs. The only standard product available to the general public is the FAST Update, which provides the reader with an overview of developments on a semi-annual basis. It consists of three to five tension barometers (graphs), displaying cooperative and conflictive developments, which are analyzed by FAST's country/area experts on the basis of specific indicators. Whenever major changes occur in one of the countries or regions under scrutiny, FAST releases Special Updates, which follow the structure of the regular FAST Updates. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy, in electronic form on the respective country page or by subscription.

Which countries do we currently monitor?

Africa:	Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia
Asia:	Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Europe:	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Russian Federation/North Caucasus region, Serbia