



## **BRIEFING**

**October 18, 2023**

### **THE RISK OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM LINKED TO THE WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS MAJOR ON A GLOBAL SCALE**

**By Claude MONIQUET, CEO of ESISC**

The war between Israel and Hamas **has already provoked numerous demonstrations and incidents around the world.**

The vast majority of these demonstrations are in support of the Palestinian cause and the incidents have targeted **Jewish communities**, but some have also targeted **Muslims** (as in the United States, where a 6-year-old boy was murdered by a man in his seventies who also seriously injured his mother).

**Two deadly attacks**, partly motivated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, took place in **France** (Arras, 13 October) and **Belgium** (Brussels, 16 October).

Based on reports from our correspondents and our contacts with various intelligence and police services, we believe that **there is a major risk of violence and terrorism spreading over the coming hours and days.**

As a reminder, **Hamas** and **Hezbollah** have issued calls for demonstrations around the world. In addition, **US President Joe Biden's visit** to Israel on Wednesday is likely to significantly increase the risk.

#### **A/ Demonstrations, riots**

Demonstrations (some of them violent) are expected to take place in many capitals and other cities across the Arab-Muslim world, mainly in the **Middle East**, but also in **North Africa** and **Asia** (including Pakistan and Indonesia).

These demonstrations will target **Israeli embassies** and **private Israeli interests** where they exist, as well as **diplomatic and consular establishments and the interests of the "West"**, mainly the **United States**, the **United Kingdom** and **France**.

**Representations of the European Union** and, to a lesser extent, of the UN and its specialised agencies, could also be targeted.

Demonstrations are also expected to take place in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and elsewhere. They will mainly target Israeli interests, but also those of the above-mentioned Western countries. In some cases, they could degenerate into clashes with the police.

## **B/ Terrorist risk**

The risk of terrorism is **becoming a major global risk** (North Africa, Middle East, Asia, North America, South America, Africa and Oceania).

**Coordinated, organized** and, above all, **individual attacks** are possible anywhere. **Hostage-taking** is also a possibility, mainly in the **Middle East** (including **Lebanon**) and **sub-Saharan Africa (Sahel)**. They could use explosives (IEDs), firearms or more rudimentary means (knives, battering rams) or take the form of suicide attacks.

These attacks are said to target **diplomatic bases, Israeli and Western interests, Jewish communities** and the **general public**.

## **C/ Our recommendations**

As a result, and until further notice, our recommendations are as follows:

- Strengthen the **security of premises** likely to be targeted in the Arab-Muslim world and in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Cancel or limit non-essential travel to the Middle East and North Africa** (mainly to Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Tunisia).
- Reinforce the **security of people present in these areas and limit internal movements to the strict minimum**; if such movements are necessary, give preference to **convoys** (if possible, under protection) or, if this is impossible, use **discretion**.

Limit or avoid **going to places where expatriates gather**.

- For **Europe, North and South America and Oceania**: exercise the utmost vigilance in the vicinity of sites that could be targeted by demonstrations and/or attacks, reinforce physical security measures (barriers, obstacles, access control, surveillance resources, etc.) avoid gatherings or exercise the utmost vigilance.

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