

# Geo-World: Conflict & Protest May

## GEOSTRATEGIC ANALYSIS

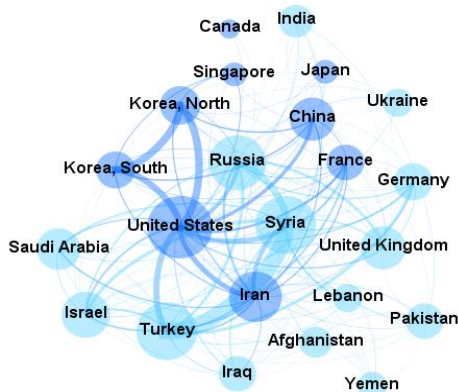
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The Trump administration decided to cancel North Korea meeting after receiving negative remarks from Pyongyang. However, diplomacy gained ground and the US President announced the Summit would be reinstated on June 12 after talks with a North Korean envoy at the White House. The US decision to withdraw from the Iran Nuclear Deal gave birth to new geopolitical uncertainties. Many electoral processes are in the spotlight. Elections in Iraq and Venezuela focused attention as the results are critical for regional issues.

North Korea Summit will be held on June 12. Iran Nuclear Deal dispute continues.

**Figure 1** Country network on news about US-Iran relationship (nodes' size means degree in the network and color modularity, edges' thickness means media coverage of countries)



Source: BBVA Research & Mapbox

### North Korea Summit was postponed to June 12

After the cancellation of North Korea Summit, there were reconciliations from North Korea and the US administration rescheduled this historic summit to June 12.

### US - Iran listed contradictory demands

US Secretary of State and Iranian Supreme Leader presented their counter demands, which harden resolution.

### Electoral processes in the spotlight in many countries

Sadrists won Iraqi elections. Elections in Venezuela led more US pressure. In the case of Colombia, there will be a second round. Turkey and Mexico are in electoral period.

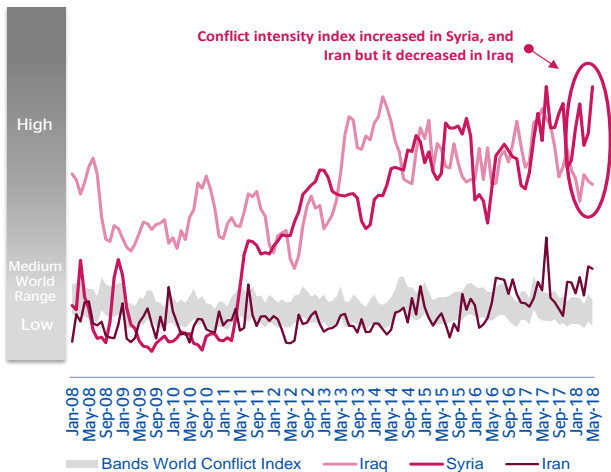
The BBVA Research World Conflict Intensity Index<sup>1</sup> decreased by second consecutive month during May. The main developments during the month were:

- **Initiations to resume the long-lasting dispute in the Korean Peninsula and to reach denuclearization at the end, faced with ups and downs during the month.** Due to negative discourses used by North Korean officials, US President Trump decided to cancel the summit between the US and North Korea. Fortunately, reconciliation followed President Trump's decision. North Korean Vice Foreign Minister stated that his country was still willing to sit down for talks with Washington. Later, the country dismantled its nuclear test site. Following the good will, President Trump said "We have been very productive talks with North Korea about **reinstating the Summit** which, if it does happen will likely remain **on the same date June 12.**" He later stated that the US delegation arrived North Korea to discuss the summit. The diplomatic crisis has been eased so far as our index points out.
- **Iran Nuclear Deal rift continued in May** after President Trump withdrew from the deal. **The US Secretary of State provided a list of demands from Tehran** in order to ink a new deal. **Those included withdrawal from Syria, freezing the missile programme and changing the course of Iranian regional policy.** Iran responded with its own list of demands from Europe saying that it would stay in the deal if oil purchase and sanction blocks could be guaranteed. Tehran also wants Europe not to interfere its foreign policies. Some European energy firms like Total and BP stated that they were considering an exit from Iranian market if no guarantees presented. **Iranian officials stated that they would decide whether to stay or exit from the deal in the coming weeks.**

1: Details about methodology can be found in the following link: [Methodology, tracking protests and conflicts.](#)

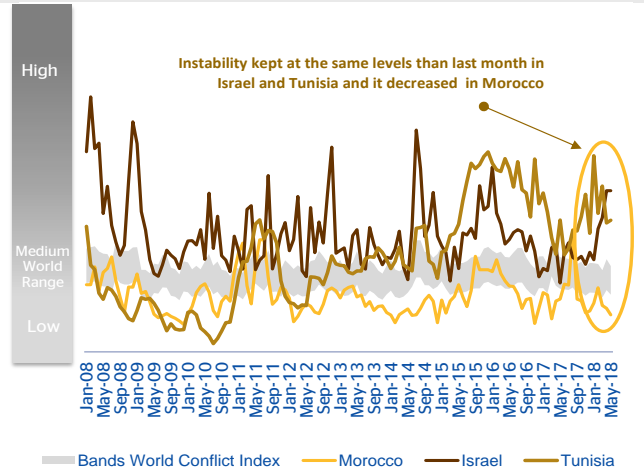
- According to Iraqi election results, Iraqi Shi'a cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's "Toward Reform" alliance won the election with 54 parliamentary seats and they initiated talks to form a government. The Iranian-backed alliance took 47 seats. Prime Minister Abadi's list earned 42 seats. Parties would need to reach 165 seats out of 329 to form a government. In Colombia, there were two candidates that will go to the second presidential round: Iván Duque and Gustavo Petro. There is a high uncertainty about the more than 5 million votes of "center" in the second round on June 17. **US pressure on Venezuela grew** after the presidential elections. Socialist leader Maduro won but his main rivals disavowed the election alleging massive irregularities. The US and Europe perceived it as illegitimate and the US decided to prohibit any purchase of debts owed to the Venezuelan government including state-owned energy company. Meanwhile, **U.S. and Turkey are close to ink a roadmap for Manbij (Syria) to supervise the area.** Military officials from India and Pakistan agreed to comply with 2003 cease-fire agreement over disputed areas. Military clashes had erupted in 2016 and many civilians and soldiers have been killed since then in the disputed areas.

**Figure 2** BBVA Research Middle East Conflict Intensity Index (Number of conflicts / Total events)



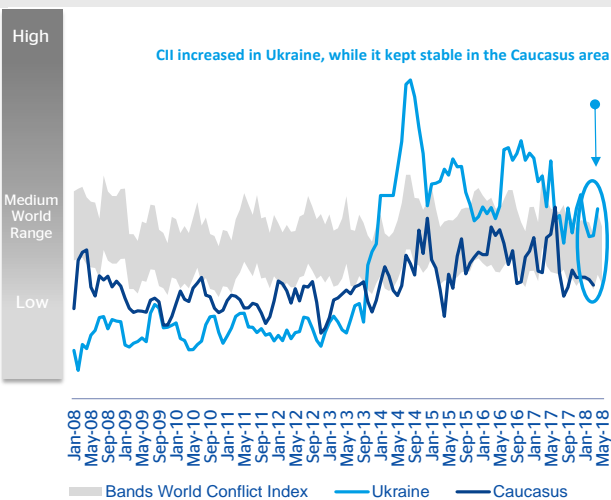
Source: [www.dgelt.org](http://www.dgelt.org) & BBVA Research

**Figure 3** BBVA Research North Africa Conflict Intensity Index (Number of conflicts / Total events)



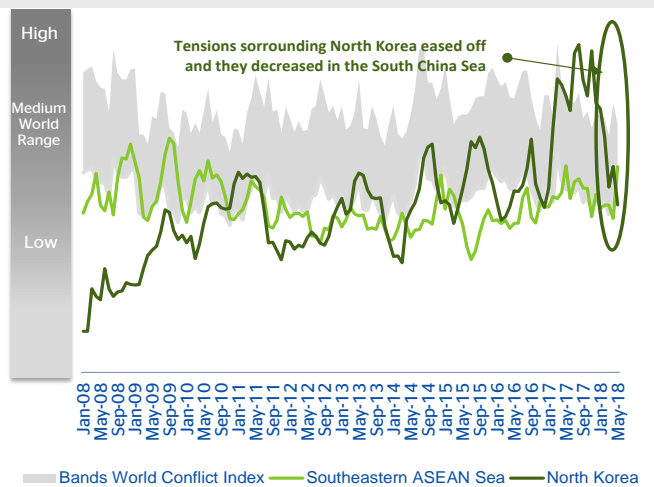
Source: [www.dgelt.org](http://www.dgelt.org) & BBVA Research

**Figure 4** BBVA Research Eastern Europe Conflict Intensity Index (Number of conflicts / Total events)



Source: [www.dgelt.org](http://www.dgelt.org) & BBVA Research

**Figure 5** BBVA Research Asia Conflict Intensity Index (Number of conflicts / Total events)

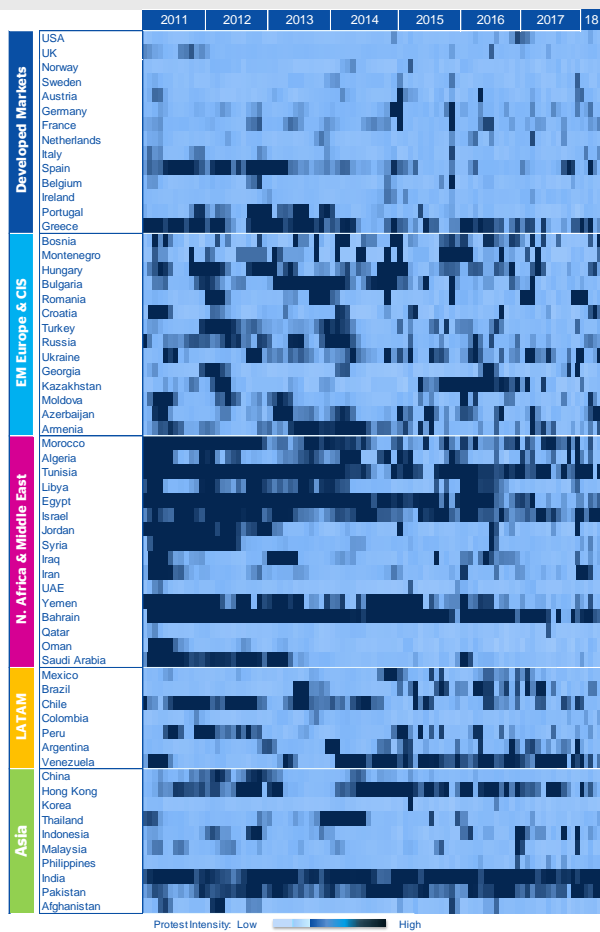


Source: [www.dgelt.org](http://www.dgelt.org) & BBVA Research

## Social unrest eased off during the month

The World Protest Index decreased during May (as shown by our BBVA Research World Protest Intensity Index<sup>2</sup>). According to the BBVA Research World Protest Intensity Map, the key takeaway facts were:

**Figure 6** BBVA Research World Protest Intensity Map Jan 2011 – May 2017 (Number of protests / Total events)



Source: [www.dgelt.org](http://www.dgelt.org) & BBVA Research

- In regional terms, social noise remained low in Europe, while tensions rose in Eastern Europe. The situation in Israel sparked tensions in the Middle East. Both in Latin America and Asia, instability kept on contained:
- In Europe, social unrest remained in France after the general strike against the labor reform. In Italy given the political situation. In Spain, social unrest seemed to ease off as well as in Greece.
- In Emerging Europe, Armenia saw massive demonstrations as the elections closed with a change of prime minister. In Ukraine, protests increased due to a journalist staging his own murder and in Bosnia over the killing of two young men. In Croatia, Montenegro and Azerbaijan, demonstrations increased during the month too.
- In North Africa and the Middle East, tensions sparked in Egypt and Israel as the clashes between the later and Hamas militants in Gaza intensify. Bahrain and Tunisia remain as regional hot spots.
- In Latin America, Venezuela and Colombia saw a rise in tensions as both underwent electoral processes this month.
- In Asia, most of countries remained calmed with India and Pakistan as the key regional hot spots. Insability in Hong Kong eased off during last months.

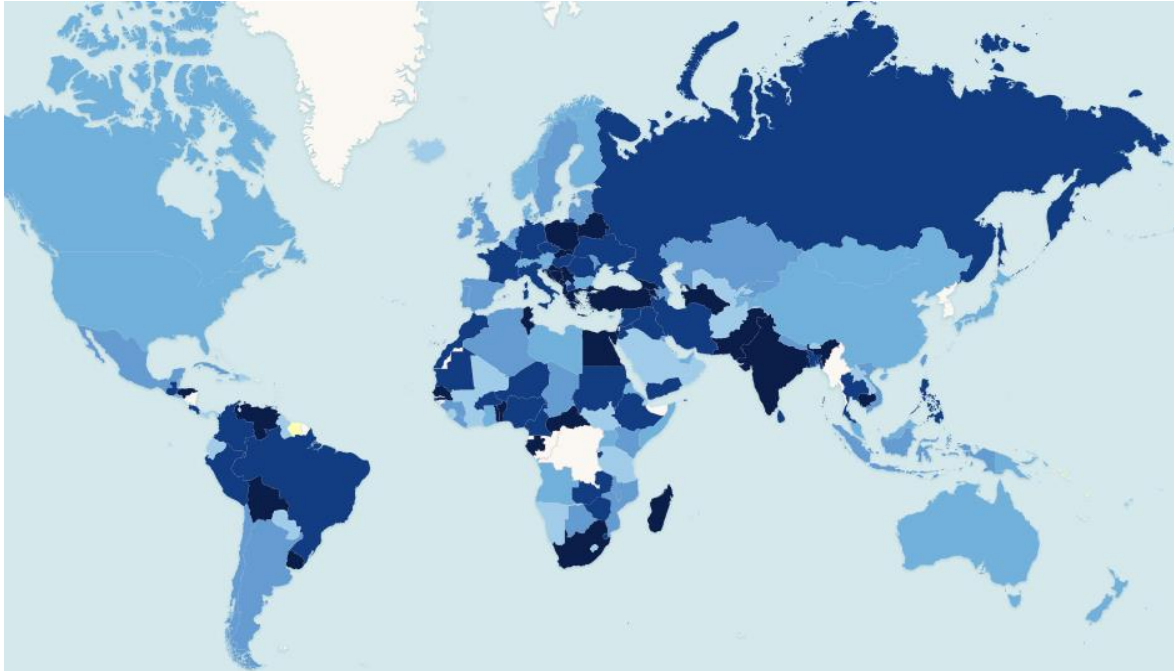
## Summary

Diplomatic efforts once gain remained successful in deescalating disputes in the Korean Peninsula. Trump administration could reinstate the Summit between the US and North Korea on its original date June 12. Meanwhile, new questions and uncertainties proliferated over the Iran nuclear deal discussions. Although European leaders are decisive to remain in the deal, US sanction decision could prevent huge firms to do business with Tehran. Elections in Iraq could define the post-ISIS era in the country with new actors. Venezuelan presidential elections triggered more US pressure.

2: Details about methodology can be found in the following link: [Methodology, tracking protests and conflicts.](#)

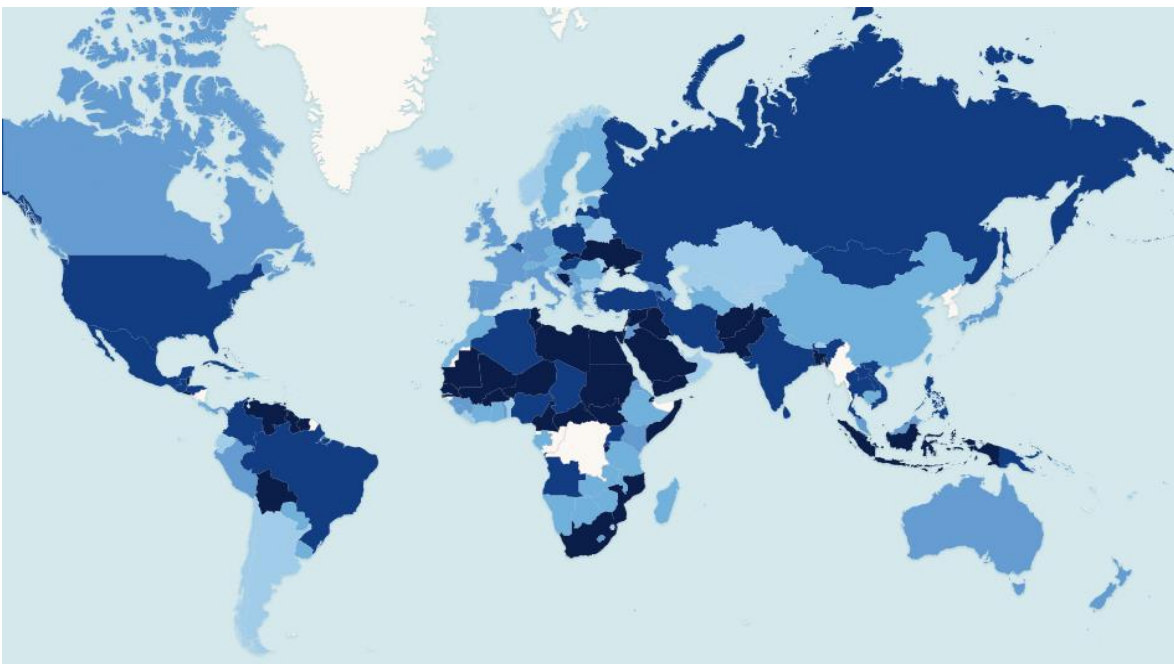
**ANNEX**

**Figure 7** BBVA Research World Protest Map May 18 (Number of events of protest / Total events by country. Darker colors indicate higher values of the index)



Source: BBVA Research and [www.gdelt.org](http://www.gdelt.org)

**Figure 8** BBVA Research World Conflict Map May 18 (Number of events of conflict/ Total events by country. Darker colors indicate higher values of the index)



Source: BBVA Research and [www.gdelt.org](http://www.gdelt.org)

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