



# A NEW ERA OF CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

The nature of conflict and violence has transformed substantially since the UN was founded 75 years ago. Conflicts now tend to be lessy

on development of inter-personal violence, including violence against children, is also more widely recognized.

but also diminishing global potential for the prevention and resolution of conflict and violence in all forms.

## ENTRENCHED CONFLICT

Globally, the absolute number of war deaths has been declining since 1946. And yet, conflict and violence are on the rise, with many conflicts today waged between non-state actors such as political militias, criminal, and international terrorist groups. Unresolved regional tensions, a breakdown in the rule of law, absent or co-opted state institutions, illicit economic gain, and the scarcity of resources exacerbated by climate change, have become dominant drivers of conflict.

In 2016, more countries experienced violent conflict than at any point in almost 30 years. At the same time, conflicts are becoming more fragmented. For example, the number of armed groups involved in the Syrian civil war has mushroomed almost half a million

## ORGANISED CRIME, URBAN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

across the world, with 1.2 billion people

Organised crime and gang violence vary widely across regions. Countries in the Americas have the worst homicide rates by a wide margin, accounting for 37 per cent of the global total in a region that accounts for only 13 per cent of the world's population. Political instability engenders organised crime, including targeted attacks against police, women, journalists,

and migrants. Meanwhile political violence no longer affects only low-income states. In the past 15 years, **more than half** of the world's population has lived in direct contact or proximity to significant political violence.

For women and girls, the home remains the most dangerous place. Some 58 per cent of female homicides were carried out by intimate partners or family members in 2017, up from **47 per cent** in 2012. Women bear the heaviest burden of lethal victimisation, often as a result of misogynistic beliefs, inequality, and **U** , hic persistg óá a l , especia l i - w



Perhaps the most prevalent modern-day threat is that of cyber-attacks. According to IBM's X-Force Incident Response and Intelligence Services, the number of cyber-attacks doubled in the first half of 2019 in comparison with the second half of 2018, most of them targeting manufacturers, oil and gas companies, and educational institutes. Owners of critical infrastructure are especially at risk, as malicious actors seek to target airport control towers, nuclear power plants, hospitals, and dams. Over the past year, more than **a hundred** cyber incidents with the potential to undermine international peace and security were identified. Such attacks would cause substantial damage and casualties.

On the flip side, advances in AI and other technologies also provide new tools and preventive strategies for police and counterintelligence agencies to better prevent attacks and identify perpetrators. But here too there are risks. For example, predictive policing comes with its own downsides, including inbuilt racial and religious biases, which can engender