PRIO Conflict Site 1989-2008 Codebook

A Geo-Referenced Dataset on Armed Conflicts

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Introduction
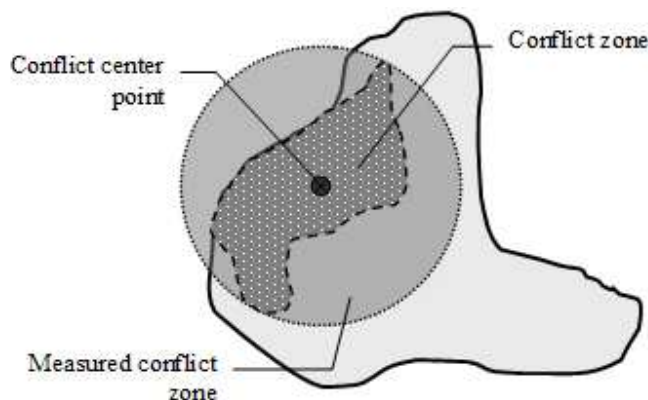
The new version (3.0) of the PRIO Conflict Site dataset is a totally revised and recoded update that corresponds to the latest available version of the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Version 4-2010) (Gleditsch et al., 2002).[2] One of the major improvements is that the data are structured in a conflict-year format, thereby adding a temporal – dynamic – aspect lacking in previous version. The time period covered is 1989-2008. In addition, a wider range of sources than in earlier versions have been used, including news reports from *Factiva* and a generous selection of case-specific literature. Moreover, the use of geographic information systems (GIS) software and databases has increased the precision in the geo-referenced coding.

The PRIO Conflict Site dataset complements the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset by providing information on the actual location of the armed conflicts in the parent dataset. Every conflict-year in the dataset is assigned a circular conflict zone, which is defined by a center point (*location*), given as latitude and longitude coordinates in decimal degrees, and a radius (*scope*) indicator that measures the distance from the center point to the most distant point in the conflict zone, rounded upwards to the nearest 50 kilometers (Figure 1). The conflict zone covers the area directly affected by a conflict. It includes all

- locations of reported armed encounters between the parties to the conflict
- territories occupied by the parties of the conflict (in intrastate conflicts, this applies only to territories occupied by the rebel side)
- locations of rebel bases (intrastate conflicts only).

Note: This figure was first used in Buhaug and Gates (2002)

Figure 1. Identifying the conflict zone

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[2] The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset defines a conflict as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths" (Harbom et al., 2009).

In intrastate conflicts, only armed encounters, occupied territories and rebel bases *in the country whose government is challenged by a rebel group* are included in the conflict zone.[3] Furthermore, areas that are indirectly affected by the conflict, e.g. through refugee flows or military mobilization, are excluded from the conflict zone.

A drawback with circular conflict zones is that they cover more territory than is actually affected by the conflict, including territories of neighboring countries.[4] Due to the nature of armed conflict it may be impossible to gain information on the exact locations of armed encounters, occupied territories, and rebel bases. It might be possible to map the actual conflict-affected area with high precision for some well-reported conflicts, but it would be virtually impossible to code all conflict-years in the dataset coherently in a similar manner. The operationalization of conflict zones is essentially a trade-off between precision and simplicity, and in most cases a circular conflict zone will give a good indication of the *core area of the conflict*.

In some cases isolated events of violence occurred at locations very distant from the core conflict area (e.g. attacks by Chechnyan insurgents in Moscow). These events were generally ignored, since they would force the conflict circle to assume an unrealistic size that would cover large amounts of unaffected territory. A list of these cases can be found in Appendix A.

For some cases of conflicts over territory where information is very scarce or unreliable (e.g. the Ethiopia-Ogaden conflict), the whole province or settlement area of the group fighting the government in an internal conflict, or the disputed territory in an international conflict, has been defined as the conflict zone. See Appendix B for a list of these cases.

Data and citation

The dataset and the codebook can be found on http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/. When using the data, please cite XXX and when appropriate the codebook.

Variable List

ID

Conflict identifier in the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.

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[3] This coding rule is somewhat problematic, but it is a tradeoff that had to be made to keep the size of the conflict zones realistic. For instance, the intrastate conflict between the government of the USA and al-Qaida (ID 224) was fought both in Afghanistan and the USA in 2001, and the conflict zone would thus cover vast swathes of the globe if the conflict-affected area in Afghanistan were to be included. In case an intrastate conflict only is active outside the country of the government side (e.g. Rwanda 2002, ID 179) error code -888 appears in the dataset (see the variable list in this document).
[4] In most GIS software packages the conflict zone can easily be clipped to follow state boundaries.

Year
Year of observation.

Latitude
The geographical center of the conflict zone is given as decimal degrees where southern latitudes and western longitudes have negative values.

Longitude
See *latitude*.

Radius
The radius of the conflict zone is given in 50 kilometer intervals, rounded upwards. If a conflict took place within a single spot the radius is set at 50 kilometers.

Conflict area
Area of the conflict zone in square kilometers. Only terrestrial areas in the countries listed in the *conflict site* variable are included.[5]

Conflict site
Gleditsch and Ward (1999) country code for the country/countries where the conflict took place. For intrastate conflicts, this can by definition only be the country of the government side in the conflict dyad(s).

Conflict territory
Name(s) of the country/countries listed in the *conflict site* variable.

Version
Version number of the corresponding UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset. This is currently version 4-2010.

Error Codes

-888
Error code -888 appears in the *latitude*, *longitude, radius* and *conflict area* cells when an intrastate conflict only is active on territory outside the country of the government side in the conflict dyad(s) (e.g. Rwanda 2002, ID 179).

-999
Error code -999 appears in the *latitude*, *longitude, radius* and *conflict area* cells when no information could be found about the location of the conflict.

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[5] The area calculations were made in the PostGIS software, which uses a spherical model of the globe.

References

Buhaug, Halvard, and Scott Gates. 2002. The Geography of Civil War. *Journal of Peace Research* 39(4): 417-433.

Gleditsch, Kristian S., and Michael D. Ward. 1999. A Revised List of Independent States since the Congress of Vienna. *International Interactions* 25(4): 393-413.

Gleditsch, Nils Petter, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg, and Håvard Strand. 2002. Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5): 615-637.

Harbom, Lotta, Håvard Strand, and Håvard M. Nygård. 2009. *UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset Codebook Version 4-2009*. (www.ucdp.uu.se/database)

Appendix A: Observations for which extreme outliers have been disregarded

ID	Year	Conflict site	Conflict territory
119	1989	200	United Kingdom
119	1990	200	United Kingdom
119	1991	200	United Kingdom
156	1990	750	India
156	1991	750	India
156	1992	750	India
156	1993	750	India
206	2002	365	Russia

Appendix B: Observations with simplified coding of the conflict zone due to scarce of unreliable information

ID	Year	Conflict site	Conflict territory
6	1990	630	Iran
20	1989	750, 770	India, Pakistan
20	1990	750, 770	India, Pakistan
20	1991	750, 770	India, Pakistan
20	1992	750, 770	India, Pakistan
23	2007	775	Myanmar
23	2008	775	Myanmar
34	1989	775	Myanmar
34	1990	775	Myanmar
34	1991	775	Myanmar
34	1992	775	Myanmar
37	1989	666	Israel
54	1992	750	India
54	1996	750	India
54	2005	750	India
54	2006	750	India
54	2007	750	India
56	1992	775	Myanmar
56	1996	775	Myanmar
56	2006	775	Myanmar
67	1993	775	Myanmar
67	1994	775	Myanmar
67	1995	775	Myanmar

67	1996	775	Myanmar
67	1997	775	Myanmar
67	1998	775	Myanmar
67	1999	775	Myanmar
67	2000	775	Myanmar
67	2001	775	Myanmar
67	2002	775	Myanmar
67	2005	775	Myanmar
67	2006	775	Myanmar
67	2007	775	Myanmar
67	2008	775	Myanmar
74	1989	645	Iraq
133	1994	530	Ethiopia
133	1995	530	Ethiopia
133	1996	530	Ethiopia
133	1999	530	Ethiopia
133	2000	530	Ethiopia
133	2001	530	Ethiopia
133	2002	530	Ethiopia
133	2004	530	Ethiopia
133	2005	530	Ethiopia
133	2006	530	Ethiopia
133	2007	530	Ethiopia
134	1989	850	Indonesia
139	1992	750	India
139	1993	750	India
139	1995	750	India
139	1997	750	India
139	2001	750	India
139	2004	750	India
139	2006	750	India
152	1998	750	India
156	1989	750	India
156	1990	750	India
156	1991	750	India
156	1992	750	India
156	1993	750	India
168	1996	530	Ethiopia
169	1990	750	India
169	1991	750	India
169	1992	750	India

169	1993	750	India
169	1994	750	India
169	1995	750	India
169	1996	750	India
169	1997	750	India
169	1998	750	India
169	1999	750	India
169	2000	750	India
169	2001	750	India
169	2002	750	India
169	2003	750	India
169	2004	750	India
169	2005	750	India
169	2006	750	India
169	2007	750	India
169	2008	750	India
171	1990	850	Indonesia
171	1991	850	Indonesia
192	1991	540	Angola
192	2007	540	Angola
219	1989	530	Ethiopia
219	1990	530	Ethiopia
219	1991	530	Ethiopia
219	1992	530	Ethiopia
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219	2005	530	Ethiopia
219	2006	530	Ethiopia
219	2007	530	Ethiopia
219	2008	530	Ethiopia
227	1990	750	India
227	1993	750	India
227	2003	750	India
227	2004	750	India