

## Summary

Violent and lethal anti-government protests have erupted in Nairobi and other cities following President Ruto's controversial signing of a new taxation bill. At least 9 people have been killed from protests on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Opposition leaders such as Raila Odinga are calling for further demonstrations against proposed measures on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

## Recent events and developments

As announced by opposition leader Raila Odinga, anti-government protests have been spreading across the country in recent weeks. Public demonstrations were carried out in June and have significantly grown into violent riots in July. People took to the streets of Nairobi, Kisumu, and Mombasa again on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, disrupting businesses and requiring police forces to forcefully disperse protestors. Further nationwide riots have taken place on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of July, leaving 9 people killed amidst intense clashes with security forces. At least 300 people have been arrested. In addition, the Nairobi expressway has reportedly sustained significant damages on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July but is now serviceable again. The opposition is still pushing for weekly protests against the new government, specifically opposing the increase in taxes and the deteriorating quality of life, and it has announced its plans to resume protests from Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> till the 21<sup>st</sup> of July. President Ruto deemed all protests as illegal "malpractices" and politically motivated, as the government imposes a ban on all protests given the damages incurred.

## Impact assessment

Last year's elections paired with relatively little unrest and insecurity, despite the losing candidate Raila Odinga challenging the results. However, protests have regularly recurred since then and were met with violence at times. Despite the recent tensions, President Ruto is highly unlikely to withdraw the proposed taxation bills. He is displaying a strict attitude against the opposition, while seeking new and bold international arrangements to not only boost the economy, but also to further demonstrate his competence against terrorism. Demonstrations are expected to continue in the upcoming weeks. While the protests are in part stimulated by Odinga's inciting speeches, the anger about high fuel prices and raised taxes is widespread among Kenyans. Violence can erupt at any moment during the protests, especially in the country's major cities. Roadblocks, looting, and vandalism are recurrent during such confrontations, leading security forces to apply forceful dispersion and use live ammunition. This equally poses a safety risk to residents and travelers.

## Advice from Forth Global

- Make sure all employees travelling to Kenya undertake several-days HEAT training prior to deployment. Emergency arrangements should be updated based on growing unrest.
- Avoid all demonstrations and protesting areas, and refrain from expressing political opinions in public.
- Prepare for sudden disruptions on major highways and routes. When travelling, plan the journey ahead and monitor local news to steer away from unanticipated developments.

## Customized advice

Please contact us for specific advice:

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