

## Summary

Since early 2024, Tanzania has experienced rising political unrest as the opposition party, Chadema, has ramped up its activities, organizing demonstrations and drawing media attention. Key Chadema leaders, including Tundu Lissu, have been arrested and released, sparking condemnation from rights groups. Despite initial reforms, President Samia Suluhu Hassan is now facing criticism for allowing ongoing authoritarian practices. This raises concerns about political freedoms and the safety of travellers, journalists, and workers.

## Recent events and developments

Tanzania's opposition party, the Party for Democracy and Progress (Chadema), has increased its political activity in 2024, gearing up for the upcoming local elections on November 27 this year and the general elections in October 2025. The party has organized large demonstrations, marches, and rallies, signalling a potential shift in the political landscape. On January 24, Chadema held a major demonstration in Dar es Salaam. Tensions escalated on August 11 when police arrested senior opposition leaders, including former presidential candidate Tundu Lissu, along with hundreds of supporters and a handful of journalists ahead of a planned youth rally in Mbeya. They were accused of organizing a "prohibited conference". The arrests were condemned by rights groups and international observers. Additional arrests followed on August 19, when three more Chadema leaders were detained in the Temeke region, sparking further criticism. President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who succeeded John Magufuli in 2021 as chairperson of the ruling Party of the Revolution (CCM), has faced growing backlash. Despite initially taking steps to open political space, the continued use of repressive tactics by the police suggests a troubling persistence of authoritarian practices. Throughout the year, Chadema has called for police reforms, political change, and stronger protection of civil liberties, indicating a more active presence in the political race for both the local and general elections.

## Impact assessment

Political unrest and rising tensions in Tanzania have increased the risk of instability. The situation may become increasingly unpredictable as the upcoming local elections approach in December. In the coming months, a rise in prohibited rallies is likely, potentially leading to clashes with the repressive police force. The politically charged atmosphere and continued use of heavy-handed tactics suggest that the situation could remain volatile across the country. The recent arrests of journalists signal growing risks for the press covering the elections, with the environment becoming more restrictive. Protests, like those seen in January and August 2024, are expected to recur in major cities such as Dar es Salaam and Dodoma, as well as in smaller, less populated areas like Mbeya in the southwest. These protests in the form of conferences, marches or rallies could disrupt daily life, causing road closures, delays, and increased security, which would impact mobility and access to services. Although President Samia has introduced some positive reforms, the violence from the 2020 elections under former President Magufuli remains fresh in people's minds. During that period, authorities killed at least four people and arbitrarily detained opposition leaders and supporters. On the eve of the elections, police reportedly fired live ammunition into crowds. Similar incidents could emerge as both local and general elections approach, posing further risks to stability.

## Advice from Forth Global

- Ensure that all employees travelling to Tanzania receive a three-day HEAT training prior to deployment.
- Employees should avoid all protests and other public gatherings.
- Employees should refrain from sharing their opinions on the political situation in Tanzania.
- Closely monitor the local and international media for updates on the political situation and potential protests, with an emphasis on demonstrations organised by the opposition party Chadema.
- Maintain the activation of crisis management and crisis management protocols. Establish the approval protocol for movement and ensure in-country staff are aware of those protocols.

## Customized advice

Please contact us for specific advice:

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