



Daily

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MAX - Europe and the Americas Daily Summary - August 24, 2021

The following report reviews current events in the Europe and the Americas region and their possible effect on business continuity and security.

Highlights of the Day

Americas

- **Brazil:** Train services to be disrupted in Sao Paulo during ongoing CPTM railway workers' strike as of August 24; allot for disruptions
- **Colombia:** Student activist assassinated in Popayan, Cauca on August 23; social leaders, activists to remain recurrent target in rural areas
- **Mexico:** Police seize 18 high-caliber weapons, arrest 14 in Tamaulipas on August 23; highlights role as hub for organized crime

Europe

- **France:** Five repatriated Afghans placed under surveillance over suspected Taliban links as of August 24; further such orders likely
- **Russia & Ukraine:** President Zelensky holds inaugural Crimea Platform Summit in Kyiv on August 23; to escalate tensions with Moscow
- **UK:** Climate activists to hold demonstration outside Embassy of Brazil in London at 10:00 (local time) on August 25; allot for disruptions

Americas Actionable Items

Americas: Authorities modify restrictions as COVID-19 vaccination campaigns continue regionwide on August 24; remain abreast of updates

In Canada, authorities in British Columbia announced that "B.C. vaccine cards" will be introduced on September 13. The "B.C. vaccine card" will be needed to attend concerts,

sporting events, restaurants, fitness classes, nightclubs, and other activities. Proof of one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination will initially be needed but beginning October 24, proof of full vaccination will be required to access the above. In Mexico, starting August 24 individuals aged 40-49, as well as pregnant women, will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination in the municipalities of Guadalupe and Zacatecas. In the USA, authorities in New York City, NY, have made vaccination against COVID-19 for education department staff mandatory with proof of the first dose to be provided by September 29. In New Jersey, all state employees including staff in state agencies, public universities, and colleges are required to be fully vaccinated by October 18 or will be required to undergo regular testing at least twice per week. In Venezuela, authorities have announced strict quarantine measures through August 2.

Those operating or residing in the Americas on August 24 and the coming days are advised to remain abreast of authorities' instructions regarding quarantines and health procedures.

Brazil: Train services to be disrupted in Sao Paulo during ongoing CPTM railway workers' strike as of August 24; allot for disruptions

A strike by Companhia Paulista de Trens Metropolitanos (CPTM) railway workers is ongoing in Sao Paulo as of the morning hours (local time) on August 24. The end date and time of the strike have not been determined as of writing. The labor action will impact the 11-Coral, 12-Sapphire, and 13-Jade lines of the city's commuter rail system. However, workers have guaranteed minimum service, especially to essential workers. The strike is being held over wage disputes and to demand higher compensation. Further details can be found [here](#).

Given that the strike is supported by most workers, it is expected to be well adhered to. While no associated protests have been announced as of writing, the possibility of demonstrations taking place near main metro stations and government buildings cannot be ruled out. Possible demonstrations are likely to transpire without major incidents of unrest. Significant disruptions to railway travel are expected for the duration of the strike.

Those operating or residing in Sao Paulo on August 24 and the coming days are advised to allot for disruptions to railway services due to the ongoing strike.

USA: Flash flood warnings remain in effect for New York, New England on August 24; remain cognizant of authorities' updates

According to the US National Hurricane Center (NHC), Tropical Depression (TD) Henri will be downgraded to a Post-tropical Cyclone during the evening hours (local time) on August 24. Flash flood warnings remain in effect between southeast New York and New England due to heavy rainfall forecast on August 24. In Waverly, Tennessee, severe flooding left 22 locals dead on August 23. Additionally, the National Weather Service (NWS) has issued excessive heat warnings for the Mississippi Delta region for temperatures ranging between 43-46 degrees Celsius on August 24. Advisories for high temperatures have also

been extended in Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, and portions of the Mississippi Valley. Red flag warnings, the second-highest in a five-tier system, associated with the ongoing wildfires remain in effect for much of Wyoming, southwestern South Dakota, and northwestern Nebraska. Disruptions to travel and public services in the form of road closures and power and gas outages are expected in the abovementioned areas due to the inclement weather forecast over the coming days.

Those operating or residing in the aforementioned states in the USA on August 24 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding weather-related risks and allot for disruptions to travel and public services.

USA: Teachers for Choice call for demonstration at City Hall in New York City, NY at 16:00 (local time) on August 25; allot for disruptions

Teachers for Choice, a self-described New York emergency union caucus opposed to forced medical mandates on teachers, will hold a demonstration at City Hall in New York City, NY at 16:00 (local time) on August 25. Activists plan to set up a stage at the corner of Broadway and Murray Street, with multiple speakers slated to intervene. The protest will be held against federal, state, and city restrictions pertaining to COVID-19 vaccination mandates for teachers.

Based on mobilization capabilities of the organizing group and social media interest in the event, the demonstration is liable to witness a turnout in the low-to-mid hundreds. Although the demonstration is liable to transpire largely peacefully, a bolstered security presence can be expected in the vicinity of City Hall to monitor proceedings and ensure adherence to COVID-19 restrictions. Significant disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be expected in the vicinity of City Hall from 16:00 onwards.

Those operating or residing in New York City, NY on August 25 are advised to allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of City Hall in the evening hours due to the slated protest.

Americas Notable Events

Colombia: Student activist assassinated in Popayan, Cauca on August 23; social leaders, activists to remain recurrent target in rural areas

Estaban Mosquera, a student activist, was reportedly assassinated in the La Pamba neighborhood of Popayan, Cauca during the afternoon hours (local time) on August 23. The attack took place in the vicinity of Mosquera's private residence. Unidentified armed individuals approached Mosquera on a motorcycle and shot him multiple times. Mosquera has previously participated in several anti-government protests over various grievances, including to demand greater investment in public universities. The identity of the perpetrators remains unknown as of writing, as investigations continue.

The location and nature of the shooting suggest that the attack was premeditated, with Mosquera likely being targeted for his anti-government activism. As such, the incident highlights the credible security threat posed to social activists and leaders, evidenced by the killing of Yeisi Campo, a social leader from Morales, Cauca on July 14. That a total of 100 social leaders have been killed nationwide in 2021 alone indicates that activists are likely to continue being targeted moving forward. With this, calls to combat the credible threats posed to social leaders, particularly in rural areas, are expected.

Mexico: Police seize 18 high-caliber weapons, arrest 14 in Tamaulipas on August 23; highlights role as hub for organized crime

On August 23, the Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional (SEDENA) seized 18 high-caliber weapons and arrested 14 members of a criminal group during a security operation in the Miguel Aleman municipality of Tamaulipas. Reports indicate that an individual kidnapped by the group was also rescued during the operation.

The aforementioned incident continues to highlight the role of the Tamaulipas region as a hub for organized crime, especially cross-border arms trafficking given its geographical proximity to Texas, USA. The fact that the group was in possession of high-caliber weapons coupled with recent violent clashes between crime groups, including the shootout in Reynosa that left 15 dead in June, reiterates the persisting threat of armed violence in the region. That said, the seizure of weapons and a series of recent security operations indicate increased efforts by the Mexican government to tackle trafficking and violence in the region, with the government recently suing 11 US-based arms manufacturing companies in an attempt to curb cross-border trafficking. With that, surveillance operations in the region are likely to continue.

Europe Actionable Items

Europe: Countries modify entry restrictions as COVID-19 cases continue to be reported regionwide on August 24; remain cognizant of updates

In Denmark, Health Minister Magnus Heunicke announced that every citizen will receive a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. However, there is no clarity regarding the time period for people to be inoculated with the booster dose. In Germany, authorities have lifted Brazil and Uruguay from the list of 'virus variant' areas. Additionally, Brazil, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Dominica, and Ireland have been moved to the list of 'high-risk' countries. The regions of Crete and the South Aegean in Greece have been placed on the list of 'high-risk' countries. In Montenegro, authorities have tightened entry restrictions, as of August 24. Travelers and Montenegrin nationals are allowed entry only if they carry either proof of vaccination with at least one dose, a negative PCR or antigen test result, or proof of recovery from the previous infection. In Norway, authorities have reintroduced the entry restrictions for travelers from Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Canada, and Moldova. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level Four "Do not travel" notice for the Dutch overseas territory of Sint Maarten.

Those operating or residing in Europe on August 24 and in the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' instructions regarding quarantines and health procedures.

Greece: Multiple groups, including KKE to hold protests in Ioannina, Thessaloniki from 12:00 (local time) on August 24; maintain vigilance

Multiple protests will reportedly be held in Ioannina and Thessaloniki on August 24. In Thessaloniki, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) will hold a protest to denounce the government's policy on wildfires at the White Tower, from 19:00 (local time) onwards. A teachers' group will hold a protest in front of the Directorate of Primary Education of Western Thessaloniki at 12:00. In Ioannina, members of Antarsya, a left-wing political organization, will hold a demonstration in solidarity with Afghanistan at Pyrros Square from 19:00.

Based on precedent, the protests are likely to draw attendance in the high-dozens to low-hundreds. The KKE protest in Thessaloniki is liable to draw a higher turnout in the low-to-mid hundreds. The teachers' action and the Antarsya protests are likely to transpire peacefully and without unrest. However, the KKE demonstration is likely to witness isolated scuffles between police and protesters. A bolstered security will be deployed in the vicinity of the protest locations as a precautionary measure. Disruptions to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic are likely during the slated protest hours.

Those operating or residing in Ioannina and Thessaloniki on August 24 are advised to maintain vigilance and allot for disruptions to travel due to the planned protests.

UK: Climate activists to hold demonstration outside Embassy of Brazil in London at 10:00 (local time) on August 25; allot for disruptions

Amazon Rebellion, Brazil Matters, Greenpeace, and other climate activist organizations will hold a demonstration outside the Embassy of Brazil in London at 10:00 (local time) on August 25. The protest is being held as a call to "fight for the future of Brazil's Indigenous Peoples" as part of a wider Global Day of Action for Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Rainforest held by the Extinction Rebellion (XR).

Based on the mobilization capabilities of the organizing groups, the demonstration is liable to witness a turnout in the low-to-mid hundreds. Although the demonstration is liable to transpire largely peacefully, a bolstered security presence can be expected in the vicinity of the Embassy of Brazil to monitor proceedings and ensure adherence to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Significant disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be expected in the vicinity of the Embassy of Brazil from the morning hours.

Those operating or residing in London on August 25 are advised to allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of the Embassy of Brazil from the morning hours onwards.

Europe Notable Events

Cyprus: Authorities to revoke passports issued to Turkish-Cypriot officials, per August 23 reports; additional diplomatic maneuvers likely

On August 23, authorities of the Republic of Cyprus decided to revoke the passports of 14 officials of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The decision follows Turkey's and the Turkish-Cypriot authorities' plans to reopen the town of Varosha despite the UN Security Council's call for an immediate reversal on the reopening. In response, Turkish leader Ersin Tatar condemned the move as "racist". As per the plan, Turkish-Cypriot officials intend to revert the 1.35 square-mile section of Varosha from military to civilian control.

The above is reflective of the heightened tensions between Cyprus and the TRNC over the ongoing dispute concerning Varosha. With over 100,000 Turkish Cypriots holding Republic of Cyprus identity cards or passports, the potential for the Cyprus government to extend the measure to more TRNC officials and citizens cannot be ruled out. That the document is required for foreign travel as the TRNC is not recognized by a majority of the countries supports this. With the reopening of Varosha widely perceived as unilateral, additional diplomatic maneuvers against the TRNC are likely until the decision is rescinded.

France: Five repatriated Afghans placed under surveillance over suspected Taliban links as of August 24; further such orders likely

According to Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, five repatriated Afghan nationals have been placed under surveillance over their alleged links to the Taliban. The suspects were identified following security interviews by the Direction Generale de la Securite Interieure (DGSI) in the United Arab Emirates, where evacuation flights are routed before departing to Paris. Since August 15, France has repatriated approximately 1,300 Afghans and their families, among others, at risk of persecution.

The above will likely prompt a sustained backlash from far-right politicians who oppose the government's move. That migration is one of the most contentious issues ahead of the 2022 presidential election suggests that President Emmanuel Macron's speech on August 16, warning that Europe needs to defend itself from an influx of irregular migrants emerging from the destabilization in Afghanistan, is likely an attempt to maintain its center-right support. With UK authorities having already conducted similar measures, the above is likely to strengthen anti-immigrant sentiments regionwide. Given the considerable difficulties of carrying out security investigations on those being repatriated, further such surveillance orders are likely near-term.

Germany: Jewish individual attacked for wearing kippah at park in Cologne on August 23; indicates elevated threat of anti-Semitic attacks

According to August 23 reports, an 18-year-old Jewish individual was beaten by a group of

10 people at a park in Cologne during the evening hours (local time) on August 20. The victim was also verbally abused for wearing a kippah. Authorities identified two individuals aged 18 and 19 who were allegedly involved in the attacks and remain suspects in the ongoing investigation.

The above highlights the elevated threat of anti-Semitic incidents in Germany, as evidenced by a similar attack against a Jewish individual wearing a kippah in Berlin in May 2021. Moreover, given the uptick in anti-Semitic sentiments witnessed in recent months amid the escalation of tensions between Israel and Hamas, similar attacks targeting Jewish individuals or religious sites are possible moving forward. This is supported by multiple acts of vandalism reported against synagogues in the North Rhine-Westphalia region in recent months. In light of this, the security presence is likely to be bolstered in the vicinity of Jewish schools and religious sites in the near term, particularly amid the upcoming Jewish holidays in September and October.

Russia: FSB arrests individual working for Ukrainian SBU to obtain state secrets in Tula on August 23; similar operations to continue

The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) arrested an individual alleged to be working for the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in Tula on August 23. The individual was recruiting Russians associated with the defense industries to obtain information regarding “state secrets on latest weapons”. On August 2, the Mari El regional court sentenced a Ukrainian national for allegedly attempting to leak Russia’s missile system-related information.

The arrest is reflective of the FSB’s attempts to crack down on the espionage operations of the SBU in Russia by recruiting locals to obtain sensitive military-related information. With that, it also highlights the elevated potential threat emanating from the clandestine operations of such individuals, including recruitment of locals, given the FSB’s claims of having prevented “militant attacks” by groups suspected to have links with the SBU in Murmansk, Stavropol, and Yugra in April 2021. Given that over 20 defense industries operate in Tula, the FSB will embolden measures in the form of targeted investigations and raids against recruitment cells to curtail the SBU-backed espionage activities moving forward.

Russia & Ukraine: President Zelensky holds inaugural Crimea Platform Summit in Kyiv on August 23; to escalate tensions with Moscow

On August 23, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky held the inaugural Crimea Platform Summit in Kyiv, with officials from 46 countries, including the EU and 30 NATO members, to discuss the possibilities of returning Russia-annexed Crimea to Ukraine’s control. The participating countries agreed to the non-recognition of Russia’s annexation of Crime and intensify political and diplomatic sanctions on Moscow in the case of further aggression in a joint declaration. Meanwhile, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov denounced the event as ‘anti-Russian’.

Given the prevailing threat of intensified Russian aggression in the Crimean Peninsula and the Black Sea region, evidenced by Moscow's recent deployment of warships, the summit is likely intended to express solidarity with Ukraine and increase international pressure on Russia. Given that the summit aims at the "de-occupation" of Crimea, an uptick in the ongoing clashes between the Ukrainian forces and Moscow-backed separatists may be witnessed in the Donbas region in the near to medium term. Additionally, Russia is also likely to conduct further military maneuvers near Crimea in response to the summit, leading to an escalation of tensions in the region.

Notable Dates

August 25

- **UK:** Tube Strike in London
- **Uruguay:** Independence Day

August 26

- **UK:** Tube Strike in London

August 27

- **Moldova:** Independence Day
- **UK:** Tube Strike in London

August 28

- **UK:** Protest in London
- **USA:** Protest march in Washington, DC

August 29

- **Slovakia:** Slovak National Uprising Anniversary

August 30

- **UK:** Summer Bank Holiday

August 31

- **Moldova:** National Language Day
- **Trinidad and Tobago:** Independence Day

September 1

- **Slovakia:** Constitutional Memorial Day

September 2

- **Transdniestria:** Independence Day

September 3

- **Transdniestria:** Public Holiday

September 5

- **Albania:** Mother Teresa's Canonization Holiday

September 6

- **Albania:** Mother Teresa's Canonization Holiday
- **Bermuda, Canada, Puerto Rico, USA:** Labor Day
- **Bulgaria:** Unification Day
- **Vincent & Grenadines:** Carnival Monday