



# World Cup 2026 – Rolling Risk Brief

Issue: 06 Date/Time: 10 June 2026 | 09:00 EST Coverage Period: 10 – 17 June 2026

## Executive Snapshot

### Key Shift Since Last Brief:

- This report is published just one day before the tournament kicks off in Mexico City, with a second match that evening in Guadalajara.
- Coordinadora Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación (CNTE) protests have intensified following a series of unsuccessful negotiations held last week. Teachers have threatened to block roads leading to the Banorte Stadium and Mexico City's International Airport (MEX). The security deployments expected this week at key corridors and locations may lead to confrontations with the protesters. On 11 June, CNTE teachers are likely to be joined by other protest groups.
- The ceasefire between the US and Iran remains highly delicate and its future remains uncertain following multiple exchanges of fire between Iran and the US after Iran downed a US military helicopter on 9 June. Meanwhile, Israeli operations continue in Lebanon, which Iran has claimed as a redline and which prompted small exchanges of fire on 7-8 June between Israel and Iran.
- The start of the hurricane season in the Pacific, along with the formation of Tropical Storm Boris near the coast of Guerrero and Oaxaca, is resulting in increased rainfall across much of central and southern Mexico. Although it is unlikely, severe weather conditions could lead to the last-minute rescheduling of matches planned for the upcoming week in Mexico City, with a lesser impact expected in Guadalajara.

### Highest Attention Cities (Next 7 Days):

- **Mexico City** – Mexico City remains in the spotlight. Match one of the tournament kicks off at 13:00 local time on 11 June when Mexico plays South Africa. Authorities in Mexico City declared 11 June to be a public holiday. Meanwhile, the CNTE teachers' union continues to strike and threatens to disrupt the tournament.
- **Toronto** – Canada will hold its first tournament match in Toronto, as the Canadian team hosts Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 June. Later that evening, the Blue Jays will host the New York Yankees – presenting a first test of the city's transit system during the tournament that warrants monitoring.
- **Los Angeles** – the city will host the first match of the tournament in the US on 12 June when the US plays against Paraguay. Los Angeles County Sheriff confirmed that though Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents will be stationed in Los Angeles during the tournament, they will not be engaging in civil immigration enforcement. Authorities announced they intend to ramp up security during the Iranian team matches in the city on 15 and 21 June.



## Analyst View

The tournament kicks off amid a deeply sensitive time in the US and Mexico. The environment in the US is highly politicized – the primary season has wrapped up and campaign season for the November midterms is getting underway. In this environment, isolated acts of political violence as well as social unrest are more likely. Furthermore, 2026 will mark the first World Cup in which a host country (US) is engaged in a military campaign against another participant (Iran) – considerably raising the temperature and broader threat environment. The Department of Homeland Security has otherwise been hampered by a prolonged government shutdown and a change of leadership after Kristi Noem was removed and replaced with Markwayne Mullin.

In Mexico, the CNTE teacher's union has placed considerable pressure on the Sheinbaum government, threatening to disrupt the tournament if salary and other labor demands are not met. Protesters escalated tactics last week, tearing down metal barriers and World Cup related sculptures as well as hijacking toll booths on several highways that connect to the capital. President Sheinbaum has refused direct talks. Should negotiations stay at a standstill, there is credible concern that CNTE protesters will generate high-impact disruption in the lead-up to the first match on 11 June. Authorities will tightly secure the venue and other critical infrastructure, but CNTE driven disruption on highways, at government buildings or other sites is plausible.

The opening matches in the US, Canada and Mexico are among the most attractive, high-profile matches of the tournament for individuals or organizations seeking attention or leverage for their cause to target. In each case, authorities are well placed to intercept and respond to terror attacks or other acts of extremist violence. However, lone actors with minimal digital footprint, using less sophisticated tactics are highly challenging to detect and thwart. Authorities in the US have expressed particular concern about softer targets, including downtowns and entertainment districts. Authorities have extended security planning beyond venue perimeters, and critical infrastructure and public spaces will be well secured. Nonetheless, organizations should ensure staff are aware of the prevailing risks and of who to contact in the event of an emergency.

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## What's Changed (Since Last Issue)

### New Developments

- On 6 June a shooting took place approximately five miles (8.00 km) from England's base camp near Kansas City, Missouri. Nine people were injured. The shooting took place in a part of the city designated as high crime risk. On 7 June, an individual believed to be suffering from an active mental health crisis stabbed six victims at New York City's Penn Station. It is believed that the victims were not previously known to the assailant.
- Transport workers, farmers, Gen Z groups, and healthcare workers have all confirmed their participation in the mobilizations scheduled for 11 June. Although their grievances differ significantly, they all see the World Cup as an opportunity to raise awareness for their protests and demands directed at the Mexican government.

### De-escalations / Stabilising Factors

- Claudia Sheinbaum's government may reduce the impact of disruption on 11 June if they successfully negotiate a settlement with one or more of these groups. However, any negotiations, especially with the CNTE, appear unlikely.

### Key External Factors:

- The Ebola outbreak in western and central Africa remains ongoing. The US, Mexico, and Canada have implemented travel restrictions for residents of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, and South Sudan and those who have recently visited those countries. Such travel restrictions will remain in place for the duration of the World Cup.

### Methodology Note

This rolling brief applies the baseline risk and Fan Tension Index (FTI) methodology outlined in the World Cup 2026 Risk Outlook, updated to reflect current conditions and developments.



## Forward Look (Next 7 Days)

### High-Attention Fixtures

- 11 June: Mexico vs South Africa in Mexico City (opening match)
- 11 June: South Korea vs Czechia in Guadalajara
- 12 June: USA vs Paraguay in Los Angeles
- 13 June: Brazil vs Morocco in New Jersey
- 14 June: Iran vs New Zealand in Los Angeles
- 16 June: France vs Senegal in Boston
- 17 June: England vs Croatia in Dallas

### Pressure Outlook

- **New York City** –Security is greatly heightened in New York City as law enforcement prepares for the possibility of overlap between the NBA Finals and the World Cup. Additional pressure could come from the possible future attendance of President Donald Trump, who attended game three of the NBA Finals on 8 June. This caused a major deployment of security forces in Midtown Manhattan, and particularly at Madison Square Garden, which is co-located with Penn Station.
- **United States Ports of Entry**– A number of instances of enhanced scrutiny upon entry by Customs and Border Patrol has been reported. A Somali referee and a large number of Iranian support staff were denied entry, while a Swiss and an Iraqi footballer and the Uzbek and Senegalese national teams faced hours long screening. Iran's national team will be allowed to play their matches in the US, but must return to Mexico when they conclude. These enhanced screenings will likely also apply to traveling fans.

### Emerging Watchpoints

- Guadalajara will host the second World Cup match on 11 June at 20.00 (local time) at Akron Stadium. Search collectives have announced mobilizations across Guadalajara, particularly between Plaza Tapatia and Plaza de la Liberacion in the city center, where the official Fan Fest will be located. Additional demonstrations are also likely near Akron Stadium and along access routes and security filter checkpoints. These mobilizations will overlap with the extensive security deployments and one-mile security perimeter established around the stadium to control access. While confrontations between protesters and security forces remain unlikely, road closures, mobility disruptions, and a heightened security presence are expected across key areas of the city.
- The high-profile nature of World Cup fixtures in the US renders them as highly desirable targets for civil unrest or ideologically motivated attacks. Some law enforcement and intelligence agencies are concerned that protest organizers could attempt to disrupt fanfests or matches to provide higher levels of visibility to their causes. Meanwhile, FBI Director Kash Patel also expressed concern that radicalized groups or individuals could attempt to disrupt individual matches in effort to garner attention to their cause.



## City Spotlight – Mexico City

**Current Posture:** Elevated

### Key Pressure Points:

- Mexico City is likely to face severe mobility disruptions on 11 June. Authorities have established an extensive security perimeter around Banorte Stadium, including a one-mile exclusion zone, road closures, and access control checkpoints that will significantly constrain movement in southern districts.
- At least ten groups, including CNTE, search collectives, transport workers, farmers, students, and anti-government organizations, have announced plans to protest on the day of the inaugural match. Several groups intend to march from the southern areas of the city towards Banorte Stadium.
- Additional disruption is expected around Zocalo, where the CNTE sit-in remains active, and the official Fan Fest will take place. Major highways connecting Mexico City with Cuernavaca, Pachuca, and Puebla may also face temporary disruptions, as well as roads leading to Mexico City's International Airport (MEX).

### Implications:

- The presence of multiple protest movements and the heavy security around Banorte Stadium increases the risk of tension between demonstrators and security forces. While large-scale violence is unlikely, isolated confrontations and crowd-control measures may happen, potentially escalating quickly.
- Simultaneous protests, road closures, and access controls are likely to create significant delays around the stadium, Fan Fest, Mexico City International Airport, and key transport corridors, requiring substantial contingency planning and flexibility.

## Reporting Cadence

			Cadence	Coverage Window
	07	17 Jun	Weekly	17 – 24 Jun

## Implications for Organizations

- Reconfirm transportation plans and allow substantial buffer times for all airport, hotel, and stadium transfers; road closures, security checkpoints, and protest activity are likely to cause significant delays throughout inauguration day.
- Use vetted transport providers and confirm access arrangements before departure; vehicle access restrictions around Banorte Stadium may require extended walking distances from designated drop-off points.
- Consult official sources regularly for updates on road closures, access points, security perimeters, and recommended routes to Banorte Stadium and Fan Fest locations.
- Monitor developments related to planned protests and liaise with local contacts or support providers to identify affected locations, alternative routes, and emerging disruption hotspots.
- Avoid protests, demonstrations, and security operations; leave the area immediately if tensions rise, confrontations appear imminent, or security forces begin deploying crowd-control measures, as bystanders may be affected.