



# World Cup 2026 – Rolling Risk Brief

Issue: 04 Date/Time: 27 May 2026 | 09:00 EST Coverage Period: 27 May – 3 June 2026

## Executive Snapshot

### Key Shift Since Last Brief:

- Teams are preparing for their imminent arrival in host countries ahead of the games for training and friendly matches. Outside of the 16 host cities, 25 other cities will act as base camps for the participating national teams. Most national teams will arrive to their base camp in late May or early June. Expect heightened security and associated disruption around base camp locations.
- Preparations for the June 11 opening match in Mexico City are facing challenges due to ongoing teacher protests, construction around World Cup sites, and a potential strike by air traffic controllers that could disrupt operations at major airports. These issues may limit mobility and logistics, particularly in Mexico City. Meanwhile authorities are adjusting security plans after FIFA approved the Iranian national team's relocation to Tijuana.
- The ceasefire between the US and Iran remains intact, despite recent exchanges of fire. Negotiations over a permanent end to the war are ongoing, but there are conflicting reports from each side on how close to reaching a deal the two sides are. Security leaders should continue to treat the situation as if hostilities could renew at short notice.

### Highest Attention Cities (Next 14 Days):

- **Mexico City** – Tensions have heightened following a sit-in protest organized by CNTE workers on May 25. The sit-in, held just a few blocks from Plaza de la Constitución (Zocalo) in the city center, is anticipated to disrupt transportation and logistics related to preparations for the official Fan Fest location in Mexico City, which is scheduled to take place at Zocalo. This impact on World Cup-related infrastructure projects will increase pressure on the federal government ahead of CNTE's planned strike on June 1.
- **New York City** – The National Basketball Association's (NBA) New York Knicks team has progressed to the NBA finals. Several games will be taking place in New York City, which is already in a celebratory mood. Heightened security and disruptions can be expected around Madison Square Garden and fan events, especially during games. There is a potential for overlap between the NBA finals and World Cup. Additionally, extra security measures are being prepared by the FBI and other agencies ahead of the World Cup. ICE has confirmed it will provide security and that those who are without valid visas or who violate their visas could be targeted for detention and deportation.





## Analyst View

While grievances linked to World Cup preparations in Guadalajara remain fragmented and have not coalesced into a unified protest movement, the likelihood of large mobilizations ahead of and during the tournament has increased. The way authorities monitor, contain, and respond to potential demonstrations will significantly shape the overall risk environment surrounding World Cup-related events, particularly around Plaza Tapatía and the city center, where the official Fan Fest will be located. Any forceful security response could temporarily affect bystanders, mobility, and fan zones operations, while further reinforcing insecurity perceptions already heightened following the 22 February cartel backlash in Jalisco.

The security situation in the US remains largely stable ahead of the World Cup. However, potential flashpoints include economic grievances, as high gas prices and inflation are causing continued increases in consumer goods prices. In the South, controversy surrounding congressional redistricting efforts has already prompted protests, and civil society groups promise further action in the summer. The Iran War poses risks of prompting further anti-war demonstrations. The risk of terror is elevated from its baseline, although it remains low overall.

---

## What's Changed (Since Last Issue)

### New Developments

- The Iranian Football Federation plans to move its training base from Arizona, USA, to Tijuana, Mexico, after receiving FIFA approval. This will require Mexican authorities to expand tournament security to include Tijuana, addressing logistics and coordination with US officials. While there are no specific threats identified at this time, this shift complicates operations amid heightened tensions involving Iran and security challenges at the northern border. It may also increase scrutiny regarding cross-border movements and delegation protection in Baja California.
- In the Garden Grove area of Los Angeles, a chemical spill and potential for a catastrophic explosion caused the evacuation of 40,000 nearby residents. Although authorities state that the risk of an explosion has been eliminated, some evacuations remain in place as hazardous conditions persist.
- On 23 May, the US Secret Service shot and killed an armed man who opened fire against officers near the White House.

### De-escalations / Stabilising Factors

- Continued indirect negotiations, sustained ceasefire arrangements, and the absence of major retaliatory actions against US or allied interests.

### Key External Factors:

- Failed or stalled negotiations between the US and Iran, alongside recent escalations following US and Israeli strikes in Iran and Lebanon, have significantly heightened regional tensions and complicated ongoing diplomatic efforts.
- Authorities announced measures to safeguard against Ebola. The measures include enhanced health screenings at ports of entry and a travel ban targeting non-US citizens, including lawful permanent residents (green card holders), who have travelled to the Congo (DRC), Uganda or South Sudan in the past 21 days. The measures are in place until 17 June. All US citizens who have visited the aforementioned countries are required to fly to Washington Dulles International Airport, Hartfield-Jackson International Airport, or George Bush Intercontinental Airport for additional health screening before continuing to their final destinations.

## 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 14 Days)

### High-Attention Fixtures

- No fixtures within this period

### City Pressure Outlook

- **Mexico City** – In addition to the confirmed protests taking place between 1 and 11 June, the city is currently engaged in infrastructure repairs and improvements in key areas, including those around Banorte Stadium and Mexico City International Airport. It is likely that these projects will remain incomplete by the inauguration day, constraining mobility and logistics, a risk compounded by heavy rains and potential flooding.
- **Philadelphia** – Event planning is reaching a critical phase, as the city will be hosting the World Cup in conjunction with celebrations for the 250th anniversary of the US's independence. Philadelphia was where independence was declared, and celebratory activities at the same time as the World Cup are expected to be quite large.

### Emerging Watchpoints

- A call for air traffic controllers to go on strike has emerged just two weeks before the 11 June opening match. If the strike goes ahead, major disruptions at Guadalajara, Mexico City, and Monterrey airports are expected, with a potential 50% reduction in air traffic controllers.
- As civil society groups begin to organize demonstrations in Southern areas of the US against controversial congressional redistricting efforts, Southern host cities may face demonstrations. Host cities that have a high chance of protests related to redistricting include Houston and Dallas (Texas state) and Atlanta (Georgia state). Organizers have hosted protests in Selma and Montgomery (Alabama state) that were attended by prominent civil rights leaders and politicians – they have promised a summer of activity.





## City Spotlight – Guadalajara

**Current Posture:** Elevated

**Key Pressure Points:**

- Urban renewal projects linked to the World Cup in Guadalajara are facing criticism, particularly over the redesign of the historic fountain in Plaza Tapatia and the removal of missing persons banners in the city center.
- These measures have amplified concerns about public spending, gentrification, and image-management ahead of the tournament, increasing the likelihood of protests and demonstrations.
- Ongoing construction activities may affect mobility and increase congestion in the areas surrounding Plaza Tapatia, Parque Rojo, and the primary routes leading to the airport.

**Implications:**

- Travel and event operations in Guadalajara remain viable, but organizations should expect increased congestion, occasional demonstrations, and last-minute mobility restrictions near central public spaces and fan zones.
- Public frustration linked to World Cup preparations is likely to persist ahead of the tournament. While major unrest remains unlikely, isolated protests and heightened scrutiny of authorities may continue affecting perceptions and logistical planning in key areas of the city.

## Implications for Organizations

- Closely monitor indicators of protest activity in Guadalajara ahead of and during the tournament.
- Map flashpoints against operational exposure and be prepared to adjust posture in the event of an escalation. Ensure executive protection teams are well across evolving local protest dynamics.
- Executive Movement: in all cases, conduct low-profile movement; secure routing and plan for contingencies.
- Guadalajara is designated a MEDIUM risk destination. Petty and opportunistic crime as well as operational disruption associated with protests during the World Cup period are the most pertinent risks to visitors.
- International SOS assesses that further widespread cartel violence in the city – like that experienced on 22 February after the killing of Jalisco New Generation Cartel leader “El Mencho” is *unlikely*. Nonetheless, security teams with exposure in Guadalajara across the tournament should watch violent crime indicators in and around Guadalajara and be prepared to adjust posture in the event of an escalation.

## Reporting Cadence

		<b>Cadence</b>	<b>Coverage Window</b>
04	27 May	Weekly	27 May–03 Jun
05	03 Jun	Weekly	03–10 Jun
06	10 Jun	Weekly	10–17 Jun (tournament start window)