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FOREIGN
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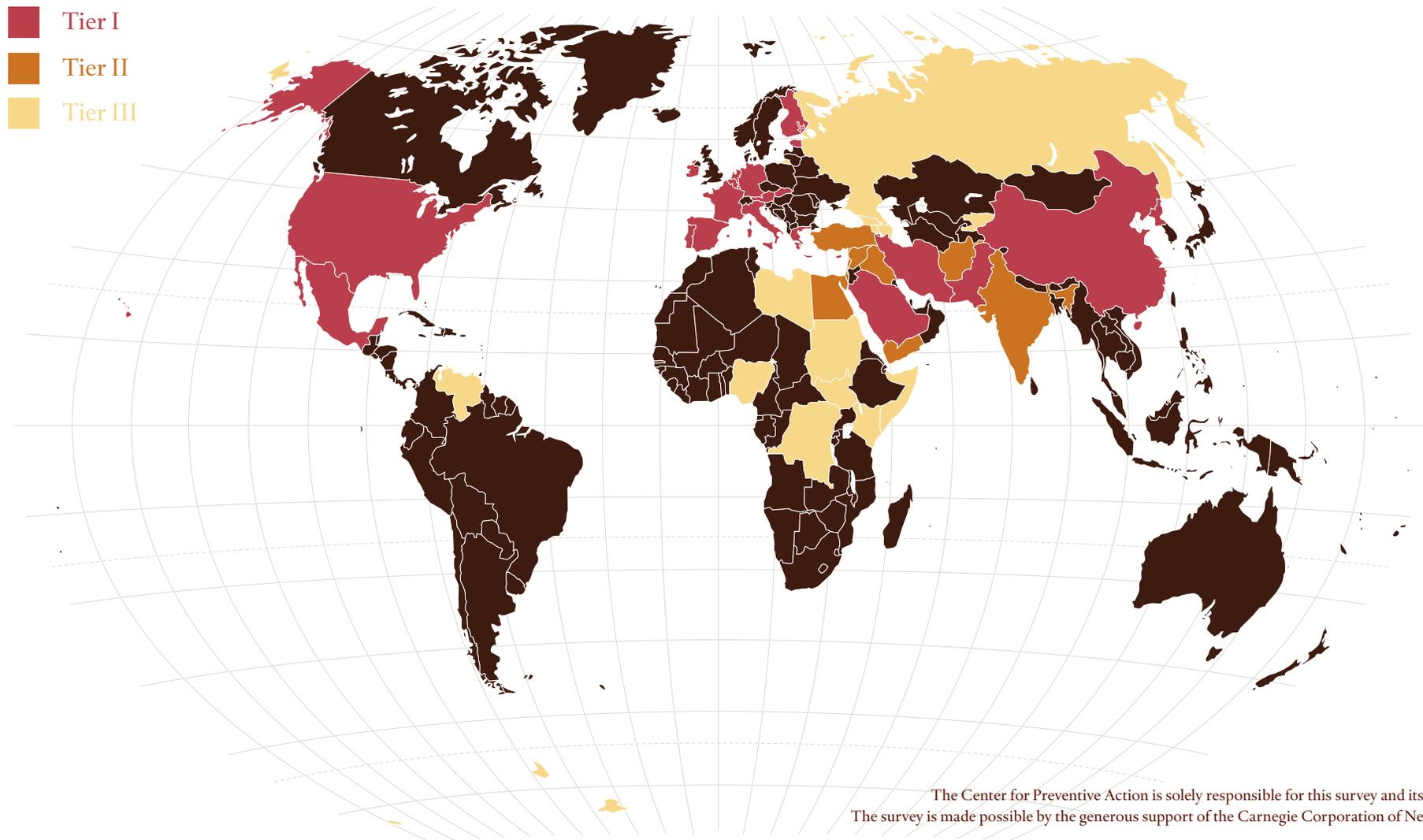
Center for Preventive Action

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Preventive Priorities Survey: 2012

The Preventive Priorities Survey (PPS) is intended to help inform the U.S. policy community about the relative urgency and importance of competing conflict prevention demands. The Center for Preventive Action asked a targeted group of government officials, academics, and experts to comment confidentially on a list of contingencies that could plausibly occur in 2012.

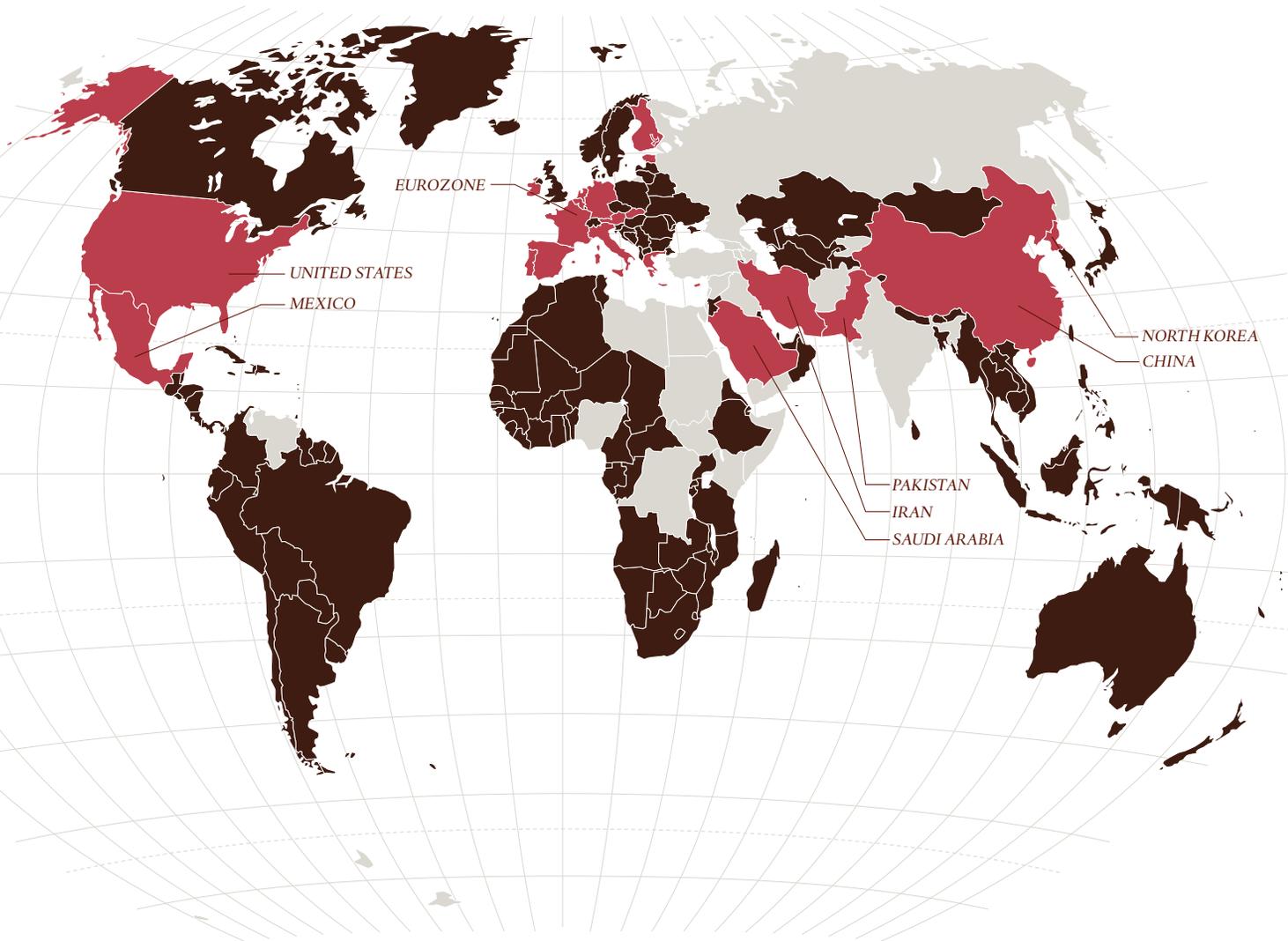
The list of preventive priorities for the United States is grouped according to three tiers of relative importance to U.S. national interests, based on different levels or categories of risk associated with various types of instability and conflict. The preventive priorities within each tier are not listed in any order of priority or probability.



Tier I

Tier I are contingencies that directly threaten the U.S. homeland, are likely to trigger U.S. military involvement because of treaty commitments, or threaten the supplies of critical U.S. strategic resources. They include:

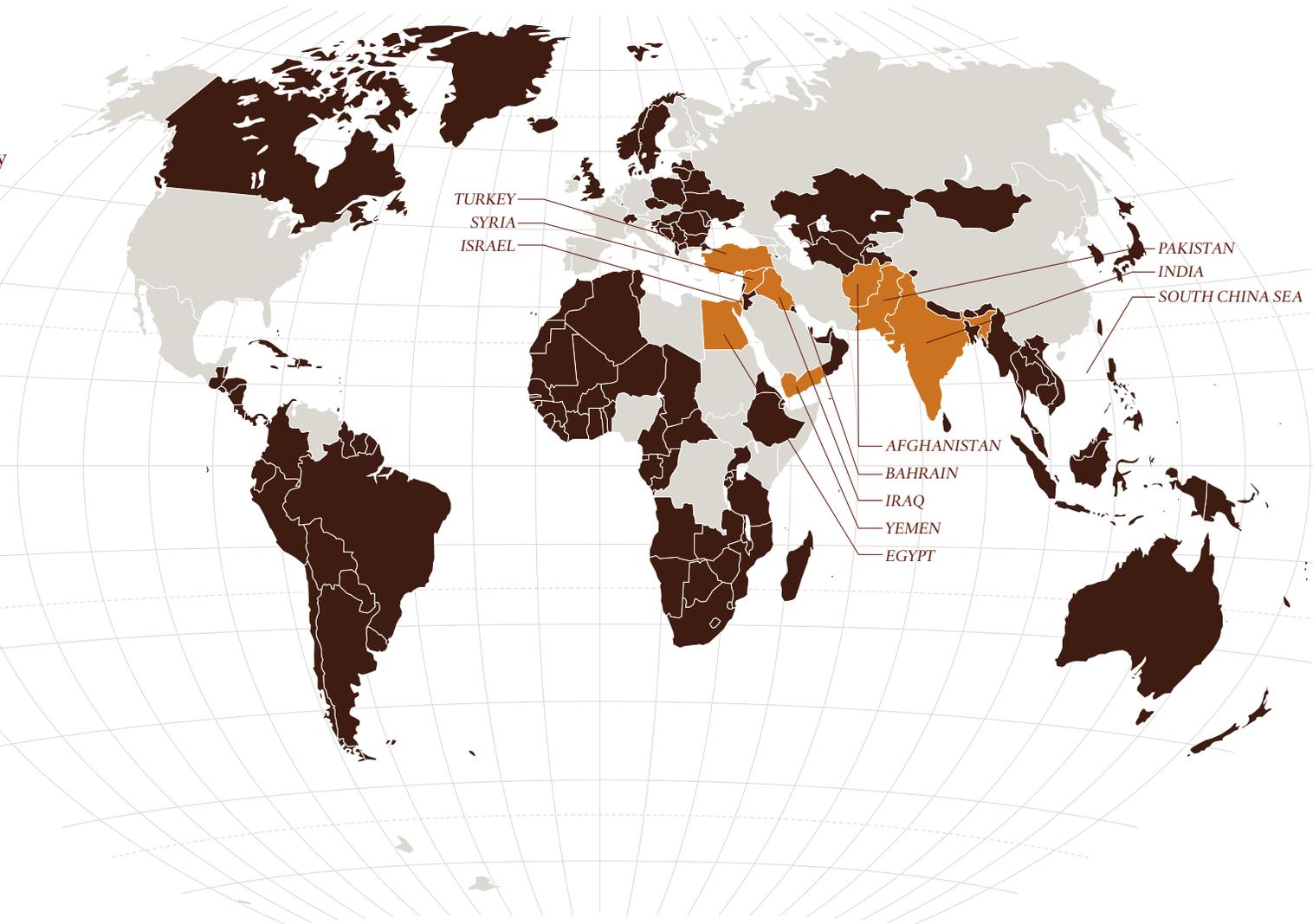
- a mass casualty attack on the U.S. homeland or on a treaty ally
- a severe North Korean crisis (e.g., armed provocations, internal political instability, advances in nuclear weapons/ICBM capability)
- a major military incident with China involving U.S. or allied forces
- an Iranian nuclear crisis (e.g., surprise advances in nuclear weapons/delivery capability, Israeli response)
- a highly disruptive cyberattack on U.S. critical infrastructure (e.g., telecommunications, electrical power, gas and oil, water supply, banking and finance, transportation, and emergency services)
- a significant increase in drug trafficking violence in Mexico that spills over into the United States
- severe internal instability in Pakistan, triggered by a civil-military crisis or terror attacks
- political instability in Saudi Arabia that endangers global oil supplies
- a U.S.-Pakistan military confrontation, triggered by a terror attack or U.S. counterterror operations
- intensification of the European sovereign debt crisis that leads to the collapse of the euro, triggering a double-dip U.S. recession and further limiting budgetary resources



Tier II

Tier II are contingencies that affect countries of strategic importance to the United States but that do not involve a mutual-defense treaty commitment. They include:

- political instability in Egypt with wider regional implications
- a severe Indo-Pak crisis that carries risk of military escalation, triggered by major terror attack
- rising tension/naval incident in the eastern Mediterranean Sea between Turkey and Israel
- a major erosion of security and governance gains in Afghanistan with intensification of insurgency or terror attacks
- an outbreak of widespread civil violence in Syria, with potential outside intervention
- an outbreak of widespread civil violence in Yemen
- rising sectarian tensions and renewed violence in Iraq
- a South China Sea armed confrontation over competing territorial claims
- a mass casualty attack on Israel
- growing instability in Bahrain that spurs further Saudi and/or Iranian military action



Tier III

Tier III are contingencies that could have severe/widespread humanitarian consequences but in countries of limited strategic importance to the United States. They include:

- military conflict between Sudan and South Sudan
- heightened political instability and sectarian violence in Nigeria
- increased conflict in Somalia, with continued outside intervention
- political instability in Venezuela surrounding the October 2012 elections or post-Chavez succession
- political instability in Kenya surrounding the August 2012 elections
- renewed military conflict between Russia and Georgia
- an intensification of political instability and violence in Libya
- violent election-related instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- political instability/resurgent ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan
- an outbreak of military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, possibly over Nagorno Karabakh

