



**Government Defence  
Integrity Index**



**2020**



Country Brief:

**GHANA**



# GHANA

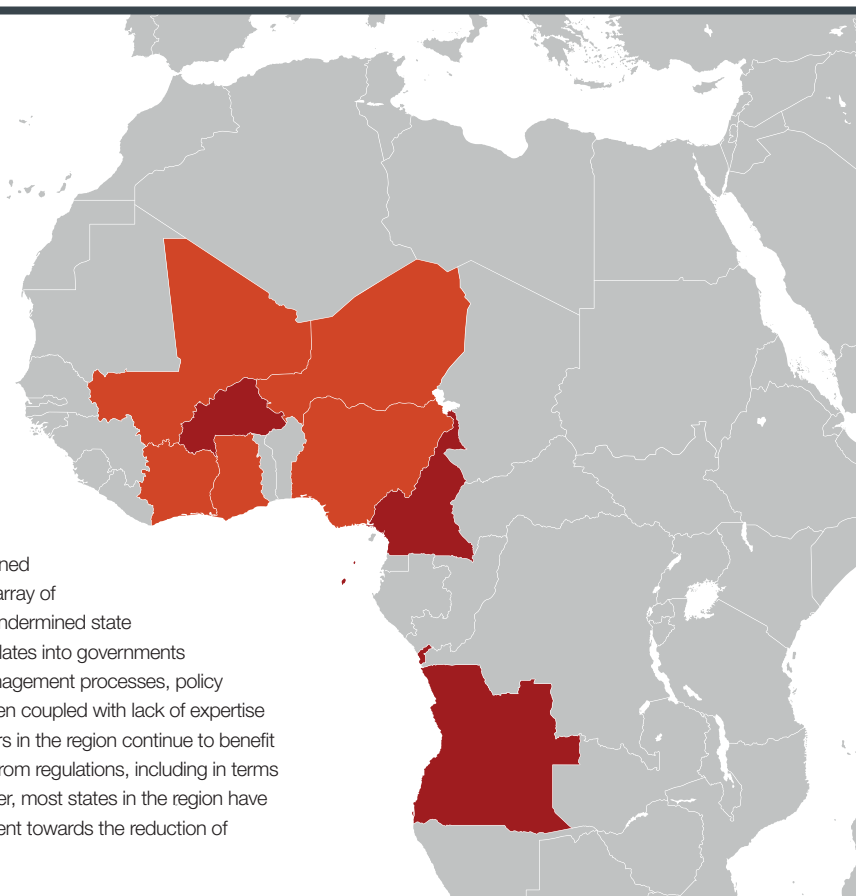
Since 1992, Ghana has built a reputation of being one of the most stable democracies in Africa,<sup>1</sup> avoiding much of the political turmoil and security challenges that its West African neighbours have experienced. Though the run up to the 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary elections proved turbulent, there is basic trust in the workings of the democratic system and Ghana has achieved positive economic growth in recent years.<sup>2</sup> However, as conflict spreads throughout the Sahel and increasingly threatens countries along the Gulf of Guinea,<sup>3</sup> Ghana will be increasingly confronted with significant security challenges, especially as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change exacerbate conflict factors.

Mounting piracy along the Gulf of Guinea and unresolved tensions between herding and farming communities in the north and the middle belt are troubling security dynamics that are becoming increasingly prominent.<sup>4</sup> With the Ghanaian defence and security forces likely to be central to efforts at countering these threats, it becomes crucial to assess the robustness of their governance mechanisms and vulnerability to corruption risk. Whilst the sector is underpinned by robust legislation and marked by higher levels of public engagement than in neighbouring countries, the sector lacks sufficient levels of transparency and accountability to protect institutions from corruption. Secrecy and defence exceptionalism remain entrenched, with national security prerogatives used to bypass reporting and oversight procedures. Parliamentary oversight remains weak, despite the relative strength of audit bodies, whilst defence procurement is overwhelmingly restricted, single-sourced and exempted from substantial oversight and controls. Significant corruption risks exist in Ghana's military deployments and, though personnel management systems are strong, they risk being undermined by weak enforcement.

Member of Open Government Partnership	Yes
UN Convention Against Corruption	Ratified in 2007.
Arms Trade Treaty	Ratified in 2015.

## West Africa

In recent years, corruption and weak governance have fuelled popular grievances and diminished the legitimacy of national institutions across West Africa. For some states, including Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Nigeria, corruption has underpinned armed conflict and the proliferation of violent extremist groups that have gained a foothold in the region. These groups are now beginning to threaten West Africa's coastal states, who themselves are confronted with rising piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. In turn, these conflicts are fuelling a rise in intercommunal violence and exacerbating tensions linked to climate change and resource scarcity. Meanwhile, trafficking and smuggling in small arms, drugs, natural resources, and human beings continue to pose a significant threats to regional stability. Poorly governed national defence forces have struggled to contend with this array of security challenges and their vulnerability to corruption has undermined state responses to insecurity. Extremely limited transparency translates into governments releasing incomplete information on budgets, personnel management processes, policy planning, and acquisitions of military assets. This, in turn, often coupled with lack of expertise and resources, undermines civilian oversight. Defence sectors in the region continue to benefit from a defence exceptionalism in which they are exempted from regulations, including in terms of procurement or freedom of information legislation. However, most states in the region have signed and/or ratified the UNCAC, showing some commitment towards the reduction of corruption risk within their borders.



<sup>1</sup> Rasheed Draman, 'Parliamentary Oversight and Corruption in Ghana', *African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA)*, Accra, 2017, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI Country report – Ghana*, Gutersloh, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> World Food Programme, 'How the Contagion of Conflict in the Sahel Could Spread across West Africa', 3 April 2020; Daniel Finnan, 'Sahel Jihadists Eye Expansion into Cote d'Ivoire and Benin Says French Spy Boss', *RFI*, 3 February 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Nellie Peyton, 'Growing Wealth Brings Rise in Deadly Conflict in Northern Ghana', *Reuters*, 2 August 2018.



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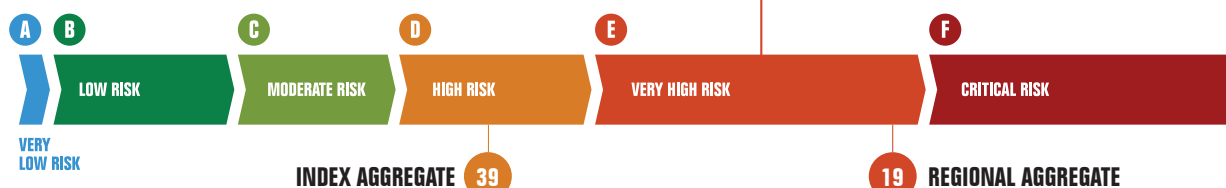
## Overall scores

The size of the colour band corresponds to number of countries that fall into that category.

**GHANA SCORE**  
**VERY HIGH RISK**

**E**

**23**



A > 83-100 VERY LOW

B > 67-82 LOW

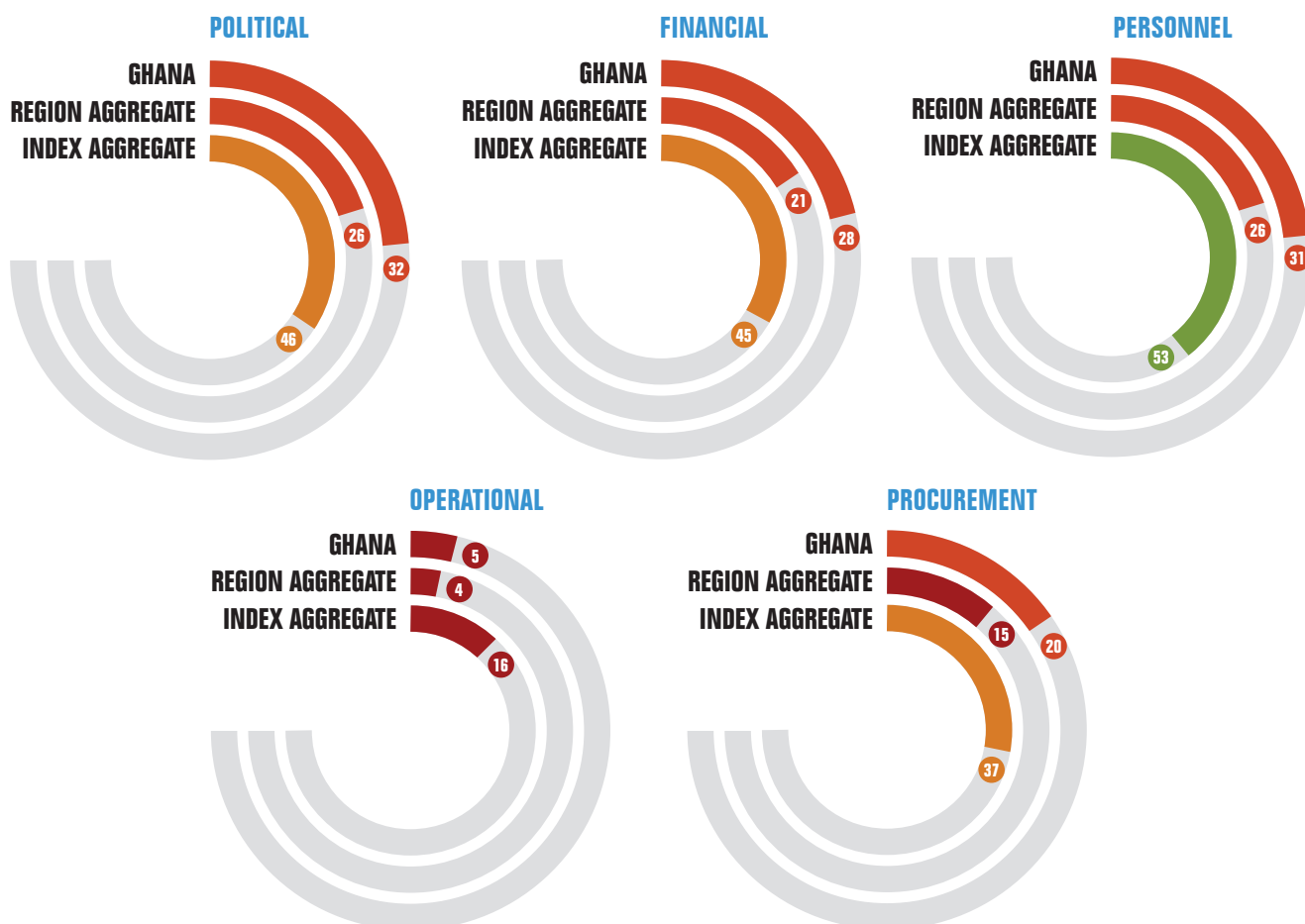
C > 50-66 MODERATE

D > 33-49 HIGH

E > 17-32 VERY HIGH

F > 0-16 CRITICAL

## Risk Comparison





# GHANA

## Parliamentary Oversight

Legislative oversight of budget (Open Budget Survey, 2019)	50/100
Military expenditure as a share of government spending (SIPRI, 2020)	1.3%
Committee members with defence expertise (%)	Exact data is not publicly available.
# of meetings/year	Data is not publicly available.
Last review of defence policy/strategy	The strategy is not publicly available.

Ghana's parliament has relatively strong formal powers of oversight and powerful tools to exercise these powers.<sup>5</sup> However, parliament's capacity and will to make use of them is tempered by excessive partisanship that hinders the work of the legislature. Strong party cohesion has been a hallmark of Ghanaian democracy, stifling substantial debate and blunting oversight tools. This is particularly visible in the defence sector where these features are buttressed by an entrenched culture of not interfering with defence affairs in parliament.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Ghana does not have a clearly defined national defence policy and majority of parliamentarians often lack knowledge of security issues, making debating these issues exceedingly difficult.<sup>7</sup> The Parliament Select Committee on Defence and Interior (PSCDI) is the designated defence oversight body; however, it also lacks adequate expertise and capacity to effectively hold the executive to account. The continual turnover of its membership and the lack of a permanent or specialised staff to support its work, seriously undermine the committee's ability to influence decisions. The committee does not engage in robust and regular debates, nor does it review defence policy, whilst its budgetary scrutiny is negligible. When budget issues are addressed, they are done so to request further resources and not to debate the use of funds, and its recommendations are similarly focussed. One potential resource through which to strengthen parliamentary oversight is Ghana's relatively strong auditing bodies in the defence sector. The Ministry of Defence's Audit Committee meets quarterly to provide internal controls over expenditure and, though there are question marks about the effectiveness of their work owing to political interference, it has the potential to provide useful insights to inform the defence committee's decision-making. The external and independent Audit Service is also empowered to scrutinise defence spending and reports bi-annually to parliament. Its audits are regular, in-depth and published online, although it should be noted they rarely focus on performance, producing mostly financial and compliance audits.<sup>8</sup>

## Financial Transparency

Defence-related access to information response rates	(1) % granted full or partial access: Data is not publicly available. (2) # subject to backlog: Data is not publicly available.
Defence-related complaints to ombudsman/commissioner #	Data is not publicly available.
Does the commissioner have authority over the MoD?	Yes (Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice – CHRAJ)
Audit reports on defence (2015-2020) #	Data is not publicly available.
Open Budget Index (IBP, 2019)	54/100
World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2021)	30th out of 180

Though government transparency is relatively strong in Ghana,<sup>9</sup> the defence sector remains an area characterised by high levels of secrecy and exemptions from standard reporting requirements. Ghana's defence budget is one illustration. Though it contains comprehensive and disaggregated information on expenditures across some functions, allocations for procurement are not itemised or included in the publicly available budget. This stands in contrast to other sub-programmes that contain information on objectives, functions, a results statement, and a list of projects. The government has also taken steps to improve the public's access to information with the passing of the 2019 Right to Information Act, designed to fill a substantial gap in Ghana's legislative framework around information rights.<sup>10</sup> While it remains to be seen how it is implemented, it should be noted that there are no explicit requirements for defence institutions to share information in the text, raising considerable uncertainty around how applicable it will be to the sector. Prior to this legislation, accessing defence information was complex and subject to arbitrary rejections by defence institutions. Financial transparency is further complicated by off-budget income, generated by military hospitals and peace support operations, which are exempted from public scrutiny and spent in opaque ways. Revenue from peace operations for instance is kept secret, without any public or institutional oversight. Additionally, off-budget military expenditure is permitted, and this spending is significant. Estimates have put Ghana's expenditures up to 20% higher than its actual budget, due to the size of its off-budget spending.<sup>11</sup> This allows the government to spend large sums on military goods and services with very little oversight, as this spending goes unrecorded.

<sup>5</sup> Rasheed Draman, 'Parliamentary Oversight', p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Transparency International Defence & Security, 'Country Overview: Ghana', 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Naila Salihu, 'Enhancing Accountability and Transparency in Ghana's Defence Sector', *KAIPIC Policy Brief*, November 2019, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Auditor-General, 'Reports'.

<sup>9</sup> Freedom House, 'Freedom in the World 2020 – Ghana', C3.

<sup>10</sup> Kofi Yeboah, 'The Fight for Transparency in Ghana', *Coda*, 1 April 2019.



# GHANA

## Personnel Ethics Framework

Whistleblowing legislation	Yes (2006 Whistleblower Act)
# defence-sector whistleblower cases	0
# Code of conduct violations	Military: Data is not publicly available.
	Civilian: Data is not publicly available.
Financial disclosure system	# submitted: Data is not publicly available.
	# of violations: Data is not publicly available.

Ghana's legal framework around personnel ethics and conduct is relatively strong. However, it remains poorly implemented in practice. Legislation, such as the 1960 Criminal Offences Act, specifically prohibits corruption and bribery but enforcement is patchy and not systematic, while facilitation payments remain widespread. Military and civilian personnel are subjected to codes of conduct, however, it is unclear whether the military code specifically addresses corruption as it is not publicly available. This makes it difficult to assess the quality and extent of the authorities' enforcement of the code and to establish whether investigations into code breaches that are reported in the media are the exceptions rather than the norm. Aside from this, Ghana has a relatively strong formal framework for encouraging personnel to report wrongdoing and corruption whilst in service. The 2006 Whistleblower Act applies to all personnel and is extensive, guaranteeing anonymity and no sanctions for misguided reporting, and establishing a complaints system and independent body to process such claims.<sup>12</sup> However, the Act has so far failed to encourage whistleblowers to step forward. The bulk of training and guidance on reporting corruption is still being done by CSOs, and defence institutions have so far failed to ensure appropriate prioritisation for whistleblower training.<sup>13</sup> There also remains a reluctance amongst personnel to use reporting channels due to a lack of trust and absence of evidence that military whistleblowers will be adequately protected. Further challenges exist in relation to recruitment and promotion processes, particularly at middle and senior positions. The Armed Forces Council, headed by the Vice-President, deals with promotions from lieutenant colonel and above. At this level, partisan politics play a key role in determining certain appointments and postings, and in many cases outweigh formal selection criteria. Scrutiny of these appointments is also patchy. The Council of State is responsible, but members are appointed by the President and subject to influence, while the Parliamentary Accounts and Defence Committees do not have the mandate to oversee such appointments.

## Operations

Total armed forces personnel (World Bank, 2018)	15,500
Troops deployed on operations #	861 in Lebanon (UNIFIL), 850 in South Sudan (UNMISS), 140 in Mali (MINUSMA).

Ghana is a significant troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, ranking tenth out of all contributing countries for total contributions.<sup>14</sup> Whilst Ghana's commitment to regional and international peacekeeping is an asset to the United Nations and has played a role in democratic consolidation and military professionalization,<sup>15</sup> a review of its anti-corruption safeguards in the field of military operations raises significant concerns around troops' vulnerability to corruption risk during deployments. Ghana has no military doctrine identifying corruption as a strategic issue for the success of military operations, nor does it include corruption in the forward planning of operations. Strategic failings also trickle down to the personnel level. There is no specific emphasis on corruption in trainings for commanders. Those deploying on peace support operations receive some related training at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), however even there the focus is light and focussed more on general ethics than mitigation strategies. Ghana also does not deploy any personnel to monitor and report on corruption risk while in the field, and it also fails to provide clear guidelines on managing such risks for deployed personnel, including those in sensitive positions such as contracting.

<sup>11</sup> Transparency International, 'Defence corruption risk in Sub-Saharan Africa An analysis of data relating corruption in defence establishments to development outcomes', 2009, p. 21.

<sup>12</sup> Republic of Ghana, Whistleblower Act.

<sup>13</sup> Ghana Web, 'SEND-Ghana educates Bolgatanga communities on corruption,' 5 April 2018.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, 'Summary of Troops Contributing Countries by Ranking', December 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Festus Aubyn, Kwesi Aning, Emma Birikorang, Fiifi Edu-Afful, Maya Mynster Christensen & Peter Albrecht, 'Ghana's Peacekeeping Efforts Abroad Have an Impact at Home', *DIIS Policy Brief*, 9 January 2019.



# GHANA

## Defence Procurement

Military expenditure (US\$ mil) (2020)	237
Open competition in defence procurement (%)	Data is not publicly available.
Main defence exports – to (SIPRI, 2016-20)	N/A
Main defence imports – from (SIPRI, 2016-20)	Spain, China, Turkey, Canada

Given Ghana's economic development and relative stability in recent years, it is perhaps unsurprising that it ranks bottom in West Africa for defence spending both as a percentage of GDP and as a percentage of total government spending.<sup>16</sup> This impression of defence spending being of low importance is tempered somewhat, when considering that Ghana still spends upwards of \$230 million on defence every year, a figure which is trending upwards and puts it well above many of its neighbours in total expenditures. A significant portion of this is spent on weapons and equipment procurement, with estimates putting this figure at just under 25% of total spending.<sup>17</sup> Increasing investment in the armed forces, however, represents a corruption risk when procurement systems are opaque and some purchases are exempted from standard reporting requirements, as is the case in Ghana. The 2003 Public Procurement Act allows for goods and services related to "national security concerns" to be procured outside

competitive tendering and allows the Armed Forces to procure directly through single-sourcing or restricted tendering.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, contrary to other public institutions, neither the Ministry of Defence's procurement cycle nor its acquisition plans are disclosed publicly, significantly undermining transparency around the procurement of military assets and efforts to exercise scrutiny over these acquisitions. While the government does publish some planned procurement in the budget,<sup>19</sup> they are far from extensive. Procurement oversight bodies, such as the MoD's Tender and Audit Committee, and the parliamentary defence committee, are entirely non-transparent and do not publish the results of their investigations, resulting in a serious information deficit with regards to procurement controls. Moreover, though the Public Procurement Authority has to validate any MoD requests to use single-sourcing when acquiring defence goods,<sup>20</sup> it does not publish information related to this process, making it difficult to assess its effectiveness. The vast majority of hardware procurement is restricted and never disclosed publicly, with only non-hardware items regularly procured through open tenders.

<sup>16</sup> SIPRI, 'Military Expenditure – Data for all countries 1949-2019'.

<sup>17</sup> Oscar Nkala, 'Ghanaian Defence Spending to Hit \$213.8 Million by 2021', *DefenceWeb*, 23 January 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Odoi Larbi, 'Ghana Loses \$2bn in Sole-sourced Contracts – Danquah Institute'.

<sup>19</sup> Republic of Ghana, 'The Budget Statement and Economic Policy', 2021, numbers 1060-1073.

<sup>20</sup> The Law Review, 'The Government Procurement Review (ed.4): Ghana', July 2016.

Version 1.0, October 2021

GDI data collection for **Ghana** was conducted February 2018 to March 2019. The narrative discussion in this GDI brief was produced at a later time with the most recent information available for the country, which may not be reflected in the GDI country assessments or scores.





# GHANA 2020 GDI Scorecard

		Grade	Score
<b>Political Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>32</b>
Q1	Legislative Scrutiny	D	33
Q2	Defence Committee	E	21
Q3	Defence Policy Debate	F	0
Q4	CSO Engagement	C	50
Q5	Conventions: UNCAC / OECD	C	63
Q6	Public Debate	D	38
Q7	Anticorruption Policy	D	38
Q8	Compliance and Ethics Units	E	25
Q9	Public Trust in Institutions	NS	
Q10	Risk Assessments	F	0
Q11	Acquisition Planning	E	17
Q12	Budget Transparency & Detail	D	38
Q13	Budget Scrutiny	C	63
Q14	Budget Availability	D	42
Q15	Defence Income	E	25
Q16	Internal Audit	D	38
Q17	External Audit	C	58
Q18	Natural Resources	C	56
Q19	Organised Crime Links	E	25
Q20	Organised Crime Policing	B	67
Q21	Intelligence Services Oversight	F	0
Q22	Intelligence Services Recruitment	F	0
Q23	Export Controls (ATT)	NEI	
Q76	Lobbying	F	0
<b>Financial Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>28</b>
Q24	Asset Disposal Controls	B	75
Q25	Asset Disposal Scrutiny	E	17
Q26	Secret Spending	F	0
Q27	Legislative Access to Information	NEI	
Q28	Secret Program Auditing	F	0
Q29	Off-budget Spending	E	17
Q30	Access to Information	D	38
Q31	Beneficial Ownership	F	0
Q32	Military-Owned Business Scrutiny	C	50
Q33	Unauthorised Private Enterprise	C	50
Q77	Defence Spending	D	38
<b>Personnel Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>31</b>
Q34	Public Commitment to Integrity	C	50
Q35	Disciplinary Measures for Personnel	C	63
Q36	Whistleblowing	E	25
Q37	High-risk Positions	F	0
Q38	Numbers of Personnel	F	0
Q39	Pay Rates and Allowances	F	13
Q40	Payment System	C	50
Q41	Objective Appointments	F	0
Q42	Objective Promotions	F	0
Q43	Bribery to Avoid Conscription	NA	
Q44	Bribery for Preferred Postings	A	83
Q45	Chains of Command and Payment	C	50
Q46	Military Code of Conduct	C	50

## OVERALL COUNTRY SCORE

**VERY HIGH RISK**

**E**

**23**

### RISK GRADE

**A • 83-100 VERY LOW**

**B • 67-82 LOW**

**C • 50-66 MODERATE**

**D • 33-49 HIGH**

**E • 17-32 VERY HIGH**

**F • 0-16 CRITICAL**



		Grade	Score
<b>Personnel Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>31</b>
Q47	Civilian Code of Conduct	NEI	
Q48	Anticorruption Training	F	0
Q49	Corruption Prosecutions	NEI	
Q50	Facilitation Payments	C	50

		Grade	Score
<b>Operational Risk</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>5</b>
Q51	Military Doctrine	E	25
Q52	Operational Training	F	0
Q53	Forward Planning	F	0
Q54	Corruption Monitoring in Operations	F	0
Q55	Controls in Contracting	F	0
Q56	Private Military Contractors	NS	

		Grade	Score
<b>Procurement Risk</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>20</b>
Q57	Procurement Legislation	C	50
Q58	Procurement Cycle	NEI	
Q59	Procurement Oversight Mechanisms	E	17
Q60	Potential Purchases Disclosed	F	13
Q61	Actual Purchases Disclosed	C	50
Q62	Business Compliance Standards	E	25
Q63	Procurement Requirements	E	17
Q64	Competition in Procurement	F	0
Q65	Tender Board Controls	E	25
Q66	Anti-Collusion Controls	D	38
Q67	Contract Award / Delivery	E	31
Q68	Complaint Mechanisms	D	33
Q69	Supplier Sanctions	C	50
Q70	Offset Contracts	F	0
Q71	Offset Contract Monitoring	F	0
Q72	Offset Competition	F	0
Q73	Agents and Intermediaries	F	0
Q74	Financing Packages	F	0
Q75	Political Pressure in Acquisitions	NS	

### KEY

**NEI** Not enough information to score indicator

**NS** Indicator is not scored for any country

**NA** Not applicable



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