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# Issue 398

## Of Eagle Eye Intelligence

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## CANADA: COVID-19 Policies Likely to Remain in Place Despite Continuing Protests

**Summary:** Protests in Ottawa and across Canada will probably continue and escalate in response to Ottawa's likely unwillingness to alter COVID-19 policies.

**Development:** On 6 February, the Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson declared a state of emergency following ongoing protests against COVID-19 restrictions. Protests began on 29 January due to growing discontent among truckers regarding the vaccine mandate required for crossing the border. The protests have grown to include a variety of anti-government complaints, ranging from dissatisfaction with COVID-19 restrictions, vaccine mandates, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Public safety minister Marco Mendicino released a statement stating that the "angry crowd" should not prompt the reversal of necessary public health policies. To quell protesters, police blocked access to food and fuel. Despite the best efforts of police, businesses across Ottawa remain closed and residents continue to report instances of harassment and feelings of fear in response to the protests. Protests and counter-protests continue to spread across the country.

**Analysis:** Protests will almost certainly continue despite the efforts of police but will likely not reverse COVID-19 related mandates and policies. This will almost certainly prolong the protests, which may in turn result in the doubling down on enforcement of policies. Protesters will probably view the attempted blockade of supplies as a provocation, which will almost certainly result in heightened tensions, potentially escalating the protests. Mendicino's commitment to upholding current policies likely reflects the sentiments of the rest of Trudeau's government and indicates an unwillingness to majorly alter them in any future negotiations with protesters. Residents and business owners in Ottawa and other impacted cities will likely put increasing pressure on police and other leaders to resolve the protests. This may result in more aggressive measures, possibly contributing to the escalation of protests.

[Alli McIntyre]

## AFRICAN UNION: Summit Over Coups Unlikely to Prevent Future Power Struggles

**Summary:** African Union (AU) member-country leaders met to discuss the rising rate of military coups sweeping across the continent. Despite the meeting, the rate of military coups will likely continue unless the summit produces definitive, hardline pre-active measures.

**Development:** On 5 February, AU heads of state met at its headquarters in Addis Ababa to discuss the rising rate of military coups afflicting the region in recent years. This comes in response to the recent uprising in Burkina Faso last month, which disposed the government and constitution. The continent has had five successful coups and two attempted coups in the past 18 months, with 12 of the 13 globally recorded coups since 2017 occurring in Africa. Many of these coups occurred in countries with economic and political instability with weak democratic establishments, although each case has its own differentiating circumstances. Some sources cite violent extremist groups, struggle institutionalizing after independence, and anti-authoritarian sentiments, among others. Despite the AU's near 20-year existence, it has had very little success in establishing productive anti-coups measures.

**Analysis:** The rising rate of military coups across Africa will likely continue due to the inaction taken by regional and international bodies in response to recent attempts. This inaction probably contributed to the startling rate increase in recent years by fueling a climate of impunity. The African Union likely would need to install rigid proactive measures to help prevent coups and install harsh punishments for any attempts. However, such measures may do little unless they address the roots of the unrest such as poverty, widespread corruption, and government mismanagement.

[Tim Fergus]

## SWEDEN: Lifted COVID-19 Restrictions Likely to Influence Other EU Members

**Summary:** Discontinued restrictions and testing in Sweden despite concerns from its scientific community will almost certainly indicate a lessened coronavirus impact in Sweden, likely influencing other EU countries to do the same.

**Development:** On 9 February, Stockholm lifted all coronavirus-related restrictions. Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson supported this decision by explaining although Sweden's coronavirus cases continue to increase, the strain on hospitals decreased with the Omicron variant. Stockholm said the reduced hospital strain indicates a new phase of the pandemic that requires less restrictions. Lifted restrictions include how many people can gather in a space, presentation of vaccination status, and establishment curfews. Stockholm also stopped free COVID-19 testing. While Stockholm continues to lift restrictions, it still urges unvaccinated individuals to avoid crowded indoor spaces. The health and science community continues to urge patience and reconsideration for Stockholm to avoid moving too fast.

**Analysis:** Stockholm will almost certainly not reconsider its position on lifting coronavirus restrictions because testing will no longer indicate a need for restrictions, which may influence decision making among other EU member nations. Because free testing stopped in Sweden, individuals may opt to not test themselves due to financial strain. The statistics indicated by Sweden for its coronavirus numbers will include nonresponse bias, almost certainly leading to the belief that its coronavirus numbers are lower than reality. Unless hospitals see a large increased strain, this will likely continue. If Sweden displays success after lifting restrictions, other EU countries will likely follow suit.

[Savannah Gallop]

## About GSIS

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's (ERAU) Bachelor of Science in Global Security & Intelligence Studies (GSIS) degree program at our Prescott Campus blends both academic and professional studies to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become future leaders in intelligence, security, and law enforcement. The program provides students with a sound foundation in the liberal arts, including international relations, foreign languages and cultures, international law, foreign policy, political and military history, and other essential topics.

## About EE

Eagle Eye Intelligence (EE) is an intelligence and research organization led by the students of the GSIS program at ERAU in Prescott, Arizona.

Dr. Philip E. Jones founded EE and Embry-Riddle's GSIS program in 2002, following a career with the Central Intelligence Agency and consulting work in international development and global security. Currently, Professor Dale R. Avery, a former career intelligence analyst, serves as EE's faculty advisor.

EE strives to provide actionable intelligence and analysis to its customers during the academic year. We are driven by a number of goals – continuous development, nonpartisanship, interdisciplinary studies, global awareness, and professionalism.

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not represent the position Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University or the College of Business, Security, and Intelligence.

Alli McIntyre, a senior in the GSIS program, currently serves as EE's Editor in Chief. For questions or comments, contact the team at [editorsee@gmail.com](mailto:editorsee@gmail.com) or Professor Avery at 928.777.4708. If you use material from this publication, you should attribute: Eagle Eye Intelligence Edition 398, a publication created by students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.



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