

# Dentons Flashpoint

## Global Situation Report

September 9, 2022

# Global Situation Update: September 9, 2022

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The European Central Bank raised interest rates to 0.75 percent, the largest increase since the early days of the currency union.

The US pledges \$2 billion in fresh security aid to Ukraine as the latter makes gains in the counteroffensive against occupying Russian troops.

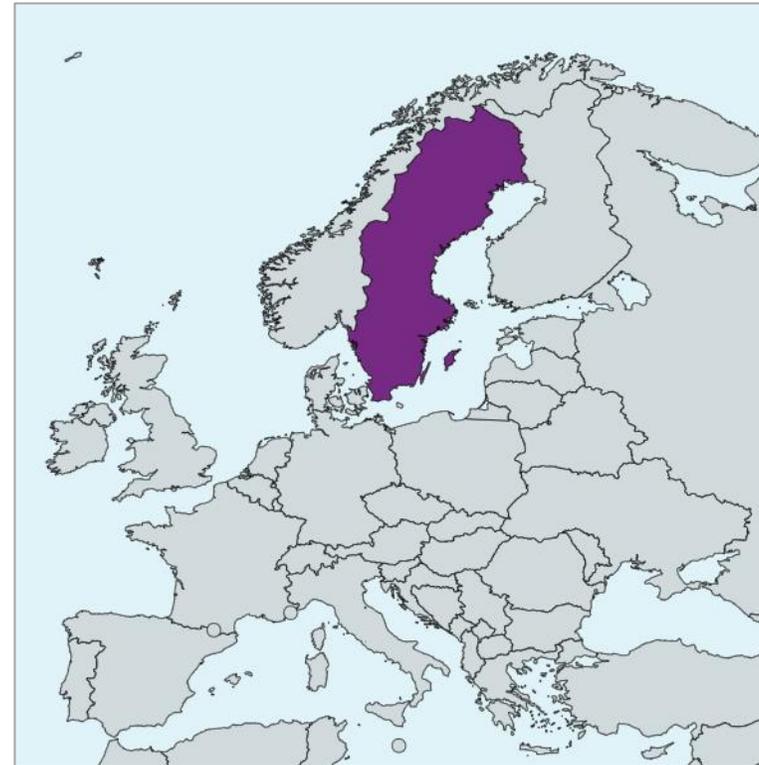
Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest-reigning monarch, dies, as the UK's new government faces steep economic headwinds.

# Global Situation Update: September 9, 2022

## WHAT WE'RE WATCHING

Sweden will hold parliamentary elections this weekend, with government formation likely to take several weeks. The incumbent Social Democrats are likely to win the largest share of the vote. However, the party is unlikely to gain a majority. Government formation prospects will likely hinge on whether centrist parties are prepared to govern with the far-right Sweden Democrats in a coalition led by the center-right Moderate Party.

If the far-right Sweden Democrats fare well, it could change the tone of national politics, for example, with demands for a clamp down on immigration. There are also concerns among many Swedes that the far-right, with its historical ties to neo-Nazis, did not swiftly and forcefully condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine.



*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Global

---

**More than 10.5 million children have lost one or both parents during the coronavirus pandemic, nearly double the previous estimates, according to the research letter published in JAMA Pediatrics.**

- The **Ukrainian** military said it had advanced nearly 50 km through that front after an assault that appeared to take the Russians by surprise. That would make it by far the fastest advance by either side in the war since Russia was forced to abandon its failed assault on the capital Kyiv in March.
- US Secretary of State Blinken visited Kyiv on Thursday and pledged \$2 billion in fresh security aid to bolster a **Ukrainian** counteroffensive aimed at pushing back Russian forces in the south and east. Ukraine reported progress in its effort to retake territory seized by Russia near Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv.
- Global **coal-fired power generation** fell by 1.2 percent during the first half of 2022 from a year earlier, per S&P Global Commodity Insights, driven by the economic slowdown in China and a surge in global coal prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Markets & Business

---

**India imposed controls on exports of several varieties of rice today, in a move likely to affect the global market as the world's leading exporter of rice.**

- **Citigroup Inc** is entitled to recoup about \$500 million of its own money that it accidentally wired Revlon Inc lenders three years ago, a US appeals court ruled.
- **Credit Suisse** struck a deal to buy out its local partner in a Chinese securities joint venture, reaffirming its commitment to the world's second-biggest economy.
- The US has seized over \$30 million in **cryptocurrency** stolen by North Korean-linked hackers Lazarus from the popular online game Axie Infinity.
- **EY's** top 15 leaders have approved a plan to split the Big Four firm into separate audit and advisory businesses, with the radical break-up proposal now proceeding to a vote of 13,000 partners.
- Amazon-backed electric vehicle maker **Rivian** has forged a deal with legacy carmaker **Mercedes-Benz** to make battery delivery vehicles in Europe.

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Environment, Sustainability & Governance

---

**The global cost of meeting global targets to fight issues such as hunger, poverty and climate change rose 25 percent to \$176 trillion over the last year, per a new report by the Force for Good Initiative.**

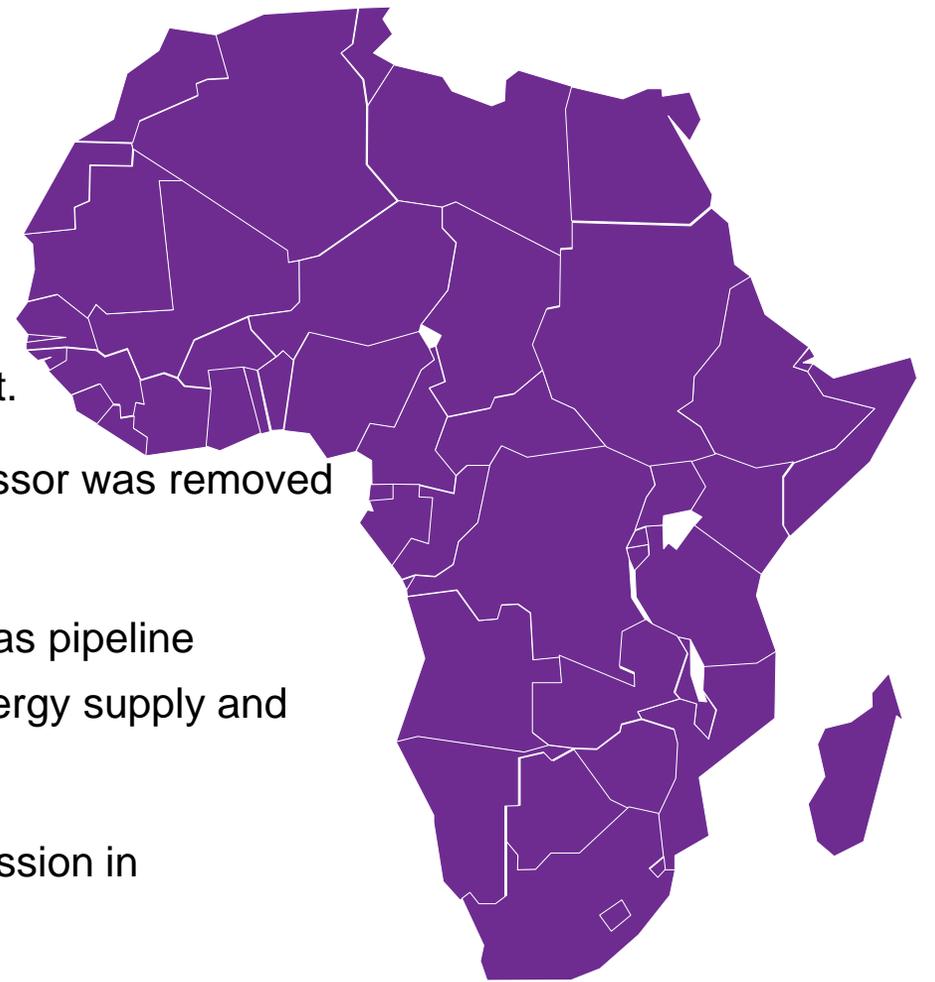
- Figures from Equilar on **diversity** show that women made up a smaller share of new directors who joined company boards in the first two quarters of this year, undoing the trend from 2021.
- Toyota, Hyundai and Nissan ranked at the bottom of a new Greenpeace study on 10 **automakers' decarbonization efforts**.
- Labor groups and investors have filed a shareholder proposal asking Apple to review how it treats **workers' rights**.

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Africa

---

- Members of a **Nigerian** oil workers' union are threatening to go on strike if the government does not do more to stem widespread oil theft.
- **Burundi's** new prime minister was sworn in a week after his predecessor was removed due to what the president called a coup plot against him.
- **Central African** countries signed a deal to create a regional oil and gas pipeline network and hub infrastructures which backers say will strengthen energy supply and reduce dependence on imports.
- The **EU** pledged to provide additional support to an African military mission in **Mozambique**, as Islamist attacks threaten critical gas projects.
- A **Nigerian** official estimated that the country will be able to send more LNG to Europe by next winter.

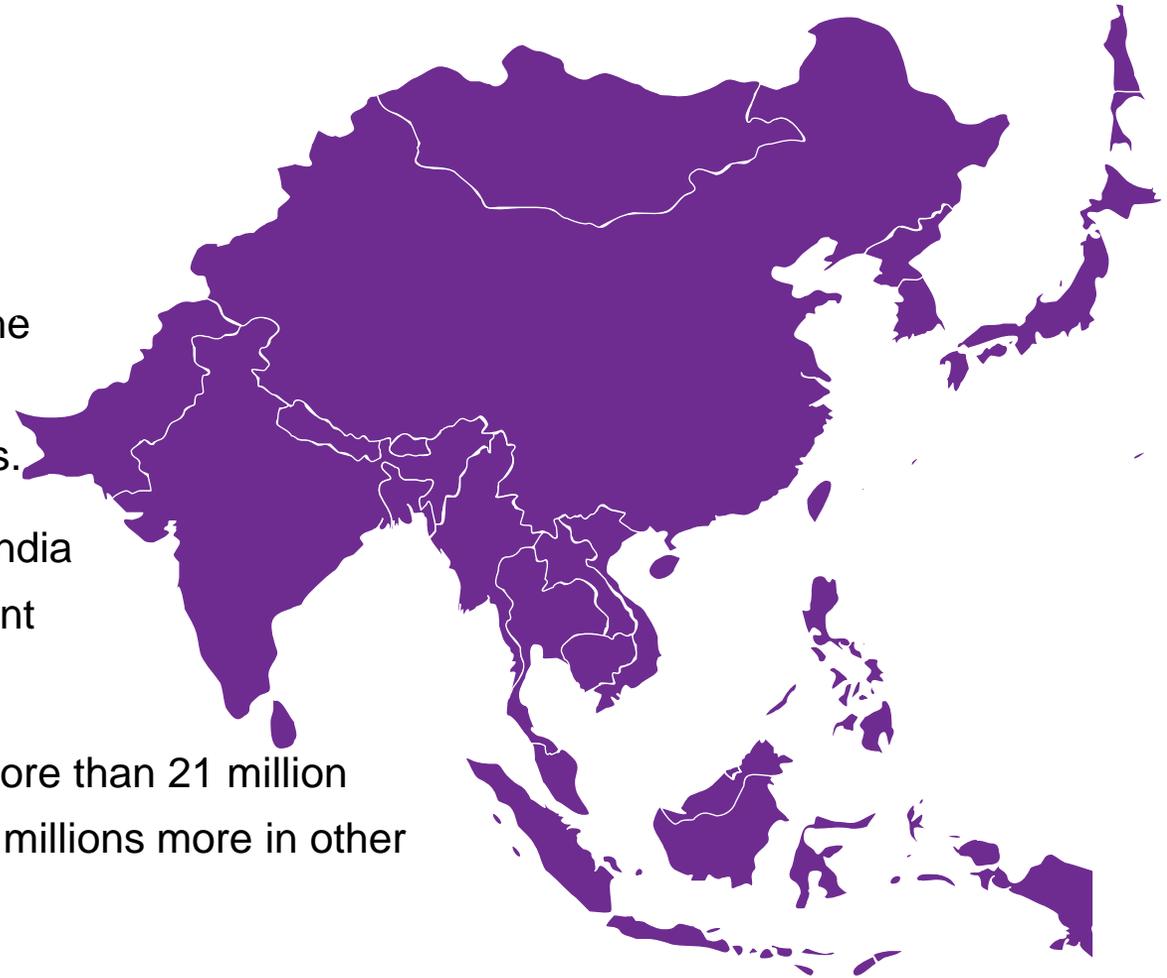


*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Asia

---

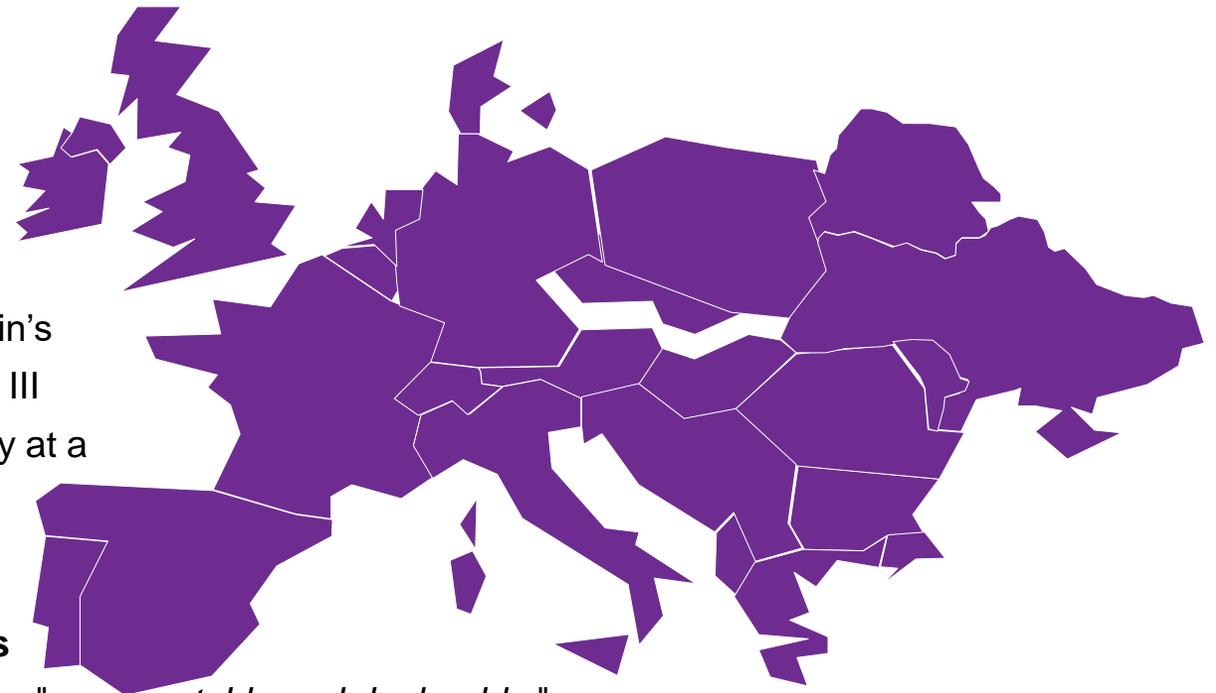
- **Indian and Chinese** troops have begun disengaging from the Gogra-Hotsprings border area in the western Himalayas, two years after clashes at the frontier strained diplomatic ties.
- **India and Japan** will deepen cooperation on defense, with India inviting investment by Japanese companies and plans for joint military exercises involving their air forces.
- The **Chinese** city of Chengdu extended a lockdown for its more than 21 million residents to prevent further transmission of COVID-19 while millions more in other parts of China were told to not travel in upcoming holidays.
- **North Korea** has officially enshrined the right to use preemptive nuclear strikes to protect itself in a new law that leader Kim Jong Un said makes its nuclear status "irreversible" and bars denuclearization talks.



*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Europe

- The **UK** is in mourning with the death of Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's longest-reigning monarch, after 70 years on throne. King Charles III automatically becomes monarch and will address the nation today at a time when the country is facing strong economic headwinds and a newly minted prime minister.
- The **EU** condemned the detention of a senior diplomat to **Belarus** who attended the trial of opposition activists in the capital Minsk as "*unacceptable and deplorable.*"
- The European Central Bank raised interest rates to 0.75 percent from zero, the largest amount since the early days of **Europe's** currency union, to combat record inflation even as an energy crisis puts Europe on the brink of recession.
- **Germany's** economy ministry is considering a number of measures to make business with **China** less attractive as it seeks to reduce its dependency on Asia's economic superpower. The measures could include reducing or even scrapping investment and export guarantees for China.
- The head of the UN human rights monitoring mission in **Ukraine** said that **Russia** is not allowing access to prisoners of war, voicing concern amid evidence that some have been subject to torture and ill-treatment.



*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# How do You Manage Incident Response?

---

*2022 has already seen business disrupted by extreme weather, ransomware attack, the ongoing pandemic and more. The common refrain “It’s not if, but when” rings truer than ever for disruptive incidents that will impact business as usual.*

*Working with Dentons, you can effectively develop an organizational incident-behavior adopted by all your team members. Dentons will help you build muscle memory through tabletop exercises, which are crafted to fit the business strategy of every client.*

*Our team plays events and incidents of different severities and complexities and accounts for real-world factors such as inconclusive evidence, mistakes by responders, and the business impact of eradication steps. Our tech-savvy lawyers continuously revise the playbooks per the evolving sector-specific threat landscape.*

*Dentons tabletop sessions are fluid, and designed to enhance preparedness with services, including:*

- ❖ Ransomware tabletop exercises
- ❖ Post-tabletop action reports
- ❖ Maturity assessments for preparedness
- ❖ Supply-chain attack simulation
- ❖ Comprehensive incident response plan
- ❖ Threat analysis and monitoring

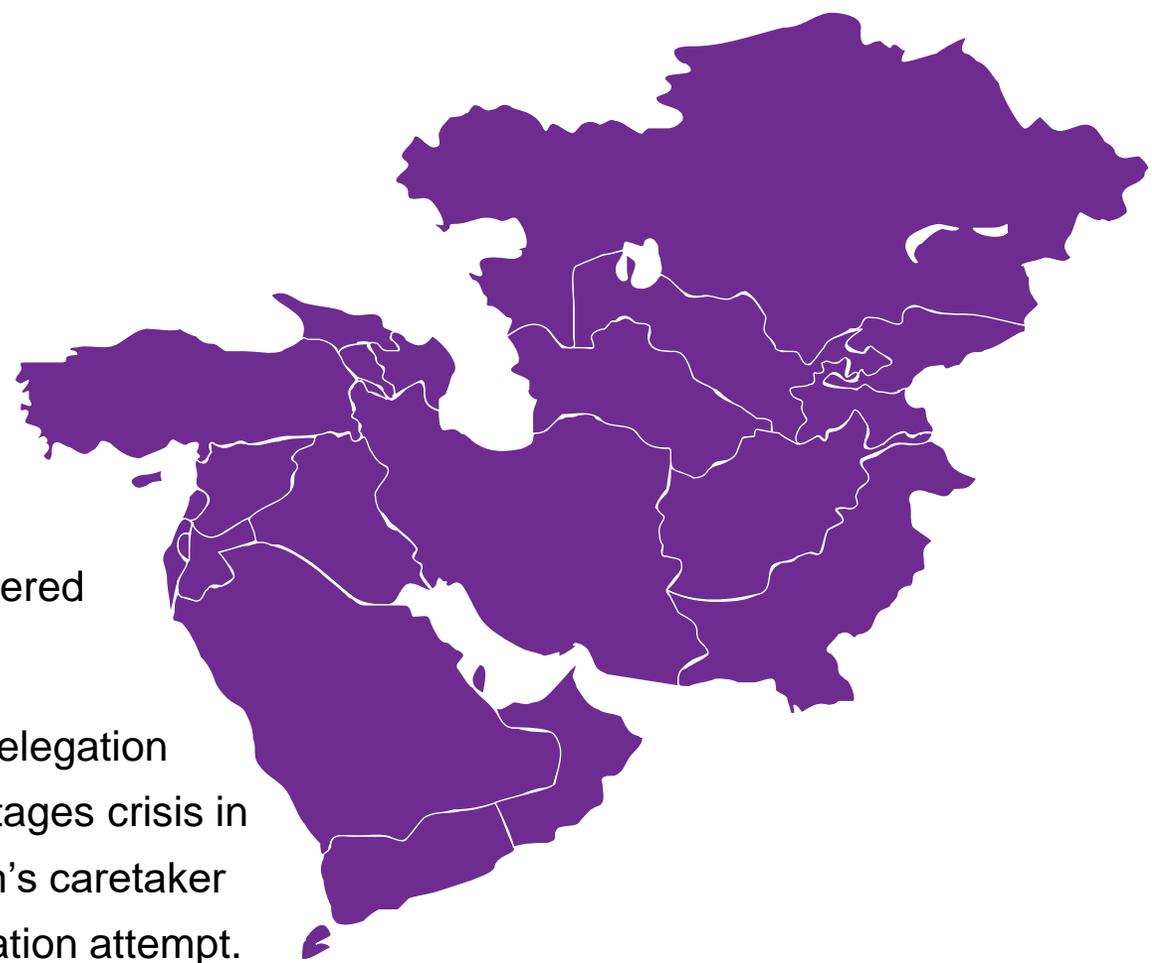
*All interaction with Dentons is attorney-client privileged*

*To learn more about the bespoke intelligence and risk services from Dentons, contact [Karl Hopkins](#).*

# Middle East

---

- The **US** is reportedly considering establishing a testing center for UAVs and other technology in **Saudi Arabia**, a potential sign of the relationship strengthening.
- **Iranian** embassy staff departed **Albania** after the country severed ties due to a major cyberattack directed by Tehran.
- The **Lebanese** government is preparing to send a technical delegation to **Iran** to negotiate acquiring "free" fuel to ease the power outages crisis in the country. A bomb exploded in the Beirut garden of Lebanon's caretaker Public Works and Transport Minister in an apparent assassination attempt.
- **UN** Secretary-General Guterres appealed to the world for massive help for **Pakistan** as he arrived to support its response to a flood disaster blamed on climate change.



# Americas

---

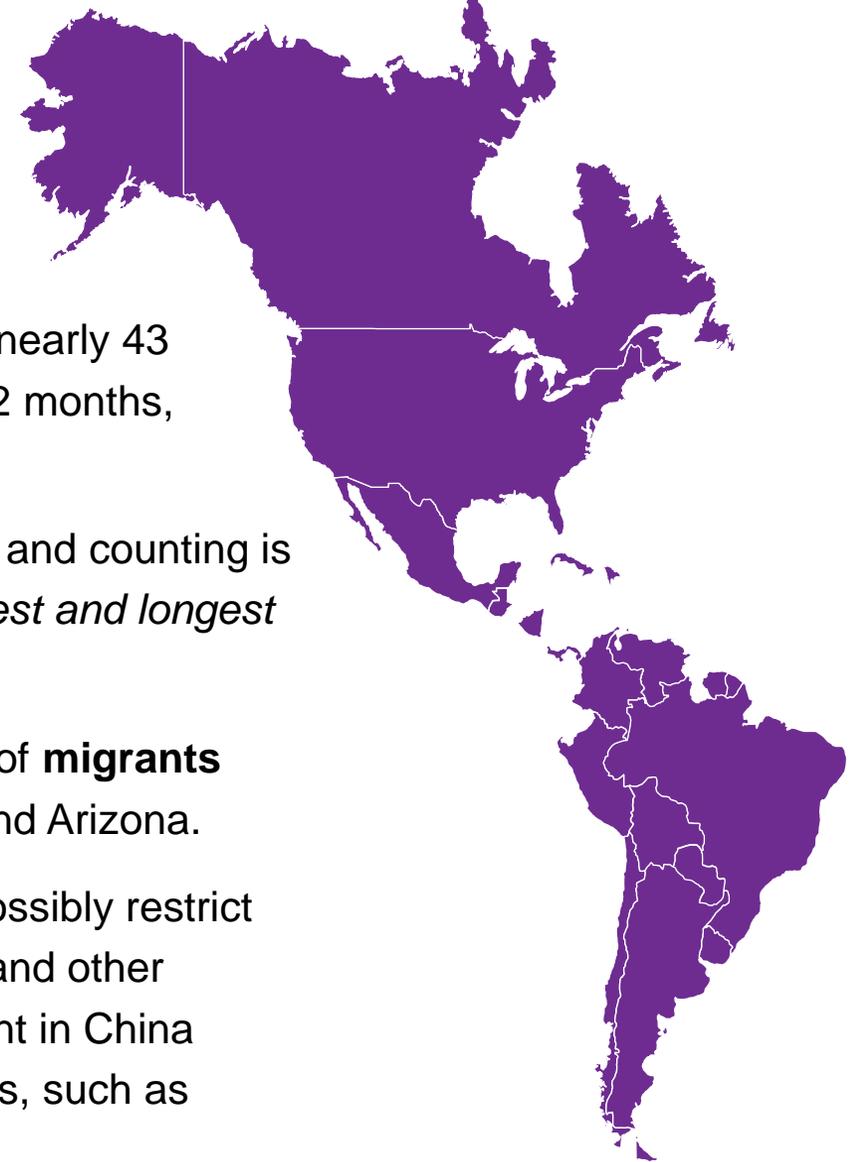
- Thousands in **Haiti's** capital and other major cities protested to demand safer streets, more affordable goods and the resignation of Prime Minister Henry.
- The Bank of **Canada** hiked interest rates by 75-basis points to a 14-year high and left the door open to further hikes to combat inflation.
- **Ecuador** reached a preliminary agreement with indigenous groups to declare a temporary moratorium on 16 oil blocks, a turning point in negotiations aimed at staving off renewed street protests.
- **Colombia** will focus its anti-drug fight on weakening traffickers' financial power and will continue forced eradication of coca crops, part of Colombia's revised anti-dug strategy under new leftist President Petro.
- **Peru's** government unveiled a new 3 billion sole investment package, including public spending and incentives for private investors, in a bid to counteract economic turbulence and falling copper prices.



*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Americas: US

- **Marijuana** use among young adults reached an all-time high last year, with nearly 43 percent of 19- to 30-year-olds saying they had used marijuana in the past 12 months, according to research funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.
- The **heat wave** scorching California and other parts of the West for 10 days and counting is the most severe ever recorded in September per weather experts, the “*hottest and longest on record*” for the month.
- Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser declared a public emergency over buses of **migrants** sent by Republican governors from the US-Mexico border states of Texas and Arizona.
- The Biden Administration is considering an executive order to screen and possibly restrict US overseas investment in cutting-edge technology development in **China** and other potentially hostile countries. Policy makers are concerned that US investment in China could help Beijing achieve its goal to dominate strategically important sectors, such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence and quantum computing.



*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Organizations Must Beware of Prolific USB-Based Malware “Raspberry Robin”

*By Emilio Iasiello, Global Cyber Threat Intelligence Manager, Scott Muir, Senior Analyst, and Courtney Barnard, Global Cyber Threat Intelligence Coordinator*

***This summer saw a spike in attempted hacks by notorious Russian cybercriminal operation Evil Corp against the manufacturing, technology, oil and gas, and transportation industries around the world via social engineering and the use of infected removable drives, such as USB devices.***

The attack vector is unusual because the malware known as “Raspberry Robin” – also known as the QNAP Worm – requires physical access to a network before it can facilitate devastating ransomware payloads. These attacks are made possible by staff, whether unwitting or complicit, and unguarded devices in public or in offices. They serve as a reminder that organizations should consider developing and implementing a USB policy that defines acceptable use of the devices to ensure their safe use.

## ***Recent Activity***

Raspberry Robin malware was first analyzed in May 2022 by cybersecurity firm Red Canary, although it may have been first leveraged by hackers as early as September 2021. More recently, IBM Security researchers provided greater insight into the malware with a report that detailed how it has spread quickly since its initial

use, with up to 17 percent of their managed clients in affected industries having suffered infection attempts during summer 2022. Throughout this year, several cases were reported in Germany, Hungary, India, and elsewhere. Perhaps the most mysterious thing about Raspberry Robin at present is the objective of its operators. Financially-motivated ransomware gangs typically exploit access quickly, while many breaches that involve Raspberry Robin have not yet done so.

## ***How it Works***

Raspberry Robin is notable because it is spread via USB sticks, moving through a targeted network after first being inserted in a network device via a USB that hosts the malicious file. There is currently a critical cyber intelligence gap about the social engineering techniques employed by attackers to convince or trick victims into

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Organizations Must Beware of Prolific USB-Based Malware “Raspberry Robin”

inserting an infected USB device into a targeted network. However, it is known that the infected USB devices contain a malicious .LNK document, which, once read by the victim's computer, will initiate contact with malicious sites controlled by the attackers.

The Raspberry Robin malware is a loader, meaning that it can remain dormant on an infected network until it is remotely instructed by its operators to “call” another malware, i.e. download a second-stage payload onto a device. In most cases investigated by IBM Security, Raspberry Robin infected the targeted device several months before the rest of the attack took place and the observed second-stage malware is known by the name “FakeUpdates.” It appears as a legitimate software update to the user, but instead installs attack software which are then used to download ransomware onto the network.

## [Links to Russian Cyber-Criminals](#)

Cybersecurity professionals note the overt similarities between Raspberry Robin and Dridex, a notorious malware loader attributed to a cybercriminal gang dubbed Evil Corp. Evil Corp is a sophisticated, highly-organized enterprise operating out of Russia,

which was sanctioned by the US Department of Treasury in 2019 for developing the Dridex malware that has been used to target hundreds of banks worldwide and initiate more than USD \$100 million in theft. The gang has expanded and diversified its range of targets over recent years, more recently with involvement in ransomware attacks.

## [Way Ahead](#)

Although there are several key intelligence gaps surrounding the Raspberry Robin malware, it remains clear that organizations must remind staff that social engineering attacks take many forms. Organizations should ensure that threats posed by external devices are included in security training, and specifically state that USB devices of unknown origin should never be inserted into a computer. A clear USB policy that defines acceptable use of the devices would likely enhance cybersecurity.

Dentons offers business leaders a full complement of counseling and advice for cyber risk management, including best practices for implementing a USB safety policy and more. Dentons also offers regulatory and litigation services, and analysis and intelligence

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Organizations Must Beware of Prolific USB-Based Malware “Raspberry Robin”

products, that can help clients to better understand fast-changing threat environments. Importantly, all interaction is attorney-client privileged. To learn more about the bespoke cyber intelligence and risk services from Dentons please contact us today.

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Coronavirus Condition Updates

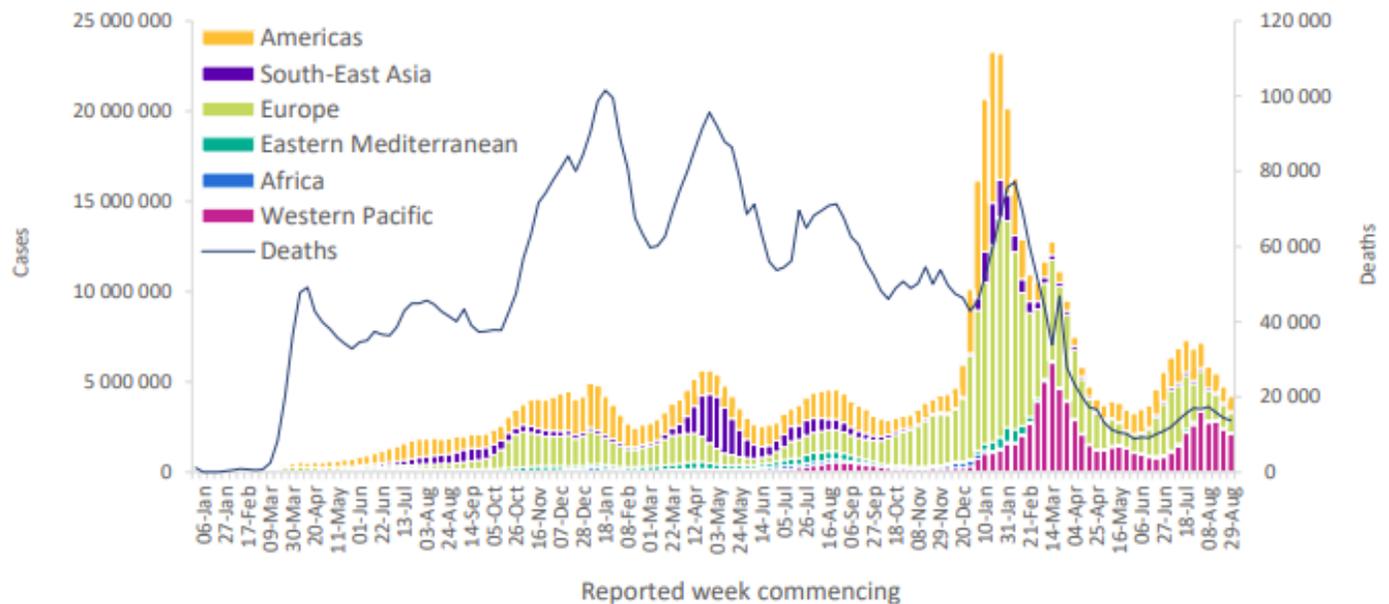
As of 6:58 pm CEST on September 7, 2022

# Coronavirus Snapshot

**Globally, confirmed coronavirus cases topped 603.7 million with 6.4 million deaths; more than 12.5 billion vaccine doses have been administered.**

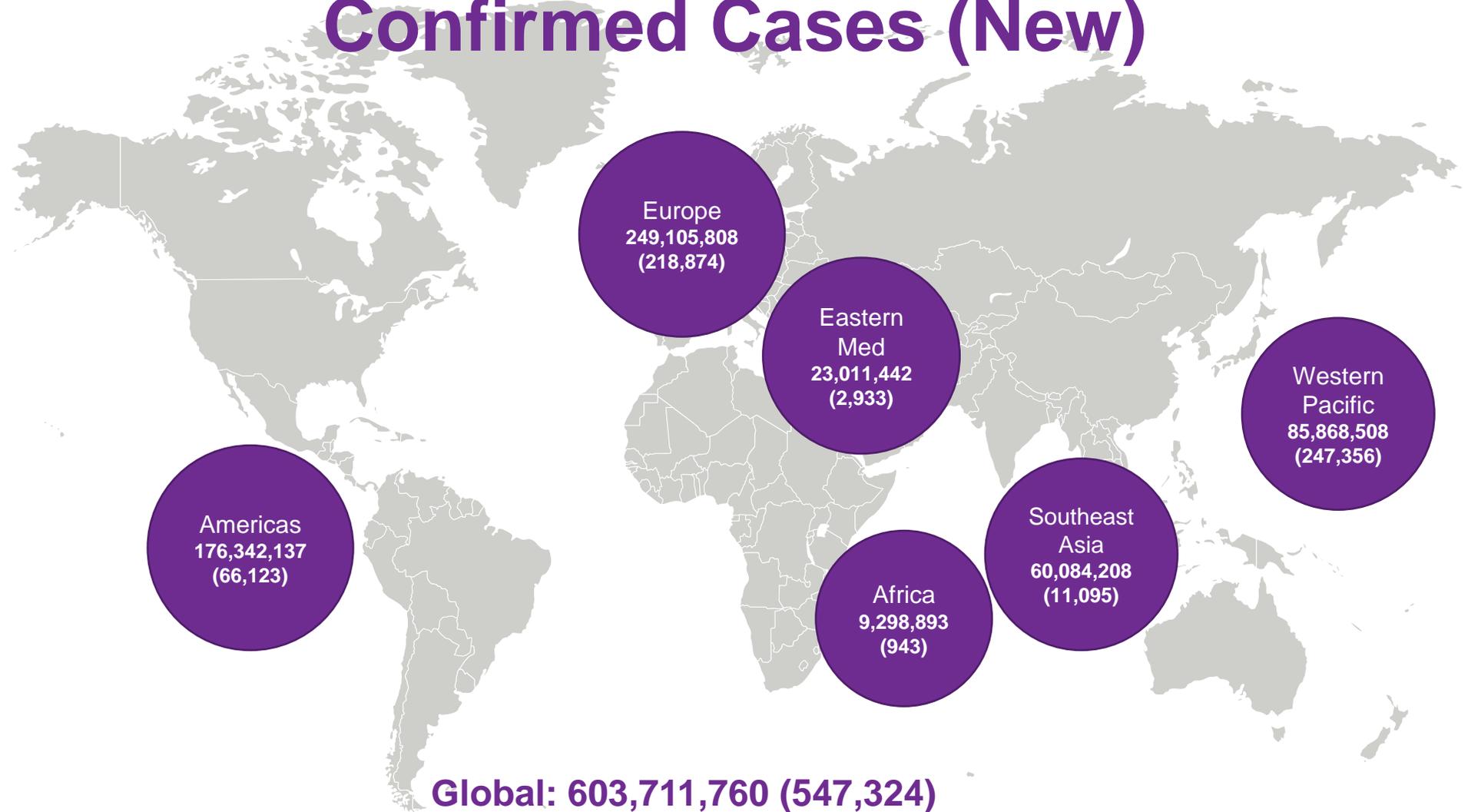
- Globally, the number of weekly cases decreased by 12 percent during the week of 29 August to 4 September 2022 as compared to the previous week, with just under 4.2 million new cases reported.
- The number of new weekly deaths decreased by 5 percent as compared to the previous week, with over 13,700 fatalities reported.

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases reported weekly by WHO Region, and global deaths, as of 4 September 2022\*\*



Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.

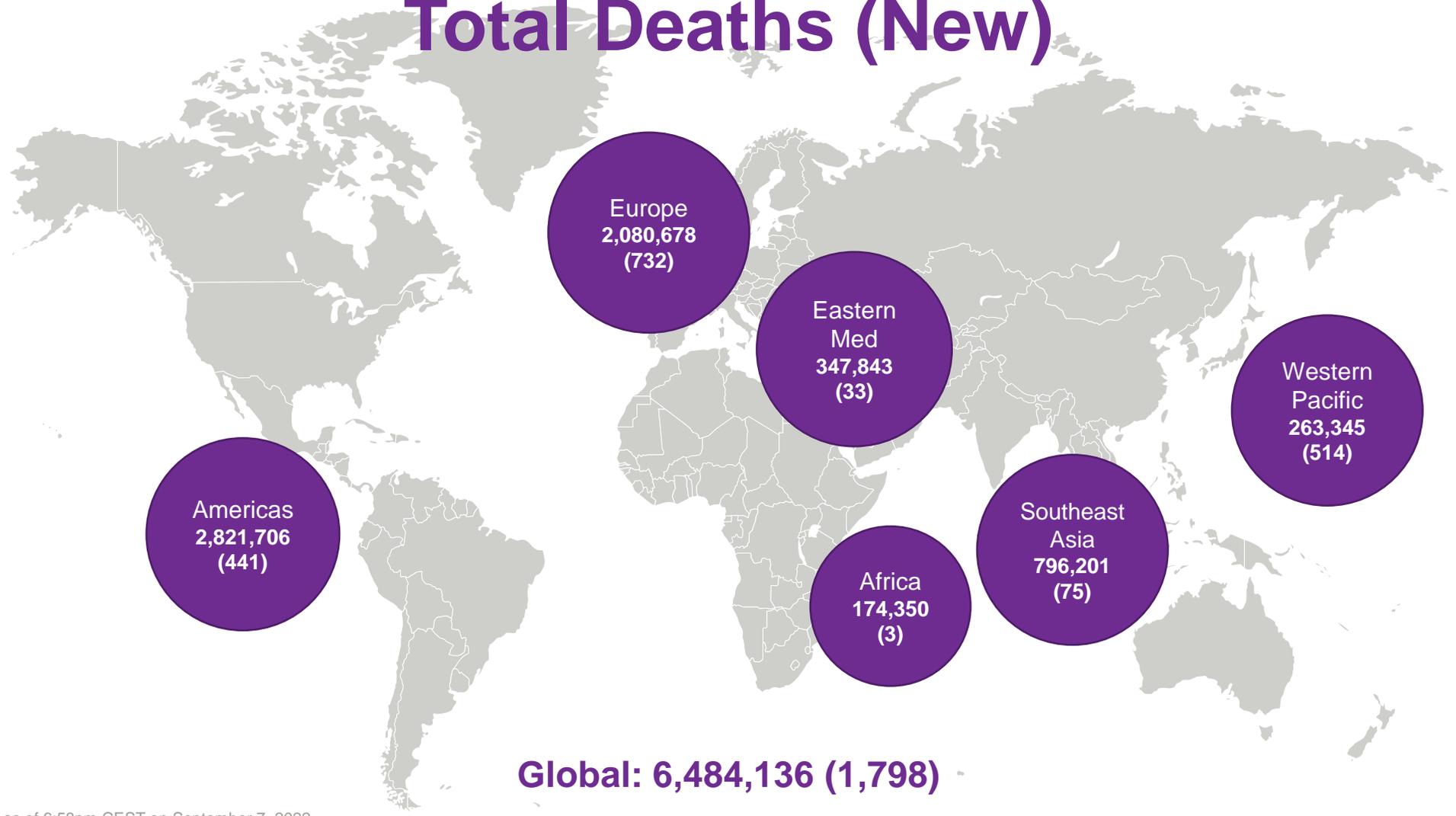
# Confirmed Cases (New)



Reflects data as of 6:58pm CEST on September 7, 2022.  
Data Source: World Health Organization

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Total Deaths (New)



Reflects data as of 6:58pm CEST on September 7, 2022.  
Data Source: World Health Organization

*Note: This report is based on sources and information deemed to be true and reliable, but Dentons makes no representations to same.*

# Contacts

---

*This summary is based on reports sourced from among the 75 countries in which Dentons currently serves clients as well as from firms in other locations, some of which will formally join Dentons later in 2020. We are pleased to share this complimentary summary and contemporaneous assessment, with the caveat that developments are changing rapidly. This is not legal advice, and you should not act or refrain from acting based solely on its contents. We urge you to consult with counsel regarding your particular circumstances.*

*To read additional analysis, visit the [Dentons Flashpoint portal](#) for insights into geopolitics and governance; industry and markets; cyber and security; science, health and culture; and economic and regulatory issues.*

## **Karl Hopkins**

Partner and Global Chief Security Officer  
Dentons  
Washington, DC

D +1 202 408 9225  
[karl.hopkins@dentons.com](mailto:karl.hopkins@dentons.com)

## **Melissa Mahle**

Senior Analyst  
Dentons  
Washington, DC

D +1 202 408 6383  
[melissa.mahle@dentons.com](mailto:melissa.mahle@dentons.com)