



ALERT +

*Extinction Rebellion Plan
Resumption of Protests in London*

United Kingdom— *August 2021*
Civil Unrest Risk

SITUATION SUMMARY

In London next week, Extinction Rebellion are set to commence what could be their longest series of unrest thus far. The group are planning to occupy sites throughout the British capital from 10:00 local time on 23 August. The specific locations of the unrest remain vague at this time; however, the demonstrations will start at Trafalgar Square and will target the City of London.

The demonstrations are set to be part of what the group are terming, The Impossible Rebellion. The main goal of the unrest is for the government to “stop all new fossil fuel investment immediately”. The protests are planned for two weeks, with the group urging people to take time off work to take part.

By targeting the city, the group are aiming to disrupt the political economy, which they believe is the root cause of the crisis. They hope this will put pressure on the biggest financial institutions that are “fueling this emergency” and that this pressure will cause a “ripple effect” leading to government reform.

The planned action comes following the release of the UN IPCC report on climate change. In the more than 4,000-page report, the UN has termed the situation a “code red for humanity” with dire consequences for the planet.

The authors of the report believe that the world will be 1.5 Celsius hotter in 2040 when compared to pre-industrial times. It is stated that there is an almost certainty of increasingly extreme heatwaves, droughts and flooding. Importantly, a key temperature limit is likely to be broken in just over a decade. Meaning that, by then, climate change, and its effects, will be irreversible.

The report expresses the hope that if humanity acts quickly, then temperatures could be stabilised. Otherwise, many of the consequences that the globe will face will be irreversible. However, this would require deep cuts in the emission of greenhouse gases that, as of yet, are not forthcoming.

SOLACE GLOBAL COMMENT

The unrest is set to be the groups first large-scale protest in London since September 2020. In the rally last year, protesters successfully blocked parliament square, as well as targeted Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and disrupted the printing of newspapers.

It is also common for the group to target offices of oil companies, such as BP, as well as banks with strong ties to the fossil fuel industry, such as HSBC. Buildings linked to these companies, such as the National Art Gallery, which is sponsored by BP, have also been the target of unrest in the past.

The group are also prone to publicity stunts that range from being generally disruptive with an underlying image, to what are extremely dangerous headline-grabbing incidents. In the past, windows have been broken or painted black (to signify oil). A decommissioned fire engine was also used to spray "blood" in front of the UK treasury. Operations at City Airport and on the tube have also been disrupted, usually by solo acts by individuals affiliated with the group.

It is highly likely that the upcoming unrest will involve some form of high-profile incident. It is also almost certain that other, smaller, incidents will occur. This could range from the blocking of major roads in the British capital to minor acts of vandalism and sabotage. Non-violent resistance is also likely, with arrests almost certain. Disruption and delays in the capital should be expected.

While it is unclear what exact high-profile incident may or may not be planned, there is a possibility that road, rail and air services in the capital will be disrupted. Major blockages, including the storming of train tracks, blocking all the bridges on the Thames, or disrupting operations at London City and other airports in the capital, are possible.

Outside of London, similar protests should be expected in all cities across the UK, while these will be smaller than those in the capital, disruption is almost certain. Unrest and protests elsewhere, in Europe, Australia and the US, is also highly likely.

SOLACE GLOBAL ADVICE

- Keep abreast with the latest developments regarding the unrest via local media and tailored Solace Secure intelligence.
 - Those operating in London in the coming weeks should allow for additional time to complete journeys due to the disruption caused by the unrest.
 - Plan journeys to bypass all ongoing disruptions due to the likelihood of delays and the potential for confrontations.
 - If possible, look to work from a remote location, avoiding the necessity to travel to the city. This is especially the case if working at an office or building that is likely to be targeted.
 - Expect a heavy police presence, including riot control officers, throughout London. Road closures and other security measures are also highly likely. These are especially likely around key institutions, such as Lloyds of London, Mansion House and the Bank of England.
 - Adhere to all instructions issued by officers, including any restrictions.
- Violence is highly unlikely; however, be aware that even calm protests can quickly escalate into violence with little or no warning.
 - If confronted with protesters be polite and avoid discussing controversial subjects, look to leave the area at the earliest opportunity.
 - Police may also forcibly remove protesters that are blocking access roads and/or office locations. During such actions, violence can occur, and tensions increase.
 - Elements of the protest group may look to target airports and other transport hubs. Such actions, usually by individuals, have resulted in clashes in the past. Look to vacate any areas should violence occur.
 - Offices and other locations at risk of being targeted should employ measures to secure properties now.



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