

## Executive Summary

- Conflict parties signed **31 inter- and intrastate peace agreements** in 2023 across eight countries, and more than four local agreements (see Figure 1). This represents a slight year-on-year increase in the number of inter- and intrastate agreements compared to the 25 agreements concluded in 2022 (see page 6 for Limitations and Future Research).
- However, peace agreement numbers in 2023 were primarily driven by a single peace process between the **Colombian government and the National Liberation Army (ELN)** which accounts for **68% of agreements** recorded in 2023 (excluding local agreements).
- Despite the increase, the **general downward trend in the number peace agreements signed** (excluding local agreements) from the early 1990s to today persists (see Figure 2).
- The four processes with the greatest number of agreements in 2023 were the aforementioned process between the Colombian government and the ELN (21 agreements), followed by the Sudan transition process (3), the Nairobi process for the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (2), and the Kosovo-Serbia normalisation process (2 agreements, status unclear due to post-hoc disputes over acceptance by all parties. See [codebook](#) for status definitions).
- **No comprehensive peace agreement** was signed in 2023. Comprehensive agreements are rare events in any year. The relative proportion of such agreements remained relatively stable since 1990, with a spike in the mid-2000s (see Figure 3).
- In 2023, **ceasefire agreements** constituted 42% of total agreements (19% average since 1990), **implementation agreements** 32% (20% average) and **pre-negotiation/process** agreements 10% (29% average) of total agreements (see Figure 5). These changes call for further scrutiny of the changing nature of peace processes.
- **Only 26% of agreements signed in 2023 include references to women, girls, gender or sexual violence** (excluding local agreements). While some progress has been made in including gender provisions in peace agreements since 1990, there is a need for more robust measures to ensure gender inclusivity in peace processes.
- The **China-mediated agreement** between Iran and Saudi Arabia marks a notable shift in global diplomatic dynamics, with potential implications for the broader Middle East and North Africa region. The success of such mediation efforts will need to be evaluated over time.
- The involvement of multiple **international actors** in mediating agreements in Colombia in 2023 highlight the complex and collaborative nature of contemporary peace processes.

## Global Insights

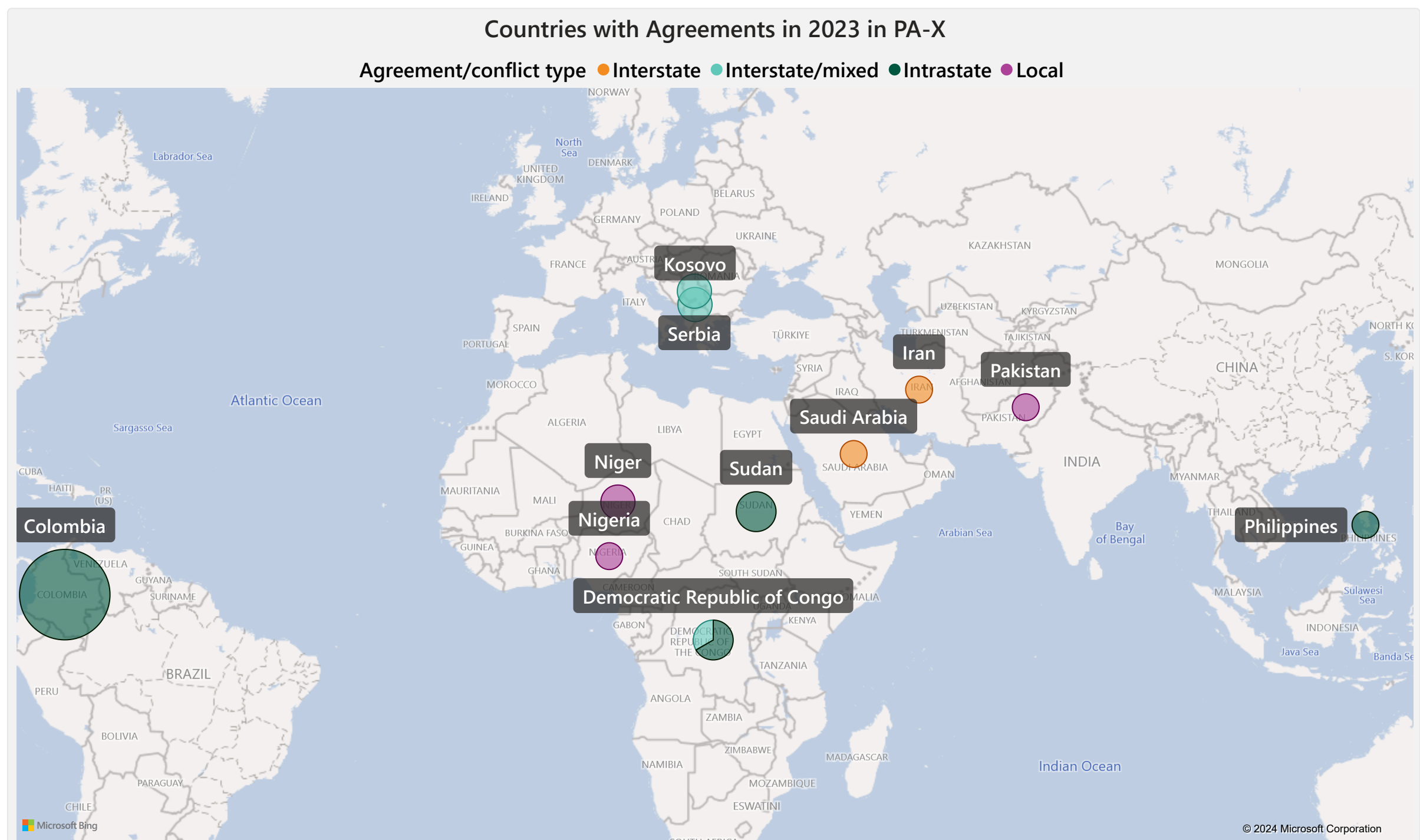


Figure 1.



## Global Insights (continued)

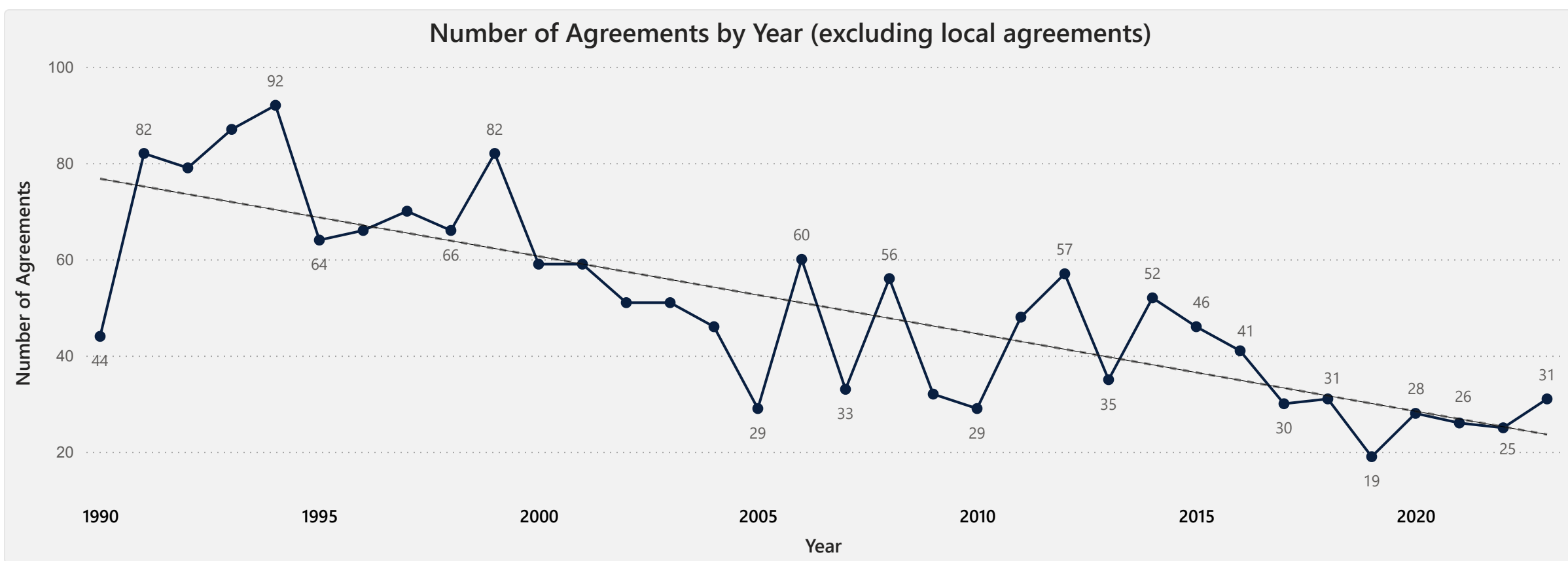


Figure 2.

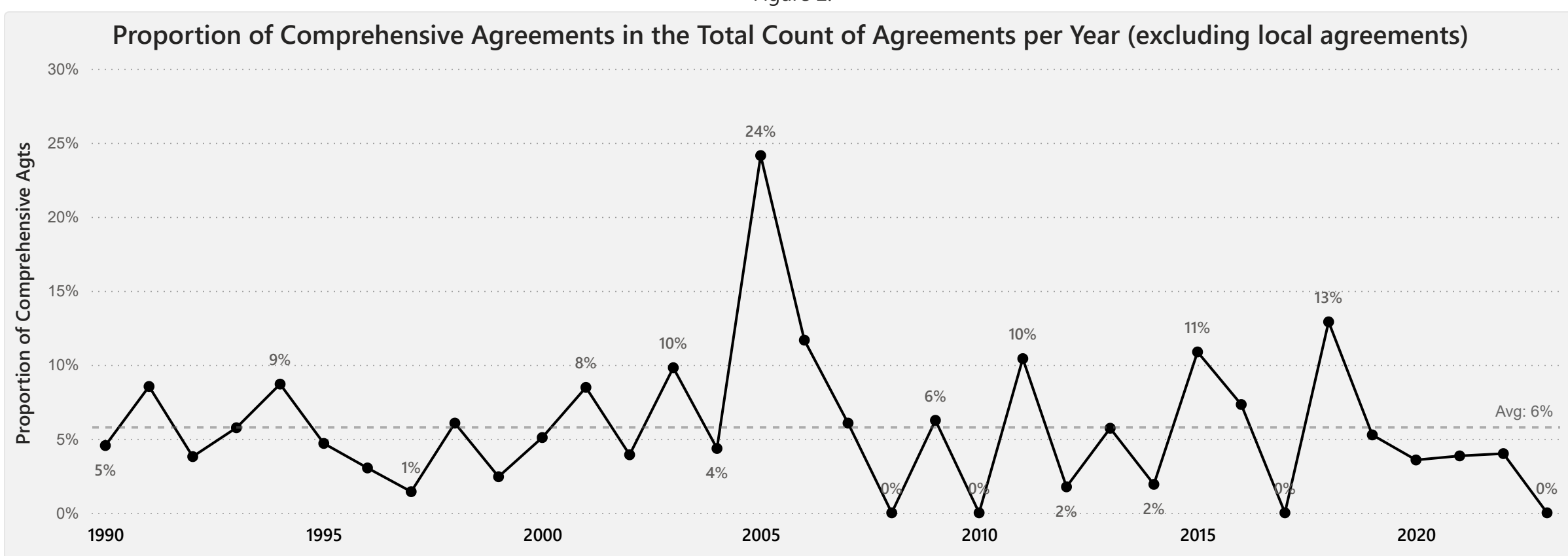


Figure 3.

## Characteristics of Agreements in 2023

The majority of agreements in 2023 dealt with **intrastate** conflicts within a state's borders (87%; 27 agreements), with the majority of these signed in Colombia (21 agreements). Figure 4 shows the proportion of agreements by stage. Conflict parties signed 13 ceasefire agreements (42% of the total of new non-local agreements) in 2023 which is well above the overall proportion of all of agreements in PA-X (19% ceasefires). 10 agreements focused on implementation (32%) at the later stages of processes, with the majority of these also part of the Colombia-ELN process (70% implementation agreements). Two agreements resulted from the Kosovo-Serbia Normalisation Process and one in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): Eastern DRC Process. Additionally, three agreements resulted from pre-negotiation stage of processes (10%), and five were framework-substantive, partial agreements on specific issues (16%). To access all 2023 peace agreements (comprising 30 agreements added as part of PA-X Version 8, and one agreement included in PA-X Version 7), please see Table 1 or visit [PA-X](#).

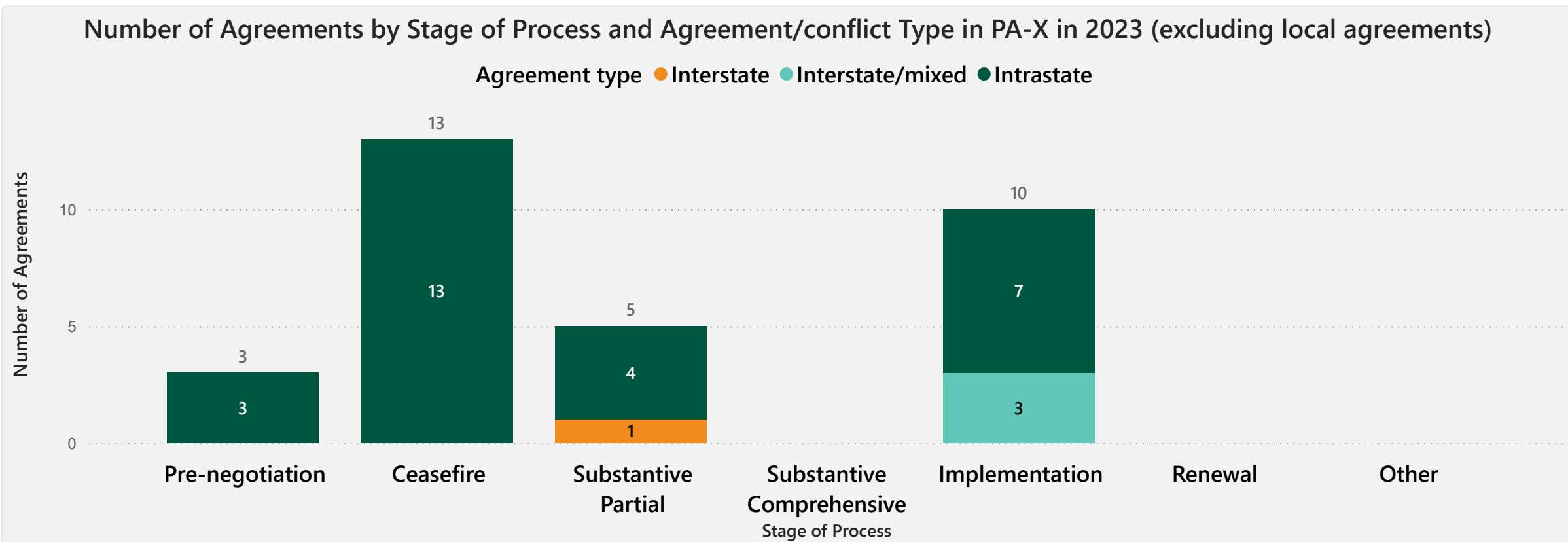


Figure 4.



## Characteristics of Agreements in 2023 (continued)

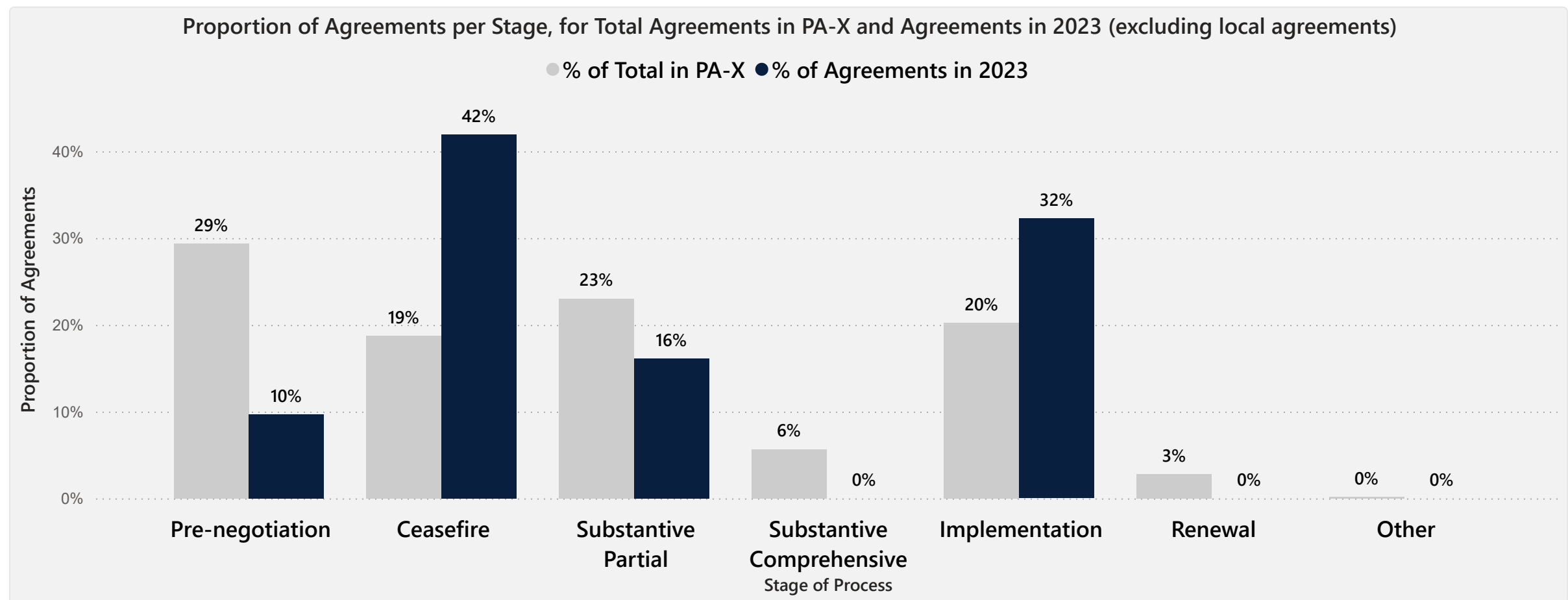


Figure 5.

## Agreement Contents

In line with the fact that the majority of agreements signed in 2023 were **ceasefire** or **implementation** agreements, the contents of new agreements heavily focused on **security sector** (in 90% of agreements) and **implementation issues** (84% of agreements). **Rights-related issues** was the third most commonly found content category in 2023 (65% of agreements).

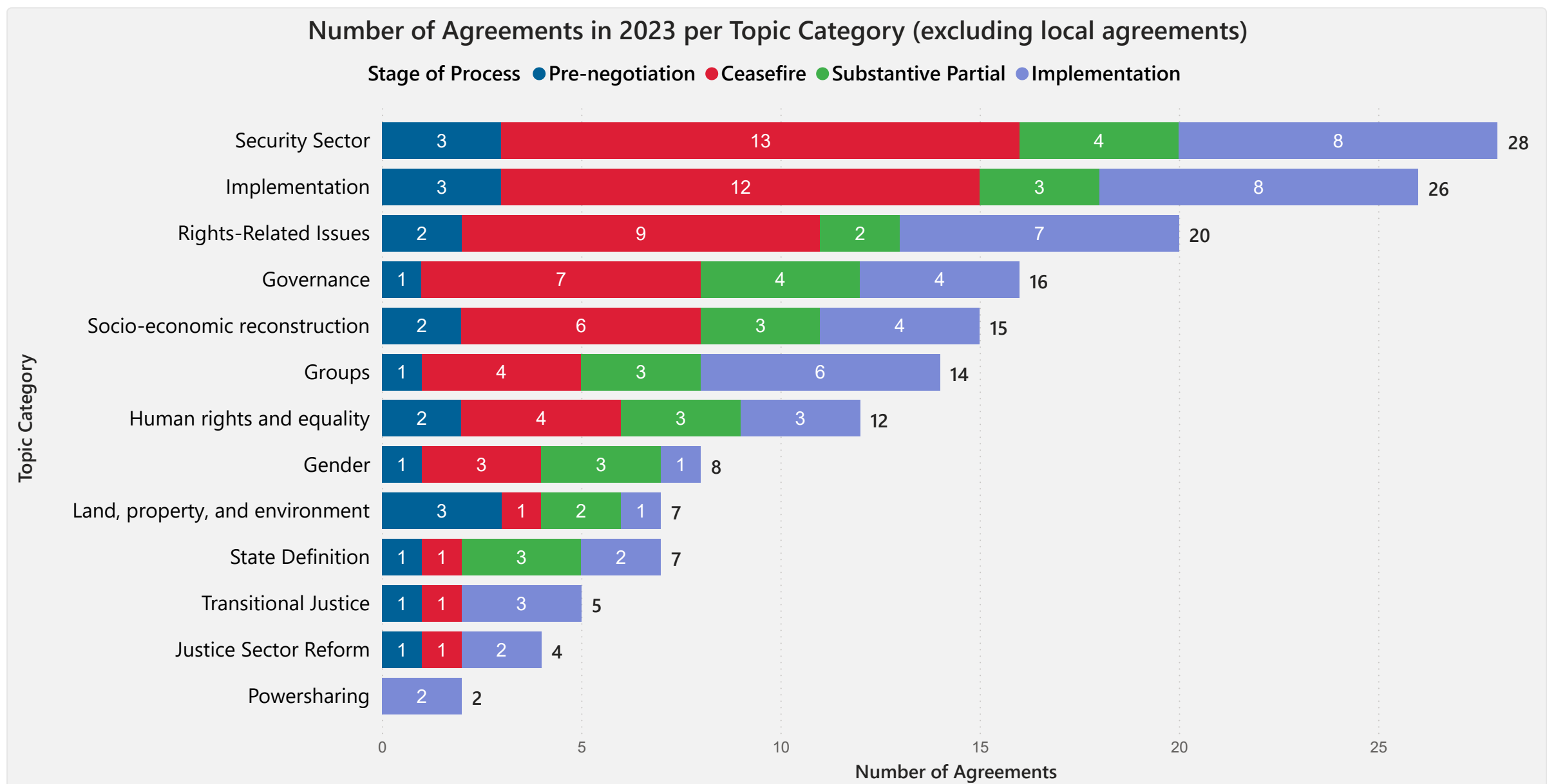


Figure 6.

## Gender

In 2023, **eight peace agreements** (excluding local agreements) include references to women, girls, gender or sexual violence (WGG); **26% of agreements**. This is a slight drop from 28% of peace agreements in 2022, and is consistent with annual percentages of WGG references in peace agreements since 2018, which have ranged from 21-32% (see Figure 7). It is also consistent with the total proportion of peace agreements with WGG references from 1990-2023 (21%).

WGG references occurred in agreements from only two processes: the Colombia-ELN process, and the Jeddah agreements for Sudan (see Figure 8).

For more information, see page 4 of this report, or the [PA-X Gender Database](#).



## Gender (continued)

### Proportion of Agreements with a Gender Provision per Year (excluding local agreements)

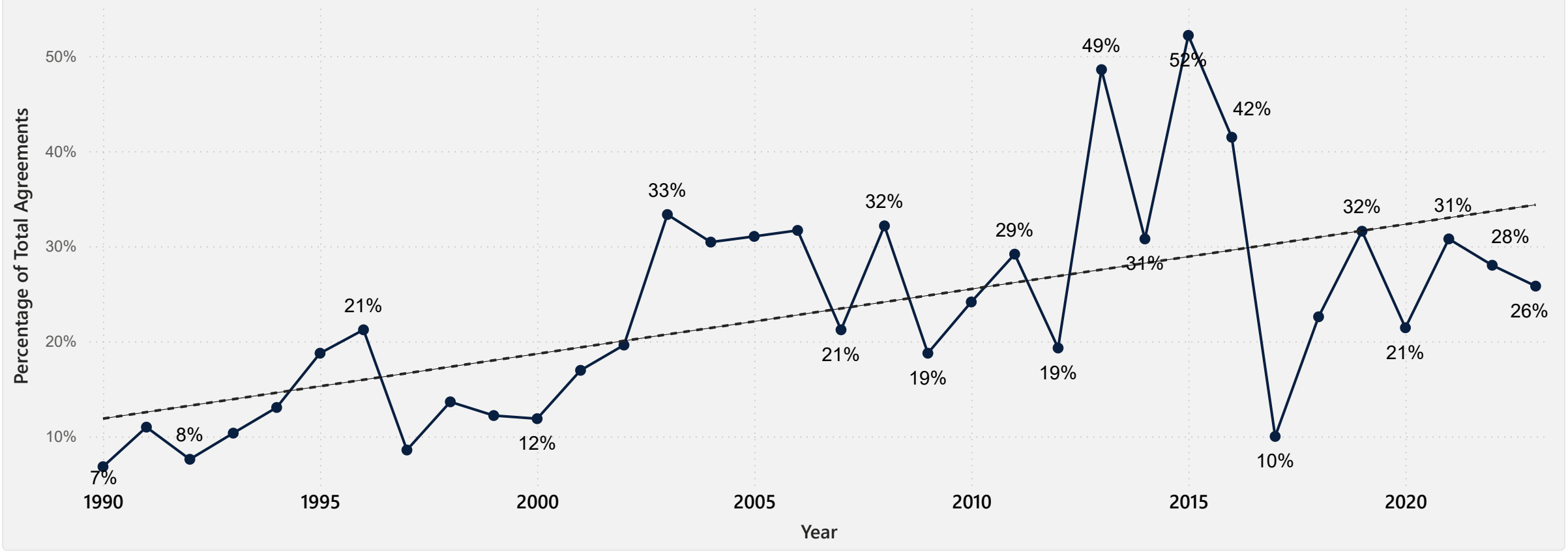


Figure 7.

### Number of Agreements in 2023 per WGG Topic

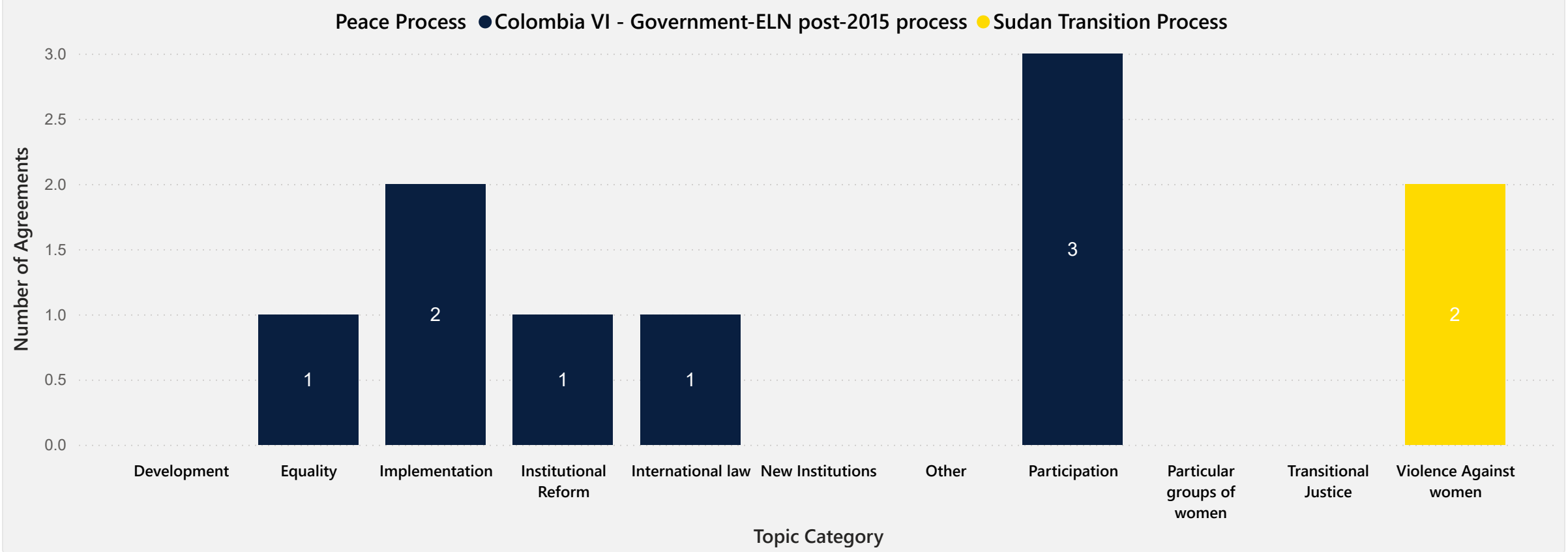


Figure 8.

## Local Agreements

Four local peace agreements were included in the PA-X database in 2023 from Nigeria, Niger and Pakistan (see Figure 9), bringing the total number of local agreements to 349. For more information, see the [PA-X Local Database](#).

- The first local agreement recorded in Niger ([Peace Agreement between the communities of the Department of Banibangou](#) [Jan 2023]) was facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), addressing armed violence and natural resource competition in the Tillabéri region.
- The second local agreement recorded in Niger ([Peace Agreement between the communities of the Department of Ouallam](#) [June 2023]) was also facilitated by HD. The agreement focuses on displacement, resource sharing and implementation monitoring.
- The local agreement in Pakistan in Kurram ([The Peace Agreement District Kurram executed in Para Chanar](#) [July 2023]) is a short local inter-tribal six-point ceasefire agreement outlining the areas of ceasefire enforcement in the district, providing for elements of demobilisation and setting out terms of violation.
- The local ceasefire agreement in Ebonyi State, Nigeria ([Effium and Ezza Effium Ceasefire](#) [Aug 2023]) obligates both sides to halt hostilities and cooperate for lasting peace, and holds violators accountable under local and federal law.

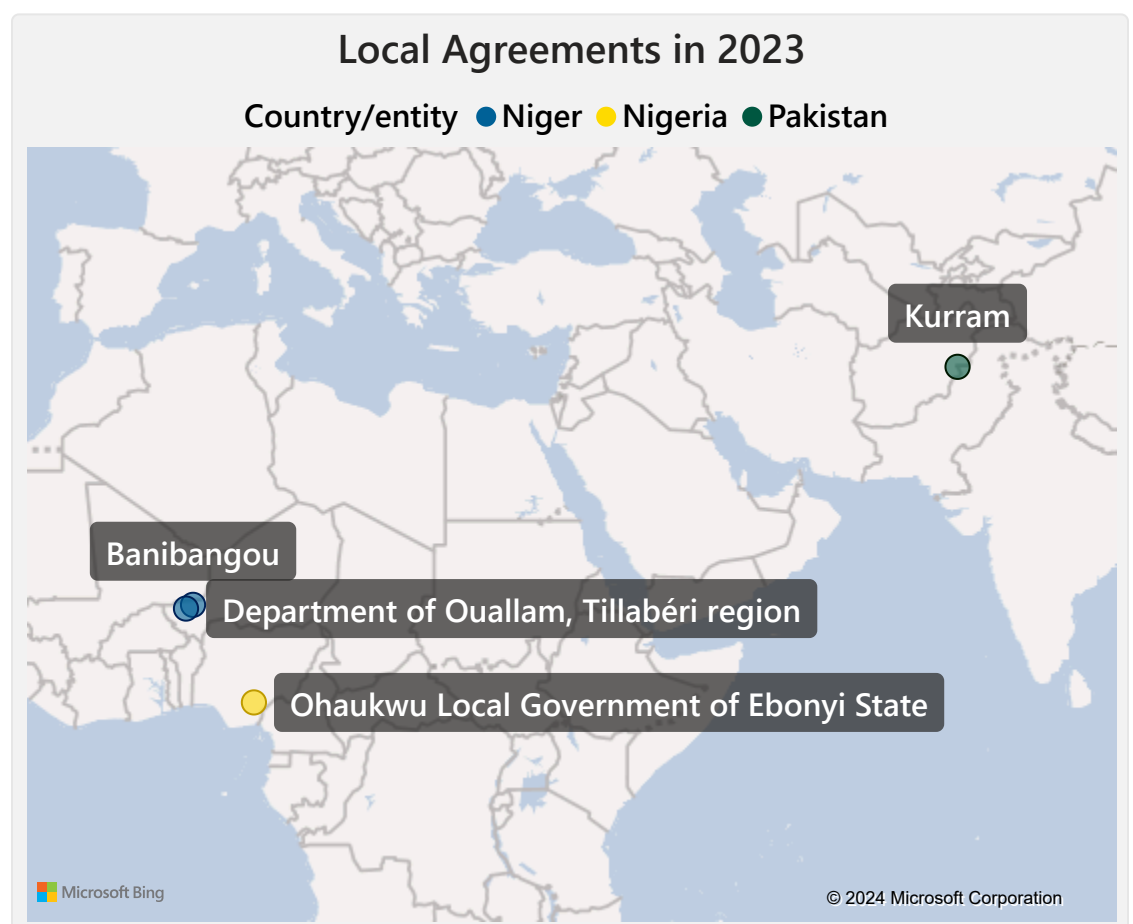


Figure 9.



## Local Agreements (continued)

The local peace agreements underscore the salience of sectarian conflicts in 2023, as well as the key role played by local elders and religious representatives in the return of peace and implementation of these agreements. While providing peace efforts with legitimacy and authority, local elders and religious leaders also make a link with mostly local state authorities. As such, the four local agreements, while not making a clear link to national peace processes, received the support of local state representatives.

## Peace Processes

The ongoing peace talks between **Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN)** account for **68%** of the agreements recorded in **2023** (21 agreements in total). Three short-lived agreements were signed in Sudan after fighting broke out in the country in April 2023. Two agreements each were signed in the East African Community-led process for the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and as part of Kosovo-Serbia normalisation efforts. Notably, a pre-negotiation/process agreement was signed between the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) after nearly 50 years of conflict. This agreement will transform the latter into a political party. This agreement involved increased Norwegian mediation efforts. Figure 10 provides an overview of all peace processes in which peace agreements were signed in 2023.

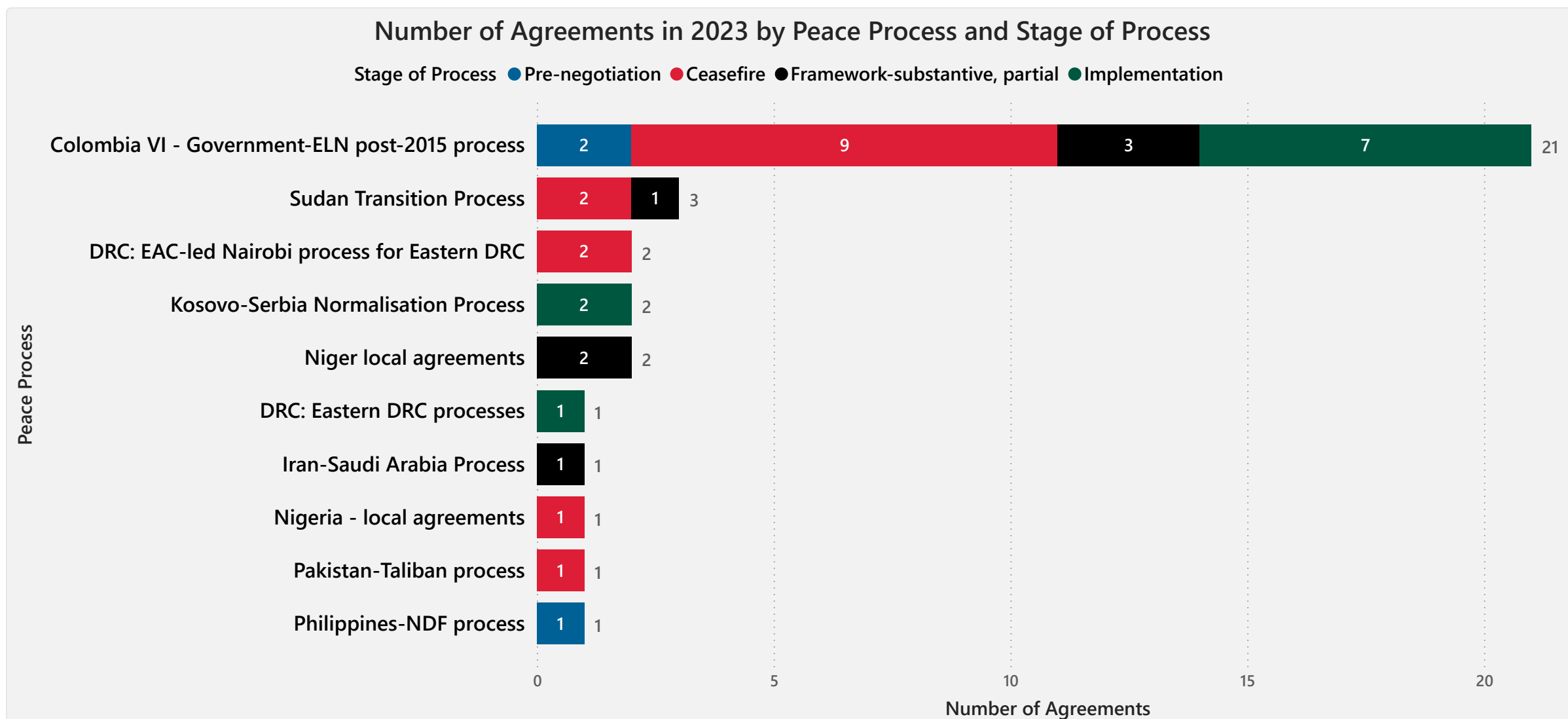


Figure 10.

## Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process

The 21 Colombian agreements added to the PA-X collection this year were the first to be signed since 2017 (see Figure 11), following the 2016 [peace deal between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia \(FARC\)](#), that marked the end of almost six decades of armed conflict. The 2016 agreement was a landmark achievement, but it was not signed by all conflict parties as the ELN and dissident elements of the FARC, known as Estado Mayor Central (EMC) rejected the deal. The significant rise in the number of Colombian peace agreements in 2023 reflects the efforts of current president Gustavo Petro, who came into office in 2022, to remedy the exclusion of the FARC from the peace process with his '[Total Peace Plan](#)', seeking peace with armed and criminal groups, as well as with urban gangs.

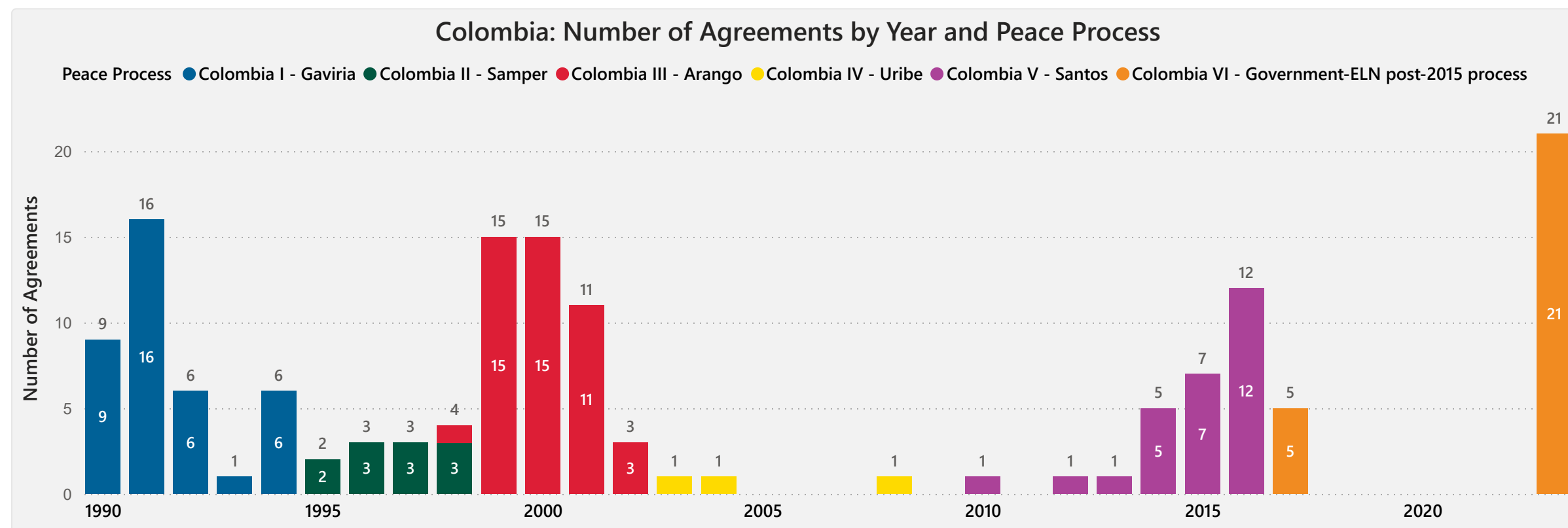


Figure 11.

## Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process (continued)

The Mexico Agreement ([Acuerdo de Mexico](#)) signed in March 2023 is an eight-page document between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the ELN that is aimed at conclusively addressing a conflict between the two signatories spanning six decades. The agreement was mediated by a panel that includes the following countries as guarantors: Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Norway and Venezuela. Additionally, it included permanent accompanying partners such as the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Colombia.

In July 2023, both parties signed 13 further agreements (see Figure 12), including a series of protocols that detail the terms of the peace process, covering issues such as Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), women's participation and international involvement. The remaining agreements comprise a variety of communiqués and agreements that relate to the [Bilateral Ceasefire](#) between the Government and the ELN. See all agreements signed in Colombia in 2023 [on PA-X](#), or view an overview on the PA-X Tracker [Process Overview](#) or [Timeline](#).

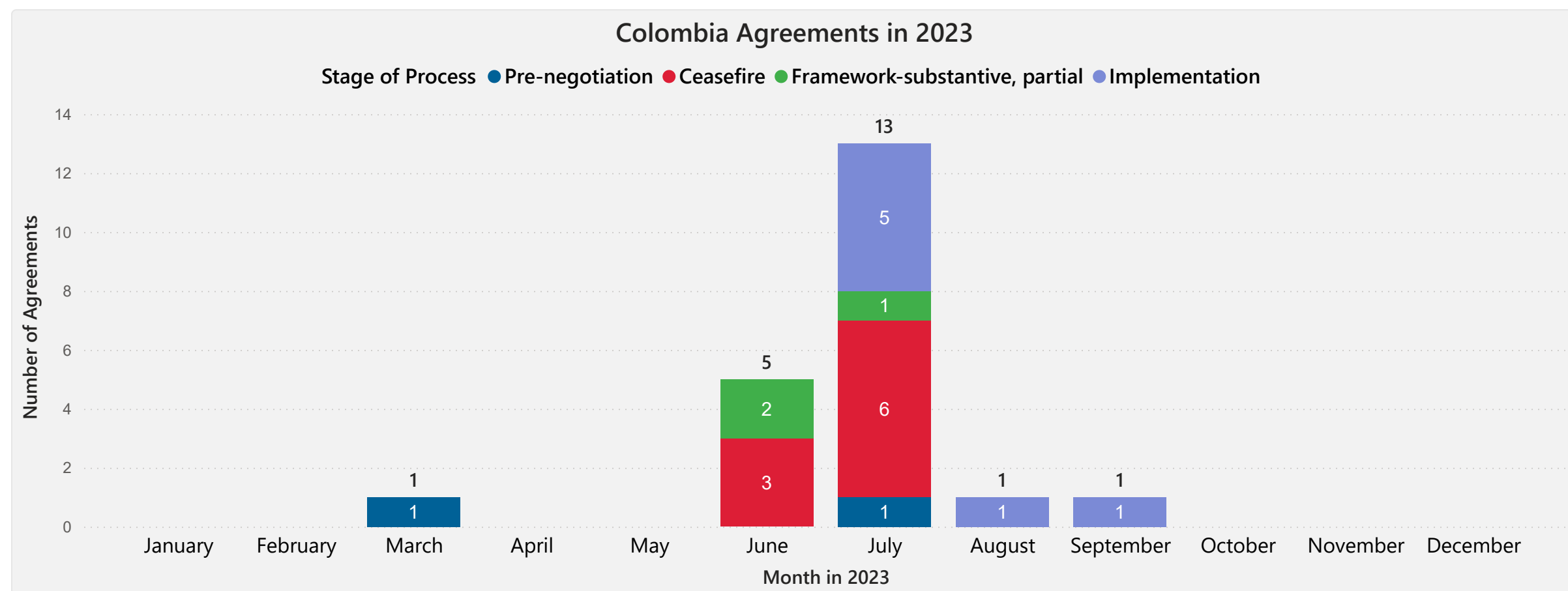


Figure 12.

## China as a Third Party

In 2023, China mediated an [agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia](#), who have been in a state of 'cold war' in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for over 40 years.

- Iran and Saudi Arabia, as regional leaders of the two main sects of Islam, have fuelled tensions and armed conflicts across the MENA region by taking different sides and funding proxies, including in Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen.
- The agreement is a milestone for the MENA region, committing the parties to resume diplomatic relations, including the re-opening of embassies and missions in both countries.
- The agreement also provides for respect for the autonomy of states and the non-interference in state's internal affairs.
- The agreement is significant beyond the region and has been interpreted as a sign of a changing global order, with China assuming a growing role and challenging American hegemony on the geopolitical stage.
- China's role as a mediator between Iran and Saudi Arabia is a new development that will be tracked in future PA-X releases.
- For more on China's role as peace agreement signatory to 39 agreements across 13 peace processes (1990-2023), see our new [scrollytelling visualisation](#) (select 'China' as the actor), as well as Bernardo Mariani's report on [China's Global Security Vision in a Changing World](#) from April 2024.

## Limitations and Future Research

- **Limitations of Data:** The PA-X Database is a collection of formal, publicly-available documents, between at least two parties relating to a conflict with at least 25 battlefield deaths in one year, which means peacemaking activity or mediation efforts as such are not covered in this data (e.g. efforts in 2023 addressing conflict in Israel/Palestine). A joint statement between Armenia and Azerbaijan from late 2023 was not included in this report as the document was not available in time for the latest release of PA-X. The statement will be reviewed for inclusion in PA-X Version 9. The collection of local agreements in PA-X is not exhaustive because these agreements have not been added to create a complete collection of local agreements signed since 1990, unlike for non-local agreements in PA-X. Some local peacemaking is verbal only, and the database only collects agreements which are written, signed and publicly available. Comparisons over time may be imperfect due to changes in publishing and publicizing agreements, especially for older agreements.
- **Future Research:** Future research should interrogate the changing nature and characteristics of peace processes. For example, it is important to investigate whether there is a trend toward signing more ceasefire and implementation agreements or if this is mainly due to the 'Colombia bias' in last year's data. It would also be useful to explore the implications of signing fewer pre-negotiation and process agreements for contemporary peace processes. Additionally, future research should examine the complex roles international mediators play in peacemaking and the processes of how gender and human rights provisions become embedded in signed peace agreements. Finally, continued monitoring and analysis are essential to understand the long-term impact and effectiveness of these peace agreements.





**Table 1: All New Agreements from 2023 in PA-X**

Country	Peace Process	Agreement (sorted by date)	Link
Democratic Republic of Congo	DRC: EAC-led Nairobi process for Eastern DRC	Press Release on Meeting between H.E. Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, Former President of the Republic of Kenya and Facilitator of the EAC led DRC Peace Process and the Leadership of M-23 (12/01/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Niger	Niger local agreements	Peace Agreement between the communities of the Department of Banibangou (21/01/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Democratic Republic of Congo	DRC: Eastern DRC processes	Communiqué of the 1140th meeting of the PSC (17/02/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Kosovo/Serbia	Kosovo-Serbia Normalisation Process	Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: EU Proposal - Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia (27/02/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Democratic Republic of Congo	DRC: EAC-led Nairobi process for Eastern DRC	Report of the Meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism for the Implementation of Ceasefire and Withdraw of M23 in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (02/03/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Acuerdo de Mexico (10/03/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Iran/Saudi Arabia	Iran-Saudi Arabia Process	Joint Trilateral Statement by the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran (10/03/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Kosovo/Serbia	Kosovo-Serbia Normalisation Process	Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue: Implementation Annex to the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia (18/03/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Sudan	Sudan Transition Process	Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan (11/05/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Sudan	Sudan Transition Process	Agreement on a Short-Term Ceasefire and Humanitarian Arrangements (20/05/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Niger	Niger local agreements	Peace Agreement between the communities of the Department of Ouallam (04/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Acuerdo de Cese al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional y Temporal el Gobierno de la Republica de Colombia y el Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional - ELN (Segundo Acuerdo de Cuba) (09/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Alistamiento para el Proceso de Participacion de la Sociedad y del Cese al Fuego Bilateral (Cuba Agreement) (09/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	El proceso de Participación de la Sociedad en la Construcción de la Paz (Primer Acuerdo de Cuba) (09/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo de Acciones Específicas para el Cese al Fuego Bilateral, Temporal y Nacional entre el Gobierno Nacional y el Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional - ELN (09/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo del Mandato del Mecanismo de Monitoreo y Verificacion (MMV) Para el Cese al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional y Temporal (CFBNT), Entre El Gobierno Nacional Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional-ELN (09/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Sudan	Sudan Transition Process	Joint Facilitators Statement From the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America (17/06/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Agreement on a Peace Dialogues Table (08/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Glosario Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral Nacional Y Temporal -CFBNT Y Sus Protocolos Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional-ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo Complementario Al Mandato Del Mecanismo De Monitoreo Y Verificacion - MMV Para El Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT, Entre El Gobierno Nacional Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo De Comunicaciones Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo De Evaluacion Prorroga O suspension Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT, Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo De Seguridad Y Proteccion Para Los Integrates Del Mecanismo De Monitoreo Y Verificacion - MMV En el Marco Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT, Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo De Veeduria Social Y Los Mecanismos De Proteccion Humanitaria En El Marco Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT, Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo Del Rol De La Iglesia Catolica En El Mecanismo De Monitoreo y Verificacion - MMV En El Marco Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral Nacional Temporal - CFBNT Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo Sobre El Rol De La Mesa De Dialogos De Paz En El Cumplimiento Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT Y Su Relacion Con El Mecanismo De Monitoreo Y Verificacion - MMV (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo Sobre La Seguridad Para El ELN Y Los Lugares Donde Hace Presencia En El Marco Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral, Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Protocolo Sobre Pedagogia Del Acuerdo De Cese Al Fuego Bilateral Nacional Y Temporal - CFBNT Y Sus Protocolos, Entre El Gobierno De La Republica De Colombia Y El Ejercito De Liberacion Nacional - ELN (13/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Plan de Trabajo del Comité Nacional de la Participacion: primera fase de diseno de la participacion de la sociedad (14/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Reglamento Operativo del Comité Nacional de la Participacion (14/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Pakistan	Pakistan-Taliban process	The Peace Agreement District Kurram executed in Para Chanar (14/07/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Nigeria	Nigeria - local agreements	Effium and Ezza Effium Ceasefire (13/08/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Panel for peace talks between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) (23/08/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Colombia	Colombia VI - Government-ELN post-2015 process	Comunicado Conjunto N. 18 (04/09/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>
Philippines	Philippines-NDF process	Joint Statement (23/11/2023)	<a href="#">↗</a>