



The West Africa Report

*Security and Piracy - At Sea - On
Land - Domestic News
and Developments for the
International Resources Sector*

The West Africa Report ~ SUMMARY

April 15 – 28, 2013



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Burkina Faso

- **24 April 2013** - The French army has handed over its security operation in the Malian desert city of Timbuktu to Burkina Faso troops as part of a phased withdrawal from its troubled former colony.

Cameroon

- **26 April 2013** - A confidential report composed by the Nigerian government has indicated that Nigeria's Islamist militant group Boko Haram was paid more than US \$3m (£2m) prior to releasing the French family of seven.
- **19 April 2013** - Cameroon's Communications Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakary has confirmed that seven members of a French family who were kidnapped by gunmen in northern Cameroon back in February of this year have been freed and are in good condition.

Central African Republic

On the Ground Events

- **15 April 2013** - Clashes between fighters who seized power in the Central African Republic (CAR) last month and youths loyal to the ousted former president, have killed at least thirteen people and left dozens wounded.

Domestic News

- **17 April 2013** - Central African Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangay has appealed for the help of France and of regional African forces in order to help secure the country following violence in the wake of the rebel takeover last month.

International Developments

- **18 April 2013** - Regional leaders on Thursday indicated that they would boost their military force in the CAR by 2,000 soldiers, in a bid to restore order as violence and looting have plagued the country following the March coup.

Cote d'Ivoire

- **26 April 2013** - The UN Security Council has extended its arms embargo on Cote d'Ivoire until 30 April 2014. It has also extended its financial and travel sanctions on those who threaten the peace in the West African country.
 - Meanwhile forces of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI) have been placed on "high alert" following a wave of violence that erupted after the announcement of the local election results.
- **19 April 2013** - The UN Special Envoy for Cote d'Ivoire, Bert Koenders, has called for "fair, transparent, free, and peaceful regional and municipal elections in the country."
- **18 April 2013** - The Cote d'Ivoire has requested that the United Nations replace peacekeepers with drones.

The Gambia

- **16 April 2013** - The United Kingdom has urged the Gambia to investigate the whereabouts of an outspoken religious leader who has not been seen by family or friends since he was arrested more than four months ago.

Guinea

- **18 April 2013** - A government spokesman has confirmed that one man has died from wounds suffered during clashes in the Guinean capital of Conakry.

Guinea - Bissau

- **25 April 2013** - A military tribunal has convicted an army captain of leading a failed coup last year. Pansau Ntchama was sentenced on Thursday to five years in prison after being found guilty of treason and using illegal weapons.
- **18 April 2013** - In a widening plot involving Guinea-Bissau, the United States on Thursday charged the country's coup leader with drug trafficking and seeking to sell arms to Colombian rebels.

Mali

- **25 April 2013** - The UN Security Council has unanimously approved a resolution to create a UN peacekeeping force for Mali.
- **19 April 2013** - Mali's interim president has sought to reassure international partners that the his country will be ready to hold democratic elections by July as promised.
- **18 April 2013** - Al-Qaeda's North African Branch has threatened to seek revenge against all those countries that are taking part in the French-led war in Mali, warning that no one who has participated will be safe.
- **15 April 2013** - The president of Chad has announced that the war against armed Islamic extremists in Mali will lose some 2,000 Chadian soldiers, leaving a number of Malian cities more vulnerable to a resurgence of jihadist attacks.

[Mauritania](#)

- **18 April 2013** - France's Foreign Minister has confirmed that Mauritania will be sending 1,800 troops to Mali as part of a planned UN force to keep the peace in the West African nation.

[Nigeria](#)

On the Ground Events

- **25 April 2013** - Authorities in Nigeria have indicated that at least eleven people have been killed in violence that has been blamed on Islamic insurgents in the country's northeastern region.
- **19 April 2013** - One of the deadliest clashes between Islamist insurgents and security forces in northern Nigeria has destroyed much of a fishing town located on the shore of Lake Chad.

Domestic News

- **23 April 2013** - Nigeria is to investigate its army's conduct after clashes between troops and Islamist fighters in the northeast killed nearly 200 people, the single deadliest event since the insurgency began.
- **18 April 2013** - Nigeria's largest opposition party has voted to merge with two other parties, a move that is aimed at creating a unified front capable of unseating the ruling party at the 2015 polls.
- **15 April 2013** - Nigeria's Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has threatened to bomb mosques and assassinate Muslim clerics.

[Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea](#)

Hijackings

- **25 April 2013** - Reports state that owners of the Nigeria-flagged offshore vessel, the **Utai 8**, lost contact with the vessel at 0900 LT.

Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies

- **24 April 2013** - Pirates chased an Antigua and Barbuda container ship, the **Bosun**, while underway at 2345 LT in position 03:51N - 005:40E, approximately 32 nautical miles south-southwest of the Nigerian coast. Pirates fired upon the container ship.
- **23 April 2013** - The Liberia-flagged container ship, **Hansa Marburg**, reported being attacked by pirates at about 0020 LT while in position 02:35N - 006:52E, approximately 105 nautical miles from the Nigerian coast.
- **22 April 2013** - Greece-flagged crude tanker, the **Cap Theodora**, reported coming under attack at 0655 UTC while in position 03:10N - 007:14E, around 104 nautical miles south-southeast of Brass, Nigeria, approximately 23 nautical miles south-southwest from Usan filed with a speed of 15 knots.
- **18 April 2013** - Three robbers in a small boat approached and attempted to board an anchored Marshall Islands-flagged General Cargo Ship, the **Corinth**, at 0010 UTC while in position 04:44.8S-011:48.7E, in Pointe Noire Anchorage, the Congo.

[About MS Risk](#)

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



Travel Summary:

There remains to be a general terrorist threat in the Sahel region, along with a heightened risk that kidnap activity may cross the northern borders from Mali and Niger into Burkina Faso. As such MS RISK advises against all travel to the northern region of Burkina Faso, specifically north of the town of Boulsa, which is located 25km north of the capital city of Ouagadougou, as well as to those areas that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has captured over 25 hostages of a variety of nationalities, primarily European, in which a number of these hostages are still being held.

Demonstrations involving young Burkinabes and junior soldiers have taken place in towns and cities throughout the country and at times they have turned violent. As such, citizens should avoid large crowds and demonstrations.



There is also a high risk of crime involving armed groups stopping vehicles (including public buses) in order to rob them. Such incidents have occurred in various parts of the country, particularly at night. As such all travel between towns by road at night is to be avoided, especially from Ouagadougou to Po where there is a heightened risk posed by bandits. This is especially severe on market days when highwaymen often operate in the hopes of catching merchants with stock or cash en route to and from the urban areas.

MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:

The biggest concern at this time is the northern areas of the country along the porous Mali border and at the junction of the Niger border. Burkina Faso has played a leading role in establishing the terms of reference for the ECOWAS force to strike back at the insurgents in Mali while concurrently brokering peace negotiations. There is an increased Burkinabe military presence in the north of the country and companies should review their respective security situations and consider the following:

- Location and safety of personnel
- Security controls, communications and contingency plans at static locations
- Work tempo implications
- Journey management systems in place and working
- Liaison with the military - use of military escorts, coordination between multiple assets, confirmation that military escorts are coordinated and competent for the task.
- Reviewing all crisis management contingencies including but not limited to the following:
 - Kidnap (for ransom or ideological purposes)
 - Medical emergency and evacuation cycle for northern area
 - Interdiction of road moves for personnel and any convoys
 - Loss of communications with remote locations - enhanced comms options, access to stores if replenishment is restricted or cut off.
 - Media and public affairs contingency
- Liaising with insurers to ensure appropriate cover is in place to meet speciality risks where needed.

Companies that rely on police escorts in the northern region of the country should ensure that travel patterns do not become predictable. Varying routes are difficult due to the limited road networks, as such, it is even more important to vary the types of vehicles that are used as well as to time the journeys and to avoid travel patterns becoming widely known. This is especially critical given the current tensions that are occurring along the Mali border and the impending ECOWAS operations.

All companies that are linked to the World Bank/International Finance Cooperation should familiarise themselves with the IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Security Forces. This applies to military, police or private security services.

Finally, unconfirmed reports have suggested that there is an elevated banditry threat that exists on the main routes south and east of the town of Fada N’Gourma en route to Pama and Diapala respectively. Road moves to these areas should be risk assessed and liaison with police should occur until the nature of the threats have been clarified. Companies with operations in the region are invited to report incidents to MS Risk in order to aid in assessing the local atmospherics.

On Land:

- **24 April 2013** - The French army has handed over its security operation in the Malian desert city of Timbuktu to Burkina Faso troops as part of a phased withdrawal from its troubled former colony. According to Malian Army Captain Famba Coulibaly, “today, during an official ceremony in Timbuktu, the French troops have passed on the torch to the troops of Burkina Faso for security operations on the ground.” Captain Coulibaly further noted that the chiefs of staff of the Malian and Burkina Faso armies attended the ceremony, alongside senior officials from Operation Serval. Around 650 Burkinabe soldiers are set to arrive on the ground by next week. France has already begun a phased withdrawal of its 4,000 soldiers, with all but 1,000 expected to have left by the end of the year. In turn, Chad President Idriss Deby, who sent 2,000 troops to Mali, announced last week that its forces would be staging their own withdrawal.



Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country

MS RISK advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndiain Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Bouba Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroula in the Far North Province which is as a result of the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats that are associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. We also advise against all but essential travel to within 40 km of the border with the Central African Republic. Incidents of armed banditry have been reported in this area. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future which may cause strikes and civil unrest to occur throughout the country. Finally there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.

Domestic News:

- **26 April 2013** - A confidential report composed by the Nigerian government has indicated that Nigeria's islamist militant group Boko Haram was paid more than US \$3m (£2m) prior to releasing the French family of seven. The Nigerian report also indicates that Cameroon freed some Boko Haram detainees as part of the deal. Since the release of the report, both France and Cameroon have denied paying a ransom, while officials in Nigeria have not commented on the issue. If the report is confirmed, then the transfer of such a significant amount of money to Boko Haram could serve to strengthen the firepower of the group. The announcement of the ransom payment also comes at a time when violence in northern Nigeria has escalated as suspected members of Boko Haram have targeted the army and police over the past week. Reports have so far indicated that more than 200 civilians have died in the violence. While the army is unable to prevent such attacks, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has appointed a committee to prepare the grounds for offering an amnesty to the militants. The French family, including four children, were captured in Cameroon in February of this year. They were freed last week and were handed over to Cameroonian authorities last Thursday.
- **19 April 2013** - Cameroon's Communications Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakary has confirmed that seven members of a French family, who were kidnapped by gunmen in northern Cameroon back in February of this year, have been freed and are in good condition. France has also confirmed their release however President Francois Hollande denied that a ransom payment was made to free the family who is currently in the Cameroonian capital of Yaounde. Despite this release, seven other French hostages are being held throughout Africa. A statement released by Cameroon's Presidency indicates that the family had been handed over to Cameroonian authorities late on Thursday.

however the circumstances of that handover remain to be unclear. Since then, they have arrived at the French embassy in the capital, under heavy security escort. Both the French and Nigerian governments were thanked in the statement however no further information on their release was provided. Meanwhile the French president's office has confirmed that Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has already left the country, heading for Cameroon where he will greet the family. Mr. Fabius has indicated that the French hostages were freed overnight "in an area between Nigeria and Cameroon," and that they would be flown back to France on Saturday. President Hollande also indicated that secret talks had been taking place over the past few weeks in order to help secure their release, noting that "France has not changed its position, which is not to pay ransoms." The family, who live in Yaounde, had been returning from a holiday in Waza National Park in the northern region of Cameroon when they were kidnapped by gunmen on motorbikes on 19 February 2013. Mr. Tanguy Moulin-Fournier, along with his wife Albane, and four children, aged between five and twelve, had been joined on their vacation by his brother Cyril. A video that was released about one week after their capture, depicted the militants demanding the release of prisoners being held in Cameroon and in Nigeria. A video released later also criticized President Hollande for deploying troops to Mali in January 2013. Since their release, Mr. Moulin



Fournier has indicated that 'we are all very tired but normal life will now resume.' He further noted that "the conditions in which we were held were very difficult, it was extremely hot. But we did not have any serious problems. We are alive and we are infinitely happy to be free. It has been very long and difficult, it was hard psychologically and we had some very low moments. But we stuck together and that was crucial. As a family, we kept each other's spirits up." With the release of this French family on Friday, at least seven French citizens are still being held hostage in Africa. The abductions have all been claimed by Islamist groups, in which at least six have been claimed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). An eighth hostage was reported to have been executed in March 2013 in Mali by AQIM however his death has yet to be confirmed.

- **Niger** - On 16 September 2010, kidnappers abducted five French nationals along with a Togolese and a Madagascan national who were mostly working for French public nuclear giant Areva and its subcontractor Satom in the uranium mining region of the country. AQIM claimed responsibility for the kidnappings on 21 September. A female French hostage, Francoise Larribe, was freed along with the Togolese and Madagascan nationals in February 2011. The four other French hostages, Thierry Dol, Daniel Larribe, Pierre Legrand, and Marc Feret, are still being held, with French authorities stating that they are still alive.
- **Mali** - On the night of 24 November 2011, Frenchmen Serge Lazarevic and Philippe Verdon were kidnapped from their hotel in Hombori in northeastern Mali. According to their families, they were in Mali on a business trip. On 9 December, AQIM claimed responsibility for the kidnappings and released photographs of the two men. On 10 August 2012, a video distributed by Mauritanian website Sahara Medias depicted Mr. Verdon speaking of the "difficult living conditions" and health problems. On 19 March 2013, AQIM announced that it has killed Mr. Verdon, citing that he was a spy for France. Although officials in Paris have yet to confirm the report, on 28 March, French President Hollande stated that the signs are that Mr. Verdon is dead. On 20 November 2012, Gilberto Rodriguez Leal, a sixty-one-year-old Portuguese-born French citizen was abducted by at least six armed men in Diema, in western Mali, as he was travelling by car from Mauritania. On 22 November, al-Qaeda-linked Islamist rebel group the

Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) claimed responsibility for the kidnapping.

- **Nigeria** - On 19 December 2012, French engineer Francis Colomp is kidnapped by around thirty armed men who attacked the residence of the company where he was working in the state of Katsina which is located in the northern regions of Nigeria, near the border with Niger. During the attack, the hostage-takers killed two bodyguards and a neighbour. The act has since been claimed by Nigerian Ansaru, which has links to Nigeria's Boko Haram. They have since indicated that the kidnapping was in reaction to France's preparations for a military intervention in Mali.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



Travel Summary:

MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). The armed rebel coalition Seleka has renewed their offensive against President Francois Bozize's government and have they have taken control of the capital city of Bangui. The security situation throughout the country continues to rapidly deteriorate. There has also been gunfire, violence and widespread looting throughout the capital city, which may occur again.



Armed rebels took control of a number of towns in the northern and central areas of the country in December 2012 and January 2013, stopping 75 km from the capital of Bangui. While a ceasefire agreement was made in Libreville, Gabon on 11 January 2013, the situation remains fragile and unpredictable. The rebels restarted their offensive in mid-March and took control of Bangui on 24 March.

There are reports of rebel activity, banditry and hostage-taking across the country. Currently the government has very limited control over much of the country. In the capital city of Bangui, there has been looting, clashes and gun fire. Reports have also surfaced that hospitals throughout the capital city are running dangerously low on

supplies. The situation in Bangui remains to be fragile, with reports of continued looting and gunfire. A curfew is in place from midnight to 4am. You should avoid being on the streets during this time. At other times, MS Risk

advises you to take extreme care, and to travel in groups if possible. There are armed patrols at night in Bangui and you may encounter several roadblocks - both official and unofficial - that are likely to be manned by armed personnel. Take particular care when approaching these.

Any individuals in the country are advised to leave now. Those who remain should take all the necessary precautions in order to stay in a safe place with sufficient stocks of food and water. If the situation deteriorates further, leaving the country by commercial means will likely become increasingly difficult. Currently regional country flights have been suspended. We advise those remaining in the country to keep up to date with local political developments and to avoid all political rallies, demonstrations or large public gatherings.

On the Ground Events:

- **15 April 2013** - Clashes between fighters who seized power in the Central African Republic (CAR) last month and youths loyal to the ousted former president, have killed at least thirteen people and left dozens wounded. This most recent fighting has been heaviest since the Seleka rebel movement seized the city on 24 March, effectively forcing President Francois Bozize to flee to neighbouring Cameroon.

Domestic News:

- **17 April 2013** - Central African Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangay has appealed for the help of France and of regional African forces in order to help secure the country following violence in the wake of the rebel takeover last month. The appeal comes shortly after at least twenty people were killed over the past weekend in Bangui amidst clashes between residents and former rebels. France has expressed growing concern over the recent events that have taken place in its former African colony.

International Developments:

- **18 April 2013** - Regional leaders on Thursday indicated that they would boost their military force in the CAR by 2,000 soldiers, in a bid to restore order as violence and looting have plagued the country following the March coup. In a statement issued after a summit that was hosted by Chad, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) bloc stated that the additional troops would assist the transition government "with security as well as restructuring security forces." However no timetable has been provided for when the troops will be deployed. The deployment would effectively quadruple the African forces in the troubled country, which currently has 500 soldiers from Cameroon, Chad, Congo and Gabon that are assisting with security. The ECCAS further noted that financial assistance was also crucial in helping the CAR through the post-coup crisis, indicating that "the transition council in place does not have a cent to its name to be able to function...partners and allies must urgently bring their own financial contribution to the transitional authorities to help them fulfill their mission.



Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country

MS RISK advises against all but essential travel to the western regions of Dix-Huit Montagnes, Haut-Sassandra, Moyen-Cavally and Bas-Sassandra. All air, land and sea borders with Ghana have now reopened following their closure on 22 September 2012. There have been a number of widely-reported shootings which occurred around Abidjan in August 2012. Although these attacks occurred mainly at night and targeted police and military installations, further incidents cannot be ruled out. Consequently the security situation in Abidjan could deteriorate at short notice.

On Land:

- **26 April 2013** - The UN Security Council has extended its arms embargo on Cote d'Ivoire until 30 April 2014. It has also extended its financial and travel sanctions on those who threaten the peace in the West African country. A UN Statement has indicated that the Council decided to extend the embargo "because Cote d'Ivoire is still vulnerable to instability fueled by available weapons." Furthermore, "UN Member States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to Cote d'Ivoire, from their territories or by their nationals, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of arms and any related material." The statement also noted that the unanimous adoption of a resolution had further refined the sanctions regime first put in place in 2004. It also renewed until 30 April 2014 the mandate of the panel of experts that assist in monitoring the sanctions regime, extending as well measures preventing the importation of rough diamonds, which in the past, the Council has indicated that it has also have helped fuel conflict. The Council added that it would continue to review the measures, with a view to modifying them further or lifting them, in the light of any progress achieved in relation to demobilization and disarmament of ex-combatants, security sector reform, national reconciliation and the fight against impunity.

 - Meanwhile forces of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (ONUCI) have been placed on "high alert" following a wave of violence that erupted after the announcement of the local election results. According to ONUCI spokesperson Sylvie van den Wildenberg, "the UN soldiers and the police units will remain on high alert and will maintain high levels of vigilance." Some 9,500 UN soldiers and 1,500 UN police were mobilized to support Cote d'Ivoire forces in providing security during Sunday's municipal and regional elections. This was exclusive of other "reserve forces" who were placed on standby just in case of a major incident. A wave of violent incidents followed the announcement of election results by the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), especially in districts within Abidjan and Yamoussoukro (230 km from Abidjan) as well as in the northern regions of the country.

- **19 April 2013** - The UN Special Envoy for Cote d'Ivoire, Bert Koenders, has called for "fair, transparent, free, and peaceful regional and municipal elections in the country." In a message to the international community, Koenders, the special representative for the UN secretary general for Cote d'Ivoire noted that there "were reports of incidents during the electoral campaign" and "he called on political stakeholders to exercise their highest sense of responsibility to guarantee elections free of violence." As such, the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) will be "following closely the different stages of the electoral process in Abidjan and in other parts of the country." The municipal and regional elections are scheduled to take place on April 21 across the Cote d'Ivoire. Observers have called for peaceful elections, especially after a few violent incidents were reported during the campaign period.
- **18 April 2013** - The Cote d'Ivoire has requested that the United Nations replace peacekeepers with drones. The country, whose security situation is described as "fragile" after a decade of turmoil that culminated in a brief civil war in 2011, has asked that the UN consider deploying the unmanned aerial systems when its peacekeeping forces are reduced later this year. Sylvie van den Wildenberg, spokesperson for the UN Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) has stated that "the use of drones would enhance the monitoring capacity of the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire, especially its surveillance and information gathering." Further noting that "this would help us to cope better with the difficulty we face in the west of the country and the heavily forested border area with Liberia which is very difficult to monitor and an ideal sanctuary for armed men." The request was made by the UN envoy Youssoufou Bamba before planned cuts to Cote d'Ivoire's current 9,500 peacekeeping force to around 8,000 take place in July, with further reductions occurring in 2015. The use of unmanned surveillance drones as part of peacekeeping operations is controversial. In January, the Security Council in effect agreed to the deployment of drones for the first time in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after a nine-month insurgency by M23 rebels in the mineral rich eastern region of the country which attracted renewed attention to the conflict in the country. The move in the DRC, which already has the world's biggest peacekeeping operation with more than 17,000 troops, follows years of resistance to the proposal, which is still opposed by neighbouring Rwanda. However there are ongoing concerns about the security situation in the country which is the world's largest cocoa producer and which once was a major economic powerhouse for the West Africa sub-region. In a recent report written by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, "Cote d'Ivoire still faces serious threats that need to be addressed to ensure lasting stability...disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants from both political camps, which remain crucial in resolving a serious threat against sustainable peace in the country, will be a challenge. Cote d'Ivoire, whose previous violence has culminated around disputed elections, is set to go to the polls in 2015. Former president Laurent Gbagbo is currently being held at the International Criminal Court in The Hague where he has been charged with four counts of crimes against humanity, with further indictments against other senior Ivorian figures expected in coming months. The UNOCI has also indicated that it will be closely watching the events in the DRC in order to assess the viability of using drones in the Cote d'Ivoire. The deployment of drones in the Cote d'Ivoire would be expected to concentrate on the troubled border area with Liberia, where there have been outbursts of fighting and civilian deaths in recent months, but where experts say the security situation is now improving. The Cote d'Ivoire also shares a poorly controlled borders with Guinea, which recently sent troops into the country in a dispute over border demarcations; Ghana, where a number of high-profile allies of former president Laurent Gbagbo have fled; and Mali, where an international military force is still fighting a war against al-Qaeda-linked insurgents in the north.

No restrictions
in this travel
advice



The Gambia

There has been an increase in political tension which may lead to unannounced demonstrations in Banjul and in other regions of the country. MS Risk advises you to avoid all demonstrations as they may turn violent. Local government elections took place across the country on 4 April 2013. Attacks on foreigners throughout the country are on the rise. MS Risk advises against all travel by road from the Gambia to the Casamance in southern Senegal. The Casamance region of south western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. Travel to the other areas of The Gambia is reasonably safe as long as you take sensible precautions to safeguard your personal possessions. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks, although unlikely, could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers.

International Developments:

- 16 April 2013** - The United Kingdom has urged the Gambia to investigate the whereabouts of an outspoken religious leader who has not been seen by family or friends since he was arrested more than four months ago. Imam Baba Leigh was detained on 3 December 2012 after he criticized President Yahya Jammeh's regime for executing nine death row inmates last year. In a statement released by the UK, David Morley, British ambassador to the Gambia, stated that "speaking on behalf of the UK, I urge the government of the Republic of the Gambia to investigate the disappearance of Imam Baba Leigh and to do their utmost to return him, fit and well, to his family, friends and wider community." The comments come in the wake of the release of the UK's annual Human Rights and Democracy Report, which singles out the Gambia for its poor record. The report indicated that "cases of unlawful detentions, illegal closures of newspapers and radio stations, discrimination towards minority groups and the lack of transparency and due process surrounding the executions of death row prisoners mark a disturbing deterioration in human rights and the rule of law in this country over the past 12 months." Both the United States and the European Union have also spoken out against the cleric's arrest. President Jammeh provoked an international outcry last year when he announced in August that all of the Gambia's death row inmates would be executed by mid-September. A week later, a first batch of nine were executed by firing squad. According to a number of rights groups, close to 40 other prisoners faced death however no further executions were reported.



No restrictions
in this travel
advice

Although there are currently no restrictions on travel to Guinea, there is a continued risk of spontaneous riots and violent demonstrations occurring which are largely due to political tensions but which on occasion can be due to other reasons ranging from power shortages to commercial disputes. Further riots and Such incidents have occurred in Conakry as well as in the regional towns like Kissidougou, Zogota, Labe, Dubreka, Fria and Sigiri. There has been extensive rioting and violence in Conakry, most recently on 25 April, when one death and a number of injuries were reported. Further riots and spontaneous demonstrations cannot be ruled out at this time. MS Risk advises those in the country to monitor the local media and to avoid large gatherings.

On Land:

- 18 April 2013** - A government spokesman has confirmed that one man has died from wounds suffered during clashes in the Guinean capital of Conakry. The clashes occurred between security forces and demonstrators who are protesting against preparations for the long-delayed parliamentary elections. Youths throwing rocks barricaded roads and burned tires in opposition strongholds in the seaside capital while police officers fired tear gas in order to disperse them. Government spokesman Damantang Albert Camara has indicated that more than fifteen others were wounded, including four from gunshots, during Thursday's protests which were sparked by President Alpha Conde's decision last week to fix 30 June 2013 as the date for the ballot. The President went forward with the decision without agreeing to opposition demands that the government allow the mostly pro-opposition diaspora to vote and strip South Africa's Waymark of its contract to manage the voter list. Over the past few months, opposition parties throughout the country have accused Conde, who took office in 2010 following the first democratic transfer of power since independence in 1958, of planning to rig the vote. This has resulted in a number of protests being staged. In February and March, nine people were killed and 300 were wounded during days of similar clashes between opposition protesters, security forces and government supporters. The election, which was originally scheduled for 2011, is meant to complete a transition to civilian rule following a military coup in 2008. It will also permit the unlocking of hundreds of millions of dollars in European aid.

No restrictions
in this travel
advice



Guinea-Bissau

There are currently no restrictions on travel to Guinea-Bissau. Although the current security situation in the country is calm, the political situation remains fluid and is therefore subject to unexpected change. The arrest of Rear Admiral Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, the former Head of the Guinea-Bissau Navy on 3 April 2013 by US authorities may result in increased tension.

On Land:

- **25 April 2013** - A military tribunal has convicted an army captain of leading a failed coup last year. Pansau Ntchama was sentenced on Thursday to five years in prison after being found guilty of treason and using illegal weapons. Mr. Ntchama was the ex-bodyguard of Guinea-Bissau's former army chief of staff. Authorities have indicated that Mr. Ntchama led gunmen who attacked a military base near the airport in Bissau in October 2012. The army fought back the attack and the coup failed. The country has had a number of coups and countercoups, resulting in the fact that no elected leader has been able to complete his term in the nearly four decades since the country gained its independence from Portugal. The most recent coup occurred in April 2012, just weeks before the presidential election runoff.
- **18 April 2013** - In a widening plot involving Guinea-Bissau, the United States on Thursday charged the country's coup leader with drug trafficking and seeking to sell arms to Colombian rebels. Former army chief Antonio Indjai, the nation's top military leader, was accused of four counts of conspiring to sell surface-to-air missiles to FARC rebels to shoot down US patrol helicopters. He has also been accused of seeking to import huge amounts of cocaine into the United States. The charges, which were revealed by Manhattan prosecutors, come less than two weeks after similar trafficking accusations were brought against Guinea-Bissau's former navy chief and four others who were arrested for an alleged trans-Atlantic plot. Two other co-conspirators have been caught in Colombia and are awaiting extradition to the United States. It was not immediately clear whether Indjai, who is now the eighth person from Guinea-Bissau accused by the Manhattan attorney, remains at large or whether he is in a US detention. However the new charges have helped shed light on an impoverished country, in which international observers have indicated has long been a narco-state. According to Manhattan US Attorney Preet Bharara, "from his position atop the Guinea-Bissau military, Antonio Indjai conspired to use his power and authority to be a middleman and his country to be a way-station for people he believed to be terrorists and narco-traffickers." His aim was to aide Colombia's FARC rebels to "store, and ultimately transport narcotics to the United States, and procure surface-to-air missiles and other military-grade hardware to be used against United States troops." The charges are the result of undercover sting operations that began in August and culminated in dramatic arrests of some of the accused by US agents on a boat in

international waters off West Africa earlier in May. Indjai, a former army chief of staff, led a coup in April 2012 that ousted the regime of former premier Carlos Gomes Junior. He agreed in May last year to hand power to a civilian transitional regime headed by President Manuel Serifo Nhamadjo, who had been due to hold elections within twelve months. However that plan has now been postponed. Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, a former chief of the navy, was arrested earlier in April by US federal agents in international waters off West Africa, with several accomplices as he was allegedly about to receive a cocaine shipment.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Travel Summary:

Currently there is a high threat from terrorism in Mali. The Government of Mali declared a State of Emergency across the whole country on 12 January 2013. This state of Emergency is in force until 6 June 2013. This effectively enables the government to take extraordinary measures to deal with the security situation in the north and elsewhere. No curfew is currently in place however MS Risk advises those in the country to monitor the local media for reports of any new measures.

Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. There is also a high threat of kidnapping in Mali by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and by the splinter group, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). Although AQIM uses the northern region of Mali as an operating base, it

has proven its capability of travelling long distances in order to carry out attacks, some of which have occurred in neighbouring countries. As such the kidnap threat cannot be isolated within the northern regional stronghold. In turn, criminal gangs have previously been engaged to carry out kidnappings for terrorist groups



in return for financial rewards. Subsequently attacks can take place throughout Mali. In the past, a number of Westerners have been kidnapped by terrorists in Mali and in the Sahel region. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel. Victims have included tourists, NGO workers and diplomats of a variety of nationalities, primarily European. These attacks have on occasion resulted in the murder of the hostages. The recent kidnapping of a French citizen in the western region of the country has come as a shock as the area where he was taken has been perceived as being stable and under governmental control. In the past, kidnap threats have typically emanated from the Azawad region in the north and east part of the county, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

- For Ransom - insurgents will raise finances for future operations. With the impending ECOWAS operation, this is accelerating as a concern.
- Human Shields - Insurgents will kidnap persons in order to deter/reduce the risk of direct action by governmental forces against them.
- Ideological - Kidnappings will occur for political purposes.

Since the coup in March 2012, and due to the ongoing political unrest, MS RISK judges that there is a continued heightened threat of kidnap for ransom in Mali and as such further attacks and kidnappings are highly likely to occur. Furthermore, although it is difficult to forecast how severe this threat will emerge, all affected organisations are recommended to review their current operations and contingencies which is in line to the previous advice which has been given. MS RISK currently advises against all travel to Mali.

MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Mali:

With western diplomatic missions all warning against unnecessary travel to Mali, those companies with fixed interests in the country need to take measured precautions if they have not done so already. This is especially an issue for organisations with any interest in the so-called Azawad region - that portion of the country which is under insurgent control. Preparations should include the following:

- Thinning out non-essential staff and dependents
- Restricting expat and local national internal travel
- Seeking advice from the security forces
- Ensuring journey management systems are in place and work
- Reviewing crisis management contingencies and carrying out exercises of these plans
- Registration of expatriates with relevant diplomatic missions and seeking advice on what support will be forthcoming (if any) if conditions deteriorate
- Liaison with insurers to know any exclusions or limits to existing cover

The most extreme risks will be in the Azawad region. There is expected to be military clashes there between the various insurgent groupings against the ECOWAS-bolstered Mali army force in line with the UN Security Council authorization to use force. Despite the obvious threats in the Azawad, organisations in Mali should be braced for nuisance attacks and isolated terrorist attacks in the capital of Bamako. When al-Shabaab was weakened in Somalia, these types of attacks were experienced in Uganda and Kenya. Although the two conflicts are not connected, it is logical to predict that similar tactics may evolve and be witnessed in Mali and inside contributing nations.

Breakdown of the Mali Intervention:

- **15 April** - Just two days after three Chadian soldiers were killed in a suicide attack in Kidal in northern Mali, Chad's President announced that his country's troops would be withdrawing from

Mali as they are not trained to fight a “guerrilla-style war.” A suicide bomber killed at least three Chadian soldiers and another four wounded in Mali on Friday. The soldiers were in the northern city of Kidal when a bomber struck. According to a regional security source, the centre of Kidal has now been sealed off. No further details pertaining to the attack have been released.

- **16 April** - The head of the pan-African force that is currently fighting Islamist militants in Mali arrived in the northern city of Kidal in order to discuss the security situation in the war-torn desert region. Pierre Buyoya’s visit comes just one day after France obtained a draft resolution in the UN Security Council for an 11,000-strong UN Peacekeeping force that will take over the military duties in Mali on 1 July 2013.
- **21 April** - Security forces have confirmed that militants have captured a village near Mali’s desert city of Timbuktu on Sunday. The Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) has confirmed that they have taken Ber, a settlement of around 9,000 people located some 50 kilometers (30 miles) east of Timbuktu, from an armed gang which had been harassing the local residents. A military source in Timbuktu confirmed the claim, stating that “the MAA effectively controls the city now. They launched an attack on a local armed group which has not been identified yet.” The take over comes hours after reports surfaced that clashes had broken out between secular Tuareg rebels and Arab militants.
- **23 April** - As part of the phased withdrawal, the French army hands over its security operation in Timbuktu to Burkina Faso troops. 650 Burkinabe soldiers are set to be on the ground by next week.
- **24 April** - Separatist Tuareg rebels have refused to disarm or take part in elections that are planned for July until negotiations have taken place with Bamako.
- **25 April** - The United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution to create a 12,600-strong peacekeeping operation in Mali which will effectively take over from both French and African forces who for the past few months have been battling al-Qaeda-linked fighters in the country’s northern region. The 15-member Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2100 (2013) to establish the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), effectively allowing it to begin operations on July 1. The initial deployment will be for a period of twelve months however the council does have the option to extend the mission if it finds it necessary. Before MINUSMA’s operations will begin, the council will first have to review the overall security situation in Mali. Specifically, the council seeks to ensure that major combat operations by international forces have ceased and that there has been a significant reduction in the capacity of militants to pose a major threat to civilians and international forces.
- **26 April** - France’s defence minister reaffirmed that his country will keep 1,000 troops in Mali in order to fight radical Islamic militants even after the arrival later this year of more than 12,000 UN peacekeepers. In a visit to the northeastern city of Gao, Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian addressed reporters just one day after the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of the peacekeeping force. During his visit to Mali, Mr. Le Drian met with the country’s interim president as well as Gen. Ibrahim Dahrou Dembele in order to discuss efforts that are underway to train the Malian military. During discussions, Gen. Dembele also highlighted that despite the French military successes, a number of difficulties remain in the Kidal region of Mali. The area has been patrolled by both French and Chadian forces, as local authorities have refused the presence of Malian soldiers whom they have accused of human rights abuses.

On the Ground Analysis:

- **18 April 2013** - Al-Qaeda’s North African Branch has threatened to seek revenge against all those countries that are taking part in the French-led war in Mali, warning that no one who has participated will be safe. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) had previously taken written questions from international journalists and on Thursday, the militant group released a 28-page document outlining the responses to the questions in English via the Twitter account for its media

arm, Al-Andalus Media. The report indicated that “no one who participated in this ferocious attack on our people in north Mali will be safe.”

- **15 April 2013** - The president of Chad has announced that the war against armed Islamic extremists in Mali will lose some 2,000 Chadian soldiers, leaving a number of Malian cities more vulnerable to a resurgence of jihadist attacks. The news that Chad will pull its troops from Mali may also force France to push back its own timeframe for withdrawing its troops from its former West African colony. In turn, it also creates a greater urgency for a UN military mission to Mali. The United Nations is set to consider whether or not a UN mission will be sent into Mali, however diplomats have yet to determine its composition and mission. Since the French-led mission began in mid-January of this year, soldiers from Chad have been involved in some of the fiercest fighting. They are also credited with some of the biggest successes to date, amongst them was the killing of Abou Zeid, a notorious al-Qaeda commander who kidnapped and terrorized Westerners in the desert for a number of years. As such, Chadian forces, always known to be good desert fighters, have enhanced their reputation during the Mali conflict, and one of the great concerns is that there are no other African troops with their capabilities. In turn, Chad has also suffered heavy troop casualties, forcing Chadian President Idris Deby to announce that his forces would not be staying for a protracted guerrilla war with the radical Islamic insurgents. On Monday, the President indicated that “Chad’s army has no ability to face the kind of guerrilla fighting that is emerging in northern Mali. Our soldiers are going to return to Chad. They have accomplished their mission.” The French, like the Chadians, were initially hoping to downscale their presence and have both indicated that they hoped to have only 1,000 troops left in Mali by the end of the year. However the early departure of Chadian forces raises questions about how feasible the planned French pullout will be if the French want to maintain the inroads made against armed Islamist extremists in the northern regions of Mali. So far, the French Defence Ministry has not made any comments on Chad’s decision to withdraw its troops.

Domestic News:

- **19 April 2013** - Mali’s interim president has sought to reassure international partners that his country will be ready to hold democratic elections by July as promised. President Dioncounda Traore made the comments before a meeting in the capital which included representatives from the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, and the West African regional block known as ECOWAS. Presidential elections in Mali are tentatively scheduled for 7 July, while legislative elections are scheduled to take place on 21 July. Critics however have questioned how Mali will be able to hold such a vote given the fact that hundreds of thousands of residents have been displaced by the political turmoil that began in March 2012 after a coup deposed the democratically elected president. According to UN figures, at least 282,000 Malians remain displaced within the country, while more than 175,000 others have sought refuge in neighboring countries, including Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. Furthermore, security also remains to be a key concern ahead of the elections, especially in the northern cities of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu, where remnants of the Islamist groups have staged a number of suicide bombings in the past months since they were ousted from power by the French-led military operation which began in January. The meeting in Mali’s capital is also aimed to discuss how best to secure these cities ahead of the July elections. According to Jeffrey Feltman, UN undersecretary-general for political affairs, the meeting is an opportunity for those involved to better coordinate their partnerships.

International Developments:

- **25 April 2013** - The UN Security Council has unanimously approved a resolution to create a UN peacekeeping force for Mali. The 12,600-strong force is intended to incorporate some 6,000 West African soldiers who are already in the country. The resolution was initially proposed by France

which intervened militarily in January in order to drive out the Islamist militants from the northern regions of the country. According to the UN security Council, the UN force is to deploy at the beginning of July before planned nationwide elections. However a French force of 1,000 troops will remain in case they are needed in order to fight the al-Qaeda-linked groups that remain in the desert regions. According to a number of analysts, the UN force will stretch the definition of peacekeeping to new limits as there is no peace agreement for it to enforce in Mali. The UN force - known by its French acronym MINUSMA - is to be composed of up to 11,200 military personnel and 1,440 police officers, making it the third largest, after those in Democratic Republic of Congo and Darfur. According to UN officials it will cost up to US \$800 m (£520m) a year. Its mission will be to stabilize “the key population centers, especially in the north of Mali...to deter threats, initiate and actively...take active effective...steps to prevent the return of armed elements to those areas.” The UN mission will be an expansion of a joint West African force already in Mali, which has come in for criticism and there are concerns over its capabilities.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country



Travel Summary:

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the northern and eastern regions of the country - especially the desert areas north of the Oualata-Tichit-Ouadane-Zouerat line, as well as the border areas with Algeria, Mali and Morocco. We also advise you to avoid Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, Tagant and Hodh el Chargui. This is due to extremist groups and armed smugglers that are active in these areas which has resulted in high threats of terrorism as well as a heightened risk of banditry and kidnapping. We also advise against all travel to the western provinces of Dakhlet - Nouadhibou and Inchiri. This includes the road from the port of Nouadhibou to Nouakchott. We advise against all but essential travel to the rest of the country.



Terrorism

Following the French military intervention in Mali there has been a heightened possibility of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. Consequently we advise vigilance.

Kidnapping

There is a high risk of kidnapping throughout Mauritania and Westerners are the favoured target. In the past, hostages have been held captive for several months before being released. MS Risk advises anyone traveling to Mauritania to take particular caution in the region of Inchire (Akjoujt is the capita) as well as in the areas that border Mali and Morocco.

For companies with employees remaining in Mauritania, MS Risk advises you to arrange a trustworthy escort that is familiar with the country. The use of varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one location to another is also highly advised. Exercise a high awareness of personal security at all times and monitor the local developments.

Domestic News:

- **18 April 2013** - France's Foreign Minister has confirmed that Mauritania will be sending 1,800 troops to Mali as part of a planned UN force to keep the peace in the West African nation. Laurent Fabius has confirmed that a UN Security Council resolution to approve the creation of a 12,6000-strong UN peacekeeping force from 1 July 2013 should be approved as soon as next week. The force, which is expected to be made up primarily of African contingents, will take up the slack as France starts drawing down its 4,000-strong force to just 1,000 by the end of this year. Mauritania, an Islamic republic which borders Mali to the west, has one of the most effective armies in the region, with experience of battling Islamist fighters in the desert terrain. However up until now, Mauritania has remained out of the Malian conflict.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Avoid all but essential travel to part(s) of the country

Travel Summary:

Summary

In light of the recent kidnapping and execution of several foreigners, coupled with an increase of attacks in the northern region of the country which have been blamed on Islamist militants, MS Risk advises against travelling to several regions in northern Nigeria. MS Risk advises against all travel to: the Riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Cross River States; Warri city, Kano city, Okene City. We advise against all travel to Borno State, Yobe State, Bombe State and Bauchi State. This is due to the frequent violent attacks which have been occurring over the past months. More recent attacks have increasingly focussed on public places,

including bars and restaurants. These attacks have resulted in a large number of deaths and injuries. We also advise against all travel to Kano City and Okene City, which has also seen a frequent number of high levels of violence.



We advise against all but essential travel to Kano state, Kaduna State, Jigwa State, Katsina State, Sokoto State, Kebbi State, Jos City, Riyom and Barkin Ladi Local Government Areas in Plateau State; Okene Region of Kogi State. These areas have witnessed an increase in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to Mubi Town in Adamawa State and the area north of Mubi Town that borders Borno State where there has also been a rise in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to

the non-riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, Abia State, Kaduna City, Zaria City.

Companies with workers in northern Nigeria, even in areas which are not subject to specific advice against travel, will require a high level of security. In light of the recent kidnappings of Westerners, employers are advised to review their security arrangements and to ensure that compounds are protected.

There is a high threat of terrorism occurring in Nigeria. A bomb attack that occurred at a bus station in Kano city on 18 March 2013 resulted in multiple casualties. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including government, security and educational institutions, international organisations as well as public venues and areas such as restaurants, bars, markets, hotels, shopping centers, places of worship and other areas that are frequented by expatriates, foreign tourists and business travelers. Terrorist attacks have been known to occur on religious and public holidays. There have been regular attacks on churches in northern Nigeria at times of worship. The US government has published an Emergency Message for US citizens, detailing information that Boko Haram may be planning attacks in Abuja. This information has been assessed as being credible and attacks could occur at any time, including against international hotels that are frequently visited by Westerners. There is also an increased level of kidnap threat in Nigeria in which foreign nationals have typically been the targets of such kidnaps.

Kidnapping

Although recent incidents of kidnapping have mostly occurred in northern Nigeria, MS Risk advises that such kidnappings can take place anywhere in the country.

- On 16 February 2013, after storming the compound of Lebanese-owned construction firm Setraco in Bauchi state, gunmen killed a security guard and abducted a Briton, an Italian, a Greek, two Lebanese and two Syrian workers. The British construction worker is believed to have been killed along with the six other foreign nationals. This was the worst case of foreigners being kidnapped in the mostly Muslim north of Africa's most populous country since an insurgency by Islamist militants intensified two years ago.
- In December 2012, a French national was kidnapped by armed men in Katsina State in northern Nigeria, reportedly from a residential compound.
- In 2012, a Lebanese national was kidnapped in Kaduna State. His Lebanese colleague was killed during the abduction.
- In January 2012, a German national was killed in Kano city. He was killed on 31 May 2012.
- In May 2011, a British national and an Italian national were kidnapped together in Kebbi State. Both hostages were killed in Sokoto on 8 March 2012.

Threats and Terrorism

Attacks by Islamist groups in northern Nigeria have become the biggest threat to stability in Africa's top oil producing country. This has been exacerbated by the fact that Western governments are currently concerned that militants may link up with groups elsewhere in the region, including al-Qaeda's North African wing, AQIM. These concerns have been further intensified by the conflict and military intervention in nearby Mali.

On the Ground Events:

- **25 April 2013** - Authorities in Nigeria have indicated that at least eleven people have been killed in violence that has been blamed on Islamic insurgents in the country's northeastern region. According to reports, the attack occurred on Wednesday night in the village of Gashua in Yobe state, when Islamic extremists attacked a police station in the village and later a prison. According to military spokesman Lt. Eli Lazarus, the shootout killed two police officers and five civilians. Another attack, which occurred in Bama, killed another four.
- **19 April 2013** - One of the deadliest clashes between Islamist insurgents and security forces in northern Nigeria has destroyed much of a fishing town located on the shore of Lake Chad. The attack has also killed more than 180 people, highlighting the brutal tactics of Nigerian soldiers in combating the nearly four-year uprising. More than 300 homes were burnt in the exchange between Boko Haram militants and the military on Friday which occurred in the state of Borno where forces clashed over four hours in the town of Baga. Some residents were killed in the fierce gun battle while others died in a conflagration when their thatched-roof homes were set alight.

However since the attack, the cause of the fire has been fiercely disputed, with the military indicating that militants had set the homes on fire by using rocket-propelled grenades. In turn, some residents have accused Nigerian soldiers of starting the fires deliberately in order to root out the extremists. The town of Baga is located in the remote northeastern edge of Nigeria, a lightly governed area of high penetration by Boko Haram militants who are easily able to slip across the borders into Chad and Cameroon. There is also a military presence in the town, and the clash between the militants and soldiers may have been set off when Boko Haram militants attacked residents who were watching a soccer match.



Domestic News:

- **23 April 2013** - Nigeria is to investigate its army's conduct after clashes between troops and Islamist fighters in the northeast killed nearly 200 people, the single deadliest event since the insurgency began. Late on Monday, President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a "full-scale" probe as the Red Cross reported a death toll of 187, many of them civilians, with dozens more wounded. A statement released from the President's office has indicated that the investigation will determine whether or not the military complied with the established rules of engagement during the operation. The fighting broke out between troops and Islamist fighters in the town of Baga which is located near the border with Chad. More than 300 houses in the fishing town had been burnt. The bloodshed, which began on Friday, has seen the most deaths in a single event since the insurgency of Boko Haram began in northern and central Nigeria in 2009.
- **18 April 2013** - Nigeria's largest opposition party has voted to merge with two other parties, a move that is aimed at creating a unified front capable of unseating the ruling party at the 2015 polls. An overwhelming majority of the 4,500 delegates at the Action Congress of Nigeria's convention in a stadium in Lagos backed the merger with the Congress for Progressive Change and the main faction of the All Nigeria Peoples Party.
- **15 April 2013** - Nigeria's Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has threatened to bomb mosques and assassinate Muslim clerics. This announcement comes just one week after the movement claimed responsibility for the killing of fifteen security personnel in the southern oil-producing Bayelsa state. According to MEND spokesman Jorno Gbomo, the campaign will start on 31 May and will focus "to save Christianity in Nigeria from annihilation." Furthermore, "the bombings of mosques, haj camps, Islamic institutions, large congregations in Islamic events and assassinations of clerics that propagate doctrines of hate will form the core mission of this crusade." According to Gbomo, MEND, the main rebel group in the oil-rich south, may call off "Operation Barbarossa" if Christian organizations and the group's suspected leader Henry Okah intervene." It has also urged Boko Haram to stop attacking Christians and churches.



Hijackings:

- **25 April 2013** - Reports state that owners of the Nigeria-flagged offshore vessel, the **Utai 8**, lost contact with the vessel at 0900 LT. The vessel's last known position was 03:50N - 006:00E, approximately 30 nautical miles south of Brass, Nigeria. The boat was apparently en route to Port Harcourt with three crew members on board. It is not known at this time whether the boat was hijacked with a view to ransom the three crew members or whether it was taken to be used as a mothership.

Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- **24 April 2013** - Pirates chased an Antigua and Barbuda container ship, the **Bosun**, while underway at 2345 LT in position 03:51N - 005:40E, approximately 32 nautical miles south-southwest of the Nigerian coast. Pirates fired upon the container ship. The vessel increased speed and evaded the boarding.
- **23 April 2013** - The Liberia-flagged container ship, **Hansa Marburg**, reported being attacked by pirates at about 0020 LT while in position 02:35N - 006:52E, approximately 105 nautical miles from the Nigerian coast. **Update** - Pirates have kidnapped four crew members when they attacked a container ship off the coast of Equatorial Guinea. Hamburg-based shipping firm Leonhardt and Blumberg has confirmed that four hostages, two Ukrainians, a Russian, and one from the Pacific island nation of Kiribati, were taken when the Liberia-flagged Hansa Marburg was attacked by armed men on Tuesday. The attack occurred around 130 nautical miles off the coast of the small West African nation. In the last week, a Greek-flagged oil tanker, the Cap Theodora, was unsuccessfully attacked twice off the coast of Nigeria, close to where the Hansa Marburg was boarded. Security sources currently believe that the two attacks are linked and that they may have been carried out by the same group.
- **22 April 2013** - Greece-flagged crude tanker, the **Cap Theodora**, reported coming under attack at 0655 UTC while in position 03:10N - 007:14E, around 104 nautical miles south-southeast of Brass, Nigeria, approximately 23 nautical miles south-southwest from Usan filed with a speed of 15 knots. One speed boat with 5 - 6 pirates on board came alongside the tanker, attempting to board it. Ladder was sighted on board the speed boat. After several attempts, the attackers gave up. A mothership - fishing trawler with red hull and white superstructure - was sighted near by. Security boats were sent to assist from Akpo and Usan fields. This is the second time the tanker has reported a boarding attempt. The last incident occurred on 16 April, 36 nautical miles west-northwest of Principe Island (south of this attack) with the same modus operandi.

- **18 April 2013** - Three robbers in a small boat approached and attempted to board an anchored Marshall Islands-flagged General Cargo Ship, the **Corinth**, at 0010 UTC while in position 04:44.8S-011:48.7E, in Pointe Noire Anchorage, the Congo. Alert duty crew spotted the robbers climbing the anchor chain and raised the alarm. On hearing the alarm, the robbers jumped into the water and escaped empty handed. Port Control was contacted, and all crew members have been reported safe.



About MS Risk

MS Risk is a privately owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by syndicate 2525 of Lloyd's of London for special risks case management in all jurisdictions. It also acts as retained advisors to syndicates in the Lloyd's of London specialty risk insurance markets: kidnap for ransom, extortion, hijack, illegal detention, illegal war tax, malicious product tamper, terrorism, political and war risk.

MS Risk is always mindful and compliant to legislation and guidelines on the use of private security services including, but not limited to the US FCPA (1977), UK Bribery Act (2010), Canadian Bill C-48 (2007), ASX 8 Corporate Governance Principles, and the World Bank/IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Government and Private Security Forces. MS Risk is a signatory of the Swiss government's International Code of Conduct. It is transparent and compliant to market expectations on legal and ethical conduct in the performance of services.

MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

MS Risk supports clients in a variety of business sectors with the following services:

- Security Consulting
 - Risk assessments and intelligence reporting
 - Planning and management
 - Due diligence and investigations.

- Project Management
 - Interim security
 - Training
 - Special assignments

- Crisis Response
 - Crisis management
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests

- Virtual Security Director service for clients lacking a full time security executive.

References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

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