



# 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

May 13 – 26, 2013



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### Benin

- **17 May 2013** - Aides of Mali's former junta chief Captain Amadou Sanogo have rejected an offer of asylum which was given by Benin.

### Burkina Faso

- Travel Summary
- **20 May 2013** - Burkina Faso's foreign minister has confirmed that talks will soon resume between the Malian government and an ethnic Tuareg rebel group whose influence has been growing in Mali's northern region.

### Central African Republic

- Travel Summary
- **20 May 2013** - Residents have confirmed that suspected foreign fighters backing a rebel movement which is now in control of the Central African Republic's (CAR) government, have invaded a remote north-central village, killing at least six people.
- **16 May 2013** - Sources have indicated that Cameroonian troops have clashed with the Seleka rebels of the Central African Republic (CAR) near the border between the countries, forcing residents to flee the area.

### Cote d'Ivoire

- **16 May 2013** - There has been a travel warning issued for the Cote d'Ivoire. MS Risk advises all individuals travelling to the Cote d'Ivoire to carefully consider the risks.

### Equatorial Guinea

- **26 May 2013** - Citizens in Equatorial Guinea voted in Sunday's local and legislative elections which have been denounced as a sham by the opposition party.

- **15 May 2013** - Police in Equatorial Guinea have arrested one opposition politician and dispersed some two-hundred demonstrators who have accused President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's regime of "maltreatment" ahead of legislative elections which are due to take place later this month.

## Guinea

- **26 May 2013** - At least six people were killed and dozens wounded on Saturday in what is the third straight day of rioting that has occurred in Conakry.
- **21 May 2013** - At least five people were killed on Saturday when security forces in Guinea opened fire on protesters in opposition strongholds in the capital city.
- **21 May 2013** - Guinea's opposition has threatened to prevent parliamentary elections from taking place on June 30 unless the South African company that is responsible for managing the electoral roll is replaced.
- **14 May 2013** - Guinean opposition leaders have called on Tuesday for renewed protests next week, accusing President Alpha Conde of sabotaging the United Nations-mediated talks that were aimed at ending the impasse over the organization of a parliamentary election.

## Guinea - Bissau

- **22 May 2013** - The African Union (AU) has indicated that it could lift sanctions against Guinea-Bissau as the country's leader has promised to hold elections later this year.
- **21 May 2013** - A new road map to the end of the transition period in Guinea-Bissau, which has been dubbed as the Pact of the Regime, was presented on Tuesday in the capital Bissau to politicians as well as they army and civil society.

## Mali

- Travel Summary
- Breakdown of Events

### *Domestic News*

- **14 May 2013** - Mali's interim President Dioncounda Traore has confirmed that he will do his utmost to ensure that national elections, which are a key goal of the troubled country's backers, take place as planned on 28 July 2013.

### *International Developments*

- **24 May 2013** - United Nations officials have confirmed that China has offered soldiers to the new UN peacekeeping mission in Mali.
- **19 May 2013** - A court in Algeria has sentenced fourteen Malian members of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) to twenty years in prison for arms smuggling and entering the country illegally.
  - Meanwhile the head of the EU military committee has indicated the he was "confident" in the ability of the first Mali battalion being trained by Europe to battle the Islamist insurgency raging in the north.
- **18 May 2013** - UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has named former Dutch government minister Bert Koenders as the head of they key UN Mission in Mali.
- **15 May 2013** - More than one hundred international donors have pledged 3.2 billion euros in aid to help Mali avoid the mistakes which had initially allowed Islamist rebels to seize vast territories in the country's northern region.

## Mauritania

- Travel Summary
- **18 May 2013** - Security sources have confirmed that a senior operative in an al-Qaeda linked group in Mali has surrendered in Mauritania.
- **14 May 2013** - Prosecutors in Mauritania are seeking to lengthen the prison sentence of a Canadian man who has already been imprisoned on alleged links to terror groups.

## Niger

- **25 May 2013** - Niger's President indicated on Saturday that Islamist militants who carried out simultaneous suicide attacks on an army base and a French uranium mine in northern Niger two days ago came from southern Libya.
- **24 May 2013** - Reports have indicated that militant leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar masterminded the two suicide bombings that occurred early on Thursday in Niger.
- **23 May 2013** - Two simultaneous suicide car bombing attacks have been carried out during the early morning hours in Niger.

## Nigeria

### *On the Ground Events*

- **25 May 2013** - Authorities in Nigeria have confirmed that they freed three women and six children who were abducted by Boko Haram militants as part of an ongoing military operation that is targeting the extremists.
- **18 May 2013** - As Nigerian troops intensify their search for Boko Haram militants, the Joint Task Force (JTF) imposed a 24-hour curfew in places identified as hot spots throughout Maiduguri.
- **17 May 2013** - Officials have confirmed that at least thirty militants have been killed during air raids on their training camps in north-eastern Nigeria.

- Meanwhile reports have indicated that explosions and gunfire have been heard overnight in the state of Katsina.
- **16 May 2013** - Nigeria's military confirmed on Thursday that it was ready to launch air strikes against Boko Haram Islamists as several thousand troops moved to the remote north-east region in order to retake territory that was seized by the insurgents.
- **14 May 2013** - Fifty-three people have been killed and thirteen villages have been burn in the central Nigerian state of Benue.

## Domestic News

- **15 May 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has declared a state of emergency in three state after a series of deadly attacks were carried out by Boko Haram militants.

## International Developments

- **17 May 2013** - The United Nation's human right office has warned that Boko Haram Islamists could face charges of crimes against humanity.

## Kidnappings

- **17 May 2013** - An inquest in the UK has found that an engineer from Greater Manchester was unlawfully killed by his kidnapers in Nigeria just minutes after a UK-led rescue operation stormed in.

## Senegal

- **20 May 2013** - The White House has confirmed that United States President Barack Obama will be visiting Senegal, South African and Tanzania in June where is is expected to meet with lawmakers as well as brininess and civil society leaders.

## Togo

- **23 May 2013** - Police in Togo have fired tear gas in order to disperse protesters in what is the latest confrontation between the ruling party and the country's increasingly active opposition.
- **13 May 2013** - Togo's President has criticized rich nations who have cut development aid on the beliefs that it contributes to the spread of terrorism.
  - Meanwhile activists in Togo have indicated that a detained leader died in custody after authorities refused a request to bring him to a hospital.
  - In other unrest, the Togolese government indicated on Monday that thirty police officers had been injured after clashes with demonstrators occurred over the weekend in Niamtougou, which is located 280 miles (450 kilometers) north of Lome.

## Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

### *Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies*

- **17 May 2013** - Eleven robbers in an unlit boat approached an anchored Italy-flagged chemical tanker, Mariella Bottiglieri, at 0230 in position 06:03.1N - 001:17.7E, Lome Anchorage, Togo.
- **14 May 2013** - Tanker reported attacked by armed pirates at 0800 LT in position 04:20N - 007:40E, south of the mouth of Opobo river, south of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria.
  - Meanwhile a St Vincent & Grenadines tanker, Saint Patrick, was attacked at around 0200 LT in position 04:25N - 007:58E approximately 8 nautical miles off Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- **13 May 2013** - Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker, Port Stewart, at 0213 LT in position 06:20.7N - 003:19.8E, approximately 8 nautical miles south south-west of Lagos, Nigeria, in the main anchorage area, reported to authorities that two persons had boarded and were seen on the deck.

### *Releases*

- **25 May 2013** - Ship managers Leonhardt & Blumberg of Hamburg Germany, operators of container vessel Hansa Marburg, have confirmed that four crew members, who were taken from the vessel by armed men 130 miles south west of Malabo, Equatorial Guinea and held hostage, have now been released.
- **14 May 2013** - Pirates in the Gulf of Guinea have released five Polish and Russian crew members who were kidnapped from a cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria last month.

## About MS Risk

No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice



*Although there is currently no travel warning against Benin, there is an underlying threat from terrorism. Furthermore while the overall political situation in the country remains to be stable, MS Risk advises any travelers and those already in the country to follow the news reports and to be alert to any developments, which may trigger public protests or unrest. MS Risk advises you to avoid any demonstrations or large gatherings of people. If you become aware of any nearby violence, you should leave the area immediately. There have been a number of incidents of mugging, personal assault and car-jackings which have occurred in Cotonou. However armed robberies have also been reported in other areas, most notably in the regions that border with Nigeria. Highway bandits are known to operate. Vehicle-jackings by bandits in the capital have, in previous instances, resulted in injuries and death. MS Risk advises you to take personal security precautions and maintain a high level of vigilance in public places especially at Dantokpa market in Cotonou and around large hotels and other tourist areas.*

### Domestic News:

- **17 May 2013** - Aides of Mali's former junta chief Captain Amadou Sanogo have rejected an offer of asylum which was given by Benin. Benin's Foreign Minister Nassirou Arifari Bako confirmed that his country had extended its hand to Captain Sanogo "in its search for peace and to assist in the democratization process of that country." In response, Makan Konate, president of Mali's Group of Patriots (COPO), a coalition of organizations supporting the former junta, indicated that "we categorically reject the offer of exile. Why should he go into exile? Its out of the question. He will remain in Mali." Sanogo, a captain in the Malian army, had on 22 March 2012 overthrown the regime of president Amadou Toumani Toure, a move which led to the fall of the country's north to armed Islamist linked to al-Qaeda. Benin's offer of asylum comes at a time when Mali is preparing for its first presidential polls since the coup, which are expected to occur at the end of July this year.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

## Travel Summary:

There a general terrorist threat remains 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. The risk of kidnapping is substantial in these regions and Westerners continue to be a favorite target. As such, MS Risk advises you to exercise extreme caution at all times. 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. If you travel to Burkina Faso, we advise that you use varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one place to another. If possible, it is recommended that you be accompanied by an armed security escort when undertaking road travel in this region.



The French military has been assisting the Malian government in its efforts to repel armed rebels. Terrorist groups in the region have since declared their intention to increase attacks and kidnappings targeting Westerners. Furthermore, citizens of countries that are currently supporting the military intervention in Mali are at a particular risk, however MS Risk advises all travellers to exercise increased vigilance in the region.

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 ongoing 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.

## **Domestic News:**

- **20 May 2013** - Burkina Faso’s foreign minister has confirmed that talks will soon resume between the Malian government and an ethnic Tuareg rebel group whose influence has been growing in Mali’s northern region. The last negotiations occurred back in December before the French launched a military offensive to oust radical jihadists who had battled with the Tuareg rebels for control of Kidal and a number of other northern cities. Although no immediate date was provided as to when the negotiations are set to occur, the announcement comes amidst lingering questions pertaining to the future of the rebel-held town of Kidal. It has remained unclear as to how the town will be able to take part in the long-awaited elections which are set to occur in July. According to the Foreign Minister, “in the days to come, contact will be made with all the players and partners

from the international community so that favorable conditions can be set up for holding elections in a calm atmosphere with the participation of all.” These conditions must include the disarmament of rebels from the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA). The group currently controls Kidal and it has exerted its influence in the months since the French-led operation ousted the jihadists from the major town in the region. MNLA fighters continue to control the roadblocks in Kida, and they have since started collecting taxes and have appointed their own governor. Consequently, Kida’s confused status has become an embarrassment for the French as well as the Malian government.

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.

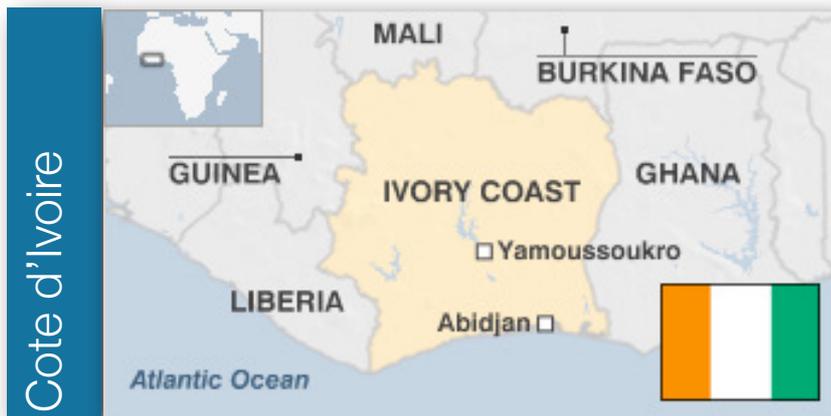
Any individuals in the country are advised to leave now. Those who remain should take all the necessary precautions in order to stay in a safe place with sufficient stocks of food and water. If the situation deteriorates further, leaving the country by commercial means will likely become increasingly 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 Land:

- **20 May 2013** - Residents have confirmed that suspected foreign fighters backing a rebel movement which is now in control of the Central African Republic's (CAR) government, have invaded a remote north-central village, killing at least six people. The assault, which occurred in the town of Bouca, comes just days after other armed fighters took a dozen civilians hostage in another village in the same area. Two people were killed in the violence that occurred there. In Bouca, which is located 180 miles (290 kilometers) north of the capital city of Bangui, residents indicated that four vehicles full of armed gunmen entered the village on Friday, where they shot dead six people. They further indicated that the men did not speak Sango, which is the local language of the CAR. There are allegations that they fighters may be Sudanese or Chadian. Also on Friday, rebels traveled into the countryside to rob people who had fled Batangafo, which is located 60 miles (100 kilometers) further north of Bouca. According to residents there, the fighters stole twenty-six cattle and also assaulted a herder. In other communities throughout the region, residents have indicated that rebels have gone door-to-door, seeking money and other valuable objects including motorcycles.

## Domestic News:

- **16 May 2013** - Sources have indicated that Cameroonian troops have clashed with the Seleka rebels of the Central African Republic (CAR) near the border between the countries, forcing residents to flee the area. According to residents, shots were heard on both sides of the border between Tuesday and Wednesday. Cameroon's army has confirmed that clashes with the rebels did occur however they declined to provide further details. A local police official on Thursday reported "problems at the border." Seleka rebels seized power in the CAR six weeks ago in a coup that ousted president Francois Bozize. The security situation in the already unstable nation continues to remain volatile, with pillaging and sporadic attacks continuing to occur. Since the coup, Cameroon has tightened security in Garoua-Boulai, with army street patrols and sporadic searches looking for arms belonging to the Central Africa's army.



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 as the situation in these regions remains to be unstable due to the intercommunity tensions as well as the presence of armed groups. All air, land and sea borders with Ghana have now re-opened 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.*

## International Developments:

- 16 May 2013** - There has been a travel warning issued for the Cote d'Ivoire. MS Risk advises all individuals travelling to the Cote d'Ivoire to carefully consider the risks. Any individuals currently residing in or travelling to the Cote d'Ivoire should monitor the conditions carefully, maintain situational awareness and pay close attention to their personal security. While the security situation significantly improved in 2013, the security conditions in the country can change quickly and without any warning. Although the April 2013 municipal and regional elections were held in general peace, there were limited and localized incidents of violence in the days that followed the election, as the results were being announced. Local security forces responded to these events, which were quickly resolved. In recent days, France has commenced a large stage of troop withdrawal from Mali. A convoy of dozens of lorries left a base outside the capital city of Bamako and is headed for Abidjan. As such, this will result in the movement of a number of support vehicles which will be driving in long convoy packets through the length of the Cote d'Ivoire.

No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice



*Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Equatorial Guinea, MS Risk advises to remain alert and to take sensible personal security precautions. Roadblocks and unannounced identification checks are likely to occur. As such, you are advised to carry the appropriate form of identification (such as a passport or residence card) with you at all times. Elections are set to take place on the 26 of May. As such, over the past few weeks, there have been a number of protests staged throughout the country, some of which have turned violent. As such, MS Risk advises you to avoid large crowds and to remain vigilant as further protests and rioting are likely to occur.*

### Domestic News:

- **26 May 2013** - Citizens in Equatorial Guinea voted in Sunday's local and legislative elections which have been denounced as a sham by the opposition party. The party of Africa's longest serving leader is expected to clinch an overwhelming victory. Placido Mico, the only opposition lawmaker in a parliament where President Teodoro Obiang Nguema's PDGE party holds 99 out of the 100 seats has indicated that "these are sham elections, just like the other elections organized by the Obiang dictatorship." The opposition lawmaker further noted that he had received reports of "fraud everywhere" and that supporters of the current President were voting multiple times. Sunday's parliamentary and local elections follow constitutional reforms that were adopted after a referendum which was held in 2011 and which established a Senate as well as created the post of vice president and limited the presidential terms to two. However it is not clear whether the law is retrospective and if President Obiang will have to step down at the end of his term in 2016. The opposition has branded the referendum as a masquerade that is aimed at cementing Obiang's power and which will enable him to groom his son, who many expect will succeed him. Polls in Equatorial Guinea closed at 1500 GMT. The results of the elections are expected to be announced in the coming days.
- **15 May 2013** - Police in Equatorial Guinea have arrested one opposition politician and dispersed some two-hundred demonstrators who have accused President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's regime of "maltreatment" ahead of legislative elections which are due to take place later this month. Gathering in the capital of Malabo, demonstrators carried banners reading: "Obiang, take your family and leave," and "France, United States, help us get rid of this regime that maltreats us." Local sources have reported that police quickly dispersed the crowd, which had planned to March past the French and American embassies, and blocked off a number of streets and intersections. According to opposition Popular Union party leader Daniel Dario Martinez Ayecaba, "when we arrived at the square, military and police outnumbered us. There were armoured vehicles and helicopters have been hovering in the air since last night." He also confirmed that the party's

Secretary General, Jeronimo Ndong Mesi, had been arrested. According to a number of sources, six people belonging to the opposition party have been arrested since Monday. Meanwhile, while speaking to university professors in a meeting that was broadcast on national television on Monday, President Obiang questioned the point of a demonstration in the run-up the May 26 elections, stating that “teachers...shouldn’t incite students to oppose the system. We’re developing our country.” The President further added that “those who want to organize a demonstration against the regime need to make sure it is in accordance with the law and if they don’t conform with the law, justice can intervene to punish them.” Furthermore, the President also warned against any interventions from other countries, stating that “we’re a peaceful nation and we do not want others involved in our affairs...the ambassadors of France and United States should refrain from meddling in this country’s affairs. We’re an independent country and...we don’t take lessons from anyone. President Obiang has ruled Equatorial Guinea with an iron fist since 1979. He has often been criticized by the international community for not respecting human rights.



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. There was serious rioting and clashes between ethnic groups in Conakry in September 2012 and in March, April and May 2013. The districts of Medina, Hamdallaye, Cosa and Bambeto have been particularly affected by this violence. Further riots and such incidents have occurred in Conakry as well as in the regional towns like Kissidougou, Zogota, Labe, Dubreka, Fria and Siguiri. MS Risk advises those in the country to monitor the local media and to avoid large gatherings. The Guinean authorities maintain police and local militia checkpoints throughout the whole country. As such, you are advised to carry identification with you at all times. Theft at gunpoint is increasingly common throughout Guinea, especially at night. However violent muggings can occur even in broad daylight for cash and other valuables such as mobile telephones. Incidents of violent car-jackings are also on the rise, especially in the outlying suburbs of Conakry like Kipe. These crimes are often carried out by individuals who are dressed in either police or military uniforms and who are often carrying military weapons. There are regular reports of robberies on the route Mamou, Faranah, Kissidougou, Guekedou, Macenta and Nzerekore.*

## On Land:

- **26 May 2013** - At least six people were killed and dozens wounded on Saturday in what is the third straight day of rioting that has occurred in Conakry. Saturday’s clashes erupted when police raided several neighbourhoods in the capital city, which is seen as being pro-opposition. A doctor has

indicated that the national hospital had taken in the bodies of six young people, all killed by bullets. He also voiced his fears that the death toll could be higher as there were reports of many more wounded. On Friday, youths erected barricades across roads in the suburbs, burning tires and blocking major roads into the city centre. Deadly violence has erupted in recent weeks in the west African nation, where opposition activists have accused President Alpha Conde of seeking to rig the elections which are planned for June 30. Similar violence erupted last week, when six people were killed in demonstrations on Thursday.

- **21 May 2013** - At least five people were killed on Saturday when security forces in Guinea opened fire on protesters in opposition strongholds in the capital city. This new violence brings the number of killed since Thursday in the unrest that began over election preparations to eleven. According to Thierno Maadjou Sow, president of the OGDH human rights group, "according to our information, they (the five) all died after being shot." Furthermore, a doctor in the area has indicated that there were many wounded, including two girls between the ages of six and eight who had been hit by gunfire. Government spokesman Damantang Albert Camara has confirmed the toll since Thursday had risen to eleven with Saturday's deaths.

## Domestic News:

- **21 May 2013** - Guinea's opposition has threatened to prevent parliamentary elections from taking place on June 30 unless the South African company that is responsible for managing the electoral roll is replaced. Cellou Dalein Diallo, head of the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG) indicated that his party wanted Waymark and its local partner dropped in favor of "another operator selected on the basis of an international tender." He further indicated that "if this is not the case, we will not boycott the elections, but will prevent them outright." Increasing discontent is developing in the West African country, where at least fifteen people have already been killed in violence that has erupted a number of times during opposition protests which called for transparency in the upcoming elections. Amongst the protesters' grievances was the selection of Waymark to revise the electoral roll, with opponents of President Alpha Conde accusing the company of colluding with the government in order to rig the elections. Opposition supporters in Guinea are also protesting against a decree that sets June 30 as the date for elections, which have already been repeatedly delayed since 2011. On Monday, Guinea's election commission indicated that the main opposition parties underlined their suspicions over the transparency of the polls by refusing to submit their lists of candidates by Monday's deadline. As a result, the candidates' lists in most constituencies are made up of "parties unknown to most."
- **14 May 2013** - Guinean opposition leaders have called on Tuesday for renewed protests next week, accusing President Alpha Conde of sabotaging the United Nations-mediated talks that were aimed at ending the impasse over the organization of a parliamentary election. The opposition, which accuses the president of attempting to rig the long-delayed election, which is due to take place on June 30, suspended protests last week in order to allow the talks to take place. According to opposition spokesman Aboubacar Sylla, "we wanted to give dialogue a chance, but we saw that no hand was extended. There was no initiative aiming to calm the situation." He further indicated that the demonstrations would resume on May 22 and would eventually extend across the country. The government has rejected the demands of stripping South African firm Waymark of its contract to revise the voter lists. It also had no immediate reaction to the opposition's call for more demonstrations. At least twenty people have been killed and more than three-hundred others have been wounded in clashes between opposition supporters, security forces and Conde's backers since March.

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



*There are currently no restrictions on travel to Guinea-Bissau, the current political situation remains uncertain throughout the country and the possibility of civil or military unrest in Guinea-Bissau remains high. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northwestern regions of the country, specifically those which border the Casamance region of Senegal, including the Sao Domingos/Mpack road.*

### International Developments:

- 22 May 2013** - The United Nations Security Council has extended the mandate of the United Nations political mission in Guinea-Bissau in order to assist in finding solutions to the political and economic crisis which are being exacerbated by additional challenges posed by transnational crime, in particular drug trafficking and money laundering. The fifteen-member council voted unanimously to extend the work of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) through 31 May 2014. In order to support efforts focused on fully restoring constitutional order and medium-term stability in the country which is recovering from a military coup. The extension of the mission is in line with suggestions that were put forth by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his latest report. In today's resolution, the Security Council requested that Mr. Ban "increase efforts to achieve greater coherence, coordination and efficiency among relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Guinea-Bissau to maximize their collective effectiveness toward combating drug trafficking." Furthermore, the Council also called on authorities in Guinea-Bissau "to review, adopt and implement national legislations and mechanism" to more effectively stem the flow of drugs and illegal funds in and out of the country, particularly through additional support to the Transnational Crime Unit (TCU). In turn, the international community was urged to enhance its cooperation with Guinea-Bissau in order to more effectively ensure control of its air traffic and surveillance of maritime security within its jurisdiction.

### Domestic News:

- 19 May 2013** - Guinea-Bissau's government has announced a three day mourning period following the death of former interim president Henrique Pereira Rosa. According to the government, flags will be flown at half mast and businesses will close as a mark of respect ahead of a state funeral which will be held on Tuesday. The former interim president will be buried at a municipal cemetery in the capital of Bissau. Rosa, aged 67, died on May 15 in the Portuguese city of Porto, where he had been undergoing treatment for cancer. He took office in 2003 following a military coup that

deposed the elected government of Kumba Yala however he lost the 2005 elections to Joao Bernardo Vieira.



**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:**

- **13 May** - Some 700 Chadian soldiers have returned to Chad to a heroes' welcome. They held a procession through the capital of N'Damena and were cheered on by several thousand people. Chad is currently gradually withdrawing its 2,000 troops from Mali, who fought alongside French forces in order to drive out extremist groups who had seized a number of key cities. According to Defence official Mbainando Tatola, the deployment of Chad's troops to Mali has cost the Chadian army "thirty-eight of our soldiers, we had eight-four wounded, we killed around one hundred

jihadists, including two of their leaders.” Chad’s contingent joined a 6,300-strong regional African force (MISMA) in March, backing up the French-led operation which was launched in January. Meanwhile a suspected jihadist opened fire on a crowd at an aid distribution point in a north Malian village, killing three civilians. Abda Ag Kazina, the deputy mayor of nearby Kidal, has stated that the attack took place in the village of Ikadiwan, which is located north of Menaka, where an attempted suicide bombing had taken place on Friday. The jihadist group MUJAO has claimed responsibility for the attack. The attack on civilians could signify a change in strategy for the extremists who previously have only targeted military checkpoints and installations in suicide bombings, causing a number of military casualties. So far, civilians have not been targeted directly.

- **17 May** - France’s first lady Valerie Trierweiler began a tour of Mali on Thursday with a visit to Gao. The first lady is on a 48-hour trip to Mali as “part of a mission for children and women.” In Gao, the first lady was accompanied by her Malian counterpart Mintou Traore, to launch a support programme for residents who had fled Gao when it was occupied by al-Qaeda-linked militants last year. She also announced that France would donate 500,000 euros (US \$644,000) to farmers in the Gao region. The first ladies spent the afternoon at a school and at a hospital, where they were greeted with cheers and warm applause, before Trierweiler returned to Bamako, where she is expected to remain until she leaves Mali on Friday evening.
- **18 May** - Tuareg rebels who control the region of Kidal, have stated that al-Qaeda-linked extremists from the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa have attacked their fighters in a village. No casualties have been reported. According to Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh, a member of the Tuareg-led National movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MUJAO), the attack occurred on Friday afternoon in the village of Anefis, which is located 110 kilometers (70 miles) southeast of Kidal. He further indicated that the French air force scrambled planes overhead in order to try and neutralize the MUJAO fighters. The attack has been confirmed by officials in Kidal. Meanwhile an influential Mali tribal chief has withdrawn his support for separatists fighting for an independent state. Intalla Ag Attacher’s tribes of the northern Iforas mountains were a key partner in the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), an armed collective of ethnic Tuaregs which rose up against the state last year.
- **19 May** - A senior Malian army officer has accused France of picking favorites amongst the country’s warring militias after its troops attacked Arab rebels who had captured a village from armed Tuaregs. According to military sources, the intervention occurred on Friday after rebels from the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) took control of the northern desert settlement of Anefis from the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). However Malian sources have indicated that the French intervention was “a bit of a mess,” further noting that “France and its partners must treat all illegally-armed groups in northern Mali equally. There should not be any favour or preference for the MNLA.” The criticism comes as France begins to withdraw its forces, winding down its troop numbers from nearly 4,500 to 1,000.
- **25 May** - France has begun a key stage of its military withdrawal from Mali. A convoy of dozens of lorries left a base outside the capital city of Bamako. The convoy which left Bamako for Abidjan is impressive in its size however French officials are insisting that it is simply carrying equipment and vehicles that are surplus to requirements. Tanks and most heavy patrol vehicles will remain in northern Mali for now. The convoy is headed south to the Ivory Coast. Saturday’s withdrawal comes just two days after Islamist rebels targeted an army barracks and French-run uranium mine in neighboring Niger, which killed twenty people.



## Domestic News:

- **14 May 2013** - Mali's interim President Dioncounda Traore has confirmed that he will do his utmost to ensure that national elections, which are a key goal of the troubled country's backers, take place as planned on 28 July 2013. Speaking in Brussels, where he is set to attend an international donor's conference hosted by the EU and France, President Traore stated that "we will do everything so that the elections can begin on July 28." Speaking shortly after holding a meeting with European Commission head Jose Manuel Barroso, the interim President further indicated that "failure to hold the elections would cause even more problems." President Traore has also confirmed that neither he nor any of his ministers would be candidates in the polls which are seen as essential to restoring democratic rule to Mali after a 2012 military coup paved the way for Islamist rebels to seize control of the northern region of the country. The conference, which is set to occur on Wednesday, will be attended by French President Francois Hollande, along with Traore, Barroso and the heads of state from several West African countries, totaling some one-hundred delegates. Earlier on Tuesday, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius indicated that the aim of the conference was to raise about 1.9 billion euros (US \$2.4 billion) which would cover the cost of a two-year reconstruction plan for Mali.

## International Developments:

- **24 May 2013** - United Nations officials have confirmed that China has offered soldiers to the new UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. According to UN spokesman Andre-Michel Essoungou, the UN Peacekeeping mission had "received pledges and offers of contributions from a number of countries around the world, including China." Other officials at the UN have indicated that talks are currently underway, and more than five hundred Chinese engineers and peacekeepers may potentially take part in the mission. UN diplomats have stated that China had offered "between 500 and 600 soldiers," describing the contribution as "a significant move by China." No comments have been made by China's Foreign Ministry. Although China has more than 1,800 peacekeepers deployed in UN operations, and contributes more troops than the four other permanent Security Council members, its troops primarily perform non-military operations.
- **19 May 2013** - A court in Algeria has sentenced fourteen Malian members of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) to twenty years in prison for arms smuggling and entering the country illegally. The Malians, who were on Sunday by a criminal court in the southern town of Ouargla, were accused of entering Algeria illegally with a shipment of weapons from Libya. Security forces arrested the group in the southeastern town of Djanet in January 2012, just at the beginning of the war in Mali. At the time of their arrest, the accused were crossing the border into Algeria from Niger with four SUV's that were packed with weapons. Algeria's defence ministry announced on 5 January 2012 that it had intercepted "a convoy made up of four all-terrain vehicles carrying individuals from African countries who were trying to bring a shipment of weapons and munitions into Algeria." An official statement released by the government indicated that the seized cargo had included 71 Kalashnikov assault rifles, 38 machine-guns, and two rocket-launchers along with a large quantity of ammunition.
  - Meanwhile the head of the EU military committee has indicated that he was "confident" in the ability of the first Mali battalion being trained by Europe to battle the Islamist insurgency raging in the north. General Patrick de Rousiers indicated to reporters in the capital city of Bamako that he had encountered "professional and extremely competent personnel" after visiting the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali, stating that "I'm enthusiastic because (the trainers) are satisfied with the Malian troops," adding that he was "confident" because "the battalion was at an extremely high professional level." The EU began a complete overhaul of Mali's army in April of this year in a bid to help the west African nation take over from foreign troops defending it against Islamist extremists. Around 700 Malian troops have gathered in

Koulikoro, which is located 60 kilometers (37 miles) from Bamako, to train under European instructors as part of a wider effort to bring the army up to scratch as quickly as possible. Around 2,500 of an estimated 5,000 Malian troops will train over the next fifteen months with the EUTM, which will run on a budget of 12.3 million euros (US \$15.8 million). The United States had initially begun an ambitious programme to train a new generation of Malian officers as part of a counter-terrorism programme in North and West Africa, however the effort ended in embarrassment for Washington. One of the officers who had attended several courses with the US military, Captain Amadou Sanago, led a coup against the Malian government last March. This prompted Washington to suspend its security assistance.

- **18 May 2013** - UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has named former Dutch government minister Bert Koenders as the head of the key UN Mission in Mali. Koenders will head the UN efforts to help Mali's interim government re-establish control over the African state where Islamist extremists took over the north of the country. Welcoming the appointment, Dutch Foreign Minister Frans Timmermans stated that "he has a key role in the perspective of rallying the different parties in the process. It is not an easy task, but it is imperative." The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) peacekeeping force is aiming to take over from the French and African forces in July. Koenders was Dutch minister for development cooperation from 2007 until 2010. He has been the head of the UN mission in the Ivory Coast (UNOCI) since October 2011.
- **15 May 2013** - More than one hundred international donors have pledged 3.2 billion euros in aid to help Mali avoid the mistakes which had initially allowed Islamist rebels to seize vast territories in the country's northern region. The meeting, which was co-hosted by France and the European Union, had an initial target of two billion euros (US \$2.6 billion) which would cover about half the cost of a 2013 - 2014 economic and political reconstruction programme that was agreed in cooperating with the international community. However shortly after the meeting concluded, French President Francois Hollande stated that donors had been much more generous in view of the issues at stake in Mali, indicating that "more than 3.25 billion euros has been mobilized at this conference." European Commission head Jose Manuel Barroso announced that the EU would be contributing 520 million euros to Mali while President Holland confirmed that France would offer 280 million euros. The French President also warned that the problem has not ended with the French intervention, insisting that Mali must live up to its commitments to hold elections in July and to promote national reconciliation. Mali President Dioncouda Traore echoed these points, stating that the crises predated the problems of 2012 and stemmed from the country's economic and political failings. However Mali's election commission has warned that that might be too soon. Delegates present at the conference also made similar remarks, highlighting the importance of the July elections which will ultimately aid in restoring democratic rule in Mali. The aid granted at the conference will be tied to an open and transparent Mali, with political reconciliation and democracy being the key elements in restoring stability to the country and to the wider Sahel region.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Mauritania

**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 May 2013** - Security sources have confirmed that a senior operative in an al-Qaeda linked group in Mali has surrendered in Mauritania. According to sources, Senda Ould Boumama, a spokesman for Ansar Dine, “went to the Mauritanian armed forces on the border,” near the southeastern town of Bassiknou on Saturday evening. According to other sources, Ould Boumama was transferred during the weekend to the capital of Nouakchott where he is reportedly being interrogated by police. The surrender is seen as a further blow to Ansar Dine and comes four months after France led a military operation to oust the organization, along with other Islamist militias, from the towns that they occupied across the northern regions of Mali.
- **14 May 2013** - Prosecutors in Mauritania are seeking to lengthen the prison sentence of a Canadian man who has already been imprisoned on alleged links to terror groups. A judicial official has indicated that prosecutors are seeking to increase the sentence to ten years. Aaron Yoon, 24, was convicted in July 2012 on charges of having ties to a terrorist group and of posing a danger to national security. He was sentenced to a period of two years. However this new requests stems from Mr. Yoon’s alleged connections to two other Canadians who were involved in a terror attack on an Algerian gas plant in January of this year. Consequently, Mauritanian prosecutors are now accusing Mr. Yoon of having acted in connivance with terrorists before the January 16 attack and four-day siege which ended with thirty-seven hostages dead and an additional twenty-nine terrorists killed. Among those found dead at the scene were two of Mr. Yoon’s former classmates from his London, Ontario high school. According to sources, the three had traveled to Morocco together however Mr. Yoon maintains that he went to Mauritania for religious study. He was arrested in December 2011, and has maintained his innocence in having anything to do with the January 2013 terror attack. Appearing briefly in court on Monday, Mr. Yoon indicated that “I came to Mauritania to study the Quran.” The court is due to render its verdict as to whether Mr. Yoon will serve a longer sentence on June 9.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

## Travel Summary:

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road that links Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka. We currently advise against all but essential travel to the remainder of the country, including the capital city Niamey.



On 23 May, terrorist attacks were carried out against a military barracks in the town of Agadez in northern Niger and at a uranium processing facility near the town of Arlit, which is located 150 miles north of Agadez. The attacks have since been claimed by a Malian terrorist group, the Movement for the Unity of Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Consequently MS Risk advises against all travel to the province of Agadez and to the surrounding areas. MUJAO has threatened to carry out further attacks in the region, which will focus on those countries who are supporting the on-going war in Mali.

There is a high threat of terrorism occurring throughout the country. Attacks could be indiscriminate and can occur in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups such as AQIM and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). These terrorist groups have already kidnapped a number of Westerners in Niger and throughout the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey, and the northern and western regions of Niger. It is highly likely that further kidnap attacks will occur.

There is a high level of crime that exists throughout the country, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. The areas located around the Gaweye Hotel, National Museum and Petit Marche in Niamey are particularly prone to muggings. It is advised that you not walk alone there, or cross the Kennedy Bridge on foot at any time. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area

with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises you to take special care and to avoid crossing the border with Nigeria during the night.

All companies that are currently operating in the north and north-west regions of the country should be aware of the increased security threats. Companies attempting road moves should coordinate them with local authorities. MS Risk does not recommend unescorted road moves east of Tahoua. There have been several military escorts operating from Tahoua to the north and north-eastern regions of the country which companies should liaise with for increased protection.

## Domestic News:

- **25 May 2013** - Niger's President indicated on Saturday that Islamist militants who carried out simultaneous suicide attacks on an army base and a French uranium mine in northern Niger two days ago came from southern Libya. According to President Mahamadou Issoufou, the raids demonstrated that Libya was a source of regional instability, months after France launched an air-and-ground assault on northern Mali, which Paris warned had developed into a launchpad for attacks by al-Qaeda-linked groups. During a press conference, President Issoufou indicated that "according to the information we have, the attackers came from southern Libya." He further indicated that "I know the Libyan authorities are trying hard. But Libya continues to be a source of instability." Although he did not give details on who the gunmen were, Mokhtar Belmokhtar has stated that his brigade had organized the raid with the MUJAO militant group. Thousands of gunmen and tons of weapons and ammunition flowed south, mainly to Mali, after the fall of Libya's former leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. A mix of Islamist and separatist rebels then seized control of the northern region of Mali before the French operation launched in January dislodged them from the towns they controlled. Niger has for weeks warned that Libya was the next potential safe haven for militants.
- **24 May 2013** - Reports have indicated that militant leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar masterminded the two suicide bombings that occurred early on Thursday in Niger. According to Mauritanian news agency Alakhbar, Mr. Belmokhtar is said to have "supervised" the bombings and that members of his group worked with Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) in order to carry out the attacks. Reports have also indicated that the attacks had "targeted elite French forces" who were providing security at the uranium mine which is majority-owned by Areva. An online statement, reportedly signed by Mokhtar Belmokhtar, read: "This is the first of our responses to the statement of the President of Niger - from his masters in Paris - that he eliminated jihad and the mujahideen militarily." The statement also threatened further attacks, as the group warned against any Western intervention in the region, stating that "columns of commandos and those seeking martyrdom are ready and waiting for their targets." The suicide bombings struck a military camp and a French-run uranium mine in two towns located in north-western Niger. Twenty people have been killed in the attacks. The first bomb at a barracks in Agadez killed nineteen, including eighteen soldiers. Four attackers died in that bombing. The second attack on the Somair mine, in the town of Arlit, killed one person and injured fourteen. Since the incident, French special forces have taken part in an operation at the base near Agade on Friday morning. Niger's government has also retracted reports that claimed that one of the militants have been holding a group of soldiers hostage. Government officials have now indicated that none of them had been held. Mokhtar Belmokhtar was believed to be behind the deadly attack on an internationally run Algerian gas plant in January in which 37 hostages and 29 insurgents were killed. He broke away from al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) last year and formed a new jihadist group, known as the Signed-in-Blood Battalion." Although armed forces in Chad had stated that he had died in a raid in northern Mali on 2 March, no confirmation has been provided.

- **23 May 2013** - Two simultaneous suicide car bombing attacks have been carried out during the early morning hours in Niger. The attacks, which occurred at around 5:30AM local time and have been claimed by Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), are believed to have been coordinated. Any individuals or companies that are currently in Niger are strongly advised to monitor the local reports and to remain extremely vigilant.

Companies stationed in the regions where the attacks occurred are strongly advised to re-evaluate their security procedures, especially in quarters where workers are living, as further suicide attacks and kidnappings are likely to occur. Niger's Defence Minister has confirmed that at least nineteen individuals, including eighteen soldiers, have been killed with another sixteen injured after a suicide attack was carried out at a military installation in Agadez, Niger. The attack occurred when a car bomb was detonated outside the military base.



Four attackers died and reports have indicated that a fifth attacker is currently holding four army officers hostages. On the ground reports have indicated that the army is patrolling in and around the city. A second incident targeted a uranium mine, which is operated by French Areva. This attack resulted in fourteen civilians being injured and one killed. In a statement released this afternoon, Areva confirmed that all those injured in the bombing in Arlit were employees of the mine, further stating that operations at the mine had been "temporarily suspended." The attack in Arlit comes three years after a 2010 incident where five Areva employees were kidnapped by militants linked to al-Qaeda's Africa branch. In 2010, militants belonging to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) kidnapped seven foreigners, including five French nationals, from a residential compound located near Arlit. At the time of the incident, the victims were either working for Areva or other contracting companies in the region. In February 2011, three of the hostages, including one Frenchwoman, were freed. However AQIM is still holding the other four hostages and has repeatedly threatened to kill them in retaliation for the French-led military intervention in Mali which began in January 2013. Today's attacks have been claimed by MUJAO, in which a spokesman for the group, Abu Walid Sahraoui, stated that the operations targeted "the enemies of Islam in Niger." He added that "we attacked France, and Niger because of its co-operation with France, in the war against Sharia," indicating that Niger's participation in the war in Mali was the reason behind the attack. French President Francois Hollande has vowed to protect his nation's interests and co-operate with Niger in its "fight against terrorism."

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Nigeria

Travel Summary:

Summary

On 14 May, the Nigerian Government declared a State of Emergency in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Since the announcement, military operations have been going on in all three states and curfews have been put in place in parts of Maiduguri, Borno state and Adamawa state.



Curfews can be imposed, amended and lifted at a short notice. Consequently you should be alert to announcements made by the respective State Governments and you are advised to monitor any developments in the affected states. There may be an increased threat of retaliatory attacks elsewhere in Nigeria following the commencement of military operations. 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 Adamawa State, Borno State, Yobe State, Gombe 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 May 2013** - Authorities in Nigeria have confirmed that they freed three women and six children who were abducted by Boko Haram militants as part of an ongoing military operation that is targeting the extremists. According to reports, the group was abducted on May 7 during an attack on the town of Bama, which is located in the country's northeastern region. According to Defence Spokesman Brigadier General Chris Olukolade, two children and one woman are still missing. The military has further indicated that those rescued from the forest close to Bama were among the kidnap victims shown in a recent Boko Haram video. Suspected Boko Haram leader Abubakar

Shekau claimed in the video that the group was holding the women and children hostage in retaliation for wives and children of its members detained by the military. Nigeria has since indicated that it intends to release a number of suspects held in connection with Boko Haram's insurgency, including women and children. The May 7 attack in Bama saw insurgents disguised in military uniforms, breaking into a prison and attacking a number of government buildings, leaving fifty-five people dead. The women and children were around the sites at the time of the attack, and were subsequently taken hostage. On May 14, Nigeria declared a state of emergency in three northeastern states and launched a military offensive seeking to end Boko Haram's four-year insurgency. However activists and the United States have raised their concerns over the fighting, criticizing Nigeria's military of carrying out major abuses. Since 2009, the conflict with Boko Haram has killed an estimated 3,600 civilians.

- **18 May 2013** - As Nigerian troops intensify their search for Boko Haram militants, the Joint Task Force (JTF) imposed a 24-hour curfew in places identified as hot spots throughout Maiduguri. A statement that was issued by Sagir Musa, the spokesman for the JTF, indicated that there would be no movement in the area for an indefinite time, stating that "the Joint Task Force (JTF) in order to sustain the ongoing special operations in the face of recent Boko Haram attacks in some areas within Maiduguri metropolis is imposing 24 hours curfew with effect from today, Saturday 18 May 2013." The statement further indicated that "the 24 hours curfew is hereby imposed in the following wards and areas: Gamboru, Mairi Kuwait, Bakin Kogi, Kasuwan Shanu, Ruwan Zafi, 202-Quarters, Dikwa, 504-Housing Estate, Chad Basin, 303-Estate and Baga areas." Reports have also indicated that all routes leading to the state have been sealed with trucks conveying commercial commodities being prevented from entering the city.

- **17 May 2013** - Officials have confirmed that at least thirty militants have been killed during air raids on their training camps in north-eastern Nigeria. An army spokesman has indicated that jets and helicopter gunships had been used to attack a number of camps. Some of the camps hit by the air raids were in the Sambisa Game Reserve, which is located about 70 km (45 miles) south of the Borno state capital of Maiduguri where the militants first emerged in 2009. According to Nigerian military spokesman Brig Gen Chris Olukolade, thirty militants had been killed since the latest offensive which began on Wednesday.



However there is no independent confirmation of the number of deaths. According to the military spokesman, the aim is to “destroy Boko Haram bases, apprehend as many of them as possible and bring them to justice.” Forces have also been deployed to seal some of the region’s porous borders and to block the insurgents from fleeing to neighbouring countries. One plane had been hit by anti-aircraft fire however it managed to return to the base. This is the first time Boko Haram has been reported to have used such heavy weaponry against aircraft. The attacks on the training camps in the north-eastern region of the country come just days after a state of emergency was declared in three states that have been hit by Boko Haram’s Islamist insurgency. Nigerian forces are currently trying to regain control and stabilize security in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe however it is widely believed that the offensive will greatly focus on the state of Borno, which is the extremists’ traditional base. Brig Gen Olukolade confirmed that “several thousand” troops had been sent to the three states in order to battle Boko Haram. The operation is the largest against Boko Haram since 2009, when soldiers flooded Maiduguri, killing more than 800 people and forcing the insurgents underground for a year. The three semi-desert states which border Cameroon, Chad and Niger, are roughly the size of England or the US state of Illinois however they have a population of just ten million. Targeting Boko Haram’s rural bases or training camps should therefore pose no great challenge for the military. However the hardest part of this campaign will be in the urban areas, such as Maiduguri, where the militants are living amongst the civilian population. President Goodluck Jonathan has indicated that the army would take “all necessary action” to “put an end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists,” further stating that the militants had taken down the Nigerian flag and replaced it with a foreign emblem in some parts of the country. Human rights organizations have also criticized some of the Nigerian military’s previous operations because of the resulting civilian casualties.

- Meanwhile reports have indicated that explosions and gunfire have been heard overnight in the state of Katsina. According to residents, banks, police stations and prisons were destroyed in the town of Daura, which is located near the border with Niger. They have also indicated that they had seen the bodies of five members of the security forces and three militants, however there has been no official confirmation of the casualties. Mobile phone networks were not functioning in many parts of north-east Nigeria on Thursday. While security officials have indicated that the mobile phone services had been shut down during the military operation. This is likely due to the fact that militants have previously attacked mobile phone masts in the area in an effort to disrupt communications.
- **16 May 2013** - Nigeria’s military confirmed on Thursday that it was ready to launch air strikes against Boko Haram Islamists as several thousand troops moved to the remote north-east region in order to retake territory that was seized by the insurgents. According to defence spokesman Brigadier General Chris Olukolade, “the entire Nigerian military is involved in this operation, including the air force.” He further noted that “definitely, air strikes will be used when necessary,” adding that a force of “several thousand” soldiers along with fighter jets and helicopter gunships have been deployed for the offensive which is set to occur in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The operations have already begun in all three states however the spokesman declined to provide additional specifics. In Adamawa, a dusk-to-dawn curfew has been imposed, with all residents forced to stay indoors after sundown. In the town of Gashua, which is located in Yobe state, residents have reported that a convoy of military personnel travelled through the town, heading north towards the Niger border. The operation follows President Goodluck Jonathan’s decision to impose a state of emergency in all threat areas after he admitted that Boko Haram had “taken over” territory in the northeast and declared war against the government. Furthermore, the militants, who have said that they are fighting to create an Islamist state in Nigeria’s mainly Muslim north, have become emboldened and better armed in recent months.
- **14 May 2013** - Fifty-three people have been killed and thirteen villages have been burnt in the central Nigerian state of Benue. The conflict, which began last week, is said to have been caused by a long-running dispute over land ownership between cattle herders and farmers. According to

local MP Sule Audu, forty people were killed on Sunday in what is the worst attack that has been carried out by Fulani herdsmen since last week. People from the Fulani community have confirmed that they carried out a series of raids on the rival Agatu farming community after several hundred of their cattle were stolen however they have denied killing as many as fifty-three people. According to reports, Local police authorities have confirmed that security force members have been deployed to the area in order to restore stability however no casualty figures have been confirmed. The recent violence in Benue is the latest sign of the growing security challenges which are facing the current government. It also comes one week after more than forty policemen were killed in Nasarawa state in an attack that was carried out by the outlawed Ombatse cult. Last week, President Goodluck Jonathan cut short a trip to South African in order to deal with the crisis that erupted after the deadly attacks.



## Domestic News:

- **15 May 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has declared a state of emergency in three states after a series of deadly attacks were carried out by Boko Haram militants. In a state address, the President indicated that the military will take “all necessary action” to “put an end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists” in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. He further indicated that “what we are facing is not just militancy or criminality, but a rebellion and insurgency by terrorist groups which pose a very serious threat to national unity and territorial integrity.” President Jonathan also ordered that more troops be sent to states in the hostile north-eastern region of the country. The Nigerian President is referring to the recent attacks that have occurred on government buildings and the killings of officials and other civilians, stating that “these actions amount to a declaration of war.” Further noting that “we will hunt them down, we will fish them out, and we will bring them to justice. The chief of defence staff has been directed to immediately deploy more troops to these states for more effective internal security operations. The troops and other security agencies involved in these operations have orders to take all necessary action...to put an end to the impunity of insurgents and terrorists.” At the same time, the President stressed that despite the current state of emergency, politicians in the three states would remain in their posts. In Nigeria, the president has the power to remove local politicians and to place a caretaker government in emergency circumstances. According to reports, the governors of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa have been “very well briefed” and are “in full support” of the decision to declare a state of emergency. The declaration of a state of emergency comes just days after the Nigeria Governors’ Forum, which represents the leaders of the country’s thirty-six states, warned President Jonathan against imposing emergency rule. While this is not the first time that the president has declared a state of emergency, it does make a clear admission that the threat from Islamist militant groups is growing. In turn, it is the first time that President Jonathan has admitted that parts of the country are no longer under the control of the central government.

## International Developments:

- **17 May 2013** - The United Nations human rights office has warned that Boko Haram Islamists could face charges of crimes against humanity. The human rights agency also urged the Nigerian

government to ensure that civilians are not swept up in any army counter-offensive. Rupert Colville, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has stated that “members of Boko Haram and other groups and entities, if judged to have committed widespread or systematic attacks against a civilian population - including on grounds such as religion or ethnicity - could be found guilty of crimes against humanity.” The spokesman further indicated that “deliberate acts leading to population ‘cleansing’ on grounds of religion or ethnicity could also amount to a crime against humanity.” Mr. Colville underlined that UN rights chief Navi Pillay had repeatedly criticized the “cowardly attacks” by Boko Haram against civilians, politicians, the security forces and foreign nationals. Furthermore, with Nigeria’s military accused of massive rights violations in the past, including indiscriminate attacks on the ordinary population, there are warnings of a risk of high number of civilian deaths.

## Kidnappings:

- **17 May 2013** - An inquest in the UK has found that an engineer from Greater Manchester was unlawfully killed by his kidnappers in Nigeria just minutes after a UK-led rescue operation stormed in. According to a report, hostages Chris McManus, 28, from Oldham, and Italian Franco Lamolinara, 48, died on 8 March 2012 before Nigerian and UK forces were able to rescue them. They had been kidnapped in May 2011 after gunmen stormed a building where they were staying. British special forces had been sent to the Sokoto area the day before the rescue attempt and the go-ahead was given by Cobra, the government’s crisis committee, after a review of the intelligence led to fears for the men’s safety. According to the inquest, a video had been released to news media appearing to show the men blindfolded with their arms behind them and masked men standing nearby. Pathologist Dr. Nicholas Hunt indicated that the hostages were killed “Fairly quickly into the engagement” as forces came under fire from kidnappers, with Mr. McManus being shot six times through a toilet door. He died from a single gunshot to the head and death would have been almost immediate. Mr. McManus, a quantity surveyor and Salford University graduate, had been working for a construction company building shopping centers and stadia in Nigeria. At the time of his kidnapping, he had been living in a heavily guarded compound in the city of Birnin-Kebbi, which had previously been considered safe by his employers.



No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice

Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Senegal, MS Risk advises to avoid road travel in the Casamance region, to the west of Kolda. The Casamance region of south-western Senegal (between the southern border of Gambia and the northern border of Guinea-Bissau) remains affected by incidents involving armed separatist groups and banditry, particularly in the regions of Bignona and Sindian. There has been an increase in clashes between the Senegalese army and suspected elements of the armed separatist group Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC). MS Risk advises against all road travel in the Casamance region to the west of Kolda, other than on the main road from Ziguinchor to Cap skiring (which is often used by groups of tourists during daylight hours) and on the road north of the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, from Sao Domingos to Ziguinchor (N4 bis). If you travel on either of these roads, you should do so only during daylight hours and monitor the local security situation before travelling. This has resulted in a number of deaths and injuries. There is currently an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. With the ongoing French military intervention in Mali, authorities in Senegal have increased security in the capital city as well as along the border with Mali. MS Risk advises that al-Qaeda militants may cross the border into Senegal and they may target Western interests as well as foreigners.

## International Developments:

- 20 May 2013** - The White House has confirmed that United States President Barack Obama will be visiting Senegal, South African and Tanzania in June where he is expected to meet with lawmakers as well as business and civil society leaders. The official visit, which will occur between 26 June - 3 July, will be Mr. Obama's second to the sub-Saharan Africa as president. He spent one day in Ghana in 2009. According to a statement that was released by the White House, "The president will reinforce the importance that the United States place on our deep and growing ties with countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including through expanding economic growth, investment and trade; strengthening democratic institutions; and investing in the next generation of African leaders." The statement continued in indicating that "the trip will underscore the president's commitment to broadening and deepening cooperation between the United States and the people of sub-Saharan Africa to advance regional and global peace and prosperity." First Lady Michelle Obama is due to accompany Mr. Obama on his trip.

No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice



*Although there is currently no travel warning against Benin, there is an underlying threat from terrorism. Furthermore while the overall political situation in the country remains to be stable, MS Risk advises any travelers and those already in the country to follow the news reports and to be alert to any developments, which may trigger public protests or unrest. MS Risk advises you to avoid any demonstrations or large gatherings of people. If you become aware of any nearby violence, you should leave the area immediately.*

### Domestic News:

- **23 May 2013** - Police in Togo have fired tear gas in order to disperse protesters in what is the latest confrontation between the ruling party and the country's increasingly active opposition. The latest incident was sparked by demonstrators who were gathering in order to protest the death of an opposition member who had died in jail. It is the second to be held this week and follows a women's March which was organized on Tuesday. However the government had banned the March which was planned for Thursday, which effectively set the stage for large protests. Police fired tear gas into the crowds as youths burned tires and blocked traffic.
- **13 May 2013** - Togo's President has criticized rich nations who have cut development aid on the beliefs that it contributes to the spread of terrorism. President Faure Gnassingbe has stated at a United Nations Security Council meeting on terrorism in Africa that rich countries had unjustly cut foreign aid since the 2008 financial crisis, indicating that "it is urgent that partner countries honor their promises" on aid. His remarks come ahead of a meeting that is scheduled to take place at the UN Headquarters, and which will be led by Prime Minister David Cameron of Britain, Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Indonesia's President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, which will set the agenda for the Millennium Development Goals after 2015. Togo's leader, whose country ranks 159th out of 186 countries in the latest UN human development index, stated that extra cash is desperately needed in order to boost security and alleviate poverty which encourages militant groups operating in countries such as Mali and Somalia.
  - Meanwhile activists in Togo have indicated that a detained leader died in custody after authorities refused a request to bring him to a hospital. This is just the latest dispute to occur between the government and an increasingly vocal opposition. Kodjo Yakanou was amongst the opposition supporters who were detained for questioning for months in connection with the January burning of two main markets. Authorities in Togo have indicated that Yakanou was suffering from malaria at the time of his death on Friday however his supporters are maintaining

that his death could have been prevented. A government statement that was issued on Monday stated that Yakanou ultimately was rushed to a Lome hospital however he died before any medical intervention occurred. According to authorities, he had malaria and the official cause of death was listed as a heart attack.

- In other unrest, the Togolese government indicated on Monday that thirty police officers had been injured after clashes with demonstrators occurred over the weekend in Niamtougou, which is located 280 miles (450 kilometers) north of Lome. According to reports, the violence came after a local philosophy professor was charged with “acts of violence against security forces.” The official statement indicated that angry youths later vandalized the police headquarters in Niamtougou and clashed with police.



## Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies:

- **17 May 2013** - Eleven robbers in an unlit boat approached an anchored Italy-flagged chemical tanker, Mariella Bottiglieri, at 0230 in position 06:03.1N - 001:17.7E, Lome Anchorage, Togo. The duty officer on board noticed the boat, raised the alarm and contacted Togo Navy and activated the fire pumps. Two robbers jumped into the water and attempted to board the tanker via the anchor chain but failed and returned to their boat. At 0300, the boat approached again from the port quarter with additional robbers who were seen holding hooks attached to ropes. The duty crew directed search lights towards the boat and noticed that the boat was flooding due to the fire hose water. The boat remained alongside and made several attempts to board the tanker. At 0420 LT, the robbers aborted the attempted boarding and moved away. At 0500 LT, a Togo Navy boat arrived at the location and patrolled the area.
- **14 May 2013** - Tanker reported attacked by armed pirates at 0800 LT in position 04:20N - 007:40E, south of the mouth of Opobo river, S of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. A white-hulled speedboat with 9 armed POB attacked the vessel. Unconfirmed reports state the MT was boarded.
  - Meanwhile a St Vincent & Grenadines tanker, Saint Patrick, was attacked at around 0200 LT in position 04:25N - 007:58E approximately 8 nautical miles off Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Pirates stated to have attacked the accommodation/diving support vessel.
- **13 May 2013** - Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker, Port Stewart, at 0213 LT in position 06:20.7N - 003:19.8E, approximately 8 nautical miles south south-west of Lagos, Nigeria, in the main anchorage area, reported to authorities that two persons had boarded and were seen on the deck. During the communication, vessel stated that the two people had jumped off. Vessel has been reported as safe.

### Releases:

- **25 May 2013** - Ship managers Leonhardt & Blumberg of Hamburg Germany, operators of container vessel Hansa Marburg, have confirmed that four crew members, who were taken from the vessel by armed men 130 miles south west of Malabo, Equatorial Guinea and held hostage, have now been released. The vessel was attacked by a criminal group in the Gulf of Guinea on April 22. Four of the vessels crew members had been taken hostage. The crew members, including Ukrainian, Russian and Kiribati citizens, were confirmed as being safe and in good spirits after thirty-one days in captivity. The captain, the 2nd officer, the chief engineer and a mate had been taken hostage. They have since returned to Germany where they are receiving medical treatment. The Federal German Police has launched an investigation. In a statement that was released, the vessels' operator extended its appreciation to the governments, government agencies and all those who assisted in

bringing this difficult situation to a close. The company further indicated that it will not be released any further details concerning the release in order to avoid encouraging further criminal acts of this kind.

- **14 May 2013** - Pirates in the Gulf of Guinea have released five Polish and Russian crew members who were kidnapped from a cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria last month. The release of the hostages was confirmed by the vessel's management company. The hostages were taken when the Antigua and Barbuda-flagged MV City of Xiamen container ship was attacked late on April 25 about 100 miles (160 km) off Nigeria's coast. According to Sunship Schiffahrtskontor KG, the ship's German operator, "despite difficult conditions while in captivity, they are in good health. They already returned to their own countries and reunited with their families." The firm did not indicate whether or not a ransom was paid however this has been the case in the past. The International Maritime bureau (IMB) has stated that fourteen heavily armed pirates attacked the container ship, breaching its citadel. Naval patrols and the presence of armed guards aboard merchant vessels have helped reduce piracy off Somalia on Africa's eastern coast but international navies are not engaged in counter-piracy missions off Nigeria.



## 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
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  - 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](http://www.msrisk.com)

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