



# 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

August 5 - 18, 2013



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### Security Summaries for West African States

#### Benin

- **11 August 2013** - On Sunday, Benin's President Thomas Boni Yayi named a new government just days after he fired his entire cabinet in part over concerns that some of the members had alleged links to a businessman who has been accused of attempting to poison the President.
- **9 August 2013** - The office of President Yayi announced on Friday that the President has dismissed his entire cabinet and that he will be appointing a new one.

#### Burkina Faso

#### Central African Republic

*Domestic News*

- **13 August 2013** - The Central African Republic's (CAR) interim leader Michel Djotodia has vowed to fight against the spread of weapons in the country that is still suffering in the aftermath of a coup that occurred earlier this year.

## *International Developments*

- **7 August 2013** - A delegation from the CAR is trying to persuade soldiers from the national army to return home after they fled to neighboring Cameroon in the aftermath of a rebel takeover which occurred more than four months ago.

## **Ghana**

- **7 August 2013** - In a case that has gripped the West African nation, Ghana's Supreme Court heard final arguments on Wednesday as to whether or not it should overturn the results of the 2012 presidential polls because of irregularities.

## **Guinea - Bissau**

- **8 August 2013** - On Thursday, Guinea-Bissau's former Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior, who was ousted in a coup last year, announced his plans to return back to his country in order to run for president in the November elections.

## **Ivory Coast**

- **5 August 2013** - A court in Abidjan has released on bail fourteen aides of former President Laurent Gbagbo who had been detained in the aftermath of the Ivory Coast's deadly 2011 crisis.

## **Mali**

### *Coverage of Mali's Presidential Elections*

- **7 August 2013** - Mali's top court confirmed on Wednesday that former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita had won the July 28 presidential vote but that he fell short of an outright majority, meaning that he will face ex-Finance Minister Soumaila Cisse in a runoff on August 11.
- **12 August 2013** - Malian presidential candidate Soumaila Cisse's supporters on Monday accused the front-runner's party of stuffing ballot boxes as workers tallied the votes.
- **13 August 2013** - Mali's presidential elections have been won by Ibrahim Boubacar Keita after his rival admitted defeat just one day after the second round of elections were held.
- **14 August 2013** - Officials in Mali announced Ibrahim Boubacar Keita as its new leader on Thursday after confirming that the ex-Prime Minister had won a landslide victory.

## **Mauritania**

- **14 August 2013** - Mauritania announced on Wednesday that it would send soldiers to the United Nations peacekeeping force in Mali, which has been charged with ensuring security after the elections, but only to those areas that are located near their shared border.

## **Nigeria**

### *On Land*

- **14 August 2013** - Nigeria's military has stated that it has killed Boko Haram's second-in-command. Momodu Bama, who was killed during fighting in the northern state of Borno, was a specialist in manning anti-aircraft guns.

- **12 August 2013** - Officials indicated on Monday that suspected Islamist extremists have stormed a mosque and shot dead forty-four worshippers, as well as twelve other people in a nearby village, in Nigeria's restive northeast region.
  - Meanwhile in a video that was obtained by journalists on Monday, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau has claimed responsibility for a series of recent deadly attacks on security forces in the northeast and has insisted that despite the ongoing offensive, he remains in "good health."
- **10 August 2013** - A local government confirmed on Saturday that gunmen have kidnapped four Thai nationals as they travelled to a farm in Nigeria's Rivers state.
- **6 August 2013** - Despite a nearly three-month-old state of emergency, which was declared in three states in northern Nigeria, the country has seen an increase in attacks as Boko Haram militants and their supporters continue their attempts to carve out an Islamic State.
- **5 August 2013** - The army indicated on Monday that clashes between Nigeria's military and members of Boko Haram in two northeastern towns have left at least thirty-five people dead, most of them insurgents.
  - Two Lebanese suspects, who are alleged to be members of Hezbollah and who are currently on trial in Nigeria on terrorism charges, told a court on Monday that they had been harshly interrogated by Israeli agents shortly after they were arrested.

## *Domestic News*

- **13 August 2013** - Nigeria's Interior Minister Abba Moro has announced that the army is making progress in its war against Boko Haram militants, despite the killing of forty-four people in a mosque. When asked about the most recent attack, Mr. Moro dismissed the attack as "desperate" and "isolated," adding that "the security agencies of Nigeria have been able to push the Boko Haram sect from their major strongholds."
- **6 August 2013** - Nigeria has requested a court to extradite a Nigerian citizen who is wanted in the United States on acts of terrorism.

## **Sierra Leone**

- **7 August 2013** - A government minister has confirmed that a former ally of Liberia's ex-President Charles Taylor has been deported from Sierra Leone a week before he was due to stand trial for crimes committed during the West African nation's 1991 - 2002 civil war.

## **Togo**

- **12 August 2013** - On Monday, Togo's Constitutional Court validated the results of last month's parliamentary polls, effectively giving the ruling party a two-thirds majority and allowing President Faure Gnassingbe's family to maintain its decades-long grip on power.

## **Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea**

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## Security Summaries for West African States

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**Cameroon** - [Click here](#)

**Central African Republic** - [Click Here](#)

**Equatorial Guinea** - There are currently no travel advisories for Equatorial Guinea. Compared with other countries in the region, the level of violent crime is low; however there are regular reports of petty theft which has affected both visitors and expatriates. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid walking around Malabo and Bata at night and to avoid travelling by road after dark. Although the political situation has been calm in recent years, you should be aware that political events can lead to an increased presence of police, military or security forces on the streets. Consequently you should avoid any political rallies, demonstrations or large public gatherings. There is a low threat from terrorism; however you should be aware that attacks can occur at any time and place, including those frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers.

**Gabon** - There is a low threat from terrorism. Crime is increasing in Gabon, particularly in Libreville and Port-Gentil. There have been incidents of robbery, armed attacks and rape. Consequently MS Risk advises you to take sensible personal security precautions and maintain a high level of vigilance in public places. Avoid isolated or poorer areas of towns and walking alone at night. There have been a number of car-jackings in Libreville. There have been attacks of armed robbery on commercial shipping in the Gulf of Guinea.

**Gambia** - There is no travel advisory for Gambia, however MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid travel by road from The Gambia to the Casamance, in the southern region of Senegal. The Casamance region of south western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Due to the French military intervention in Mali, coupled with The Gambia's stated commitment to participate in the intervention, there is a possibility that retaliatory attacks that target Western interests in the region, may be carried out. Travellers to the country are warned to remain vigilant as attacks can take place at anytime and anywhere. Following a political disagreement between the government of The Gambia and the Europa Union, pertaining to the deterioration of human rights in The Gambia, there has been an increase of political tensions which may lead to unannounced demonstrations in Banjul as well as in other parts of the country. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid all demonstrations.

**Ghana** - [Click Here](#)

**Guinea** - There is currently a low threat from terrorism. Serious ethnic violence is occurring in N'Zerekore, which is located in the far south-eastern region of the country. A number of people have reportedly been killed while others have been severely injured. There have also been reports that properties have been destroyed. The violence follows an incident which occurred on 14 July in Koule, which is located about 25 miles north of N'Zerekore. There are currently reports that the violence is spreading further into other parts of the "Guinea Forestiere" region. MS Risk advises any travellers to Guinea to avoid this region as continued attacks are likely to occur. Due to the ongoing French military intervention in Mali, there is a possibility that retaliatory attacks targeting Western interests may be carried out in the region. Over the past several weeks, there has been extensive rioting and violence that has occurred in Conakry. Up to ten people are reported to have been killed in Conakry in the latest outbreaks of violence, on 25 and 25 May. The suburbs of Hamdallaye, Bambeto and Cosa have been especially affected. With Guinea's opposition parties pulling out of UN-mediated elections talks, and with the likelihood of elections being pushed back, it is highly likely that violent protests and demonstrations will continue to occur in the capital city. MS Risk advises to maintain extreme vigilance, and to monitor local media and to avoid large gatherings. Guinean authorities maintain police and local militia checkpoints throughout the entire country as such you are advised to carry the appropriate form of identification (such as a passport or residence card) with you at all times.

**Guinea-Bissau** - [Click Here](#)

**Liberia** - MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of Liberia. There is a high level of crime in Monrovia, including armed robbery. The Liberian National Police has a very limited capability to prevent or

detect crime, or to provide emergency response in any part of the country. Foreigners have been mugged in the Mamba Point and Sinkor areas of Monrovia, where most international visitors stay. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks could be carried out in Liberia, this is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali.

**Mali** - [Click Here](#)

**Mauritania** - [Click Here](#)

**Niger** - MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road linking 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; areas within 40 km of the border with Nigeria in Diffa, Zinder and Maradi provinces. MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from terrorism, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack that was launched by suspected Islamist militants. Travellers in Niamey should continue to monitor developments and be alert to announcements and remain vigilant at all times. On 23 May 2013, a military barracks in the town of Agadez and a uranium processing facility near the town of Arlit, approximately 150 miles north of Agadez, were attacked. A number of people were killed and injured. The terrorist group which claimed responsibility for the two attacks has publicly threatened to carry out further attacks in Niger. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in its northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Borno and Yobe border southern Niger. Consequently there is a risk that instability may spill over the border from Nigeria to Niger. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups including AQIM and MOJWA. These terrorist groups have kidnapped Westerners in Niger and in the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey and the north and west of Niger. Further kidnappings are likely to occur. There is a threat of retaliatory attacks in Niger, due to the country's participation in the French-led intervention in Mali. Levels of crime are high, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. Banditry, smuggling and other criminal activity is common in border areas, especially after dark. Bandits are through to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises to avoid crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

**Nigeria** - [Click Here](#)

**Senegal** - 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. There have been a number of deaths and injuries. There is currently an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places 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

**Sierra Leone** - [Click Here](#)

**Togo** - [Click Here](#)

**Sahel Region** - [Click Here](#)



No travel restrictions for this country

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant. There is currently a low threat from terrorism. There have been incidents of mugging, personal assault and car-jacking in Cotonou. Armed robberies have also been reported in other areas, most notably in those regions that border Nigeria.

## Domestic News

- **11 August 2013** - On Sunday, Benin's President Thomas Boni Yayi named a new government just days after he fired his entire cabinet in part over concerns that some of the members had alleged links to a businessman who has been accused of attempting to poison the President. A statement released by the presidency has indicated that President Yayi has named a twenty-six-member team, the same number of posts as the last government. There are no opposition politicians in the newly formed government, which includes thirteen former members and thirteen new entrants. In turn, the President has also opted not to appoint a prime minister as there had been disagreements between Mr. Yayi and former Prime Minister Pascal Koukpaki. According to reports, Mr. Koukpaki, along with another member of government, have been suspected of being close to Patrice Talon, the businessman who has been charged with conspiring the alleged poison plot. Although President Yayi is currently in his second term, after winning re-election in 2011, the poison plot allegations, which were made public in October of last year, have caused a political storm. Some view the accusations as an attempt for Mr. Yayi to rid himself of political enemies while others argue that Mr. Talon was seeking revenge against a leader who attempting to suppress corruption. Mr. Talon is currently in Paris, France, where a court is considering whether or not he should be extradited back to Benin in order to face the charges.
- **9 August 2013** - The office of President Yayi announced on Friday that the President has dismissed his entire cabinet and that he will be appointing a new one. The statement indicated that the President will announce the new line-up "shortly." Although no reason for the move has been given, one presidential adviser has reported that there were some doubts raised pertaining to the loyalty of some of the ministers within his cabinet after a prominent businessman was charged with masterminding a plot to poison the president. The businessman, Patrice Talon, is accused of plotting to poison the president with the help of Mr. Yayi's niece, doctor and an ex-minister. Mr. Talon is currently in France where a court is considering whether he should be extradited back to his home country.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



### Security Summary

Any citizens traveling to, and residing in, Burkina Faso are urged to exercise and maintain a high level of security awareness at all times.

#### Threats and Concerns

There is a general threat from terrorism throughout the Sahel region. Given the on-going French military intervention in Mali, the threat of retribution against Western private sector interests, especially French, has increased. Although there are currently no known Islamist operatives in Burkina Faso, the country's shared border with Mali may enable such elements to gain access. Furthermore, such militants may have disguised themselves as refugees in an attempt to blend in and to cross the border without detection. The regional Islamist elements that could threaten Burkina Faso include: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar al Dine, Ansar al Sharia and Boko Haram.

#### Kidnapping Threats

There is a heightened risk that terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), may cross the northern borders from Mali and Niger into Burkina Faso in order to carry out kidnap attacks. MS Risk therefore advises against all travel to the areas of Burkina Faso north of the town of Boulssa, which is 25 km north of the capital of Ouagadougou. We particularly advise against all travel to the regions that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel region, in which a number of these hostages continue to be held. AQIM operates directly or through criminal gangs who carry out kidnappings on their behalf or pass on their kidnap victims in return for payment.





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

***MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:***

Although the biggest concern at this time remains in the northern areas of the country, specifically along the porous Mali border and at the junction of the Niger border, the attack and kidnapping in Algeria has demonstrated that such attacks can occur at any place and at any time. In addition, the attack on BP in Algeria came just days after Islamists announced that they would retaliate against French interests in the region. Consequently, it is highly likely that more attacks will take place over the coming months.

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

Companies relying on police escorts in the northern region of the country should ensure that travel patterns do not become predictable. Varying routes is difficult due to the limited road networks; therefore, it is even more important to vary the types of vehicles used as well as the times of the journeys and to avoid travel patterns becoming widely known. This is especially critical given the current tensions along the Mali border and the impending ECOWAS operations. All companies 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 suggest there is an elevated banditry threat 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 has been clarified. Companies with operations in the region are invited to report incidents to MS Risk to aid in assessing local conditions. Liaising with insurers to ensure appropriate cover is in place to meet special risks where needed is also strongly advised.



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

### Security Summary

On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamwa, Borno and Yobe. Both Adamawa and Borno border Cameroon’s far North, North and Adamaoua provinces. It is possible that military operations there might have an impact across the border in Cameroon. MS RISK advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Bouba Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroula in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. We also advise against all but essential travel to within 40 km of the border with the Central African Republic. Incidents of armed banditry have been reported in this area. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country. Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.



## Domestic News

- **15 August 2013** - Cameroon has formally taken full sovereignty of the oil-rich peninsula, which was ceded by Nigeria in 2008. The territory was handed over to Cameroon after a ruling reached by the International Court of Justice, which effectively ended years of border skirmishes. The five year UN-backed transition period exempted residents in the area, many of whom are Nigerian fishermen, from paying taxes. However now the Nigerian citizens living in the area will be obligated to apply for a residence permit, or take up Cameroonian citizenship, if they wish to remain in the region. For Nigerians refusing to change nationality, a residence permit will cost 130,000 CFA (US \$260; £170) for two years or 250,000 CFA for ten years. Official figures have indicated that there are 300,000 people living in the peninsula, in which 90% of them are from Nigeria. It currently remains unclear how many have decided to leave the region however it is believed that most have decided to remain. Most of those who have left the region are now living in camps located in Nigeria's Cross River state, where they have been critical of the authorities for not doing enough in order to resettle them.
- **13 August 2013** - A Cameroonian court has sentenced a former health minister to twenty years in prison for corruption over a fake contract to deliver mosquito nets to hospitals. The country's special criminal court, charged with fighting high-level corruption, found Urbain Olanuena Awono guilty of embezzling more than 80 million CFA francs (US \$162,000). Co-accused Yves Rodrigue Soue Mbella, who is on the run, was sentenced in absentia to life in prison. Mr. Soue Mbella had won successive public contracts to supply the insecticide-treated mosquito nets to hospitals located in northern Cameroon. However the anti-malaria treatment was never delivered despite the programme being paid in full by the government. During the trial, judges found that Mr. Awono had "facilitated" the misappropriation of the funds by signing the paperwork which allowed Mr. Soue Mbella to be paid by the state's Treasury. Mr. Awono however has denied the charges, claiming that his signature had been faked. His lawyers have argued that the charges against their client are "politically motivated." Mr. Awono, who has been in detention since 2008, was already sentenced in June of this year to fifteen years in connection with a separate case that involved the embezzlement of public funds. Such trials in Cameroon are the result of the government's initiatives in 2006, which launched a high-profile campaign to tackle rampant corruption, arresting a number of prominent figures, including former ministers and heads of public companies.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



Central African Republic

Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). The armed rebel coalition Seleka has renewed its offensive against President Francois Bozize’s government and has taken control of the capital, Bangui. Security throughout the country continues to rapidly deteriorate with gunfire, violence and widespread looting reported throughout the capital.



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 Bangui. While a ceasefire agreement was made in Libreville, Gabon on 11 January 2013, the situation remained fragile and unpredictable. The rebels restarted their offensive in mid-March and took control of Bangui on 24 March.

Currently the government has very limited control over much of the country and there are reports of rebel activity, banditry and hostage-taking country-wide.

Reports have also surfaced that hospitals throughout Bangui are running dangerously low on supplies and the situation there remains fragile, and a curfew is in place from midnight to 4am and the streets should be avoided during this time. At other times, MS Risk advises extreme care, and to travel in groups if possible. There are armed patrols at night in Bangui and roadblocks - both official and unofficial - that are likely to be manned by armed personnel and particular care should be taken when approaching these.

Any individuals in the country are advised to leave now. Anyone who remains should take all necessary precautions and 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 anyone remaining in the country to keep up to date with local political developments and to avoid all political rallies, demonstrations and large public gatherings. Any individuals in the country are advised to leave now. Those who remain should take all the necessary precautions 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.

## Domestic News

- **13 August 2013** - The Central African Republic's (CAR) interim leader Michel Djotodia has vowed to fight against the spread of weapons in the country that is still suffering the aftermath of a coup that occurred earlier this year. In an address to the nation to mark the country's 53rd anniversary of independence from France, Mr. Djotodia stating that the government had "taken measures to restore security," and that "we must fight against proliferation and circulation of weapons." The interim leader also added that controls on gun ownership would be put in place. In what is the latest coup to hit the unstable nation, the CAR plunged into chaos when the Seleka rebel coalition toppled former president Francois Bozize's government on March 24. Rebel leader Djotodia proclaimed himself president and was later accepted as interim leader of a transitional government for a period of eighteen months until elections are held. However he has struggled to restore order and control rogue rebels who have gone on looting sprees and attacked the population.

## International Developments

- **7 August 2013** - A delegation from the CAR is trying to persuade soldiers from the national army to return home after they fled to neighboring Cameroon in the aftermath of a rebel takeover which occurred more than four months ago. Hundreds of soldiers from the national army, known as FACA, are believed to be among the 3,000 refugees from the CAR who are still in Cameroon. Although a number have been approached about returning home, most of them have declined, stating that they fear for their safety. Djodiar Kato, a spokesman for the soldiers, indicated on Wednesday that "those of us considered Bozize loyalists are being hunted down by the Bangui regime. We have been declared 'wanted' and personally, I'm not ready to go back," adding that "we don't have sufficient guarantees that we will not be dragged to court to face manslaughter charges once we return." In response, Idris Salao, leader of the CAR delegation which visited Cameroon this week insisted that he came with a message of peace and reconciliation, adding that some of the soldiers in exile have continued to receive their monthly salaries and some have since been promoted to higher ranks. However Cameroon's Secretary of State in charge of War Veterans, Koumpa Issa, has stated that no one will be forced to go back and that "Cameroon will continue playing its role as a nation of hospitality." The call for their return comes at a time when human rights groups describe a rapidly deteriorating security situation across largely anarchic CAR, with accounts of rebels committing massacres and setting homes ablaze. A number of the atrocities have been blamed on the Seleka rebel fighters who overthrew President Francois Bozize in March of this year. The United Nations and others have warned of the growing lawlessness in the CAR, which also neighbors some of the most volatile countries on the continent. A panel of UN experts stated earlier this week that the rule of law in the CAR is "almost non-existent." Their findings cited dozens of reported cases of civilian killings along with reports of army soldiers who had been abducted by armed rebels.



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

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## Domestic News

- 7 August 2013** - In a case that has gripped the West African nation, Ghana's Supreme Court heard final arguments on Wednesday as to whether or not it should overturn the results of the 2012 presidential polls because of irregularities. The country's largest opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), is challenging President John Dramani Mahama's presidential win last December, stating that the vote was marred by irregularities and that their candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo, was the true winner. The NPP's attorney, Philip Addison, told the court in his closing arguments that "these constitutional violations, malpractices and vulgarities have a material effect on the results." Three attorneys, representing Mr. Mahama, Ghana's election commission and the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC), also gave their closing statements at the Supreme Court in the capital city of Accra. Mr. Mahama's attorney, Tony Lithur, argued that the NPP had not provided enough evidence in order to support its arguments, highlighting that the bulk of the NPP's evidence consisted of "pink sheets," which were used to report the results from polling stations across the country. He further noted that the NPP had failed to tie the evidence on the pink sheets to any particular incident or malpractice. In contrast, the NPP claims that these sheets demonstrate a raft of improprieties, such as ballot box-stuffing and voting by people who were not verified through a biometric system that was used for the first time in the December election. Presiding Justice

William Atuguba announced on Wednesday that the court would have a final verdict on August 14. It would then adjourn for a maximum of fifteen days in order to deliberate before announcing its final verdict. Hearings in the case began in April. If the court agrees with the NPP's allegations, it could order the country's election commission to reverse Mr. Mahama's election victory, which would in effect pose an extraordinary test for Ghana's democracy. During the December election, which international observers deemed was free and fair, Mr. Mahama was elected president after receiving 50.7 percent of the vote. The NPP however immediately stated that the election was rigged, further adding that the election was handled improperly and vowing to challenge the outcome in court. Since its filing, the NPP's case has gripped Ghana, a nation of 25 million, which is considered to be one of the most resilient democracies in turbulent West Africa. Since returning to civilian rule in 1992, elections have seen both major parties voted out of office, establishing Ghana's democratic credentials in a region of the world that has seen its share of rigged polls and coups. Stakes in the 2012 elections were particularly high due to the booming economy, which has been fueled in part by a new and expanding oil industry.

No travel restrictions for this country



*There are currently no restrictions on travel to Guinea-Bissau. Although the security situation is currently calm, 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/Mapack road.*

## International Developments

- **8 August 2013** - On Thursday, Guinea-Bissau's former Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior, who was ousted in a coup last year, announced his plans to return back to his country in order to run for president in the November elections. Mr. Gomes Junior, 62, who has been living in exile in Portugal, did not specify when he intends to return to Guinea-Bissau, however he did note that he is in the process of "creating the conditions for my return." He has also called for "fundamental freedoms" to be respected ahead of the polls, including a free press and the right to demonstrate. The impoverished West African nation is set to hold its presidential and parliamentary elections on November 24. The polls are aimed at ending the transitional period that began when Mr. Gomes Junior was overthrown in April 2012 in a coup that interrupted the presidential elections in which he was in the lead with 49 percent of the vote. No president has ever completed a full term in office in Guinea-Bissau as the country has suffered chronic instability, due to conflicts between the army and state, ever since it gained its independence from Portugal in 1974.





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 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. There recently was an attack that occurred in the Boufla CI concession, in which a group of armed men, numbering about ten, engaged in banditry . According to on the ground sources, the attack lasted for fifteen minutes during which the victim's personal belongings were stolen from him. However no injuries were reported. The attack occurred during daylight hours. Consequently any individuals in this particular region are reminded to be extremely vigilant.*

## Domestic News

- 5 August 2013** - A court in Abidjan has released on bail fourteen aides of former President Laurent Gbagbo who had been detained in the aftermath of the Ivory Coast's deadly 2011 crisis. Among those granted bail on Monday are his son Michel, a French-born 43-year-old dual citizen. Pascal Affi N'Guessan, former president of Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front, along with Justin Koua, the party's youth leader, were also released. Lida Kouassi, the former Minister of Defence, was also released. The fourteen aides join eight close aides of the ousted president who were released on bail late last year. A justice ministry statement read out on state television indicated that "the are only being freed on bail, the proceedings leading up to the verdicts are in progress and will most likely be concluded by year's end." Laurent Gbagbo was ousted in April 2011 after a deadly four-month crisis which was sparked by his refusal to concede electoral defeat to Alassane Ouattara, who was eventually sworn in as president a month later. The former president was arrested and later transferred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, where he currently faces four counts of crimes against humanity in relation to the violence. Gbagbo's wife, Simone, has also been detained in the Ivory Coast. She faces trial over her involvement in the violence, which left an estimated 3,000 people dead. The ICC has issued a warrant against her however authorities in the Ivory Coast have not yet given a formal response. Update (6 August) - The United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) has welcomed the decision by judicial authorities in Abidjan to provisionally release fourteen officials from the former government headed by Laurent Gbagbo who are currently awaiting trial. The Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of UNOCI, Aïchatou Mindaoudou, stated that "this development will bring about peace between all Ivorian

political actors,” adding that “it contributes to the pursuit for equal justice and is a good sign for a national dialogue that is truly republican, as part of the search for lasting reconciliation in Cote d’Ivoire.”

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



Security Summary

Terrorism



Currently there is a high threat from terrorism in Mali. Although the Government of Mali declared a State of Emergency across the whole country on 12 January 2013, that state of emergency has now been lifted. 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 neighboring 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.

There have been incidents of armed banditry, car-jacking, and kidnap in the northern regions of Mali. Bandits and smugglers are particularly active across the Mali-Algeria, Mali-Burkina Faso, Mali-Mauritania and Mali-Niger borders and pose a threat to travellers, especially after dark. Authorities in Mali have provided the following numbers in case of emergencies:

- 80 00 11 14
- 80 00 11 15
- 20 22 13 35
- 20 23 95 15
- 20 23 95 11

### *Kidnapping*

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.

### *Local Travel*

Although the ongoing military intervention has regained control of the major northern cities in Mali, the situation remains tense in the region and there continues to be a high risk of retaliatory action by terrorist groups. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northern region of Mali, especially to the cities/towns of Gao, In Khalil, Kidal, and Timbuktu as well as the surrounding areas. Landmines have been used by groups operating in the north and northeast of Mali.

Night-time checkpoints continue to operating Bamako. These checkpoints largely control access to military and Government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn. MS Risk advises to keep vehicle and personal identification documents with you at all times while travelling by road. Furthermore, approach security checkpoints slowly and comply with instructions that are given.

## **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 Events**

- **14 August** - The soldier who led the coup that ousted Mali's government last year, and effectively paved the way for a sweeping Islamist offensive, has been promoted just days after a new president was elected in the troubled nation. Just two days after Ibrahim Boubacar Keita emerged as Mali's president-elect, a defence ministry spokesman confirmed that "today, the cabinet approved the nomination of Captain Amadou Sanogo for the grade of Lieutenant-General." On March 22 of last year, Captain Amadou Sanogo led a group of fellow mid-level officials to overthrow then-president Amadou Toumani Toure, effectively upending what had been considered by many one of West

Africa's flagship democracies. The mutiny precipitated the fall of northern Mali to Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda. The coup also deepened a schism in the army between the Red Berets, who are loyal to Toure, and the Green berets, who were broadly pro-junta. Once a US-trained English instructor to his fellow Malian officers, Sanogo comes from Segou, Mali's third-largest city, located on the Niger River, 240 kilometers (150 miles) from the capital of Bamako. His army career saw him make his way through a military academy in Kati, outside Bamako, whose barracks became the junta headquarters. The coup led by Sanogo was sparked by soldiers' anger over their rout at the hands of the well-armed Tuareg rebels who were seeking independence from their homeland in the north. Demoralized and under-equipped, the mutineers slammed Toure's regime for its incompetence in the face of the rebellion by the disenfranchised desert nomads, which has simmered for decades.

- **6 August** - Protesters in the remote northern town of Kidal have called for the release of dozens of rebels imprisoned in the distant capital, underscoring the tensions between the government and the largely separatist region before a presidential runoff election this weekend. The demonstrators are seeking the release of 122 prisoners affiliated with the Tuareg separatist rebel group, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). A spokesman for the MNLA, Moussa Ag Assard, has indicated that in addition to freeing the rebels, protesters have also requested that the Malian army leave Kidal. Following a Tuareg rebellion in early 2012, Kidal, Mali's northernmost provincial capita remained outside the scope of the national government for months. Discontent with the government's handling of that crisis later sparked a coup in March that unleashed political upheaval and forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes across the country. The Malian military only returned to Kidal last month and their presence in the town remains deeply unpopular. The Azawad flag continues to fly across Kidal and rebels remain largely in control. Voter participation during the first round of presidential voting last month was also low, highlighting how many there do not pledge allegiance to the Malian government. Despite concerns over the lack of government control in Kidal, which is largely run by separatist Tuaregs, the elections will go ahead.

## Coverage of Mali's Presidential Elections

- **7 August 2013** - Mali's top court confirmed on Wednesday that former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita had won the July 28 presidential vote but that he fell short of an outright majority, meaning that he will face ex-Finance Minister Soumaila Cisse in a runoff on August 11. The Constitutional Court also rejected claims of irregularities which were made by Mr. Cisse and other candidates, stating that the final results from the first round of voting gave Mr. Keita 39.79 percent of the vote, well ahead of Mr. Cisse's 19.70 percent. Mr. Keita, who is running on a nationalist pledge to restore Mali's dignity, is the favorite to win Sunday's race, having already secured the endorsement of some twenty other candidates as well as being backed by a number of influential Muslim leaders. The court's announcement, which meant that campaigning can officially begin for Sunday's vote, was however greeted with disappointment by Mr. Cisse's camp, which alleges that voting irregularities and, in some cases, fraud, had compromised the result. The court however dismissed these complaints. Foreign observer missions broadly praised the July 28 vote, dispelling fears that it had been hastily organized and that Mali was not properly prepared. Turnout was revised down slightly to 48.98 percent however it remained a record as participation in previous elections in Mali had never topped 40 percent. Whoever will win Sunday's elections will face the complex task of negotiating with Tuareg separatists in northern Mali. A June 2013 ceasefire deal committed the government to talks within two months of talking office, however many in the populous southern region of the country are opposed to greater autonomy for the north and reset the Tuareg uprising.
- **12 August 2013** - Malian presidential candidate Soumaila Cisse's supporters on Monday accused the front-runner's party of stuffing ballot boxes as workers tallied the votes. Mr. Cisse's national campaign coordinator has stated that a ballot box full of votes had been discovered around the time

that polls opened on Sunday at one of the polling stations in Bamako. Gouagnon Coulibaly further alleged that other stuffed ballot boxes were found at two mosques. The campaign of front-runner Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has denied the accusations, stating that “these appear to be the words of a bad loser.” Results of the elections are not expected until Friday however Mr. Keita is widely expected to win the second round of voting after having received nearly 40 percent of the ballots in the first round.

- **13 August 2013** - Mali’s presidential elections have been won by Ibrahim Boubacar Keita after his rival admitted defeat just one day after the second round of elections were held. Although official results have not been announced, former Malian Finance Minister Soumaila Cisse conceded defeat against ex-Prime Minister (1994 – 2002) Keita on Monday, announcing that he had “went to see him to congratulate him and wish him good luck for Mali.” His defeat came hours after electoral and security sources had indicated that Mr. Keita had pulled ahead with two-thirds of the votes counted after Sunday’s second round of the election. This was confirmed by Mr. Cisses’ spokesman, who indicated that his candidate had admitted defeat after it became clear the Mr. Keita had won the polls in Gao, which is the largest town in northern Mali. Both Mr. Keita and Mr. Cisse had lost out in the 2002 presidential elections to Amadou Toumani Toure, who was overthrown by a military junta in March of last year, just weeks before the end of his final term in office. Mr. Keita will now face the daunting task of rebuilding a country that is still reeling from more than a year of turmoil. During weeks of campaigning, Mr. Keita became known for his blunt speech, his refusal to compromise and his reputation for toughness. Throughout his campaign, he vowed to unify Mali if elected, stating that “for Mali’s honor, I will bring peace and security. I will revive dialogue between all the sons of our nation and I will gather our people around the values that have built our history: dignity, integrity, courage and hard work.” His top priority will be to secure lasting peace for northern Mali, which has seen five violent rebellions since the country gained its independence from France in 1960. The 68-year-old will now oversee more than US \$4 billion (£2.6 billion) in foreign aid promised to rebuild the country after a turbulent eighteen months. The new government which he will lead will also be obliged to open peace talks with the separatist Tuareg rebels within two months following a ceasefire that enabled voting to take place in the northern regions of the country. Cementing national reconciliation will likely be a challenge for the newly formed government as many in the southern regions of the country continue to be hostile towards funneling more of Mali’s already scarce resources to a region they see as being responsible for the country’s plight. In turn, there is a continued unease between a number of ethnic groups, not only between the north and south, but also within the north itself. The European Union’s election observation mission has given the elections a positive assessments, stating that it complied with international standards in “99 percent” of Mali’s polling stations. European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton has welcomed what she calls “a credible and transparent” election. A statement released by her office also noted that the EU pledged to support efforts to “build a durable peace and restore national unity” in the West African country. Meanwhile the United States has signaled that it was prepared to resume aid to Mali following the election. Marie Harf, deputy spokeswoman at the State Department, hailed Mali’s interim government for “securing a peaceful and orderly environment in which Malians were able to vote,” further adding that “we’ve made clear that following the return of a democratically elected government, we will seek to normalize our foreign assistance to Mali.” The United States was legally forces to suspend military aid to Mali after the coup in March of last year.
- **14 August 2013** - Officials in Mali announced Ibrahim Boubacar Keita as its new leader on Thursday after confirming that the ex-Prime Minister had won a landslide victory. Figures for Sunday’s second-round of voting were announced on live television by the Interior Minister, showing that Mr. Keita won an overwhelming 77.6 percent of the vote, with his rival Soumaila Cisse gaining 22.4 percent. According to Interior Minister Sinko Coulibaly, turnout was recorded at 45.8 percent, while just 93,000 ballots were spoiled, compared with 400,000 in the first round. Former Finance Minister Cisse had already conceded the run-off vote to Mr. Keita after it became apparent on Monday morning that victory was beyond his grasp. While these elections are expected to give a

fresh start to the conflict-scarred nation, Mr. Keita's regime begins already mired in controversy after it emerged on Wednesday that Captain Amadou Sanogo, who led a group of fellow mid-level officers to overthrow then-president Amadou Toumani Toure on March 22 of last year, had been promoted. Human Rights Watch (HRW) has described Sanogo's elevation from captain to the rank of lieutenant-general as "outrageous," further adding that "Sanogo and forces loyal to him have been implicated in extremely serious abuses, including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, attacks against journalists and torture." Most of these crimes were committed during 2012 in the months after the March coup d'etat. The HRW also noted that "instead of being rewarded with this promotion, Sanogo should have been investigated for his alleged involvement in these acts."



Avoid ALL  
travel to part(s)  
of

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

## Security 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

- **14 August 2013** - Mauritania announced on Wednesday that it would send soldiers to the United Nations peacekeeping force

in Mali, which has been charged with ensuring security after the elections, but only to those areas that are located near their shared border. The MINUSMA force has replaced an African military mission, which has been supporting French soldiers who entered Mali in January to halt an Islamist militant advance and to help the government re-establish its authority over the vast country. Mauritania has promised to provide up to 1,800 soldiers to the mission, which is made up of around 6,300 troops. Its contribution will be part of a planned doubling in size of MINUSMA, which is expected to occur by the end of this year. However officials in Nouakchott have stated that “technical details” have delayed the deployment of their troops. During a “meet the public” event in the southeastern town of Nema, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz stated that “we have set our conditions: our contribution will be the deployment of our forces to the border areas...and not other parts of Mali,” adding that “we are ready to participate in MINUSMA if these conditions are accepted.” The proviso however goes the wishes of the Malian government, which has requested that Mauritanian soldiers be deployed to its borders with Niger and Burkina Faso.





Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security 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 focused 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.

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 Land

- **14 August 2013** - Nigeria's military has stated that it has killed Boko Haram's second-in-command. Momodu Bama, who was killed during fighting in the northern state of Borno, was a specialist in manning anti-aircraft guns. Seventeen other militants, including Momodu Bama's father, Abatcha Flatari who is "one of the spiritual guiding lights of the outlawed terrorist group," were also killed while another twenty-four fighters were arrested. According to Brig. Gen Chris Olukolade, the militant's death, which occurred on 4 August, had been "confirmed by other arrested terrorists," however there has been no independent confirmation of his death. Boko Haram has yet to comment on the statement. Gen Olukolade further noted that Momodu Bama was one of the "most-wanted" militant commanders and had a 25m naira (US \$155,000; £100,000) bounty on his head. The announcement of his death comes just one day after Nigeria's Interior Minister Abba Moro stated that despite the killing of forty-four people in a mosque over the past weekend, the Nigerian army was making progress in its war against Boko Haram. The latest attack, which is suspected to have been carried out by the militants, took place in the town of Konduga, located 35 km (22 miles) from the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, where Boko Haram was first established.
- **12 August 2013** - Officials indicated on Monday that suspected Islamist extremists have stormed a mosque and shot dead forty-four worshipers, as well as twelve other people in a nearby village, in Nigeria's restive northeast region. According to a senior government official, who requested anonymity, "gunmen believed to be Boko Haram members entered the mosque and opened fire on Muslim worshippers, killing 44" in Kondunga. After the attack, some residents in the town of Kondunga reported that the attackers had arrived wearing army camouflage, a tactic they have used in the past to disguise themselves as Nigerian soldiers. These reports however have not been officially confirmed. A local official further noted that suspected Boko Haram members had also raided Ngom village, in the nearby Mafa district, where they shot dead twelve people on Saturday night. This recent string of attacks is believed to be in revenge over citizen vigilante groups that have formed in order to help the military battle Boko Haram militants. In recent weeks, the military has encouraged the formation of such vigilante groups as a means of aiding authorities in locating and arresting members of Boko Haram. These vigilante groups have been credited with reducing the number of attacks however some have warned that the situation could spiral out of control and lead to further violence. The violence also comes as Nigeria's military continues to pursue an offensive in the country's northeast, which is aimed at ending the insurgency. The military has claimed major successes with its offensive, however its version of events is difficult to verify as authorities have cut phone lines in many areas and access to remote locations in northeastern Nigeria has been severely restricted.
  - Meanwhile in a video that was obtained by journalists on Monday, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau has claimed responsibility for a series of recent deadly attacks on security forces in the northeast and has insisted that despite the ongoing offensive, he remains in "good health." The vide contains what Shekau claims to be footage of Boko Haram gunmen opening fire on the military in the town of Bama. He also refers to fighting in the towns of Baga and Gamboru Ngala, which is located near the border with Cameroon. Boko Haram's leader has been

declared a global terrorist by the United States, which in March of this year put a US \$7 million (5.3 million euros) bounty on his head.

- **10 August 2013** - A local government confirmed on Saturday that gunmen have kidnapped four Thai nationals as they travelled to a farm in Nigeria's Rivers state. State commissioner for agriculture Emmanuel Chindah confirmed by telephone that on Friday, while on the way to Omida farms in the Bugum area of the riverine state, the gunmen had stopped their vehicle and kidnapped the Thais and their two Nigerian colleagues. He further added that "the two Nigerians were immediately released. But in that process one panicked and jumped into the water and drowned." No further information has been released. Nigeria is one of the world's worst countries for kidnapping. Levels of such incidents are particularly high in the Rivers state, where petro-dollars flowing from Africa's largest oil industry have long been a draw for criminal gangs. Such gangs attempt to gain millions of dollars a year by extorting ransoms.
- **6 August 2013** - Despite a nearly three-month-old state of emergency, which was declared in three states in northern Nigeria, the country has seen an increase in attacks as Boko Haram militants and their supporters continue their attempts to carve out an Islamic State. In the latest incidents to rock the northern regions of the country, at least thirty-five people have been killed in two attacks that were carried out by militants. Meanwhile on Tuesday, gunfire and explosions shook one northeastern Nigerian town while soldiers established a round-the-clock curfew on another region in light of a wave of insurgent clashes. Clashes broke out in the town of Gamboru Ngala, which is located near the border with Cameroon, on Monday night and continued into Tuesday. Due to minimal communications, the military has not yet commented on the situation and details pertaining to the clashes remain unclear. Meanwhile in the city of Potiskum, a round-the-clock curfew has been imposed on the city as soldiers carried out house-to-house searches. Local residents have reported that soldiers were conducting house-to-house searches in two neighborhoods in a bid to locate high-profile Boko Haram members. Although the military has not provided any details as to the sudden imposed curfew, the security operation comes ahead of the Muslim Eid al-Fitr holiday which follows the holy month of Ramadan. There are currently no indications of how long the curfew will remain in place however the country will be celebrating Eid al-Fitr on Thursday and Friday. The situations in the two towns do not appear to be linked as they are located hundreds of kilometers apart. The recent clashes and military operation come in the wake of fighting which occurred on Sunday in two other northeastern towns, in which at least thirty-five people have been killed. A military statement released by officials indicates that thirty-two militants, along with two soldiers and one police officer, died during assaults that were carried out on a police station and military base on Sunday. Military spokesman Sagir Musa has indicated that "troops have successfully repelled Boko Haram terrorist attacks on a police base in Bama...on 4 August." He also noted that a military base in the town of Malam Fatori was also attacked, triggering a gun battle. The military has also stated that "sophisticated weapons" and explosives were used in the attacks. Although the attacks had occurred on Sunday, news of the incidents emerged days later as communications with the region have been difficult since the state of emergency was declared on May 14.
- **5 August 2013** - The army indicated on Monday that clashes between Nigeria's military and members of Boko Haram in two northeastern towns have left at least thirty-five people dead, most of them insurgents. According to a military statement, fighting in the town of Bama, which was sparked by an attack on a police base, "led to the death of one policeman and seventeen Boko Haram terrorists." In recent months, the town has been frequently hit by violence. Military spokesman Sagir Musa further indicated that four trucks, three motorbikes, dozens of explosive devices, three rocket-propelled grenades, 10 AK-47 rifles and over 100 rounds of ammunition had also been recovered from the Islamist militants. Clashes also occurred in Malam Fatori after Boko Haram members attacked a military base, triggering a gun battle that left two soldiers and fifteen Boko Haram militants dead. According to the military, the insurgents were armed with

“sophisticated weapons” and explosives during the attacks. Both towns are located in Nigeria’s Borno state.

- Two Lebanese suspects, who are alleged to be members of Hezbollah and who are currently on trial in Nigeria on terrorism charges, told a court on Monday that they had been harshly interrogated by Israeli agents shortly after they were arrested. Mustapha Fawaz, Abdallah Thahini and Talal Ahmad Roda were arrested in May of this year after the discovery of an arms cache in a residence in the northern Nigerian city of Kano. They have since been accused of plotting attacks against Western and Israeli targets in Nigeria. They have denied all the charges. On Monday, Mr. Fawaz testified that after his arrest in Abuja, a security official told him that “some European friends” wanted to ask him questions. In response to questions by his lawyer, Mr. Fawaz told the court that he “was taken to an interrogation room where I met three Israeli Mossad agents.” Mr. Fawaz, who has denied membership in Hezbollah, further indicated that “they handcuffed my hands behind my back for days. I lost country because they did not allow me to sleep for several days.” He concluded by stating that “during the 14 days of interrogation, I was interrogated by six Israeli Mossad agents and one masked white man.” According to him, no Nigerian official was present during the sessions. An Israeli embassy spokesman has not responded to requests for comment. Mr. Thahini, who told the court he was no longer a member of Hezbollah, also gave a similar account during his testimony. He claimed to have collapsed after being denied sleep for five days by the foreign interrogators. Both Mr. Fawaz and Mr. Thahini have denied any knowledge of the arms cache that was discovered in Kano. Justice Adeniyi Adetokunbo Ademola adjourned the case until September 30 after both the prosecutors and the defence close their cases. The three suspects are believed to own a supermarket and an amusement park in Abuja however the two businesses have been closed since the arrests. A fourth suspect is said to be on the run.

## Domestic News

- **13 August 2013** - Nigeria’s Interior Minister Abba Moro has announced that the army is making progress in its war against Boko Haram militants, despite the killing of forty-four people in a mosque. When asked about the most recent attack, Mr. Moro dismissed the attack as “desperate” and “isolated,” adding that “the security agencies of Nigeria have been able to push the Boko Haram sect from their major strongholds.” The mosque attack occurred during dawn prayers on Sunday in the town of Konduga, which is located 35 km (22 miles) from the Borno state capital of Maiduguri, which is where Boko Haram was established in 2002 and where the group launched its first attack seven years later. News of the incident however only began to emerge on Monday, as communications have been disrupted by the state of emergency. Forty-four civilians were killed in the attack. It remains unclear why the mosque was targeted however one possible explanation points to members of a local vigilante group who may have been praying inside the mosque at the time of the incident. Reports have also indicated that another twelve civilians were killed in Ngom village, which is located closer to Maiduguri. Although Boko Haram has not yet commented on the mosque attack, the news of the incident came as a video of the group’s leader, Abubakar Shekau, emerged in which he indicates that his followers had carried out recent attacks including some that had targeted the police and military. He further noted that the army’s claims to have inflicted heavy losses on the group were “lies.” Boko Haram has frequently attacked churches but it has also occasionally targeted mosques and preachers who disagree with their views. Military sources have stated that the attackers on Sunday wore military uniforms, which they may have taken during recent attacks on a barracks. Following a calm immediately after the emergency was declared back in May of this year, there has been a recent spate of attacks, which have left some 160 people dead. However the Nigerian government has maintained that these were the “desperate antics” of a group trying to show that it was still relevant.

- **6 August 2013** - Nigeria has requested a court to extradite a Nigerian citizen who is wanted in the United States on acts of terrorism. According to court papers, which were made available on Wednesday, the United States Embassy has requested the extradition of Lawal Olaniyi Babafemi on a federal indictment which has charged that he provided support to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The papers state that Mr. Babafemi, 33, admitted to FBI agents that he travelled to Yemen with AQAP members and was given US \$8,600 in order to return to Nigeria and to recruit English speakers who would radicalize others. Nigeria requested his extradition at a court in Abuja on Tuesday, stating that Mr. Babafemi had fled from the United States earlier this year. AQAP has claimed a number of terrorist attacks, including the 2009 attempted bombing of a Northwest Airline flight from Amsterdam to Detroit by a Nigerian with explosives hidden in his underwear.



No travel restrictions for this country

There is currently no travel advisory for Sierra Leone. Violent incidents have taken place under cover of crowds in the streets of Freetown. There are also occasional small riots between rival groups of youths in the central and eastern areas of Freetown. If you encounter such an incident, you should leave the area immediately. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks may be carried out in Sierra Leone. This is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. During the rainy season, May to October, roads can become extremely difficult, even for off-road vehicles. On 9 August a bridge in the capital city of Freetown collapsed due to a landslide that was caused by heavy rain. At least six people were killed in the incident. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

## Domestic News

- **7 August 2013** - A government minister has confirmed that a former ally of Liberia's ex-President Charles Taylor has been deported from Sierra Leone a week before he was due to stand trial for crimes committed during the West African nation's 1991 - 2002 civil war. Ibrahim Bah was deported to his home country of Senegal, a move which has prompted an outcry from rights campaigners. His deportation is in light of increased pressure from human rights groups on Sierra Leone's government to arrest and prosecute Mr. Bah since a panel of experts presented a report to the United Nations Security Council earlier this year. The report indicated that Mr. Bah had supplied arms to Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels and that he had been a close aide to ex-President Taylor until 2003. Since 2004, Mr. Bah has been targeted by a UN travel ban and asset freeze for his alleged links to arms and diamond trafficking however he has so far avoided prosecution despite mounting pressure from rights groups. He has been living in Freetown for the past five years and had been due to stand trial on Monday in Sierra Leone in a case that was brought on by a private citizen. The charges including false imprisonment, kidnapping, assault, and making death threats in the diamond-rich Kono district in 2000. However Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma ordered his deportation on July 27. It currently remains unclear whether Mr. Bah is in detention in Senegal as his details are no longer listed on the wanted section of Interpol.

No travel restrictions for this country



There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. Crime is on the rise in Lome. Local authorities warn of a rise in violent robberies and car-jacking incidents that target both foreigners and Togolese alike. Togolese authorities have also warned motorists to only stop for individuals in uniform, particularly after dark. You should avoid travelling alone where possible even within Lome city limits, especially after dark. There is a possibility of retaliatory attacks in Togo, due to its participation in the intervention in Mali.

## Domestic News

- **12 August 2013** - On Monday, Togo's Constitutional Court validated the results of last month's parliamentary polls, effectively giving the ruling party a two-thirds majority and allowing President Faure Gnassingbe's family to maintain its decades-long grip on power. The court's ruling effectively finalizes the results from the July 25 polls. The court also rejected five appeals, including those which alleged fraud and intimidation, because of a lack of evidence. Court president Aboudou Assouma stated in his ruling that "overall, voting took place according to the applicable procedures and regulations." Observers from the African Union (AU) and West African bloc ECOWAS have also stated that the elections were held in acceptable conditions. President Gnassingbe's UNIR party won 62 of the 91 seats in the vote, while the closest opposition party, Let's Save Togo, won 19 seats. These results mean that the President's party will now control an even greater percentage of seats than it did previously. During the 2007 legislative elections, the party won 50 of 81 seats.





## At Sea

### Hijacks

- **12 August 2013** - About 11 pirates armed with guns boarded and hijacked a Marshall Islands-flagged chemical tanker, the SP Atlanta, at anchor at 0330 LT in Lagos Anchorage, Nigeria. They stole the crew members personal belongings and caused minor injuries to those on board the tanker. **Update (13 August 2013)** - The vessel was released and safely arrived at Lagos anchorage. No further details have been released.

### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies

- **15 August 2013** - About 8 - 10 robbers in a speed boat tried to place a hook to the railings of a chemical tanker at 0240 UTC at Lagos anchorage, Nigeria. Robbers were spotted by the crew and the alarm was raised. Other ships were informed on the VHF Radio. Local authorities were informed and a naval patrol arrived at the location and conducted a search, resulting in the boat moving away from the vessel. The vessel has been reported safe.
- **12 August 2013** - Nigeria-flagged OSV came under attack at 2140 UTC, about 35 nautical miles off the Nigerian Coast. Two gunboats with approximately 7 - 8 pirates on board fired upon the OSV. A patrol boat was in the location and responded to the emergency calls. Patrol boat exchanged fire with the pirates. Pirate boats then headed north at a high speed.
- **11 August 2013** - Robbers in a small skiff approached an anchored Liberia-flagged product tanker, FPMC 25, at 0005 LT, Lagos anchorage, Nigeria. Master raised the alarm and all crew members were mustered into the citadel. The armed security team on board the vessel fired warning shots, resulting in the skiff moving away.
- **31 July 2013 (Late Report)** - Robbers boarded an anchored Cayman Islands UK-flagged bulk carrier, the Athos, at 2300 LT while in Abidjan anchorage, Cote d'Ivoire. The robbers used a long pole with a hook in order to board the vessel. The crew members on board the bulk carrier spotted the robbers and raised the alarm. Upon hearing this, the robbers escaped on a wooden boat. All crew has been reported safe and nothing was stolen.
- **30 July 2013 (Late Report)** - A gunboat claiming to be a Nigerian boat called a Hong-Kong-flagged chemical tanker, the High Jupiter, on VHF, requesting details of the tanker, cargo, last and next ports. The call was made at 1345 LT while the tanker was about 45 nautical miles south of Brass, Nigeria. This information was passed to the gun boat. Around fifteen minutes later, the gun boat approached the tanker at a high speed, demanding that the tanker stop and permit boarding.

The Master informed that he would not be stopping as the area was a high risk for piracy attacks. The gunboat threatened and followed the tanker for 20 minutes during which two shots were fired in the air. The Master of the chemical tanker raised the alarm over VHF and requested ships in the vicinity to relay its message to port control which was not responding to its calls. Upon hearing the VHF alarm, the gunboat moved away from the chemical tanker. The tanker and its crew members has been reported safe.

## Weather Analysis

- **Gulf of Guinea** - South-southwest winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** - South-southwest winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
- **Synoptic Discussion** - The Gulf of Guinea is under the influence of high and low pressure systems, bringing strong southerly winds and moisture into the area. Expect mostly cloudy conditions with rain showers and possible thunderstorms.

## Sahel Region

There remains a very real threat of kidnap, particularly of Westerners, in the Sahel and surrounding region. The Sahel region includes Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger and the kidnap threat extends to other countries including Algeria, Cameroon, Libya and Nigeria. The threat has increased following the French military intervention in Mali, which began in January 2013. The start of the military operations in Mali saw a number of attacks in the region, including the attack on a gas plant in Algeria in January and more recently attacks of a French-controlled Uranium plant in Niger. Further attacks such as these are highly likely to occur.

There are currently at least thirteen hostages who remain held in the Sahel and surrounding regions. Kidnap victims have included construction workers, NGO workers, tourists as well as diplomats of various nationalities, primarily European. Some hostages have been killed, including nine British nationals since 2009. Terrorist groups in the region have also kidnapped at least fifteen Westerners in Cameroon and Nigeria since December 2012.

### ***Threats in the Region***

The terrorist threat in the Sahel and surrounding region mainly comes from a number of groups, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Terrorist groups such as AQIM aspire to establish Islamic law in the region and mainly attack Western interests. In turn, such terrorist groups typically carry out kidnappings of Westerners for financial gain, prisoner exchange and to exert political pressure on governments. Kidnapping for ransom is AQIM's primary source of finance.

AQIM, along with a number of regional Islamist groups, operate in the border areas of northern Mali, Niger and Algeria however they have proven their capabilities of travelling long distances in order to carry out attacks which have included attacks in Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Criminal gangs also carry out kidnappings for terrorist groups in return for financial payment.

### ***Working in the Region***

If you do choose to work in an area where MS Risk advises against all travel due to the high threats of kidnapping, you will need a high level of security. You will also need to

- Ask your employer about their security arrangements and make sure that they are able to provide you with an adequate level of security for the level of threat from terrorism and kidnapping.
- Follow your employer's local security guidelines
- Maintain a high level of vigilance at all times
- Keep others informed of all your travel plans.
- Vary your routines and routes as criminal gangs and terrorist groups may monitor movement prior to a kidnapping attempt.
- Consider pre-deployment training on travelling under close protection.

### ***Recent Kidnap Attacks***

#### Algeria

- On 16 January 2013, a number of foreign workers were taken hostage at a gas installation near the town of In Amenas, close to the border with Libya. A number of British nationals were killed in the attack.

## Cameroon

- On 19 February 2013, 7 French tourists were kidnapped in Far North province near the Nigeria border. They were released on 18 April 2013.

## Nigeria

- On 16 February 2013 a British national was kidnapped along with six other foreign nationals in Bauchi state. They are believed to have been killed.
- In December 2012, a French national was kidnapped in Katsina state. He is still being held.
- In May 2012 a Lebanese national was kidnapped in Kaduna state. He is still being held.
- In January 2012, a German national was kidnapped in Kano. He was killed some months later.

## Mali

- On 21 November 2012, a French national was kidnapped near the town of Kayes, close to the border with Senegal and Mauritania. He is still being held.
- On 15 April 2012, a Swiss national was kidnapped in Timbuktu. She was released on 24 April 2012.
- On 4 April 2012, 7 Algerian diplomats were kidnapped in Gao. Three of them were released on 5 July 2012.
- On 25 November 2011, 4 tourists were attacked in Timbuktu; one was killed and three others were kidnapped. They are still being held.
- On 24 November 2011, 2 French nationals were kidnapped in the town of Hombori, to the north-east of Mopti. One was killed in March 2013 while the other is still being held.

## Mauritania

- On 20 December 2011, Mauritanian military police were attacked in Adel Begrou, Mauriania, near the border with Mali. One Gendarme was kidnapped in the attack and was held for almost three months before being released.



## About MS Risk

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

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

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

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

- Security Consulting
  - Risk assessments and intelligence reporting
  - Planning and management
  - Due diligence and investigations.
- Project Management
  - Interim security
  - Training
  - Special assignments
- Crisis Response
  - Crisis management
  - Business continuity management
  - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
- Virtual Security Director service for clients lacking a full time security executive.

References are always available.

More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

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