



# 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

July 22 – August 4, 2013



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### Security Summaries for West African States

#### Benin

- **1 August 2013** - The United States has described the Republic of Benin as a democratic leader in West Africa, citing the many successful transparent elections which the country has held.

#### Burkina Faso

- **2 August 2013** - Students in the capital city of Ouagadougou have sent more than a dozen cars ablaze after negotiations with university officials failed.
- **29 July 2013** - Thousands of protesters marched through Burkina Faso's capital city on Sunday, denouncing a perceived attempt made by the President to extend his hold on power through the creation of a new Senate.

#### Central African Republic

- **16 July 2013** - Officials announced on Friday that the African Union (AU) will form a new 3,600-strong peacekeeping mission for the Central African Republic (CAR) in order to step up efforts to stabilize the fractious country.

## Guinea

- **24 July 2013** - Recent clashes in Guinea's southeast forest region have killed ninety-five and injured hundreds, this according to a government spokesman who provided numbers on Wednesday that were significantly higher than those announced last week.

## Ivory Coast

- **2 August 2013** - The Ivory Coast's opposition party, the Cote d'Ivoire Popular Front (FPI), is pressing for an "international inquiry" into the mutiny that occurred on July 23, when deaths were reported to have occurred at the Abidjan Detention and Correction House (MACA).
- **30 July 2013** - The United Nations Security Council on Tuesday cut back the size of the UN peacekeeping force in the Ivory Coast as it praised the governments efforts in increasing stability there.

## Mali

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

- **2 August 2013** - Mali's interim government announced on Friday that the country's presidential elections will go to a second round, which has been scheduled for August 11, after no candidates succeeded in securing a majority in the landmark polls.
- **1 August 2013** - Mali's interim presidency has announced that the results of the first round of voting in Mali's presidential election will be announced on Friday, a day later than expected.
- **31 July 2013** - While official results from Sunday's presidential elections in Mali are not expected to be announced until Friday, the country's interim government has stated that initial results indicate that Mali's ex-Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubakar Keita has a clear lead in the polls that are intended to restore democratic rule in Mali.
- **29 July 2013** - France's Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault declared on Monday that elections in Mali, which were held on Sunday, were a "great success" for the country and for France, which deployed its troops to the African nation earlier this year in order to dislodge Islamist militant groups from the northern regions of the country.
- **26 July 2013** - The head of the European Union observation mission indicated on Friday, 48 hours ahead of the first round of elections, that conditions have been met for a credible presidential election in Mali.

## Mauritania

- **1 August 2013** - Mauritanian security authorities and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have finalized plans in order to move Malian nationals out of refugee camps that are located near Fassala.
- **23 July 2013** - A Mauritanian official and Amnesty International have both confirmed that a 24-year-old Canadian who was sentenced to eighteen months in prison for his alleged ties to al-Qaeda's North African branch has been freed.

## Niger

- **1 August 2013** - Officials in Niger and Nigeria have confirmed that they arrested a Nigerian terrorist leader in neighbouring Niger, effectively foiling a plot to regroup and launch more attacks.

## Nigeria

### *On Land*

- **1 August 2013** - Witnesses and the military reported on Thursday that Islamic extremists killed eight people in an attack that targeted teachers and Muslim clerics in northeastern Nigeria.
- **30 July 2013** - According to hospital sources, at least twenty-eight people have been killed and fifteen others injured in a series of explosions that targeted bars in the northern Nigerian city of Kano.
  - Meanwhile Nigerian authorities have arrested forty-two suspected members of Boko Haram in Lagos and the neighbouring southwest state of Ogun.

- **29 July 2013** - On Monday, Nigerian prosecutors widened charges against three Lebanese nationals who have been accused of having links to Hezbollah as their trial began.
- **28 July 2013** - Suspected Islamist militants attacked a fishing settlement in northeast Nigeria over the weekend, killing at least twenty civilians.
- **23 July 2013** - The British High Commission has confirmed that a man, who was kidnapped by gunmen on Friday shortly after landing at the international airport in Lagos, Nigeria's largest city, has been released.

## Domestic News

- **31 July 2013** - Nigeria's electoral commission has approved the merger of three main opposition parties into a bloc that could pose the most credible threat yet to the long-ruling party of President Goodluck Jonathan.
- **30 July 2013** - A battalion of around 700 Nigerian troops fighting Islamist militants in northern Mali is set to return home on Wednesday, where their country faces similar challenges.

## Senegal

- **26 July 2013** - A government spokesman has confirmed that Senegal's national police director has been removed from his post amidst allegations that he was involved in drug trafficking.

## Togo

- **31 July 2013** - On Monday, Togo's main opposition rejected the provisional electoral results which showed that the ruling party won two-thirds of the parliamentary seats, effectively allowing the current President's family to maintain its decades-long grip on power.
- **28 July 2013** - ECOWAS has declared Togo's parliamentary polls credible and transparent.
- **26 July 2013** - On Friday, officials in Togo began to tally up the votes after long-delayed parliamentary elections were held on 25 July.

## Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

### At Sea

#### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies

- **24 July 2013** - Report from master of Nigeria-flagged oil product tanker, MT Loulou, that vessel came under attack while in position 04:16.8N - 007:56.1E, Eket offshore anchorage, Nigeria.

### Piracy News

- **2 August 2013** - Ghana's navy has intercepted a ship and arrested its crew members on suspicion that the vessel had been involved in the hijacking of an oil products tanker off Gabon last month.
- **22 July 2013** - Pirates have released a Turkish cargo ship with a crew of twenty-four Indian nationals on board, which was hijacked near the Port Gentil, off the coast of Gabon in West Africa last week.

## About MS Risk

## Security Summaries for West African States

**Burkina Faso** - [Click Here](#)

**Cameroon** - On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamawa, 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.

**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** - There is currently no travel advisory for this country, however over the past year, there has been an increase in violent robberies. In May of this year, an expatriates vehicle was stopped by an armed individual who forced his way into the car, demanding money. On being paid, the individual left the vehicle. During a separate incident, an expatriate was robbed of her wallet while trying to pay a taxi driver. There have been reports that two westerners were shot while driving along at night and of a further two westerners being robbed at gunpoint at a restaurant. Both incidents occurred in the Accra area. There was a separate report of a robbery occurring in the Tema area, which resulted in the fatality of a westerner. There have been other reports of foreign nations being held at gun-point in their homes and while walking in the street. Most armed robberies occur at night

however some incidences have occurred during daytime. A common tactic is to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force you to stop. As a result of ongoing local Chieftancy and land disputes, isolated inter-ethnic violence and civil unrest can occur at any time including in the Northern, Upper East and Volta Regions. A dusk to dawn curfew has been imposed on the Hohoe community in the Volta Region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering to travel to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of fighting. There is an underlying threat from terrorism.

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

**Guinea-Bissau** - *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/Mpack road.*

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

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

**Sierra Leone** - 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.



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.

## International Developments

- **1 August 2013** - The United States has described the Republic of Benin as a democratic leader in West Africa, citing the many successful transparent elections which the country has held. In a congratulatory message to Benin, on occasion of the country's 53rd Independence anniversary, which was marked on 1 August, US Secretary of State John Kerry stated that "the United States and Benin share a friendship based on common interests and values. Since the 1990's, Benin has held multiple free and fair elections, cementing its role as a democratic leader in West Africa. We look forward to deepening our partnership to promote good governance and economic development, regional stability, and the empowerment of vulnerable populations." The US also wished the government and people of Benin "a festive celebration and a peaceful, prosperous future."

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

Over the past several weeks, regional Islamist militants, such as members of AQIM, have specifically targeted Westerners for kidnapping for ransom in neighbouring countries. Although no known kidnappings have taken place in Burkina Faso, the instability throughout the region, specifically in Mali, has increased potential vulnerabilities. Intelligence reports have confirmed that terrorists are highly likely to be planning kidnap operations from Burkina Faso. Consequently there is a heightened risk that such kidnap activity may cross the northern borders from Niger and Mali into Burkina Faso. MS RISK advises against all travel to the northern region of Burkina Faso, specifically north of the town of Boulouga, which is located 25km north of the capital city of Ouagadougou. This includes the border provinces of Lebara, Kenedougou, Banwa, Kossi, Sourou, Yatenga, Loroum, Soum, Oudalan, Seno, Yagha, Komondjari and





Tapoa. Since 2008, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has captured over 25 hostages of a variety of nationalities, primarily European, and a number of these hostages are still being held.

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.

## **Domestic News**

- **2 August 2013** - Students in the capital city of Ouagadougou have sent more than a dozen cars ablaze after negotiations with university officials failed. Police superintendent Patrice Yeye indicated on Friday that two officers had been seriously wounded in unrest that occurred on campuses in

Ouagadougou this week. The violence began after university officials told students that they had to vacate their dormitories at the end of July. After refusing their demands, students launched protests throughout the capital city earlier this week. Superintendent Yeye stated on Friday that nearly fifty people had been arrested in connection with the violent demonstrations. In recent weeks, the West African nation has been rocked with a number of protests, leading a number of regional analysts to compare these protests with the 2011 uprisings which occurred for months after a student died while in police custody. President Blaise Compaore's possible attempts to lengthen his stay in power, after his term ends in 2015, has also sparked fears that violence may continue.

- **29 July 2013** - Thousands of protesters marched through Burkina Faso's capital city on Sunday, denouncing a perceived attempt made by the President to extend his hold on power through the creation of a new Senate. The protests come just one week after thousands of workers participated in demonstrations around the country against rising costs of basic goods, such as rice and sugar, and have underscored the tense environment that faces President Blaise Compaore as he decides whether to run for re-election in 2015 or step down. Lawmakers in Burkina Faso approved the creation of the Senate in May of this year, and on Sunday, local officials were selecting thirty-nine members who would represent them in the 89-member body. President Compaore will appoint 29 members himself. Opposition leaders fear that the president intends to use the Senate in order to amend Article 37 of the constitution, which limits presidents to two five-year terms. President Compaore has been in power for twenty-six years, however his terms ends in 2015 and the current rule would not permit him to run again. After Sunday's march and rally in Ouagadougou, opposition leader and protest organizer Zephirin Diabre stated that the large amount of protesters present was "proof that the people are rejecting the Senate." A demonstration was also organized in Bobo-Dioulasso, which is Burkina Faso's second-largest city. President Compaore has not indicated whether he will step down in 2015, resulting in the International Crisis group warning in a report published last week that his silence would only contribute to the uncertainty that was occurring in the country. In turn, any attempts by President Compaore to change the rules on term limits could result in large-scale demonstrations like those seen in Burkina Faso in the first half of 2011. In response to last weekend's protests, Prime Minister Luc Adolphe Tiao has stated that the government would begin talks with trade unions in regards to high living costs. However he did not address concerns relating to the Senate. Talks with the unions have not yet begun.

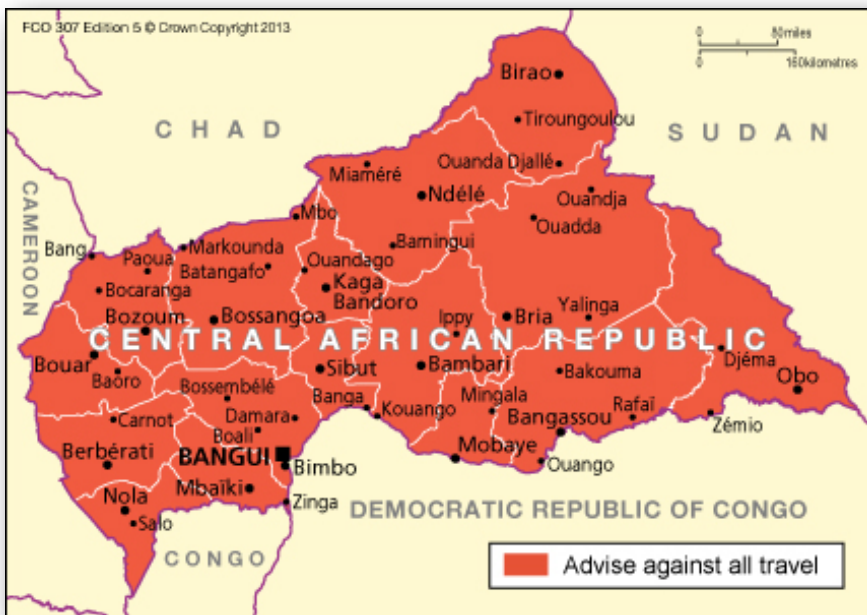


Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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.

## Regional Reporting

- **16 July 2013** - Officials announced on Friday that the African Union (AU) will form a new 3,600-strong peacekeeping mission for the Central African Republic (CAR) in order to step up efforts to stabilize the fractious country. Admore Kambudzi, secretary of the AU's Peace and Security Council, indicated that an existing regional peacekeeping mission, known as MICOPAX, would be rolled into the larger new force from August. He further noted that the peacekeeping mission's mandate would be to protect civilians and to help stabilize the country and restore the central government in the former French colony. Ramtane Lamamra, commissioner of the Peace and Security Council, has stated that 2,600 troops contributed voluntarily by AU members would be sent in order to increase the presence of the roughly 1,100 troops who are in the CAR as part of MICOPAX. Mr. Lamamra stated that "it is aimed at moving from the situation that CAR and the region have been experiencing for quite some time to a different kind of engagement on the part of the international community." The United Nations has stated that more than 49,000 refugees have fled to neighbouring states, mainly the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon, and the Congo Republic, since December. More than 200,000 people have been displaced within the country.

No travel restrictions for this country



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.*

## Domestic News

- 24 July 2013** - Recent clashes in Guinea's southeast forest region have killed ninety-five and injured hundreds, this according to a government spokesman who provided numbers on Wednesday that were significantly higher than those announced last week. Officials has previously put the death toll at fifty-four. According to spokesman Albert Camara, the violence was partly due to the large flow of arms in the region. In turn, there was a possibility that former rebels from Liberia, as well as fighters trained under a former Guinean junta leader, were involved as well. Furthermore, he specifically mentioned the threat posed by fighters from former Liberian rebel groups known as ULIMO, which opposed then-President Charles Taylor during that country's prolonged civil war, as well as fighters trained by former junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara, who staged a coup in Guinea in 2008 and ruled for about a year. Witnesses have indicated that the violence began on July 15 in a village located outside N'Zerekore, where members of the Guerze ethnic group beat a young Konianke man to death after accusing him of stealing from a gas station. Some witnesses also reported that victims had been beheaded with machetes. Preparations for Guinea's legislative elections, which are set to take place in September, have already sparked violent protests in Conakry, with analysts warning that the vote may be marred by ethnic violence if nothing is done in order to calm the situation.



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

- **2 August 2013** - The Ivory Coast's opposition party, the Cote d'Ivoire Popular Front (FPI), is pressing for an "international inquiry" into the mutiny that occurred on July 23, when deaths were reported to have occurred at the Abidjan Detention and Correction House (MACA). In a statement that was issued on Thursday, the FPI, which is the party of the Ivory Coast's ex-president Laurent Gbagbo, called for an "international commission of inquiry" in order to investigate what it sees as "massacres." The party also noted that the inquiry will help identify the "true causes, the true circumstances and the real figure of the victims." According to sources from the prison department, on the night of July 23, an army intervention in a fight between prison guards and detainees at the MACA left at least three inmates dead and several others injured. However the FPI statement has noted that "the death toll was at least 50 people and several others were injured, two of them are still in a critical condition." It also affirmed that on the night of July 23, "there was no attempted 'prison break' or a confrontation between "armed detainees" and prison guards. The army unnecessarily intervened and started beating up prisoners after one of them had refused to be transferred to another prison, the party stated, adding that the army's intervention forced the prisoners to protest and this is when they were "mercilessly beaten up by the army." The Ivory Coast's government has yet to issue an official statement relating to the riot that occurred at the MACA, which is the country's largest prison with a total of 5,000 detainees.
- **30 July 2013** - The United Nations Security Council on Tuesday cut back the size of the UN peacekeeping force in the Ivory Coast as it praised the government's efforts in increasing stability there. The council voted in a resolution extending the UN mission in the Ivory Coast to reduce its maximum size from 10,400 troops to 7,127. According to the resolution, another reduction, to

about 5,400 troops, is planned for 2015. The UN force, known as UNOCI, played a key role in helping President Alassane Ouattara take power after his predecessor Laurent Gbagbo refused to acknowledge defeat in the 2010 presidential elections. The months-long crisis led to chaos, in which about 3,000 people died. During the Security Council's meeting on Tuesday, the Council praised President Ouattara's efforts to "stabilize the security situation and accelerate economic recovery" in the West African country, which is the world's top cocoa producer. However the Council did note "with concern" the slow pace of efforts to disarm an estimated 65,000 militia fighters. The Council also highlighted lingering tensions along the Ivory Coast's border with Liberia. According to UN experts, Gbagbo followers have used Liberian mercenaries in order to stage sporadic attacks in the western regions of the country.

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 with 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**

- **25 July** - Officials indicated on Friday that at least one person was killed in ethnic clashes in Mali's northern city of Kidal. This has complicated efforts to restore order ahead of the planned presidential elections which are set to occur next week. According to reports, the fight broke out late Thursday between a Tuareg, the lighter-skinned ethnic group which is dominant in Kidal and whose members attempted to declare independence last year, and a member of the Songhai ethnicity, a dark-skinned, sub-Saharan ethnic group whose members support the Malian state. On the ground sources have indicated that several people has also been injured in the clashes.
- **24 July** - One of the favorites in Mali's presidential election took his campaign to the former rebel stronghold of Kidal on Wednesday, calling the stop a gesture of unity. Soumaila Cisse, a former minister and ex-leader of the West African Economic and Monetary Union indicated that he's "in

Kidal as part of the campaign to show that Kidal is part of Mali. We are all brothers and we must build together a country that is one and indivisible.” Mr. Cisse’s main rival, former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, had already been in the town, which is located 1,500 kilometers (930 miles) from the capital of Bamako, on July 15.

- **22 July** - Election officials who were abducted by gunmen in northern Mali a week before the presidential elections, have been freed. According to local officials, the workers were seized on Saturday in the Tessalit area while they were handing out voter identification cards. The abduction comes just weeks after the Malian interim government lifted a state of emergency which had been in place since January, when France intervened in order to help drive out Islamist militants who were occupying the northern regions of the country. The governor of northern Kidal province, Adama Kamissoko has indicated that the workers had been kidnapped by fighters from a Tuareg rebel group, adding that they were picked up on Sunday by French forces and driven to military camp a short distance from Tessalit. They are said to be unharmed. It remains unclear how many people were kidnapped, as reports vary from two to six people.

## Coverage of Mali’s Presidential Elections

- **2 August 2013** - Mali’s interim government announced on Friday that the country’s presidential elections will go to a second round, which has been scheduled for August 11, after no candidates succeeded in securing a majority in the landmark polls. Figures for Sunday’s ballot, which were announced on live television, indicated that former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita came in first in Mali’s presidential elections, gaining 39.2 percent of the vote, however he will face his main rival, ex-Finance Minister Soumailia Cisse, who attained 19.4 percent of the vote, after he failed to secure an outright majority. The results, which were announced by Territorial Administration Minister Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, are provisional and need to be confirmed by the West African nation’s Constitutional Court. No candidate gained the fifty percent of the vote that is necessary in order to declare a victory. Dramane Dembele, the candidate for Mali’s largest political party, the Alliance for Democracy in Mali, polled just 9.6 percent, taking third place. Twenty-four other presidential candidates also took part in the polls. It is widely believed that Mr. Dembele’s votes, along with those of fourth placed candidate Modibo Sidibe, which amount to a total of 14.5 percent, are likely to be transferred to Cisse in the run-off. The announcement of a run-off will likely ease tensions which have risen since partial results earlier in the week gave Mr. Keita a large lead, indicating that he may win outright. Although Sunday’s voting was carried out in a peaceful manner, and has been praised by observer missions, Mr. Cisse’s party on Wednesday has announced that the elections had been marred by what it termed as “ballot stuffing,” a form of electoral fraud in which people submit multiple ballots during a vote in which only one ballot per person is allowed. Critics have argued that Mali, which was under pressure from the international community, may have rushed into the polls and risked mishandling the elections which would result in more harm than good. However the country has been praised by the international community for running a transparent, credible and peaceful election. In response to Wednesday’s allegations, acting President Dioncounda Traore and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon have acknowledged that the vote may be “imperfect” in a country where 500,000 citizens continue to be displaced by a military coup that was launched in March 2012. They have however urged Malians to respect the outcome. Despite heavy security during voting, after the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, one of the main armed groups in northern Mali, announced that it would “strike polling stations more than 3.5 million Malians cast their ballot, resulting in a 51.5 percent turnout which eclipsed its next best of 38 percent. The turnout was also higher than the United States has managed in three of its presidential elections since 1984. This high turnout has in effect demonstrated that Malians are ready to get back to the democratic government that was present prior to a military coup which led to armed Islamist militants taking over the northern regions of the country.

- **1 August 2013** - Mali's interim presidency has announced that the results of the first round of voting in Mali's presidential election will be announced on Friday, a day later than expected. No explanation was given as to why the delay will occur however an official from the ministry of territorial administration has indicated that the vote-counting had not been completed following Sunday's polls, stating that "the law allows us until Friday for the publication of interim results and we have not quite finished counting." Initial results showed on Tuesday that former prime minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita had taken a comfortable lead, with Interior Minister Moussa Sinko Coulibaly announcing that there would be no need for a second round of voting on August 11 if the trend continued. However the party of Mr. Keita's rival, Soumaila Cisse, announced on Wednesday that the election had been marred by "ballot stuffing," a form of electoral fraud in which people submit a number of ballots during a vote in which only one ballot per person is allowed.
- **31 July 2013** - While official results from Sunday's presidential elections in Mali are not expected to be announced until Friday, the country's interim government has stated that initial results indicate that Mali's ex-Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubakar Keita has a clear lead in the polls that are intended to restore democratic rule in Mali. With a third of the votes counted in Mali's presidential elections, the country's interim government has stated on Tuesday that former Prime Minister Keita is expected to win the elections, with former Finance Minister Soumaila Cisse expected to gain second place. Col Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, the Minister of Territorial Administration, stated to journalists in the capital city of Bamako that "there is one candidate, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who has a wide margin compared with other candidates.... If maintained, there will not be a need for a second round." Mr. Cisse's camp however has rejected the results, calling for an international commission to count the ballots that were cast in Sunday's poll. His spokesman, Amadou Koita, has called the announcement "scandalous" and has questioned why Col Coulibaly refused to provide figures to back up his statement. International observers have urged Malians to accept the outcome of the elections while Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara, who is the current head of the regional Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has expressed confidence that the Malian contenders will accept the voters' choice. The announcement of a possible winner in Mali's critical presidential elections comes just days after France hailed the elections as a success. The European Union also indicated on Monday that the elections had gone well and that they had been marked by enthusiasm amongst voters despite threats from Islamist terrorists that polling stations throughout the country would be attacked. Sunday's vote was the first election to be held since an uprising by Tuareg separatists sparked a military coup in March of last year, which toppled democratically elected President Amadou Toumani Toure and effectively plunged the country into a political crisis which opened the way for Islamist militants to occupy the vast northern desert regions for ten months before being ousted by a French-led military offensive that was launched in January of this year. The presidential elections are seen as critical in not only completing the transition towards a democracy but also in maintaining stability and security.
- **29 July 2013** - France's Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault declared on Monday that elections in Mali, which were held on Sunday, were a "great success" for the country and for France, which deployed its troops to the African nation earlier this year in order to dislodge Islamist militant groups from the northern regions of the country. A high turnout has been reported despite renewed threats from Islamist groups that polling stations would be attacked. Thousands of United Nations troops kept the peace on Sunday as Malians voted for a new president in a bid to usher in a new period of peace and stability in the first elections to be held since a military coup helped plunge the country into chaos. Early indications showed a record turnout in much of the country, where voters were choosing from twenty-seven candidates, all of whom have pledged to restore peace. Preliminary results collated by journalists in polling stations suggest that former premier Ibrahim Boubacar Keita had taken a clear early lead. The unofficial projection may indicate that Mr. Keita, 69, could win the elections after the first round. Amongst the twenty-seven candidates, Mr. Keita is seen as the frontrunner. His main rival is thought to be Mr. Soumaila Cisse, a former chairman of the Commission of the West African Monetary Union. An official announcement on the first-round

results however is not expected until Friday. If no candidate winds an overall majority, then a second round run-off between the top two contenders will be scheduled for August 11. Voting stations opened on Sunday at 8:00AM (0800 GMT) under heavy security just one day after the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), which is one of the main armed groups linked to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), had threatened to “strike” polling stations. However there have been no reports of any serious incidents occurring. Voting in the northern regions of the country also passed off peacefully. In Gao, which is northern Mali’s largest city, dozens of people lined up to vote in a school near Independence Square. Meanwhile in Timbuktu, voting went ahead after initial problems with organizations, in which many voters were unable to find their names on the voting lists. A large portion of the worry ahead of the polls had been focused on Kidal which was occupied for five months by Tuareg separatists until a ceasefire accord allowed the Malian army to provide security earlier this month. In the run-up to the elections, ethnic clashes between Tuareg rebels and black African left four people dead. In turn, gunmen, though to be from the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) kidnapped five polling officials 200 kilometers (125 miles) north of Kidal.

- **26 July 2013** - The head of the European Union observation mission indicated on Friday, 48 hours ahead of the first round of elections, that conditions have been met for a credible presidential election in Mali. Louis Michel indicated to reporters in Bamako that he “believes that these elections can take place in a context and in conditions that are acceptable and do not allow for a distortion or an abuse of the result,” adding that “I really think the personality who emerges during this election will have more than enough legitimacy.” Mr. Michel also noted that the campaign, which ends Friday, had taken place “in a normal atmosphere without violence and without insults.” Voters will have a choice of twenty-seven candidates as they go to the polls on Sunday for the first time since a separatist uprising led to a coup in March of last year, which in turn evolved into a sweeping Islamist offensive which upended one of the region’s most stable democracies. Prior to his arrival in Mali, Mr. Michel had concerns about the country’s ability to implement the process but he “found a greater capacity than we imagined” on the part of the organizers to get the country ready in time. One hundred EU observers will be deployed in five of the eight administrative regions of Mali on Sunday, however they will not go to northern towns of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, where tensions remain following a nine-month occupation by armed Islamist militants last year.



Mauritania

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

- **1 August 2013** - Mauritanian security authorities and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have finalized plans in order to move Malian nationals out of refugee camps that are located near Fassala. The Mauritanian news agency reported on July 1st that “the returnees, some 100 refugees, represent the first batch of people to return to Mali since the start of military operations that France and African forces launched against the terrorist groups that were controlling northern Mali.” According to reports, this is the first group of refugees to return home since the national Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the Malian government signed an agreement some weeks ago in Ouagadougou. Mauritania received some 100,000 Malians, who fled their homeland after al-Qaeda affiliated terrorists and armed Islamists moved in. However while Mauritania has begun the preparations for refugees to return to their homeland, the Malian refugees are nervous about the their return to Mali.
- **23 July 2013** - A Mauritanian official and Amnesty International have both confirmed that a 24-year-old Canadian who was sentenced to eighteen months in prison for his alleged ties to al-Qaeda’s North African branch has been freed. The official also indicated that Aaron Yoon would be kept under police surveillance until he was sent back to Canada, however no details on when Mr. Yoon will return to Canada have been provided. Mr. Yoon travelled to the region along with two other Canadians who were implicated in a large-scale terror attack on a natural gas plant in southeastern Algeria earlier this year. He was arrested in Mauritania in December 2011. Earlier this month, a court in Mauritania ordered that Mr. Yoon be released after he was sentenced to eighteen months in prison, the same amount of time that he had already served. A spokesperson for the Foreign Affairs Department in Ottawa confirmed the release, stating that “we are aware that a Canadian jailed in Mauritania is in the process of being released.” Mr. Yoon has denied that he had any ties to terrorism, stating that he came to Mauritania in order to learn Arabic and to study the Quran.

Avoid ALL  
travel to part(s)  
of country

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



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.

## On Land

- **1 August 2013** - Officials in Niger and Nigeria have confirmed that they arrested a Nigerian terrorist leader in neighbouring Niger, effectively foiling a plot to regroup and launch more attacks. A statement that was released by Nigeria's military on Wednesday indicated that intelligence agents from both countries had been on the trail of the leader who was arrested on Saturday in the border areas. The statement has not identified the leader nor did it indicate what group he belongs to however it did note that the leader had fled the clampdown in northern Nigeria and was recruiting



and training militants in Niger for terrorist attacks in Nigeria. Northeast Nigeria, which borders Niger and Chad, is currently facing an Islamic extremist uprising that has forced the country's government to declare a state of emergency in three northern states. The military operation that has been going on for the past several months has resulted in a large number of militants going into hiding. It is believed that a number of militants may have moved out of the northern regions of the country and into either the south of Nigeria or into neighbouring countries.



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.

## *Threats and Terrorism*

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

## On Land

- **1 August 2013** - Witnesses and the military reported on Thursday that Islamic extremists killed eight people in an attack that targeted teachers and Muslim clerics in northeastern Nigeria. The attack, which was carried out in the town of Bui, which is located 185 kilometers (115 miles) south of Maiduguri, killed eight civilians and appeared to be the beginning of the planned campaign to carry out further attacks. Witnesses reported that militants struck at night, targeting teachers and Islamic clerics. Indicating a change of tactics, the military has indicated that the militants had used only knives to kill their victims in what appears to be an effort to keep the noise of gunshots from attracting soldiers to the area. Military spokesman Lt. Col. Sagir Musa also warned that the Boko Haram terrorist network was planning more such killings and that "massive attacks" were aimed at the northeastern town of Maiduguri, which is the capital of Borno state. The military spokesman stated that "the Joint Task Force (JTF) wishes to alert citizens...of the impending plans by Boko Haram terrorists to carry out massive attacks and bombings in Maiduguri metropolis and other parts of Borno State any moment from now and during the Eid al-Fitr." That celebration, which is set to occur on August 8, marks the end of the Ramadan fasting period. News of the attack comes on the same day that the military congratulated themselves on the arrest of a Nigerian terrorist leader in neighbouring Niger, stating that it had foiled a plot to regroup and launch more attacks. A statement released on Thursday noted that intelligence agents from both countries had been on the trail of the leader who was arrested Saturday in a border area. Although statement did not identify the leader or his group, it did state that the arrested leader had fled the military clampdown since the state of emergency was introduced and was recruiting and training militants in Niger in order to launch terrorist attacks in Nigeria.
- **30 July 2013** - According to hospital sources, at least twenty-eight people have been killed and fifteen others injured in a series of explosions that targeted bars in the northern Nigerian city of Kano. Witness reports have indicated that the blasts occurred in a Christian neighbourhood which has previously been attacked by militants belonging to Boko Haram. Kano state Police Commissioner Musa Daura confirmed that there had been "some explosions in Sabon Gari this evening," adding that the "explosions happened at open-air beer parlors..." Eyewitnesses reported that multiple blasts struck the predominantly Christian district at around 21:30 local time (20:30 GMT), in an area where people had gathered to enjoy the area's nightlife. The military has since cordoned off the blast site which has prevented people from entering the area. On the ground

sources have indicated that the Muslim majority in the city are now anxious that reprisal attacks may occur as people come out onto the streets after breaking their daytime fast during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. While reports have indicated that at least twenty-eight people were killed in the attack, a statement released by the Nigerian military indicated that the explosions left twelve people dead and a “couple of others” injured. Furthermore, the statement noted that the blasts could have been avoided if the public had been vigilant, and had spotted packages containing explosive devices being “dropped” in the area. The same neighborhood had been targeted in the past by Boko Haram militants. In March of this year, explosions at a bus station in the city killed more than twenty people. Although no group officially claimed responsibility for the bus station blasts in Kano, Boko Haram was largely blamed for the attack.

- Meanwhile Nigerian authorities have arrested forty-two suspected members of Boko Haram in Lagos and the neighbouring southwest state of Ogun. Lagos army spokesman Kingsley Umoh has indicated that the military “...arrested 42 suspected members of Boko Haram in Lagos and Ogun,” further adding that ‘some have already confessed to being Boko Haram and said they fled the northeast due to the military efforts there.’ Although the military crackdown in Boko Haram’s northeast stronghold, which was launched in mid-May shortly after President Jonathan announced a state of emergency in three northern states, has weakened the group, the arrest of such a large number of suspected Boko Haram militants in the southern region of the country has indicated that the operation has pushed militants into hiding, with security sources fearing that attacks could spread to other areas of the country. The arrest of the suspects also comes just days after multiple bomb blasts in Nigeria’s largest northern city of Kano killed a number of people on Monday in a predominantly Christian area which has previously been targeted by Boko Haram. Despite an increase in attacks in recent months, President Goodluck Jonathan has stated that he remains open to a peaceful resolution with Islamist rebels and has set up a committee to discuss offering Boko Haram militants amnesty in return for laying down their weapons. The group’s leader, Abubakar Shekau, however has stated in a number of Internet videos that he is not interested in any dialogue with the Nigerian government. On Tuesday, the president announced that the committee, which was due to submit its report and recommendations this week, had received an extension of two months on the deadline. The president further added that the committee was making progress, sparking remarks from the chairman of the committee, Tanimu Turaki, who told reporters on Tuesday that “we are engaged in critical discussions with insurgents...that will lead not only to the signing of ceasefire agreements...but also lead to disarmament.”
- **29 July 2013** - On Monday, Nigerian prosecutors widened charges against three Lebanese nationals who have been accused of having links to Hezbollah as their trial began. Access to the courtroom has been restricted and the identities of the witnesses have been concealed. Mustapha Fawaz, 49, Abdallah Thahini, 48, and Talal Ahmad Roda, 51, have been accused of having ties to the powerful Lebanese Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah and of plotting attacks against Western and Israeli targets in Nigeria. Prosecutors brought new charges related to money-laundering and illegal importation of goods among crimes. These came in addition to the terrorism-related offenses that were filed last month after a massive supply of weapons was found at a business in the capital of Abuja and in a private home in the northern city of Kano. The defendants have pleaded not guilty to all of the charges however prosecutors have indicated that they have admitted their membership in Hezbollah, which is not a crime in Nigeria. The trio are believed to own a supermarket and an amusement park in Abuja, however the businesses have been shut down since their arrests. A fourth suspect is said to be on the run.
- **28 July 2013** - Suspected Islamist militants attacked a fishing settlement in northeast Nigeria over the weekend, killing at least twenty civilians. The military indicated on Sunday that the assault had targeted the town of Baga, which is located on the shores of Lake Chad and which, until recently, had been a Boko Haram stronghold. According to Lieutenant Haruna Sani, spokesman for the multinational force of soldiers from Niger, Chad and Nigeria, who have been tasked with security

along Nigeria's porous northeastern borders, "the sect members came armed and started shooting sporadically, killing 20 civilians." Baga was the scene of a clash between multi-national forces and Islamist militants which occurred back in April of this year. Although the Nigerian army at the time indicated that thirty-seven people had been killed in the clashes, local leaders stated that around 185 individuals, mostly civilians, had died in the violence. While a concerted military crackdown in the northeastern region, which was launched in mid-May of this year, has weakened the four-year-old insurgency, which is fighting to carve an Islamic state out of the northern regions of Nigeria, it has also pushed militants into hiding, mostly along a mountainous area located near the border with Cameroon. Intelligence sources have indicated that from this area, Boko Haram militants have been able to launch a series of devastating attacks in recent weeks. The military operation has also resulted in civilians helping Nigerian forces in identifying and arresting Boko Haram members.

- **23 July 2013** - The British High Commission has confirmed that a man, who was kidnapped by gunmen on Friday shortly after landing at the international airport in Lagos, Nigeria's largest city, has been released. On Friday, Wale Adebayo, spokesman at the Deputy High Commission in Lagos, indicated that "there was a kidnapping of a Briton and we are working with the Nigerian authorities." He had declined to provide further details, including the day the attack occurred. A private security source familiar with the incident indicated on Friday that the British man had been abducted on Tuesday while travelling into the city after landing at the airport. According to the source, the attackers opened fire on the vehicle and "the driver was injured by a gunshot," before the Briton was seized. There is typically heavy traffic well into the night on most of the roads that lead from the airport in the Ikeja neighbourhood towards central Lagos. However it currently remains unclear where the attack occurred or whether there were any witnesses nearby. Today, Mr. Adebayo stated that "we can confirm the release of the British national...following his abduction on July 16. The man was released on Sunday and no comments have been made on whether a ransom payment had been made. The kidnaping for foreigners for ransom is common in Nigeria, particularly around the oil-rich southern coast. There has also been a rise of such incidents occurring in Lagos. In March of this year, a British man, working for the French energy company CGG, was kidnapped in the upscale Victoria Island area of the city. He was released days later. However officials refused to confirm reports that a ransom had been paid for his release. In the oil-producing Niger Delta region, foreigners working in the oil sector are often released following an armed abduction. Their employers and officials typically do not reveal details about ransoms. Foreigners have also been kidnapped in the northern regions of the county, however those attacks are considered different and have been blamed on Islamist extremists. A Briton was amongst seven foreigners kidnapped in February of this year from a construction site in the northern Bauchi state in an attack that was claimed by the Islamist group Ansaru. Ansaru later posted a video that appeared to show the corpses of some of the hostages. In 2010, 28-year-old Briton Chris McManus was abducted along with an Italian national, Franco Lamolianra, in the northern Kebbi state. They were both killed in the northwestern Sokoto State nearly a year later amidst a rescue operation which had been jointly planned by British and Nigerian authorities and authorized by British Prime Minister David Cameron. That attack was later blamed on Ansaru, a group which is seen as being an offshoot of Boko Haram.

## Domestic News

- **31 July 2013** - Nigeria's electoral commission has approved the merger of three main opposition parties into a bloc that could pose the most credible threat yet to the long-ruling party of President Goodluck Jonathan. Although the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has ruled more or less unchallenged, winning every presidential poll since 1999, recent internal divisions have weakened the party while the coalition of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and Congress of Progressive Change (CPC) has become better funded and organized than any previous opponent. A statement that was released by the electoral commission indicated that "the

Independent National Electoral Commission has approved the application by three political parties, the ACN, ANPP and CPC, to merge into one, to be known as the All Progressive Congress.” A fourth party, the APGA, was also supposed to join the coalition, however it has yet to submit an application. However many analysts believe that it remains to be seen as to whether or not the opposition coalition, which is largely a patchwork of competing interests from the north and the predominantly ethnic Yoruba around the commercial hub of Lagos, can hold together. Its two main figures, former northern military ruler Mohammadu Buhari and former Lagos state governor Bola Tinubu, are both powerful personalities on either side of the north-south divide. Although they will have to agree on a candidate for the 2015 presidential polls, it is widely expected that a Muslim northern candidate will emerge with a southern Christian running mate for vice president. It is also believed that the more closely fought the election, the more violent it could be as previous elections have been marred by violence, especially in constituencies that were hotly contested. More than 500 people were killed in post-election rioting in April 2011 after youths in northern towns erupted in protest over President Jonathan’s victory. The PDP currently controls two-thirds of Nigeria’s states and has a majority in both houses of the national assembly. Despite this, it is deeply divided over President Jonathan’s assumed intentions to run for office in 2015, a debate which has dominated politics at the expense of urgently needed economic reforms. President Jonathan’s possible intentions of running for office again have resulted in more than half of Nigeria’s governors, and a number of lawmakers, in revolution against the president over the issue. Northerners have also increasingly been opposed of the president as they felt that his running in 2011 had violated an unwritten agreement to rotate power between the largely Muslim north and mostly Christian south every two terms.

- **30 July 2013** - A battalion of around 700 Nigerian troops fighting Islamist militants in northern Mali is set to return home on Wednesday, where their country faces similar challenges. On Tuesday, Defence Ministry spokesman Brig. Gen. Chris Olukolade announced that some of the troops would be deployed immediately. Nigeria initially sent 1,200 troops in order to aid an African force that was tasked with helping put down an Islamic insurgency in northern Mali. On Tuesday, Brig. Gen. Olukolade added that Nigeria would sustain its contribution to the operations in Mali “in other forms,” including providing a fully staffed military field hospital, a signal squadron and staff officers for the force headquarters. The announcement that Nigeria would be withdrawing its troops from Mali was made by the African Union earlier this month. While the troop withdrawal from Mali has been due to the ongoing military operations in northern Nigeria, which have focused on battling Boko Haram militants, some reports have indicated that the sudden withdrawal may be in part due to soldiers fighting in northeast Nigeria protesting that they have been deployed for more than two years, thousands of miles from their families. Human rights activists have noted that the lack of rotations could be contributing to ongoing reports of human rights abuses that have been carried out by soldiers. Charges in which the Nigerian military has aggressively denied.

No travel restrictions for this country



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

## Domestic News

- 26 July 2013** - A government spokesman has confirmed that Senegal's national police director has been removed from his post amidst allegations that he was involved in drug trafficking. Abdou Latif Coulibaly has indicated that President Macky Sall has made the decision to relieve Abdoulaye Niang of his duties in a bid to allow the police director to defend himself against the allegations. Mr. Niang served as head of the anti-drug office until last year. A report that was prepared by his replacement indicated that during his time in that post, he became implicated in an international drug trafficking ring that involved dealers from Senegal and Nigeria. So far, Mr. Niang has not responded publicly to the allegations, however Mr. Coulibaly has stated that a government inquiry had found no evidence against him. West Africa is known to be a transit point for Latin American cocaine that is bound for Europe. However over the years Senegal has had few drug seizures.



No travel restrictions for this country

There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. Legislative elections will be held on 25 July 2013, which has been declared a public holiday. Consequently MS Risk advises you to avoid all demonstrations and large gatherings anywhere in the country as they could quickly become violent. In the past, demonstrators have targeted foreigners. There have previously been riots and protests in Lome in August 2012 and in April 2013. 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

- 31 July 2013** - On Monday, Togo's main opposition rejected the provisional electoral results which showed that the ruling party won two-thirds of the parliamentary seats, effectively allowing the current President's family to maintain its decades-long grip on power. Although the full elections results of the country's parliamentary elections were announced by the Electoral Commission on Sunday night, Togo's main opposition coalition, Let's Save Togo, had already alleged earlier in the day that irregularities had occurred during the elections. The following day, Agbeyome Kodjo, a key figure within the Let's Save Togo party, called the vote and results a "sham," stating that "its an electoral sham amid massive corruption and proven electoral fraud." The West African nation's constitutional court must now approve the results from Thursday's elections before they can become final. According to results that were released by the Electoral Commission on Sunday evening, President Faure Gnassingbe's UNIR party won 62 of the 91 seats, giving the party a two-thirds majority in Parliament. If the results are approved by the constitutional court, the President's party will effectively have control over an even greater percentage of seats than it currently holds. During the 2007 legislative elections, the UNIR party won 50 of 81 seats. The closest opposition party was Let's Save Togo, which won 19 seats. During Thursday's elections, the UNIR performed particularly well in the northern region of the country, which is its traditional stronghold. Meanwhile Let's Save Togo is stronger in the south, winning seven of the ten seats in the capital city of Lome. The second-largest opposition group in the elections, the Rainbow coalition, obtained six seats in Parliament. In a statement that was released late on Monday, the party also rejected the results of the polls, alleging that "several serious anomalies and cases of massive fraud" were recorded during the elections. Despite the opposition coalition stating that there were irregularities that occurred during the elections, observers from the African Union (AU) and West African bloc ECOWAS have



stated that the elections were held in acceptable conditions. In turn, the United States Embassy in Togo congratulated the Electoral Commission on Monday on the peaceful outcome of the elections, urging all the political parties to “respect the wish of the Togolese people.” A statement released by the US Embassy stated that “we urge all the political parties to respect the wish of the Togolese people and resolve all differences in a peaceful manner, in conformity with the electoral law.” The Embassy also urged that the new national assembly undertake the strengthening of democracy and to work for a more prosperous future for the Togolese. The long-delayed vote came after months of protests, with the opposition coalition seeking to bring about sweeping electoral reforms. Many of the protests were dispersed by security forces who fired tear gas into the crowds, while some thirty-five people, mostly opposition members, were detained in the run-up to the vote in connection with a number of suspicious fires that had occurred at two major markers. Thirteen opposition members have since been released, including five candidates who participated in Thursday’s polls. Over the coming days, as the results of the elections are either confirmed or denied by the constitutional court, it is highly likely that protests may break out if it is announced that the current President’s party has won a majority of the seats in Parliament.

- **28 July 2013** - ECOWAS has declared Togo’s parliamentary polls credible and transparent. In its preliminary report, the ECOWAS Observer Mission to Thursday’s Parliamentary polls in Togo, which consists of eighty members, indicated that though there were shortcomings, they were not sufficiently significant to mar the credibility of the elections. The report further noted that “consequently, the Mission considers that the 25 July 2013 legislative elections proceeded in acceptable conditions of freedom and transparency.” The Mission has also urged Togo’s Electoral Commission to announce the provisional results within the stipulated time line, and exhorted all stakeholders to refrain from speculating or declaring unofficial results. It has also called on all political parties to respect the process and the rule of law, urging all to resort only to legal means to seek redress of any grievances emanating from the electoral process. The report also indicated that more than three million registered Togolese voted Thursday in order to elect the 91-seat parliament from more than 1,100 candidates of the ruling party, opposition coalitions and fourteen independent candidates.
- **26 July 2013** - On Friday, officials in Togo began to tally up the votes after long-delayed parliamentary elections were held on 25 July. On Thursday, voters had queued up in order to cast their ballots in what officials have indicated were mainly peaceful elections. The head of the African Union’s observer mission, Guinea’s Prime Minister Kabine Komara, has indicated that the election process seemed smooth throughout the early hours of voting. The polls come after months of protests which were backed by the opposition in its bid to weaken the ruling family’s decades-long grip on power. Final results, along with a breakdown of the number of seats won by each party in the proportional electoral system, are not expected for another several days. However the vote is seen as an indication of what will likely happen when presidential elections are held next year, with some experts indicating that yesterday’s elections could expose weaknesses in the grip of the Ganssingbe family which has ruled the country for more than four decades. While the African Union observer mission indicated that the election process seemed smooth, roughly two hours after polling stations were opened on Thursday, the most prominent opposition leader in the West African nation voiced his concerns over some initial issues however he noted that he was confident that the vote would be clear. Jean Pierre Fabre, who is running for a parliamentary seat, indicated that several polling stations had opened after the agreed time of 0700 GMT and that ballot materials had not been delivered on schedule at a number of ballot stations. Crowds of several hundred had built up at some of the polling stations, with some complaining that their names could not be found on the voter lists. The polls mark the latest step in the country’s transition to a democracy after Gnassingbe Eyadema’s rule from 1967 to his death in 2005, when the military installed his son Faure Gnassingbe as president. Since 2005, Faure Gnassingbe has won elections in 2005 and 2010 however the opposition has denounced both winnings as fraudulent. Thursday’s elections are the first legislative polls to occur since 2007, when President Gnassingbe’s party won 50 of the 81

seats. This time, ninety-one seats will be decided. Since 2007, the polls have been rescheduled twice as mediators struggled to bring the government and opposition to an agreement. A total of 1,174 candidates are standing in Thursday's elections, with 159 women among them.



## At Sea

### Hijacks

- None reported during this period.

### Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies

- **24 July 2013** - Report from master of Nigeria-flagged oil product tanker, MT Loulou, that vessel came under attack while in position 04:16.8N - 007:56.1E, Eket offshore anchorage, Nigeria. Exxon Terminal security staff responded to the incident.

## Weather Analysis

- **Gulf of Guinea** - Southwest winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
  - **Extended Forecast** - Southwest winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 8 - 9 feet.
- **Synoptic Discussion** - The Gulf of Guinea is under the influence of high pressure, bringing southerly winds and moisture into the area.

## Piracy News

- **2 August 2013** - Ghana's navy has intercepted a ship and arrested its crew members on suspicion that the vessel had been involved in the hijacking of an oil products tanker off Gabon last month. On July 15, pirates seized the Maltese-flagged MT Cotton tanker along with its 24-crew members near Gabon's Port Gentil, in the first reported attack in that area for five years. The vessel was released the following week. Ghana's deputy Information Minister Felix Kwakye Ofosue has

indicated that the vessel that was intercepted by Ghana's navy, the MT Mustard, was believed to have been used to have been used to siphon about 3,500 tonnes of fuel from the MT Cotton. The vessel later sailed into Ghanaian waters, first docking at the eastern port of Tema before heading for an offshore oil facility off the town of Saltpond. In a statement that was released on Thursday, Mr. Ofori indicated that "the vessel was intercepted off the coast of Saltpond and the crew arrested by the Ghana Navy." He further added that Ghana's Bureau of National Investigations was conducting further investigations into the ship's activities. The Gulf of Guinea region is a major source of oil, cocoa and, increasingly, metals for world markets. International navies are not currently actively engaged in counter-piracy missions in the region, unlike in the waters off Somalia. However regional governments have begun to step up their efforts in order to combat the phenomenon. In June of this year, a number of states signed a code of conduct under which they would arrest and prosecute suspected pirates and seized vessels believed to have been used in piracy.

- **22 July 2013** - Pirates have released a Turkish cargo ship with a crew of twenty-four Indian nationals on board, which was hijacked near the Port Gentil, off the coast of Gabon in West Africa last week. This is the most southerly attack to occur off the coast of West Africa. According to family members, the Indian crew members aboard the MT Cotton are safe and many have called home since their release. It currently remains unclear whether or not a ransom demand was made by the pirates. Officials from Geden Lines, the Turkish company which owns the vessel, confirmed that pirates had left the vessel during the early morning hours on Monday and that the captain has been asked to move the ship at "fullest possible speed" from its present location in the Gulf of Guinea towards a "safe port" in West Africa. The vessel's owners have also indicated that the pirates had also taken away nearly a third of the ship's cargo. Pirates seized the Maltese-flagged tanker on July 15 near Gabon's Port Gentil, in what is the first reported attack in the area in the past five years.



## 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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