



The West Africa Report

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



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- Project Management
 - Interim security
 - Training
 - Special assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis management
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 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
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References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

24 hr Contact Information:

Email: operations@msrisk.com

Telephone: +44 207 754 3555

MS Risk Limited, South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ.

Tel: +44 1624 626400

Directors: S.J. Bingham, V.K. Prentice, P.O.J. Tracy.

Registered in the Isle of Man No 007435V

24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555
www.msrisk.com

The West Africa Report ~ SUMMARY

October 14 – 27, 2013



Follow us on Twitter @ MS Risk_Security for regular updates on topical security events and issues.

West Africa - Regional Reporting

- **25 October 2013** - Leaders of the fifteen-nation West African bloc Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met on Friday for a special summit in Dakar, which will focus on moving the region towards a common market and single currency by 2020.
- **20 October 2013** - West African bloc ECOWAS confirmed on Sunday that it will be holding a special summit in Dakar on 25 October, which will focus on the region's economy along with recent political crises.

Burkina Faso

- **17 October 2013** - On Thursday, the first ladies of Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast signed an agreement aimed at fighting the growing child trafficking trade that is occurring between the two west African countries.

Cameroon

- **17 October 2013** - Official election results indicated on Thursday that Cameroon's President Paul Biya's ruling party, which has been in power for three decades, has kept its grip on a massive parliamentary majority after winning 148 of the 180 seats in recent elections.

Central African Republic

Domestic News

- **19 October 2013** - During a public meeting in the capital of Bangui on Saturday, the CAR's interim president has called on young people throughout the country to not be "manipulated" into taking up arms.

International Developments

- **24 October 2013** - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon requested on Wednesday that 250 troops be deployed to the CAR in order to protect the global body's personnel and facilities.
- **16 October 2013** - On Wednesday, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) denounced what it called the "unprecedented" violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), urging all sides to respect civilian safety and calling for urgent international aid.

Guinea

Domestic News

- **18 October 2013** - On Friday, the electoral commission confirmed that Guinea's ruling party and its allies had won West African nation's legislative elections, prompting the opposition to announce that it would not recognize the official results.
- **17 October 2013** - After nearly three weeks, officials in Guinea have finally released the results of the parliamentary elections.

Liberia

- **15 October 2013** - On Tuesday, ex-President Charles Taylor was transferred under tight security from The Hague to a British prison where he is likely to spend the rest of his life.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **24 October 2013** - On Thursday, France's military confirmed that French, Malian and UN forces had launched a "large-scale" operation in Mali.
- **23 October 2013** - On Wednesday, militants in northern Mali killed at least two Chadian UN peacekeepers and a civilian, as Islamist violence continues to escalate in the troubled West African nation.
- **18 October 2013** - Officials have confirmed that the death toll from last week's river boat sinking has increased from 39 to 72 after more bodies were discovered inside the wreck.
- **14 October 2013** - On Monday, Amadou Sanogo, who led the March 2012 coup, left the army barracks, where he had been living in, and moved into a new residence in the capital.

Regional Reporting

- **23 October 2013** - The President of West African bloc ECOWAS has urged its member states and other countries to send troops in order to aid the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali.

International Developments

- **17 October 2013** - France's Defence Minister indicated on Thursday that his country will maintain 2,000 troops in Mali in order to help secure the November legislative polls before further scaling down its military presence.
 - Meanwhile the head of the EU electoral observer team in Mali has indicated that he hopes next month's parliamentary polls will match the "success" of August's presidential election.

- **16 October 2013** - On Wednesday, the United Nations appealed for more troops for its Mali peacekeeping force, which over the past few weeks, has faced a new surge in militant attacks.

Mauritania

Domestic News

- **21 October 2013** - On Monday, one of Mauritania's main opposition parties announced that it was pulling out of the November 23 elections, despite an earlier pledge to take part.

International Developments

- **17 October 2013** - A new global index released on Thursday by an anti-slavery charity revealed that Mauritania ranks amongst the countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery.

Niger

- **16 October 2013** - According to the United Nations Children Fund, more than 2,500 children under the age of five have died in Niger this year as a result of malnutrition.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **25 October 2013** - Suspected Boko Haram militants engaged with security forces in a lengthy gun battle and raided a hospital in the northern city of Damaturu.
- **22 October 2013** - On Tuesday, Nigeria's military indicated that it had killed thirty-seven suspected Boko Haram fighters during a ground and air assault that was carried out on an insurgent camp located in the northwestern region of the country.
- **20 October 2013** - On Sunday, Boko Haram militants, dressed in military uniform, killed nineteen people near the Nigerian border with Cameroon, where over the past few weeks, the group's militants have carried out a number of deadly attacks.
- **15 October 2013** - Although Nigeria's military stated on Tuesday that it had repelled coordinated attacks by Boko Haram militants over the weekend, killing forty insurgents, few details of the operation have emerged and the account could not be independently verified.
- **14 October 2013** - According to a safety official, at least seven people are dead, and eleven others injured, after a road crash that occurred in northern Nigeria.

Domestic News

- **14 October 2013** - Security forces in Nigeria are on high alert amidst threats of terrorist attacks ahead of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha.

International Developments

- **14 October 2013** - A recent report put together by rights group Amnesty International has called for an urgent investigation, stating that it had evidence that hundreds of people had died in detention facilities during a crackdown on Islamist militants in Nigeria.

About MS Risk

Security Summaries for West African States

Benin - 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.

Burkina Faso - [Click Here](#)

Cameroon - [Click here](#)

Central African Republic - [Click Here](#)

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

Gabon - There is a low threat from terrorism. Crime is increasing in Gabon, particularly in Libreville and Port-Gentil. There have been robberies, armed attacks and rapes. 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 armed robberies of 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 against 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 The Gambia's recent decision to withdraw from the Commonwealth, there has been mounting anti-UK rhetoric by the country's president. This may result in an increase in anti-UK sentiment throughout the country. Consequently MS Risk advises anyone in The Gambia to avoid discussing politically sensitive topics. 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 travellers to avoid all demonstrations.

Ghana - Although there is currently no travel advisory for Ghana, the country has seen an increase in violent robbery in 2013. In May, an expatriate's vehicle was stopped by an armed individual who forced his way into the car demanding money. On being paid, the individual left the vehicle. In a separate incident, an expatriate was robbed of her wallet while attempting to pay a taxi driver. There have also been reports of two Westerners being shot while driving alone at night. In a separate incident, two westerners were robbed at gunpoint while at a restaurant. Both incidents occurred in the Accra Area however there have been reports of robberies in the Tema area which in one case resulted in the death of a Westerner. There have also been reports of foreign nationals being held at gun-point in their homes and while walking in the street. Most armed robberies occur at night however there have been some reports of such incidents occurring during daytime. A common tactic has been to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force the targeted vehicle 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 put in place on the Hohoe community in the Volta region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of the Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering travelling to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of flooding which is common in the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions during the rainy season, which spans from March to November. We advise that you monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

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.

Ivory Coast - [Click Here](#)

Liberia - 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. There have been reports of westerners being robbed at gunpoint on the main road from Abidjan to Yamoussoukro. 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 was a recent banditry attack in the Boufla CI concession by a group of about ten armed men. 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.

Mali - [Click Here](#)

Mauritania - [Click Here](#)

Niger - [Click Here](#)

Nigeria - [Click Here](#)

Senegal - [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. During the rainy season, May to October, roads can become extremely difficult, even for off-road vehicles. On 9 August a bridge in the capital city of Freetown collapse due to a landslide caused by heavy rain. At least six people were killed in the accident. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

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



- **25 October 2013** - Leaders of the fifteen-nation West African bloc Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met on Friday for a special summit in Dakar, which will focus on moving the region towards a common market and single currency by 2020. According to ECOWAS Commission President Kadre Desire Ouedraogo, “we are used to seeing ECOWAS at the forefront of crisis and political issues but we are moving towards...working on building the economies of our countries. The President also noted that political issues would be discussed however he underlined that the meeting was called to “talk about issues of economic integration.” During the summit, the leaders of fifteen nations will discuss a series of recommendations on the creation of a single monetary zone, the establishment of a single customs area within ECOWAS territory and signing off on deals to strengthen trade links with the European Union. One of the key recommendations that will likely be discussed is the establishment of common tariffs across the zone on imports from non-member countries. Founded in 1975, ECOWAS groups around 300 million people in eight French-speaking and five anglophone countries as well as two where Portuguese is the official language. Eight mostly francophone states that make up the West African Economic and Monetary Union, UEMOA, use the CFA franc which is pegged to the euro. The remaining countries, which include English-speaking Nigeria, have their own currencies. West Africa hopes to see a common currency for these seven nations by 2015, with the ultimate goal being merge with the UEMOA states and a single monetary zone within ECOWAS by 2020. While the economy will top the agenda, officials at ECOWAS have indicated that political tension in Mali and Guinea-Bissau, along with the threat of a post-electoral crisis in Guinea, will also be discussed during the summit. Leaders at the summit are likely to call for calm in Guinea, where the opposition has stated that it will take its claims of election fraud to the country’s Supreme Court. Guinea-Bissau is another source of concern for ECOWAS as the country’s interim regime is due to hold presidential and parliamentary elections on November 24. The regional bloc will also consider contributing more troops to the UN mission in Mali, MINUSMA, following a recent surge of attack by Islamist militants.
- **20 October 2013** - West African bloc ECOWAS confirmed on Sunday that it will be holding a special summit in Dakar on 25 October, which will focus on the region’s economy along with recent political crises. According to officials as the fifteen-nation Economic Community of West African States, the economy will be at the top of the agenda however the current situations in Guinea-Bissau and Mali, along with the threat of post-electoral crises in Guinea. During the summit, the regional bloc will also consider contributing more troops to the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) following an increase in Islamist attacks. Guinea-Bissau, where ECOWAS also has troops, is another source of concern for West African leaders. After a military coup in 2012, an interim government is due to hold presidential and parliamentary elections on November 24. Meanwhile leaders at the summit will also call for calm in Guinea, where the opposition has indicated that it will take its claims of election fraud to the country’s Supreme Court.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



Burkina Faso

Security Summary

Any body traveling to, or residing in, Burkina Faso is urged to maintain a high level of security awareness at all times

Threats and Concerns

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



Kidnapping Threats

There is a heightened risk that terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Unity and

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

There is also a high risk of armed groups stopping vehicles (including public buses to rob them. Such incidents have occurred in various parts of the country, particularly at night. Therefore, all travel between towns by road at

night is to be avoided, especially from Ouagadougou to Po where there is a heightened risk. This is especially severe on market days when bandits often target merchants with stock or cash en route to and from the urban areas.

MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:

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

There is an increased Burkinabe military presence in the north of the country and companies should review their respective security situations and consider the following:

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

Companies relying on police escorts in the northern region of the country should ensure that travel patterns do not become predictable. Varying routes is difficult due to the limited road networks; therefore, it is even more important to vary the types of vehicles used as well as the times of the journeys and to avoid travel patterns becoming widely known. This is especially critical given the current tensions along the Mali border and the impending ECOWAS operations. All companies linked to the World Bank/International Finance Cooperation should familiarise themselves with the IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Security Forces. This applies to military, police or private security services.

Finally, unconfirmed reports suggest there is an elevated banditry threat on the main routes south and east of the town of Fada N'Gourma en route to Pama and Diapala respectively. Road moves to these areas should be risk assessed and liaison with police should occur until the nature of the threats has been clarified. Companies with operations in the region are invited to report incidents to MS Risk to aid in assessing local conditions. Liaising with insurers to ensure appropriate cover is in place to meet special risks where needed is also strongly advised.

Regional Reporting

- **17 October 2013** - On Thursday, the first ladies of Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast signed an agreement aimed at fighting the growing child trafficking trade that is occurring between the two west African countries. The two countries signed an accord to “elaborate and put in place plans of action, programmes and regional projects to fight against child trafficking.” During a press conference shortly after the agreement was signed, Burkinabe first lady Chantal Compaore stated that the number of children who had fallen prey to this trafficking had tripled in the past three years from 588 in 2010 to 1895 in 2012. She added that “despite prevention measures, hundreds of children are still being trafficked between our two countries. Burkina Faso’s child services are

constantly called upon for the repatriation of victims of this trafficking.” Her Ivorian counterpart, Dominique Ouattara, cited a 2011 study, stating that thirty-nine percent of Ivorian children between the ages of five and fourteen worked in their country, which has often come under fire from NGO’s for its child labour. The Ivory Coast, which is the world’s largest cocoa producer, is also a large centre for regional child trafficking, where children from neighboring countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso, end up working in the country’s plantations.



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

Security Summary

The killing of a Cameroonian police officer on 19 August has prompted officials in Cameroon to close its border with the Central African Republic (CAR). The death of the officer occurred after a number of Seleka fighters crossed over the border into Cameroon, where they were stopped by officers patrolling the border region. Despite being escorted over the border, the fighters returned and attacked the police. It is currently not known how long the border will be closed. Consequently MS Risk advises against all travel to the border regions with the CAR as it is highly likely that militant groups and pro-Seleka fighters may be patrolling the areas and may at times attempt to cross into Cameroon.

Legislative and municipal elections took place on 30 September 2013. Although the election results have not yet been released, it is possible that protests may occur if fraud allegations by the opposition are announced. Such protests may turn violent with minimal warning. Consequently MS Risk advises any travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to avoid large crowds, political demonstrations and rallies.

On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamwa, Borno and Yobe. Both Adamawa and Borno border Cameroon's far North, North and Adamaoua provinces. It is possible that military operations there might have an impact across the border in Cameroon.



MS RISK advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Boubia Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroua in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country.

Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.

Domestic News

- **17 October 2013** - Official election results indicated on Thursday that Cameroon's President Paul Biya's ruling party, which has been in power for three decades, has kept its grip on a massive parliamentary majority after winning 148 of the 180 seats in recent elections. While President Biya's Cameroonian People's Democratic Movement (RDPC) won the elections, the party lost five lawmakers compared to the 153 seats it had previously held. The Social Democratic Front (SDP) remains the main opposition party after winning eighteen seats in the September 30 elections, two more than it had previously held. President Biya, 80, has ruled Cameroon since 1982. Since then, he has taken steps to prolong his time in office while his party has often been accused by the opposition of electoral fraud and using state funds to finance election campaigns. Although more than forty submissions were made to the Supreme Court, seeking the partial annulment of the vote, none of them were successful.

Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country

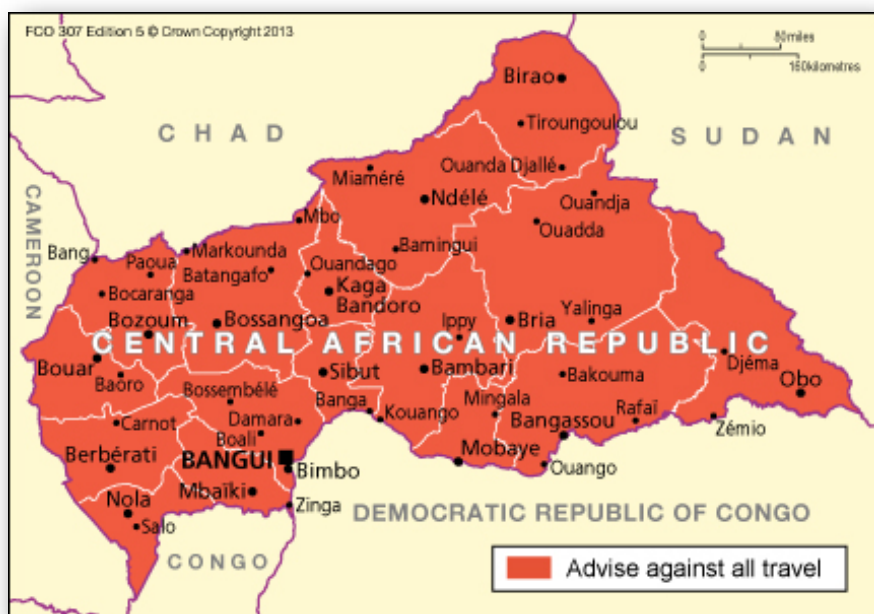


Central African
Republic

Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). The armed rebel coalition Seleka has renewed its offensive against President Francois Bozize's government and has taken control of the capital, Bangui. With Michel Djotodia officially sworn into office on August 18, security

throughout the country has continued to deteriorate. Reports of rebel activity, banditry and hostage-taking have occurred across the region. In the capital, Bangui, the security situation also remains fragile with reports of continued looting and gunfire. There is currently a curfew in place from midnight to 4AM. It is therefore advised that you should avoid being on the streets during this period. At other times, MS Risk advises that you should take extreme caution and travel in groups whenever 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.

Domestic News

- **19 October 2013** - During a public meeting in the capital of Bangui on Saturday, the CAR's interim president has called on young people throughout the country to not be "manipulated" into taking up arms. President Michel Djotodia, the former leader of the now disbanded Seleka rebel group, added that security and stability were "vital" for the country's future, stating that "I want young people...to say no to manipulation, of trying to pit some against others, the result being that young people take up guns, machetes and clubs to put the lives of their fellow men in danger." The interim leader added that "we refuse to allow our youth to be used. It is them who pay the heaviest price." During the public meeting, President Djotodia also indicated that he wanted traditional leaders to lead the country out of a spiral of violence, adding that "for the re-establishment of the state and the organization of future elections, security and stability are vital." Despite the Seleka rebel group being disbanded, a new wave of attacks and summary executions perpetrated by rebels and government forces in the country's northwestern region have continued to destabilize the country and have demonstrated that the interim government has minimal grip on the situation. Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has denounced the "unprecedented" violence that occurred throughout the country this week as former Seleka commanders have attempted to gain control of regions across the country by terrorizing the local population.

International Developments

- **24 October 2013** - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon requested on Wednesday that 250 troops be deployed to the CAR in order to protect the global body's personnel and facilities. In a letter that was addressed to the UN Security Council, Mr. Ban proposed the establishment of a "guard unit" that will protect the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA). In it, the proposed unit would initially be composed of 250 military personnel, who would be deployed in Bangui, and during "...a second phase, increase it strength to a battalion of 560 military personnel, with its own enablers, in order to progressively deploy to locations outside Bangui where the UN has a presence." "Given the urgency of the situation," Mr. Ban proposed redeploying UN peacekeeper who are currently working on another unnamed mission. Provision for a protection unit were included in a UN Security Council resolution that was adopted on 8 October 2013, and which left Mr. Ban to draw up details of the composition and remit of the peacekeeping team.
- **16 October 2013** - On Wednesday, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) denounced what it called the "unprecedented" violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), urging all sides to respect civilian safety and calling for urgent international aid. In a report released by the MSF, officials at the NGO stated that "tens of thousands of villagers have fled a fresh wave of attacks, summary executions, perpetrated both by armed groups and government forces in the northwest of the country. The report further added that people were taking refugee in the bush, without protection, noting that as a result, civilians were particularly exposed to the dangers of malaria, which is the biggest cause of death in the country. According to Ellen Van der Velden, head of the MSF mission in the CAR, hygiene conditions are "disastrous" with so many families living together. The Geneva-based group also noted that "MSF is today one of the only NGO's working in the conflict zones. It provides medical and surgical help, access to drinking water and hygiene as well as nutritional help. But greater aid is needed." According to MSF official Dr. Andre Munger, other humanitarian groups have left the country or suffered from robberies and now need to "re-equip and find sufficient funding." Last month, the UN's children's agency decried the total lawlessness in the country, adding that it has "spelt disaster for children."



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

The results of the 28 September legislative elections have been released. Consequently, the political situation within the country remains tense and protests may occur as the official results are announced. Such protests and riots may turn violent and it is likely that the capital city and other regions throughout Guinea will be affected by such protests over the coming weeks. There is currently a low threat from terrorism. Nearly 100 people were reported to have been killed in July in an outbreak of ethnic violence in the "Guinea Forestiere" region in the far south-east of Guinea. A large number of injuries were also reported and properties destroyed. Areas of Guinea that border Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, the Ivory coast, Liberia and Sierra Leone are often tense and have an increased military presence. Therefore, MS Risk advises against all travel to the regions bordering the countries listed above. There have been regular reports of robberies on the routes Mamou, Faranah, Kissidougou, Guekedou, Macent and Nzerekore. MS Risk advises all travellers on these routes to remain vigilant and to avoid travel after dark. Official and unofficial checkpoints may be set up along these routes. Vehicles and passengers are submitted to checks on documentation and baggage. It is advised that you approach such checkpoints with caution as corruption and extortion are common at roadblocks. Occasionally, checkpoints can be a pretext for armed robbery. Road travel is hazardous during the rainy season which occurs from May to October. Torrential rains can cause floods and landslides. MS Risk advises you to monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Domestic News

- 18 October 2013** - On Friday, the electoral commission confirmed that Guinea's ruling party and its allies had won West African nation's legislative elections, prompting the opposition to announce that it would not recognize the official results. In a statement released by the electoral commission, the Rally of the Guinea People (RPG) party, which is headed by Alpha Conde, has obtained 53 out of the 114 seats in the national assembly while its small party allies attained seven seats. However the opposition parties, which won a total of 37 seats in the September 28 polls, have indicated that the results which gave victory to the RPG are "unrealistic" and that they "...will not recognize the results which are not in keeping with the people's vote."
- 17 October 2013** - After nearly three weeks, officials in Guinea have finally released the results of the parliamentary elections. In an announcement on state radio late Thursday, election authorities stated that the President's ruling party was ahead in the Matoto district, which is the West African country's largest district. According to officials, more than 103,000 votes were cast for the ruling party while two opposition parties attained nearly 71,000 votes and more than 53,000 votes respectively. Officials also indicated that the delayed results from Matoto have held up the announcement of preliminary national results. The elections, which were held on 28 September, are Guinea's first in a decade and have resulted in rising fears that the results of the elections will reignite violence throughout the country.

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



Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of Liberia, specifically those regions of the country that border with the Ivory Coast. 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 (including Sinkor beach in broad daylight) where most international visitors stay. The roads from Monrovia to Roberts International Airport, the port town of Buchanan and to the border with Sierra Leone at Bo Waterside, and to the border with Guinea at Ganta, are mainly paved and in reasonable condition. Most other roads outside Monrovia are unpaved. Driving and road conditions will significantly deteriorate during the rainy season, which occurs from May to November. Many roads during this time become impassable. MS Risk advises against all travel at night outside of Monrovia, except to or from Roberts International Airport. This is because roads are treacherous and all the roads are unlit. Furthermore, vehicles often do not have any lights. As a result, travellers after dark are more vulnerable to being robbed at an illegal barricade. Liberia has become increasingly stable since the internal conflict ended in 2003. However the security situation remains fragile. 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. UNMIL peacekeepers are deployed to the main population centers around Liberia, and patrol the main roads.



International Developments

- **15 October 2013** - On Tuesday, ex-President Charles Taylor was transferred under tight security from The Hague to a British prison where he is likely to spend the rest of his life. A statement, which was released by the UN's Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) indicated that "Charles Ghankay Taylor...was transferred today from the Netherlands and the custody of the Special Court to the United Kingdom, where he will serve the remainder of his 50-year sentence." According to the court, a chartered plane flew Taylor, who was accompanied by guards, to Britain where he arrived at 1000 GMT and "was handed over to representatives of Her Majesty's Prison Service." Although a justice ministry official in London declined to confirm that Taylor was in Britain, or say in which prison he would serve his time, stating only that "we do not comment on individual cases," officials in London did indicate last week that Taylor would serve out the rest of his sentence in a British jail, according to the confidential deal that was made in 2007 shortly after his arrest. Although for now, Taylor will remain in a British prison, court authorities have indicated that they are ready to consider a request by Taylor to be transferred to a prison in Rwanda. He had previously had asked to serve his sentence out in Rwanda in order to be closer to his family. Taylor's historic sentence pertaining to eleven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity was the first to be handed down by an international court against a former head of state since the 1945 Nazi trials in Nuremberg.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to Bamako. We also advise against all travel to the rest of Mali, especially to the northern regions of the country. Although Bamako is generally calm, the situation throughout the rest of the country is still volatile. Presidential elections were held on July 28 and August 11, and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and his new government took office in September 2013. Legislative elections are expected to take place in November and December 2013. If you are in Bamako, MS Risk advises you to maintain a high level of vigilance, to keep a low profile and to stay alert to the local political developments. We also advise that you avoid sensitive areas, including

military installations and large gatherings of people. Night time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako, largely controlling access to military and government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn.

During the rainy season, which runs from May until October, torrential rains can cause floods and landslides, and may result in houses collapsing. In late August, there were reports of flash flooding that occurred in Bamako. The neighborhoods of Bankoni, Taliko, Lafiabougou, Djicoroni, Woyowayanko,



Lafiabougou Bougouba and Bougoudani were all hit by floods during the rains storms which lasted most of the day. MS Risk advises anyone in the capital city to monitor the local weather reports and to expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Terrorism

There still remains a high threat from terrorism in Mali. 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 country, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

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

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

Local Travel

Although the 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 operate in 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

On The Ground Reporting

- **24 October 2013** - On Thursday, France's military confirmed that French, Malian and UN forces had launched a "large-scale" operation in Mali. According to spokesman Col. Gilles Jaron, several hundred French soldiers are involved in the mission, which will focus on the northern regions of the country and which is aimed at preventing a resurgence of "terrorist movements." The operation, known as "hydra," is "the first time we have seen forces of significant size working together" in Mali,

adding that its goal is to “put pressure on any terrorist movement to avoid their resurgence.” Reports have indicated that about 1,500 troops will be involved in the operation, including some 600 French, 600 Malian and 300 UN soldiers. While the colonel has stressed that the mission was not linked to any recent attacks, the launch of the operation does come one day after a suicide bomb attack on a UN Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) base located in Tessalit. The attack killed one civilian and two Chadian peacekeepers. The Malian leader of a splinter group of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Sultan Ould Bady, has indicated that the attack on the base was carried out because the Chadians were “working for France.” In the wake of the most recent attack that has affected the northern region of the country, the UN Security Council has stressed that those responsible will be held accountable.

- **23 October 2013** - On Wednesday, militants in northern Mali killed at least two Chadian UN peacekeepers and a civilian, as Islamist violence continues to escalate in the troubled West African nation. The ambush on a United Nations checkpoint follows an urgent request by the organization for more troops as its peacekeeping force faces an increase in rocket attacks and bombings by militants ahead of next month's nationwide elections. According to a Malian army source, “jihadists attacked the positions of the Chadian army in Tessalit with heavy arms and car bombs. Two Chadian troops have been killed. The four suicide bombers were also killed on the spot and a civilian also died. The Malian army sources added that the militants retreated in an exchange of gunfire with soldiers in the village. The UN outpost is a remote but strategically important one, and is located some 200 kilometers (125 miles) north of the rebel stronghold of Kidal. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has condemned the attack. A statement released by Mr. Ban's spokesman indicated that “this attack will not deter the determination of the United Nations to support the restoration of security, stability and sustainable peace in Mali.” Just hours before the attack in Tessalit, the president of the West African bloc ECOWAS had urged member states, along with other countries, to send more troops in order to bolster the peacekeeping mission in Mali. Speaking two days ahead of a summit in Dakar, which is set to focus on the region's economy and recent political crises, Kadre Desire Ouedraogo called for a positive response to an appeal by the United Nations last week which called for troop reinforcements and much-needed equipment. So far, no group has claimed responsibility for the attack, which is the first to occur against troops since al-Qaeda splinter group MUJAO blew up a bridge near Gao on 8 October 2013. In recent weeks, the northern region of Mali has seen a surge in attacks on troops that are stationed there. On 7 October, a Malian soldier died after being wounded in an attack by the group. In late September, a suicide bombing in Timbuktu, which was claimed by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), killed two civilians and four bombers, as well as wounding seven Malian soldiers.
- **18 October 2013** - Officials have confirmed that the death toll from last week's river boat sinking has increased from 39 to 72 after more bodies were discovered inside the wreck. During a press conference, that was attended by several other government members, Security Minister General Sade Samake indicated that “there are now 72 dead, 11 lightly injured and 210 survivors.” The accident involved a large dugout boat, which at the time was carrying scores of people and a large amount of merchandise. It broke up on the Niger river, near Koubi, which lies around 70 kilometers (40 miles) north of the central city of Mopti. Although accidents involving rudimentary canoes occur frequently, this latest disaster took place over night and according to authorities is the deadliest ever recorded in Mali. Furthermore while such boats are the main means of transport for residents of Mali's central and northern regions, who travel to the towns located along the Niger river, they are typically not properly equipped with life vests, fire extinguishers and lights for nighttime navigation.
- **14 October 2013** - On Monday, Amadou Sanogo, who led the March 2012 coup, left the army barracks, where he had been living in, and moved into a new residence in the capital. According to a defence ministry official, “it was necessary for the country's peace of mind that he leave Kati,” a garrison town located north of Bamako where his headquarters were located. The official added that Sanogo will “not be going back up there any time soon, we will not let that happen.” Sanogo, who was promoted from the rank of captain to four-star general in August, shortly after the

presidential elections, left Kati on Sunday. He was escorted in a six-vehicle convoy. Officials have indicated that the Malian army has since taken control of the headquarters that Sanogo had been using, along with his military equipment. The decision to move Sanogo to Bamako is likely the result of a mutiny that occurred in Kati earlier this month, when ex-junta members requested promotions similar to what Sanogo had received. With fears that another coup may occur, the Malian army was forced to intervene, resulting in the arrests of around twenty officers, including Sanogo's former deputy. Shortly after the mutiny, Mali's newly elected President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita vowed that Bamako was "no longer going to live in fear of Kati." On 22 March 2012, Sanogo led a group of fellow mid-level officers and overthrew then-president Amadou Toumani Toure. The coup precipitated the fall of northern Mali to al-Qaeda-linked militants however France's military intervention in January has resulted in the removal of the rebels from their former strongholds in the region's main cities. Months after the coup, Sanogo and his former junta were granted a general amnesty in May, with Sanogo receiving the status of former head of state, along with all the accompanying benefits. Although a month later his status was withdrawn, Sanogo was appointed as head of a committee on army reform, a post that was created for him as an incentive to accept the transitional government. Earlier this month, President Keita dissolved the army reform committee. While Human Rights Watch (HRW) described Sanogo's promotion to general as a "shameful act," arguing that the former captain should have been investigated for an alleged involvement in torture, officials in Mali indicated at the time that his promotion was a bid to force him into retirement.

Regional Reporting

- **23 October 2013** - The President of West African bloc ECOWAS has urged its member states and other countries to send troops in order to aid the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali. The call for more troops, aid and equipment comes at a time when a surge in Islamist attacks has rocked the northern region of the country. Speaking two days ahead of a summit in Dakar, which will focus on the region's economy and recent political crises, ECOWAS President Kadre Desire Ouedraogo called for a positive response to the United Nation's appeal last week for troop reinforcements and much-needed equipment. During his speech, President Ouedraogo recognized that troops from ECOWAS nations, and Chad, had already been in Mali for nine months, first as part of the AFISMA African force and now as part of the ongoing peacekeeping mission. Last week UN special representative to Mali Bert Koenders stated that recent attacks in the north of the country had been "an important wake-up call" over security, adding that the international force needs helicopters and troops as it builds up to replace the French force which is set to withdraw sometime early next year.

International Developments

- **17 October 2013** - France's Defence Minister indicated on Thursday that his country will maintain 2,000 troops in Mali in order to help secure the November legislative polls before further scaling down its military presence. Speaking to reporters in Paris, Jean-Yves Le Drian indicated that "we're going to keep a little more than 2,000 men until the end of the year," adding that "there no longer is a war, what we're doing now is counter-terrorism." France currently has 3,000 troops left on the ground in Mali and it aims to scale down its presence to 1,000 troops by the end of January 2014. Although initially, officials in France had indicated that they would decrease their troops numbers to 1,000 by the end of this year, recent heightened tensions, coupled with a rise in attacks in northern Mali, have forced France to maintain its troops in a bid to contain the situation. Mali's first parliamentary polls are due to begin on November 24, with a second round scheduled for December 15. France deployed its air force and sent combat until in January of this year in order to help Mali's government gain back the northern territories of the country which were being controlled

by al-Qaeda-linked Islamist groups. Since then, French forces have helped Malian authorities in reclaiming control of the main cities however al-Qaeda militants, and its offshoots remain a threat in the region and have launched sporadic attacks from their desert and mountain hideouts. At the peak of France's Operation Serval, the country had 4,5000 troops in Mali. A UN Stabilization force, which is meant to eventually reach 12,640 troops and police, is currently in the process of taking over security control from France.

- Meanwhile the head of the EU electoral observer team in Mali has indicated that he hopes next month's parliamentary polls will match the "success" of August's presidential election. On November 24, Mali is set to hold its first parliamentary elections since a military coup last year led to a sweeping Islamist occupation of the northern region of the country. The European Union's Louis Michel has stated that he hopes the legislative elections will "confirm the irrefutable success of the presidential election," citing strong voter turnout and the "quality of voting operations." Ahead of the upcoming elections, the EU has recommended a number of improvement relating to voting conditions for some 500,000 displaced people and refugees who fled in 2012. Around 100 EU observers will monitor the elections, the same number as for the presidential poll.
- **16 October 2013** - On Wednesday, the United Nations appealed for more troops for its Mali peacekeeping force, which over the past few weeks, has faced a new surge in militant attacks. In a report on the work of the UN's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), presented to the UN Security Council by UN special representative to Mali, Bert Koenders, recent attacks in the north of the country have been "an important wake-up call" over security. Koenders further stated that as the international force builds up in order to replace French forces, it will require more helicopters and troops, noting that "troop generation will have to accelerate." As such, UN members must "do their utmost to enable the rapid deployment of additional enablers and battalions to Mali in order for MINUSMA to effectively and timely discharge its mandate." In closed consultations on the new troubles that have emerged in Mali, French diplomats backed the UN's call for extra support, stating that there had to be increased security vigilance around legislative elections to be held in November." MINUSMA will eventually reach 12,640 troops and police. Although at the end of July, the UN peacekeeping mission had just over 6,000 troops, since then forces from Nigeria and Chad have withdrawn. The call for more troops for MINUSMA comes after weeks of increased tensions in Mali. Although a presidential election was held in July of this year, which was due to a signed peace agreement between Tuareg groups and the Malian interim government, militant attacks have resumed in northern Mali where the extremist groups are based. On 28 September, a suicide bomb attack was carried out in Timbuktu while shells were fired in Gao on 7 October. Tensions within the army have also resurfaced, and may further destabilize the already fragile security situation.

Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country

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



Mauritania

Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the provinces of Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, Tagant, Hodh el Chargui, Dakhlet-Nouadhibou and Inchiri. We also advise against all travel to the northern and eastern regions of the country, especially the desert areas north of Oualata-Tichit-Ouadane-Zouerat line, as well as the border areas with Algeria, Mali and Morocco. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the rest of the country, which includes travel along the Nouakchott-Nouadhibou corridor which comprises of the north-south arterial road that runs between these two cities and which passes through Nouamghar. 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.

On 22 August, officials in Mauritania announced that they have postponed the October 12 elections by six weeks after a coalition of opposition parties indicated that it would boycott the polls in an attempt to cause the vote to fail. The country's election commission has since indicated that the first round of parliamentary and local elections will occur on November 23 while the second round, if necessary, will occur on December 7. With opposition parties threatening to boycott these elections, demonstrations may be held in a number of locations across the country, including Nouakchott. Although demonstrations have generally been peaceful, some have involved clashes with police. Consequently, MS Risk advises you to avoid political gatherings and demonstrations.

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. Attacks could be indiscriminate and by occur in places that are frequented by foreigners. 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

- **21 October 2013** - On Monday, one of Mauritania's main opposition parties announced that it was pulling out of the November 23 elections, despite an earlier pledge to take part. According to officials, the left-leaning Union of the Forces of Progress (UFP), which is part of the coalition of opposition parties, has indicated that the boycott would thwart the "sham elections" that are being planned by President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. The move signifies that of the eleven parties that make up the Coordination of Democratic Opposition, only the Islamist group, Tewassoul, has agreed to take part in the upcoming polls, noting that its participation would be a "form of struggle against the dictatorship." The latest issue to hit the upcoming elections comes after officials in the country have already postponed the parliamentary and local elections, which had initially been planned for October. They were later postponed after the coalition stated that it would "boycott this electoral masquerade" in a bid to cause the vote to fail.

International Developments

- **17 October 2013** - A new global index released on Thursday by an anti-slavery charity revealed that Mauritania ranks amongst the countries with the highest prevalence of modern slavery. The "Global Slavery Index" report, which was put together by the Walk Free Foundation, ranked 162 countries by estimating the number of people in each nation affected by a range of practices, including forced and bonded labor, human trafficking, forced marriages and the use of children in the military. Using reports from governments and non-profit organizations, as well as statistical estimates, the charity indicated that Mauritania has the highest proportion of people in slavery, with

many people inheriting slave status from their ancestors. According to the report, about 140,000 to 160,000 people are enslaved in the West African nation, which has a population of 3.8 million.



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

Security Summary

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 Tillabéri 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 , 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 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 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 thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises avoiding crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

International Developments

- **16 October 2013** - According to the United Nations Children Fund, more than 2,500 children under the age of five have died in Niger this year as a result of malnutrition. While the child mortality rate has declined over recent years, it still stands as one percent, with officials at UNICEF stating that the impoverished West African nation was one of the world's most aid-reliant countries. According to Guido Cornale, the UNICEF representative in Niger, "without international aid in Niger, we would see children dying by their tens of thousands" each year. According to an expert, "it is undeniable that the government is trying to combat malnutrition....But the level of...dependence is alarming." Niger, which has been hit by several famines in recent years, and in 2012 was ranked last on the UN's Human Development Index, has since 2010 received close to US \$900 million in order to combat food crisis. However the food problem in Niger is compounded by its location between the desert and several strife-torn countries. In turn, the world's highest fertility rate also means that Niger's populations doubles every eighteen years.

Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country

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



Nigeria

Security Summary

Summary

There have been reports of a security incident involving gunfire that occurred in the Apo district of the capital city of Abuja on the morning of 20 September 2013. The incident may have involved suspected Boko Haram militants. Consequently any travellers in the capital city are reminded to remain vigilant at all times as further attacks may occur with minimal warning.



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 The Ground Reporting

- **25 October 2013** - Suspected Boko Haram militants engaged with security forces in a lengthy gun battle and raided a hospital in the northern city of Damaturu. On Thursday, gunfire rocked the city for some seven hours after a group of about twenty gunmen, some in uniform, targeted the city and raided the hospital. Clashes between militants and security forces spread to other parts of the city, with a number of on the grounds sources reporting that the military was slow to respond. Authorities have since imposed a 24-hour curfew. By Friday, the streets in the city were deserted. Damaturu is the main city located in the state of Yobe, which lies to the west of Borno. Over the past year, the city has seen calm, mainly due to the large military presence. According to residents, the gun battle was a "big, audacious attack," with assailants later stealing drugs from the hospital and driving off in ambulances.
 - Meanwhile the Nigerian military has reported that at least seventy-four suspected Boko Haram militants were killed in a raid that was carried out in Borno state. According to army spokesman Lt. Mohammed Dole, the military raid in Borno state involved "ground and aerial assault," and "led to the destruction of the identified terrorist camp." Lt. Dole further noted that the latest raid had been carried out on Thursday, and that two Nigerian soldiers had been wounded.
- **22 October 2013** - On Tuesday, Nigeria's military indicated that it had killed thirty-seven suspected Boko Haram fighters during a ground and air assault that was carried out on an insurgent camp located in the northwestern region of the country. According to military spokesman Aliyu Danja, the military attacked a suspected Boko Haram camp in Borno state. During the operation, which commenced on Monday, army forces recovered arms and ammunition and destroyed a number of vehicles and motorcycles that belonged to the suspected militants. While the spokesman did indicate that "...a total of 37 suspected Boko Haram militants were killed in a cross fire exchange," these accounts could not be independently verified. The assault on the suspected Boko Haram camps comes just days after the terrorist group's militants, disguised in military uniform, killed nineteen people near the the Nigerian border with Cameroon on Sunday. It also comes a week after the military stated that it had repelled coordinated attacks by Boko Haram Islamists, killing forty insurgents. While the Nigerian military has continually stated that the military campaign against Boko Haram, which was launched in May of this year, has been a success, the militant group has continued to carry out attacks throughout northern Nigeria.
- **20 October 2013** - On Sunday, Boko Haram militants, dressed in military uniform, killed nineteen people near the Nigerian border with Cameroon, where over the past few weeks, the group's militants have carried out a number of deadly attacks. According to local residents and survivors of the attack, the gunmen arrived on motorcycles and blocked the highway near the town of Logumani, which is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) from the border. They then proceeded to shoot and hack to death nineteen motorists and burnt three trucks. According to Musa Abur, leader of a civilian vigilante group in the area, "we have recovered 19 dead bodies from the scene of the attack

by Boko Haram gunmen,” adding that “five of the victims, who included two truck drivers and their assistants, were shot dead while the rest were slaughtered.” A passenger who survived the attack also gave a similar account, stating that “we were asked to get out of our vehicles and lie face down by nine men dressed as soldiers who blocked the road around 5:00 AM,” further stating that “they shot dead five people and went about slaughtering 14 others before someone called them on the phone that soldiers were heading their way.” The victim, who was shot in the leg, also indicated that “they abandoned the rest of us and sped into the bush on their motorcycles.” Mr. Abur also noted that gunmen had previously attacked the border town of Gamboru Ngala, located near Logumani, late on Friday, however they were repelled by soldiers and local vigilante groups. Although military authorities in the region have yet to comment on the latest attack, this incident appears to bare the hallmarks of previous attacks that have been carried out by Boko Haram militants.

- **15 October 2013** - Although Nigeria’s military stated on Tuesday that it had repelled coordinated attacks by Boko Haram militants over the weekend, killing forty insurgents, few details of the operation have emerged and the account could not be independently verified. According to a statement issued by the military, Islamist fighters “of unknown strength attempted coordinated and simultaneous attacks” on Sunday in three remote towns in northeastern Borno state. The statement, which was issued from the army’s 7 Division, based in the northeast, further noted that troops “successfully repelled all the attacks, killing 40 terrorists...” in the towns of Bama, Gwoza and Pulka. In mid-May of this year, officials in Nigeria launched a major offensive in the northeastern region of the country, aimed at ending Boko haram’s four-year insurgency. Although military officials have described the campaign as a success, and have released details of operations that have purportedly killed hundreds of insurgents, including several top Boko Haram commanders, the military’s accounts of clashes have been difficult to verify. With the mobile phone network being switched off in much of the northeast since the operation began, a tactic the military has stated would block Boko Haram militants from coordinating attacks, witnesses and local officials have been largely unreachable. Furthermore, violent attacks and bombings have continued to be carried out, resulting in large numbers of defenceless civilians, including more than 100 students, being killed since July. After the most recent student massacre on 29 September in the northeastern state of Yobe, President Goodluck Jonathan called for a review of the military campaign, and has ordered that new strategies be developed in order to curb the rising violence.
- **14 October 2013** - According to a safety official, at least seven people are dead, and eleven others injured, after a road crash that occurred in northern Nigeria. According to Mike Olagunji, sector commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) in Nigeria, an eighteen-seat Mazda bus and fuel tanker collided at Dogon Hauwa village, which is located 14 kilometers (8 miles) away from Birnin Gwari local government area in the state of Kaduna. The sector commander further added that five of the victims were burnt beyond recognition, with two others dead from the injuries they had sustained in the crash. Those injured were rushed to a nearby health facility run by the state. The road safety chief attributed the accident to high speed, noting that the bus hit the tanker when the driver lost control trying to avoid a pot hole.

Domestic News

- **14 October 2013** - Security forces in Nigeria are on high alert amidst threats of terrorist attacks ahead of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. Residents in the northern regions of the country have received warnings, indicating them to stay home, as security forces prepare for a possible wave of attacks by Boko Haram militants. Last week, Boko Haram indicated that it was planning “big attacks.” Although the date and place of the attacks remain unknown, security officials throughout the country are preparing as the attacks will likely occur ahead of the upcoming holiday. In a statement published on Monday, police chief Mohammed Abubakar stated that extra police officers are being deployed around malls, bus stations, churches and mosques.

International Developments

- 14 October 2013** - A recent report put together by rights group Amnesty International has called for an urgent investigation, stating that it had evidence that hundreds of people had died in detention facilities during a crackdown on Islamist militants in Nigeria. On Monday, the rights group indicated that prisoners had been suffocated, starved and subjected to extra-judicial killings in the army-led operation which is focusing on ending a four-year insurgency led by Boko Haram militants in the country's northeastern region. Officials at Amnesty International have indicated that a senior Nigerian officer had told the NGO that around 950 people, who had been suspected of having links to Boko Haram, died in custody during the first half of this year. In the report, Amnesty International called for an immediate probe into the case, however experts have warned that their demands will likely not go ahead. Furthermore while the Nigerian army did formally respond to Amnesty International's report, it has rejected the accusations of human rights abuses.



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

Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Senegal, MS Risk advises avoiding 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 Skirring (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. Severe water shortages in Dakar have led to a number of demonstrations in the suburbs. Youths have blocked some roads with burning tyres and have clashed with police. MS Risk advises travellers to avoid all demonstrations and to leave any affected areas at the first sign that unrest may develop. 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

- 17 October 2013** - A court in Senegal has extended the pre-trial detention of the former president's son Karim Wade, who in April of this year was charged with illegally amassing a fortune of over US

\$1 billion. According to Mr. Wade's lawyer, when his client appeared before a Dakar court on Tuesday, a new accusation was added to his charge sheet. El Hadjii Sall has called the move an excuse to remand his client in custody beyond the legal limit, insisting that his client should have been freed. The new charge relates to an unexplained sum of 98.6 billion CFA francs (US \$205 million) which prosecutors say was deposited into a number of bank accounts in Monaco by Mr. Wade. His new detention period can last for another six months. Under Senegalese law, investigators had a maximum period of six months to investigate Mr. Wade before either sending him to trial or dismissing the case. Mr. Wade was initially jailed in April on charges of corruption stemming from an accumulation of a vast fortune valued at more than US \$1 billion. Mr. Wade, who is alleged to own a number of foreign companies, has denied any wrongdoing, stating that his wealth was acquired legitimately.