



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

September 16 – 29, 2013



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

Benin

- **18 September 2013** - A court in France is due to consider a request to extradite a Beninese businessman who has been accused of plotting to poison President Thomas Boni Yayi.

Burkina Faso

- **25 September 2013** - In the wake of the deadly Nairobi shopping mall attack, Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore urged African states on Wednesday to improve their cooperation in fighting extremist militants.

Cameroon

- **19 September 2013** - According to a source within the security forces, police in Cameroon have arrested a rebel leader, Abdoulaye Miskine, from neighboring Central African Republic (CAR) on suspicions that he may launch cross-border raids.

Central African Republic

Regional Reporting

- **19 September 2013** - According to aides of French President Francois Hollande, Hollande is due to hold a mini-summit on Thursday with African leaders in the Malian capital of Bamako in order to discuss the security situation in the Central African Republic.

- **17 September 2013** - According to an official involved in talks pertaining to the crisis in the CAR, although reinforcements for the African peacekeeping mission in the CAR have begun to arrive, the planned 3,600-strong force will not be fully deployed before 2014.

International Developments

- **24 September 2013** - This week, the United Nations is set to turn its attention to the violent near-collapse of the Central African Republic, with France leading efforts to restore order and peace in its former colony.
- **17 September 2013** - On Tuesday, the United States welcomed the announcement by the Central African Republic indicating that it had dissolved its Seleka rebel group.

Guinea

On the Ground Reporting

- **24 September 2013** - On Tuesday, fighting broke out in the streets of Guinea's capital for a third day in a new wave of pre-election violence that has already left one policeman dead and more than seventy wounded.
- **23 September 2013** - On Monday, the government confirmed that at least one person has been killed in Guinea's capital city after clashes between supporters of rival political parties erupted.
- **22 September 2013** - Security forces in Conakry used tear gas in order to break up clashes that erupted in the capital city on Sunday between supporters of the opposition and ruling parties campaigning for the long-delayed elections.
- **16 September 2013** - Pro-government and opposition supporters clashed on the streets of Guinea's capital city on Monday, sparking fears over unrest a week ahead of nationwide elections.

Domestic News

- **28 September 2013** - Polls have closed in Guinea's first parliamentary elections since a coup in 2008.
- **26 September 2013** - On Thursday, Guinea's election commission confirmed that seventy percent of voter cards had been distributed and that conditions required for nationwide polls to be credible were being met.
- **25 September 2013** - Guinea's long-delayed legislative elections, which were scheduled to occur on Tuesday, have been postponed by four days to September 28 after talks were held on Saturday in Conakry between the opposition and the government.
 - Meanwhile a Guinean government minister stated on Wednesday that the country was "in danger" from outsiders plotting against it amidst media reports that a coup was being planned in the capital city.
- **21 September 2013** - A UN official has confirmed that Guinea's legislative elections, which were due to be held on Tuesday, have now been postponed until September 28 for "final adjustments."

Guinea-Bissau

- **20 September 2013** - The United States is struggling to prosecute Guinea-Bissau's former navy chief Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto as lawyers have been unable to find enough translators who speak his native Kriol.

Ivory Coast

- **20 September 2013** - On Friday, the Ivory Coast announced its decision to not transfer former first lady Simone Gbagbo to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which had issued a warrant for her last year for suspected crimes against humanity.

Liberia

- **26 September 2013** - A UN-backed appeals court on Thursday upheld Liberian ex-President Charles Taylor's 50-year sentence for arming rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war in the 1990's.
 - Meanwhile a court in Liberia's capital city of Monrovia is wrapping up the trial of eighteen men who have been accused of staging cross-border attacks in the Ivory Coast.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **28 September 2013** - On Saturday, two suicide bombers let off explosives in a car in front of a military camp in the northern town of Timbuktu, killing two civilians.
- **18 September 2013** - On Wednesday, armed factions from Mali's diverse desert communities committed themselves to peace talks to end an 18-months crisis that was triggered by a Tuareg uprising.
- **17 September 2013** - According to a military source, a group of Chadian troops from the United Nations peacekeeping force in Mali have deserted their posts in a dispute over pay and conditions.

Domestic News

- **19 September 2013** - On Thursday, leaders from across Africa and from France arrived in Mali for the inauguration of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita who will be sworn into office in front of thousands of supporters as the nation enters a new era of democracy after months of political turmoil.
- **18 September 2013** - Mali's new government on Wednesday called for the first parliamentary elections to be held on November 24. These will be the first parliamentary elections to occur since the military coup which was launched last year.

Regional Reporting

- **26 September 2013** - Despite reaching a peace agreement with the Malian government in June of this year, on Thursday, Tuareg separatists confirmed that they were suspending participation in the peace deal, accusing the Malian government of not respecting the accord that had been reached between the two groups.
- **18 September 2013** - Al-Qaeda's North African branch has released a video of seven kidnapped Westerners.

International Developments

- **25 September 2013** - The United Nations has stated that at least four of its peacekeepers were involved in the rape of a woman in Mali.

Mauritania

- **18 September 2013** - In a cabinet overhaul late on Tuesday, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz replaced his ministers of the interior, foreign affairs, and mines and oil.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 September 2013** - Suspected Islamist militants have attacked a college in northeastern Nigeria, killing up to fifty students. Reports have confirmed that the students were shot dead as they slept in their dormitory at the College of Agriculture in Yobe state.
- **28 September 2013** - Reports have indicated that Nigerian Islamist group Ansaru has released a video of a French national who was kidnapped in December 2012.
- **26 September 2013** - On Thursday, suspected Boko Haram militants opened fire on a church in the country's northeastern region, killing the pastor and his children before setting fire to the building and fleeing.
- **25 September 2013** - A video, purportedly showing the leader of Islamist militant group Boko Haram alive, has been released in Nigeria a month after the country's military stated that they may have killed Abubakar Shekau during a shoot-out.
- **20 September 2013** - Security forces in Nigeria's capital Abuja have reported that a cell of suspected Islamist militants has opened fire on its forces.
- **19 September 2013** - Islamist insurgents have hit a northeastern town, setting public buildings on fire and killing a soldier and the wife of a senior police officer.
- **18 September 2013** - On Wednesday, the army reported that a military strike on Boko Haram's camp in Nigeria's northeastern region last week has left about 150 Islamist militants and sixteen soldiers dead, however reports have surfaced that dozens of troops may have been killed in the operation.

Domestic News

- **25 September 2013** - Nigeria's Senate has opened an investigation into the killing of at least seven people by security forces in Abuja amidst conflicting reports relating to the gun battle.
- **17 September 2013** - On Tuesday, lawmakers in Nigeria's Lower House exchanged punches over the presence in Parliament of a splinter group of the ruling party.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

About MS Risk

Security Summaries for West African States

Benin - [Click Here](#)

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 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 - [Click Here](#)

Ivory Coast - [Click Here](#)

Liberia - [Click Here](#)

Mali - [Click Here](#)

Mauritania - [Click Here](#)

Niger - MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road linking Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka; areas within 40 km of the border with Nigeria in Diffa, Zinder and Maradi provinces. MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including

the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from terrorism, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack 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.

Nigeria - [Click Here](#)

Senegal - 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.

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 collapsed due to a landslide caused by heavy rain and at least six people were killed. 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.



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

- 18 September 2013** - A court in France is due to consider a request to extradite a Beninese businessman who has been accused of plotting to poison President Thomas Boni Yayi. Patrice Talon has been accused of being behind a conspiracy to assassinate Benin's president during a coup attempt last year. Talon, who is in exile in France, is accused of being behind an assassination plot that allegedly involved the President's niece, Zouberath Kora Seke and his doctor, Ibrahim Cisse. He is also accused of economic crimes. France's appeal court has a Beninese report of several hundred pages which will be considered when the court makes its final decision in the case. The report was received shortly after the court demanded clarification on seven points when it considered the extradition request back in May. According to French law, officials cannot extradite anyone to a country where the death penalty and forced labor are still in operation, which is the case in Benin although both are supposed to be abolished soon. Consequently, the French judges involved in the case are asking what punishments the men will receive prior to making a decision. They have also asked to see the reports by the US's FBI and French laboratory Toxlab pertaining to the pills allegedly used in the plot. Benin is also seeking the extradition of Talon's collaborator, Olivier Boko, who has also fled abroad.

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.

Domestic News

- **25 September 2013** - In the wake of the deadly Nairobi shopping mall attack, Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore urged African states on Wednesday to improve their cooperation in fighting extremist militants. Compaore, who emerged as a mediator in the crisis in Mali where al-Qaeda-linked groups imposed a brutal form of Islamic law in the northern regions of the country, has since indicated that "there may be links between all these groups." Discussing the Nairobi attack in an interview ahead of his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Compaore stated that "beyond the Sahel, we need to start reinforcing information-sharing, be it in Central Africa or all the way to Eastern Africa." In regards to Mali, Compaore called for vigilance in

the country even though the war is “over,” noting that “these Malian movements that were demanding independence or Islamic Sharia Law have agreed to follow the Republic’s principles, starting with participating in elections and allowing Mali to choose a legitimate president,” however “for those non-Malian groups that left, you still have to be vigilant.”



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 are set to take place on 30 September 2013. Although the campaigns have been peaceful,



there is a risk that such gatherings 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 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. 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.

On The Ground Reporting

- **19 September 2013** - According to a source within the security forces, police in Cameroon have arrested a rebel leader, Abdoulaye Miskine, from neighboring Central African Republic (CAR) on suspicion that he may launch cross-border raids. The source indicated that "Miskine was arrested on September 16 while he was in a hotel room in Bertoua," in eastern Cameroon, adding that General Miskine, the leader of the rebel Democratic Front of the Central African People (FPDC) was taken to the capital Yaounde, "where he is currently in custody of a special police service." The source also noted that "investigators want to know if he is using Cameroon as a rear base to prepare a possible plan to destabilize" the CAR. Miskine has spent several days in Bertoua and has also been in the southern port city of Douala. Miskine and his men joined forces with the Seleka rebel alliance last December and fought its way to power in the CAR's capital Bangui in March, ousting president Francois Bozize, who had been in power for the past ten years. Although the alliance effectively destabilized the country, by April, Miskine had cited "differences in points of view" with the Seleka forces, and would later break ranks with them. The Seleka troops then attacked the FPDC rebels and chased them into the northeastern region of the CAR.

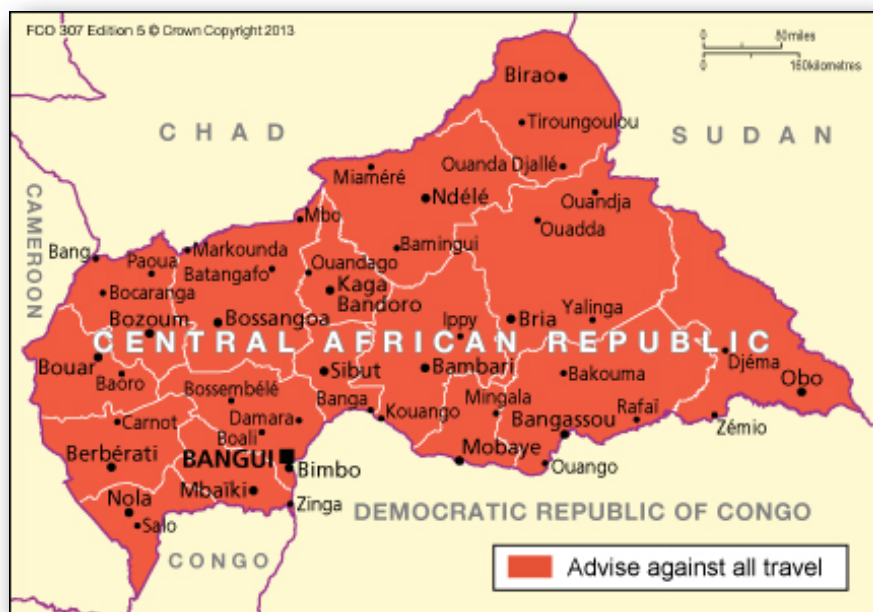
Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country



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. 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.

Regional Reporting

- **19 September 2013** - According to aides of French President Francois Hollande, Hollande is due to hold a mini-summit on Thursday with African leaders in the Malian capital of Bamako in order to discuss the security situation in the Central African Republic. The meeting, which will occur on the sidelines of the inauguration of Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, will bring together the heads of state of Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, as well as the main contributors to an African Union forces in the CAR. According to a member of Hollande's entourage, "the president wants to encourage this approach, see what they need and how to bring the issue to the United Nations," adding that the idea is to "enable the force to press for a resolution from the Security Council." The mini-summit on the ongoing crisis in the CAR comes ahead of the UN General Assembly which Hollande is due to attend next week in New York.
- **17 September 2013** - According to an official involved in talks pertaining to the crisis in the CAR, although reinforcements for the African peacekeeping mission in the CAR have begun to arrive, the planned 3,600-strong force will not be fully deployed before 2014. An official, who took part in regional meetings hosted by Gabon on Tuesday, has stated that "the force will reach 2,000 soldiers (in September) and hit 3,600 by January 2014." Further meetings are due to take place in Gabon later this week in which officials will decide on the leadership and make up of the force. Moussa Fati Mahamat, Chad's Foreign Minister, has indicated that the force, which will be known as MISCA, will have an African Union mandate to carry out more robust operations than the existing mission operated under Central Africa's CEEAC regional bloc.

International Developments

- **24 September 2013** - This week, the United Nations is set to turn its attention to the violent near-collapse of the Central African Republic, with France leading efforts to restore order and peace in its former colony. According to French President Francois Hollande, the landlocked nation has plunged into chaos since a coalition of rebels and armed movements ousted President Francois Bozize in March and is now threatened with "Somalisation." France, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the European Union will co-chair a ministerial meeting on the crisis on Wednesday in New York. The meeting will be attended by officials from the US and UN along with representatives of the African Union and of neighboring countries Burundi and South Africa. CAR's new regime will be represented at the UN General Assembly by transitional Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye. Reports have indicated that the Prime Minister is expected to ask for a massive injection of aid in order to stabilize the country until democratic elections are held next year. Although relief agencies and rights organizations have repeatedly warned that the CAR is becoming a failed state, the widespread murder, looting and rape by lawless armed groups has continued to occur in what many characterize the CAR as a "forgotten crisis" that has been eclipsed by issues such as the Syrian conflict. Basic infrastructure and services scarcely exist outside the capital city of Bangui, which is located in the southwest, while former rebels, armed movements from neighboring Chad and Sudan along with bandit groups run riot in large regions of the country. According to UN figures, some 1.6 million Central Africans, or a third of the population, require emergency humanitarian aid. Furthermore, nearly 300,000 are internally displaced or have fled to neighboring countries.
- **17 September 2013** - On Tuesday, the United States welcomed the announcement by the Central African Republic that it had dissolved its Seleka rebel group. Officials in the US however also issued a cautious warning to the violent alliance. The announcement by the US comes just days after the CAR's President Michel Djotodia confirmed on Friday that he was dissolving the alliance that overthrew the country's former leader and brought him to power. He declined however to provide further details on how he plans to neutralize the group. In response, US State Department spokesman Jen Psaki stated that Washington welcomes "the decree issued by the Central African

Republic government that dissolved the Seleka rebel alliance,” warning that “we call on all actors, particularly those who belong to the now disbanded Seleka rebel alliance, to refrain from attacks on civilians and call on the interim government in Bangui to establish security throughout the Central African Republic.” After ousting president Francois Bozize from power in March of this year, Djotodia’s Seleka rebel alliance won de facto recognition from the international community along with a chance to steer the nation through the transition period which will lead to elections within the next eighteen months. However six months into Bozize’s ouster, the picture remains bleak as numerous reports have emerged from the CAR about the widespread rape, child soldier recruitment and weapons proliferation which has prompted UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to state that the CAR needs the world’s “urgent attention.” While the US State Department regularly condemns abuses carried out by the Seleka rebels, and keeps a close watch on the country since closing down its embassy in Bangui at the end of December, it has never categorized Bozize’s ouster as a coup.



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

Over the past week, Guinea's capital city Conakry has experienced a number of violent riots and protests in the wake of the upcoming elections which have been rescheduled to 28 September 2013. Further riots and spontaneous demonstrations are likely to occur over the weekend, as the elections take place, and later as the election results are released. 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.

On the Ground Reporting

- 24 September 2013** - On Tuesday, fighting broke out in the streets of Guinea's capital for a third day in a new wave of pre-election violence that has already left one policeman dead and more than seventy wounded. According to witnesses at the scene, opposition and pro-government activists clashed in the residential district of Ratoma, burning down at least five shops before police officers were able to separate the groups. The violence comes despite a massive deployment of police on the main thoroughfares running through opposition areas of the city. This most recent fighting also comes just one day after opposition protesters shot dead a trainee policeman and wounded two other officers as violence broke out Monday in Conakry. According to a government spokesman, forty-nine people sustained minor injuries one day after clashes between pro- and anti-government protesters left twenty-four wounded. The clashes also come just days after the United Nations confirmed over the weekend that the parliamentary polls, which were initially scheduled to take place on Tuesday, would be pushed back four days amidst concerns raised by opposition activists

over the organization of the vote. Some five million voters are expected to head to the polls on Saturday. The vote was initially due to have been held six months after the swearing-in of President Alpha Conde in December 2010, however it has been repeatedly delayed. The West African nation's main opposition leader, Cellou Dalein Diallo, has accused the president's camp and the electoral commission of attempting to rig the vote, now set to occur on September 28. He and other opposition leaders have stated that both the electoral commission and the president have gerrymandered electoral boundaries to maximize the number of voters in areas known to be pro-government. They have called for new boundaries which will bring voters closer to polling stations and have requested that the number per polling station be no more than 500.

- **23 September 2013** - On Monday, the government confirmed that least one person has been killed in Guinea's capital city after clashes between supporters of rival political parties erupted. According to a statement released by the government, a trainee-gendarme had been shot dead while two other gendarmes were wounded by the gunfire. Another forty-nine people were slightly injured in the clashes. The statement also indicated that "once again, the government appeals to political parties to calm down their supporters and abstain from violence against peaceful citizens." The clashes erupted despite a UN-brokered deal over the weekend to postpone the elections in order to allow the electoral commission to address concerns raised by opposition parties over preparations for the vote. The clashes, which resulted in blocked roads leading to the centre of Conakry, come in the run-up to the long-awaited legislative elections which are now due to occur on Saturday. Security officials on Monday issued warnings to people to limit their movements around the opposition stronghold neighborhood in the capital city where the clashes occurred.
- **22 September 2013** - Security forces in Conakry used tear gas in order to break up clashes that erupted in the capital city on Sunday between supporters of the opposition and ruling parties campaigning for the long-delayed elections. According to witness accounts, the clashes resulted in multiple injuries and come just one day after a United Nations special envoy announced that the vote, which was initially scheduled for Tuesday, would be pushed back to September 28 in response to opposition concerns about the voter list and other issues. According to Kaba Mamady, one of President Alpha Conde's supporters, the clashes occurred when a group supporting the ruling party of the president was gathering in Conakry's Bambeto neighborhood and was approached by opposition supporters who provoked the confrontation on Sunday afternoon. However opposition supporter Gadirou Barry has stated that the altercation began when ruling party supporters lobbed stones at the opposition caravan and later set a minibus on fire. At least twenty people are believed to have been injured in the latest clashes that have hit the capital city, however officials have not confirmed the number.
- **16 September 2013** - Pro-government and opposition supporters clashed on the streets of Guinea's capital city on Monday, sparking fears over unrest a week ahead of nationwide elections. According to witness reports, Guinea's largest market was forced to close and traders fled to safety as rioters pelted cars with stones and looted stores in Conakry's busy Madina district. A senior police officer has stated that the clashes "...all kicked off with the posting of election campaign banners by the activists of a political party which their opponents tore up and even tore down the hoardings," adding that "they were attacked with sticks and then stones that wounded many on both sides." Although the bloodshed started in Madina district, it later spread to other parts of Conakry where youths overturned bins and put up barricades, blocking traffic on the main route between central Guinea and the airport.

Domestic News

- **28 September 2013** - On Thursday, Guinea's election commission confirmed that seventy percent of voter cards had been distributed and that conditions required for nationwide polls to be credible were being met. The election commission has also indicated that thirty-two polling stations have been added in order to make voting easier. After months of delays and a campaign that has been

plagued by violent unrest, Guineans are expected to vote on Saturday in the first parliamentary elections to be held in the West African nation in over a decade. Five million voters will choose from some 1,700 candidates vying for the 114 seats in the national assembly which will replace the transitional parliament that has been running the country since military rule ended in 2010.

- **25 September 2013** - Guinea's long-delayed legislative elections, which were scheduled to occur on Tuesday, have been postponed by four days to September 28 after talks were held on Saturday in Conakry between the opposition and the government. The talks over the weekend come after Guinea's main opposition leader threatened to call protests if officials went forwards with the elections without fully addressing the complaints pertaining to preparations. The opposition has complained that the voter list contains a number of errors, effectively meaning that many of its supporters have been left off the list while some people have been registered several times. It has also complained that polling stations in oppositions strongholds have been scattered far apart, meaning that voters would have to travel far and therefore would be less likely to vote. Following Saturday's talks, Cellou Dalein Diallo, the main opposition leader, has stated that although he wants a longer delay in order to fix the issues, he is satisfied with the compromised date of September 28. The elections are meant to complete the country's transition back to civilian rule however they have been repeatedly delayed since current President Alpha Conde was elected three years ago. These delays have effectively created doubts about the political progress not only amongst Guineans, but investors and donor. The West African nation's economic growth forecast has been cut to 2.9 percent for this year, down from 4.5 percent. This is a result of the protests and ongoing political issues. Over the past several months, dozens of people have been killed in protests over the election preparations. Furthermore, while this delay will allow organizers to address some of the issues, it is likely that the fundamental lack of trust between the two sides and the election commission will continue, meaning that tensions are likely to simmer.

 - Meanwhile a Guinean government minister stated on Wednesday that the country was "in danger" from outsiders plotting against it amidst media reports that a coup was being planned in the capital city. Security Minister Madifing Diane made the comments in response to reports that French and American secret service documents "announcing a coup in Conakry." During a meeting in Conakry of the International Organization of the Francophone, the minister indicated that "Guinea is in danger and the strings are being pulled from outside," however he refused to comment on the specific details of the reports. The report has caused alarm in Guinea as the country is in the process of preparing itself for its first parliamentary elections in more than a decade. Election polls are set to open on Saturday.
- **21 September 2013** - A UN official has confirmed that Guinea's legislative elections, which were due to be held on Tuesday, have now been postponed until September 28 for "final adjustments." According to UN facilitator for dialogue in Guinea, Said Djinnit, after widespread consultations, an "exceptional delay of four days for final adjustments before the elections" has been decided on. The four-day delay has been agreed upon following "consultations" between politicians and representatives of the international community, including the UN. The announcement was made by Djinnit during a press conference, which was attended by leaders of the opposition, Cellou Dalein Diallo, and Sidya Toure, along with the presidential majority. During the press conference, Mr. Toure had also indicated that it was "impossible" for the vote to be held on Tuesday and that the parties were currently "...working towards it, but as far as the opposition is concerned, it is impossible for the elections to be held (Tuesday) in these conditions." The delay is the latest postponement of the legislative polls, which were initially due to have been held within six months of the swearing-in of President Alpha Conde in December 2010. However disagreements between the opposing factions on how the elections should be organized have sparked nationwide protests that have left more than fifty dead since 2011. The country's main opposition leader, Diallo, has accused the president's camp and the electoral commission of attempting to rig the vote.

No Travel
Restrictions for
this Country



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

International Developments

- 20 September 2013** - The United States is struggling to prosecute Guinea-Bissau's former navy chief Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto as lawyers have been unable to find enough translators who speak his native Kriol. At a pre-trial hearing on Thursday at the US District Court in Manhattan, attorneys indicated that they had sought the help of the United Nations in order to locate people who would be able to communicate with him and translate reams of evidence however they had minimal success. According to Na Tchuto's lawyer, Sabrina Shroff, "we only have one translator, and that is simply not enough." Since his arrest, this is the second such hearing, which focused on problems finding translators, to have taken place. This problem has delayed scheduling his trial while another pre-trial hearing has been set for November. Although Portuguese is the country's official language, most Bissau-Guineans rarely speak it and instead use the local Kriol dialects or tribal languages. Na Tchuto was arrested in a sting off the West African coast in April of this year in what is the Drug Enforcement Administration's most high-profile capture of a suspected drug kingpin in Africa. He was seized in a luxury yacht off the coast of Guinea-Bissau following a months-long undercover operation by the Drugs Enforcement Administration, which also involved former FARC rebels and numerous recorded secret meetings. Following his arrest, he was flown to New York where he has been in jail awaiting trial. The US Department of Justice has accused Na Tchuto of plotting to import Colombian cocaine and export weapons, including surface-to-air missiles, to Colombia's FARC rebel group, which has been labeled a terrorist organization by Washington. Na Tchuto, a former fighter in Guinea-Bissau's 1956 - 1973 independence war who is now in his 60's, has denied any involvement in drug trafficking. The operation also targeted Guinea-Bissau's army chief, Antonio Indjai, who led a coup in 2012 that derailed the country's elections. He however avoided arrest by refusing to go offshore and has too denied running drugs. Guinea-Bissau, a poverty-stricken former Portuguese colony neighboring Senegal, is believed by the United Nations to be a major transshipment point for Latin American cocaine that is headed to users in Europe. Furthermore, the United States and states in Europe have suspected the country's military of being involved in the drug trade for years.



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 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.

Domestic News

- 20 September 2013** - On Friday, the Ivory Coast announced its decision to not transfer former first lady Simone Gbagbo to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which had issued a warrant for her last year on suspected crimes against humanity. According to reports, after eighteen months, a cabinet meeting finally decided to file a "motion to dismiss" the warrant and not to send Simone Gbagbo to The Hague, where her husband and former president, Laurent Gbagbo, awaits trial over months of deadly violence that followed the 2010 presidential elections. A statement released by the government indicated that "the decision of the cabinet aims to have Mrs. Gbagbo brought to trial...by Ivorian courts whose good reputation has been restored and which can hold a fair trial that will guarantee the rights of the defence." The statement added that the government will inform the ICC of its decision shortly. Simone Gbagbo was detained in Odienne, in the country's northwest, shortly after the post-election crisis which had been sparked by her husband's refusal to acknowledge his defeat in the November 2010 presidential elections. The violence left about 3,000 people dead. The former first lady is also under investigation for suspected genocide, harming state security and white-collar crimes. Although the Ivory Coast turned over her husband to the ICC in late 2011, it seems now that officials in the country are less inclined to try other suspects in the 2010 - 2011 unrest under its own jurisdiction. Furthermore, opponents of current president Alassane Ouattara, the winner of the 2010 elections, have accused him of carrying out "a victor's justice" as no one from his own camp has had to face prosecution.

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

PCO 2011 Edition 3 Crown Copyright 2012

SIERRA LEONE

GUINEA

IVORY COAST

ATLANTIC OCEAN

LIBERIA

MONROVIA

Scale: 0 to 100 miles / 0 to 100 kilometers

Legend:

- Orange: Advise against all but essential travel
- Green: See our travel advice before travelling

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

Domestic News

- 26 September 2013** - A UN-backed appeals court on Thursday upheld Liberian ex-President Charles Taylor's 50-year sentence for arming rebels during Sierra Leone's civil war in the 1990's. According to Judge George King of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), "the appeals chamber...affirms the sentence of 50 years in prison and orders that the sentence be imposed immediately," adding that "the Appeals Chamber is of the opinion that the sentence imposed by the trial chamber is fair and in light of the totality of the crimes committed," by Taylor. The judge also indicated that Taylor's lawyers had "failed to demonstrate any errors in the Trial Chamber's reasoning." Taylor listened without emotion as the verdict was read out. In 2012, Taylor, 65, was found guilty of supporting rebels from neighboring Sierra Leone, who waged a campaign of terror during a civil war that claimed 120,000 lives between 1991 and 2002, in exchange for "blood diamonds" that were mined through slave labour. His historic sentence of eleven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity was the first handed down by an international court against a former head of state since the 1946 Nuremberg trials. The former West African leader will start serving out his sentence immediately, most likely in a British jail.

Update - Victims of the bloody regime of Liberian warlord Charles Taylor have indicated their relief shortly after his 50-year jail term for war crimes against humanity in Sierra Leone was upheld by an international court on Thursday. The final verdict, which was handed down by the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) brings the seven-year trial of the 65-year-old former Liberian president, who was sentenced in May of last year, to an end, effectively bringing justice for "some of the most heinous crimes in human history." Speaking shortly after the verdict was announced, Sierra Leone government spokesman Abdulai Bayratty stated that "as a government, we believe that justice has been done and impunity is over," adding that "the message for sitting heads of state not only in Africa but beyond is that when you are in power you must exercise it judiciously, have respect for the rule of law and human rights and uphold the dignity of others." Around 100 people, including human rights activists and survivors of Sierra Leone's civil war, watched a live broadcast of the verdict in the capital city of Freetown. The former warlord, who was jailed initially for fifty years for arming rebels during Sierra Leone's brutal 1990's civil war, is likely to spend the rest of his life in prison. He sparked a thirteen-year civil war in his own country when he led a rebellion in 1989 to oust President Samuel Doe. That rebellion eventually transformed into one of Africa's bloodiest conflicts. His National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) would later earn a reputation for its extreme violence, conspiring child soldiers and terrorizing citizens of certain ethnic groups. After taking control of Monrovia, Taylor was elected president in 1997, however violence again erupted in 1999 when another rebellion began. As Liberia's president from 1997 to 2003, Taylor supported the Revolutionary United Front rebels in neighboring Sierra Leone by supplying them with guns and ammunition as they waged a campaign of terror during a civil war that claimed 120,000 lives between 1991 and 2002. He would eventually lose control of much of the country and would flee to Nigeria in 2003. According to the United Nations, the conflicts resulted in 270,000 deaths, with many civilians displaced and several thousand becoming victims of atrocities. Taylor was finally arrested and transferred to The Hague in 2006, where he was convicted in 2012 of aiding and abetting the rebels during the conflict, which was known for its mutilations, drugged child soldiers, and sex slaves. While most believe that justice has been served, some of the victims of the conflict remain bitter and have voiced their frustration that Taylor had not received the 80-year sentence that had been requested by prosecution. In turn, he has never been charged for his role in Liberia's bloody history, only that in neighboring Sierra Leone.

 - Meanwhile a court in Liberia's capital city of Monrovia is wrapping up the trial of eighteen men who have been accused of staging cross-border attacks in the Ivory Coast. The current case involves eighteen Liberians who have been accused of taking part in cross-border raids in 2011 and 2012. They are being tried under Liberia's 1976 law against "mercenarism," which carries a maximum penalty of life in prison. Tiawon Gongloe, the lead lawyer for the suspects however

has indicated that the case should never have made it to court as the law was not intended to prosecute crimes committed beyond Liberia's borders. While regional experts have been pushing officials in Liberia to address the security situation that has affected the border region with the Ivory Coast over the past two years, a defense lawyer representing the suspects in this case has stated that Liberia's law against mercenary activity is being misapplied. Liberia was also gravely affected by the Ivory Coast's 2010 - 2011 post-election crisis, which claimed at least 2,000 lives before it concluded in May 2011. The crisis erupted after former President Laurent Gbagbo refused to leave office even though he had lost the 2010 election to current President Alassane Ouattara. As a result of the crisis, tens of thousands of Ivorian refugees fled into Liberia, as did an unknown number of combatants. In the months that followed the conclusion of the crisis, the first cross-border attacks began to occur. Often involving a mix of Liberian and Ivorian fighters, the attacks were brief strikes against villages in the Ivory Coast and resulted in a number of civilians being killed along with homes being destroyed and thousands being displaced. The problem went largely unnoticed until June 2012, when an attack in the southwestern region of the Ivory Coast killed seven United Nations peacekeepers. This year, however, the situation seems to have calmed down as the last cross-border raids were recorded in March, in which three attacks were carried out in quick succession, resulting in ten people killed. However regional experts warn that there is still a possibility that violence could return to the region, underscoring the need for both Liberia and the Ivory Coast to combat the mercenary activity.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all but essential 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.



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

- For Ransom - insurgents will raise finances for future operations. With the impending ECOWAS operation, this is accelerating as a concern.

- Human Shields - Insurgents will kidnap persons in order to deter/reduce the risk of direct action by governmental forces against them.
- Ideological - Kidnappings will occur for political purposes.

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

Local Travel

Although the 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

- **28 September 2013** - On Saturday, two suicide bombers let off explosives in a car in front of a military camp in the northern town of Timbuktu, killing two civilians. An African military source from the United Nations' MINUSMA peacekeeping mission has confirmed the attack, which is the first suicide bombing to occur in the town since March of this year. On March 21, a suicide bomber blew up a car near Timbuktu's airport, killing a Malian soldier.
- **18 September 2013** - On Wednesday, armed factions from Mali's diverse desert communities committed themselves to peace talks to end an 18-months crisis that was triggered by a Tuareg uprising. The announcement was made after a three-day meeting in the capital of Bamako between the main Tuareg separatist organizations along with the Arab Movement for Azawad (MAA) and the United Forces of Patriotic Resistance (UFPR). According to Hamada Ag Bibi, from the High Council of the Unity of Azawad, which represented the Tuareg side along with the larger National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), the agreement committing to dialogue has been presented to President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. According to sources, the agreement commits the signatories to seeking "a solution through dialogue to our problems" and adds that "we will not use violence as a means of expression." While this agreement seems to further solidify the peace deal that was signed several months ago between the Malian government and the Tuaregs, Harouna Toure, of the UFPR, has highlighted that this recent document is merely "a good first step" rather than a binding peace deal. Mali's vast northern desert is home to a mix of ethnic groups, with Tuareg desert nomads, Arabs and the black African Fulani and Songhai having lived together for centuries in a region that has been made famous by the ancient city of Timbuktu.
- **17 September 2013** - According to a military source, a group of Chadian troops from the United Nations peacekeeping force in Mali have deserted their posts in a dispute over pay and conditions. A Chadian army captain claiming to be the leader of the deserters has indicated that his men left their posts in the northeastern town of Tessalit overnight from Monday to Tuesday and were now heading to the city of Gao. The officer further stated that "there are 160 of us. We left the Amachache camp in Tessalit to claim better living conditions and demand our wages too," adding that "we have been in Mali for nine months and many of us haven't been paid - that is not good." Asked whether the deserters were armed, the officer replied that "a soldier always has his weapon by his side." Speaking on the condition of anonymity, an officer from MINUSMA confirmed that soldiers had deserted their posts, stating that "more than 150 soldiers" had left without permission and would be met in Gao by a Chadian military delegation. The 2,000 Chadian soldiers of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) were at the forefront of the French-led military intervention that was launched in January to oust Islamist rebels who had taken over northern Mali in the chaos that followed a coup. During the battle, Chad lost at least thirty-eight men, with the heaviest fighting taking place in the northeastern Ifoghas mountains. The UN peacekeeping force, expected to reach a strength of 12,600, replaced AFISMA in July.

Domestic News

- **19 September 2013** - Despite reaching a peace agreement with the Malian government in June of this year, on Thursday, Tuareg separatists confirmed that they were suspending participation in the peace deal, accusing the Malian government of not respecting the accord that had been reached between the two groups. While the peace accord enabled national elections to go forward in July and August, and allowed Mali's military to return to the northern Tuareg town of Kidal, it also called for the central government to commence peace talks within two months of the President's election. In turn, under the signed deal, the government and rebels would agree to respect the country's territorial integrity and hold peace talks that would focus on the status of the north. Although the signing of the agreement was seen by many as an easing of tensions in a region of Africa that has been on numerous occasions affected by Tuareg uprisings, this latest falling out demonstrates that

tensions and a lack of trust continue to be a major issue and may deal a blow to the hopes of a lasting peace. Following a meeting in neighboring Burkina Faso's capital of Ouagadougou, the separatist groups - the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUA) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) - stated that they wanted to hold an emergency meeting of all parties involved in the peace accord in order to assess the implementation of the agreement. In a statement released late on Thursday, Mossa Ag Acharatoumane, a founding member of the MNLA, accused the Malian government of failing to live up to its promises, which were outlined in the agreement that was signed in the capital of neighboring Burkina Faso. The statement also indicated that "following multiple difficulties in implementing the Ouagadougou accord, caused notably by the Malian government's failure to respect its commitments," the Tuareg and Arab rebel groups "decided to suspend participation in the structures created by the said accord." The three movements involved in the recent meeting dated the decision from September 18, the date of the second meeting of the joint committee as set under the ceasefire accord. The central issue for Tuareg groups is the future status of northern Mali, which the Tuareg movements call "Azawad." The rebels are seeking autonomy, an issue which the central government has been unwilling to discuss. Furthermore, amongst the Tuaregs grievances outlined in the statement are that the Malian government has not yet started prisoner releases which are in line with the Ouagadougou agreement. However observes of the peace deal have noted that Tuareg fighters have increasingly been moving outside of their bases in Kidal, which is in contrast to the accord that stipulates that the separatists would garrison their fighters. While so far neither the Malian government nor authorities from the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali have commented on these latest developments, tensions between Tuareg separatists and the central government in Bamako have been rising has no peace talks have occurred despite Mali's new President being sworn in and a new government being formed. This decision also risks increasing tensions in a country that continues to be fragile after eighteen months of political instability. Just last week, protesters in Mali's northern town of Kidal pelted officials from Mali's newly elected government during a weekend visit to the town.

- 18 September 2013** - Al-Qaeda's north African branch has released a video depicting seven kidnapped Westerners. The video was received by Mauritanian news agency ANI, which indicates that all the captives seemed to be in good health. France's Foreign Ministry has announced that the hostage video seems to be "credible." The newly released video depicts seven hostages, including four Frenchmen and a Dutchman, who were kidnapped from a uranium compound in northern Niger exactly three years ago; along with a Swede and a South African who were abducted from a hostel in Timbuktu in northern Mali November 2011 in an attack that left a German man dead. In the video, which was released to Mauritanian news agency ANI, Frenchman Daniel Larribe, 61, introduces himself as the head of the French group, stating that he was kidnapped by militants belonging to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). According to ANI, Mr. Larribe states that he is "...in good health but threatened with death," adding that he holds the French authorities responsible for his fate. The video also includes statements from the other French hostages, including Pierre Legrand, Thierry Dol and Marc Feret as well as South African Stephen Malcolm, Dutchman Sjaak Rijke and Swede Johna Gustafsson. It also shows the French hostages reportedly urging the French administration, as well as their family members, to work for their release. At the time of their kidnapping, the four Frenchmen were mostly working for French public nuclear giant Areva and its subcontractor Satom. They were kidnapped in Arlit, northern Niger, on 16 September 2010. At the time, Daniel's wife, Francoise Larribe, was also captured however she was released in 2011. Although it remains unclear when the video was made, officials from ANI have indicated that the messages recorded by the French hostages were made in June of this year. Furthermore, this is the first video that is said to depict the men since France launched an intervention in Mali in January after al-Qaeda-linked militants threatened to overrun the capital Bamako. According French Foreign Ministry spokesman, Philippe Lalliot, "based on an initial analysis, the video seems credible to us and provides new proof of life of the four French hostages kidnapped in Arlit (northern Niger) on

September 16, 2010,” adding that the footage was being authenticated. AQIM is currently believed to be holding eight European hostages, including five French nationals. According to French prosecutors, one of the French hostages, Philippe Verdon, who was kidnapped in Mali in 2011 and found dead earlier this year, was executed with a shot to the head. Officials in France believe that his killing was in retaliation to France’s intervention in Mali. A fifth hostage, Serge Lazarevic, was kidnapped along with Mr. Verdon from their hotel in Hombori on the night of 24 November 2011. Shortly after their kidnapping, the families of the two men insisted that they were not mercenaries or secret service agents. These comments were in response to threats made by AQIM militants stating that the two hostages would be killed as they were French spies. While the newly released video depicts the pleas of the French hostages for their release, it is highly unlikely that the French government will get involved, and that their plight will be publicly discussed. Although in July of this year French President Francois Hollande announced that France was “doing everything” to bring the hostages back, he indicated that officials would “...not talk so as not to complicate a situation which is bad enough.”

International Developments

- **25 September 2013** - The United Nations has stated that at least four of its peacekeepers were involved in the rape of a woman in Mali. The assault is believed to have occurred on Thursday in the northern city of Gao, which is amongst the areas that were seized by militants following a coup in March 2012. The woman is thought to have come forward seeking medical help from the UN immediately after the attack which effectively triggered the UN force to launch an investigation into the incident. They have been identified as being amongst the 1,500 Chadian soldiers who are currently serving under the UN force, Minusma. Although on the ground sources have reported that it is currently not known exactly how many Chadians were involved, the victim identified four soldiers as having assaulted her. At the time of the attack, there were 165 Chadian soldiers stationed in Gao, with reports indicated that the soldiers had defied the orders of their superiors and left their base in Tessalit after a dispute over pay and conditions. The UN has since indicated that it wants officials in Chad to investigate the incident and to take appropriate disciplinary action against the men involved, with a Minusma spokesman in Bamako indicating that it is up to the Chadian army to decide on what disciplinary action they should take against the men. The spokesman further indicated that the victim would be offered medical, psychological and legal support however she would not receive any financial compensation. Chad’s troops are part of a force of 6,000 African troops that are serving under the 12,000 - strong Minusma peacekeeping force. Minusma took over the security duties in July after the withdrawal of French soldiers, which led an operation to oust Islamist militants from the north.

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

- **18 September 2013** - In a cabinet overhaul late on Tuesday, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz replaced his ministers of the interior, foreign affairs, and mines and oil. In total, twelve ministers were affected by the changes however the President has retained Prime Minister Moulaye Ould Mohamed Laghdaf. Mohamed Ould Ahmed Salem Ould Mohamed Rare, the former governor of Trarza province, was named the new interior minister. He replaced Mohamed Ould Bolilil, a veteran politician who is expected to run for a seat in a southern constituency located along the border with Senegal, in which many believe it could fall to the opposition. Ahmed Ould Teguedi, who until now was Mauritania's ambassador to the United Nations, was appointed as foreign minister, taking over the role from Hamady Ould Baba Ould Hamady who will now serve as minister of fishing. Mohamed Ould Khouna, previously delegate minister for new technologies, was appointed minister of petroleum, energy and mines while Sidi Ould Zein, a former adviser to the prime minister, was named justice minister. The presidential decree announcing the reshuffle, which was read on state television, did not provide a reason behind the move. All main cabinet positions went to close allies of the president, signaling a possible rolling back of overtures made to the opposition ahead of the legislative elections that are due to be held in November.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

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

- **29 September 2013** - Suspected Islamist militants have attacked a college in northeastern Nigeria, killing up to fifty students. Reports have confirmed that the students were shot dead as they slept in their dormitory at the College of Agriculture in Yobe state. Reports have also indicated that the gunmen set fire to classrooms at the college, which is located in rural Gujba district. Although casualty figures from the latest attack to hit the northern region of the country have not been confirmed, a local politician has indicated that around fifty students have been killed. The politician also indicated that two van loads of bodies had been taken to a hospital in Yobe's state capital, Damaturu. Despite the ongoing military intervention, Boko Haram has staged a number of attacks over the past few months which have resulted in a high number of casualties. The militant group has also targeted schools. In June of this year, Boko Haram militants carried out two attacks on schools in the region. At least nine children were killed in a school located on the outskirts of Maiduguri, while thirteen students and teachers were killed in a school in Damaturu. In July, the village of Mamudo in Yobe state, Islamist militants attacked a school's dormitories with guns and explosives, killing at least forty-two people, mostly students. Boko Haram targets schools as it regards them as a symbol of Western culture.
- **28 September 2013** - Reports have indicated that Nigerian Islamist group Ansaru has released a video of a French national who was kidnapped in December 2012. In the video, which has been posted online, the hostage identifies himself as 63-year-old Francis Collomp, an engineer with the French firm Vergent, who was "kidnapped in Rimi, Katsina state on 19 December 2012." Mr. Collomp, who had been working on a wind power project in Katsina at the time of his kidnapping, was taken after a group of some thirty gunmen stormed the compound where he was staying. Ansaru claimed responsibility for his abduction days later, stating that it was a justification for France's push for military intervention against the Islamist rebels who seized northern Mali. In the three-minute video, the hostage appears to be wearing a white t-shirt with an unidentified person holding a weapon in the background. If this video is confirmed authentic, then it will be the first video of Mr. Collomp to emerge since his abduction. Although parts of the short video statement are not clear, Mr. Collomp can be heard calling for "negotiations" for his "safe release." In the latter portion of the video, the camera focuses on an Arabic statement which addresses "the governments of France and Nigeria." While there is no direct threat of further attacks, or any direct threat on Mr. Collomp's life, the statement does indicate that the militant group vowed to treat "treachery and treason" by the French or Nigerian governments with "reciprocity." France's Foreign Ministry has confirmed that it is trying to authenticate the video and that it is in contact with Mr. Collomp's family. Ansaru is considered by many to be a breakaway faction of Boko Haram,

however links between the two militant groups remain in question with some regional experts indicating that Ansaru may have emerged from a faction within Boko Haram that sought to specifically target foreign interests. Ansaru has been blamed for the 2011 kidnapping of a Briton and an Italian national in northern Nigeria. Both hostages were killed in March of last year. Ansaru has also claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of seven foreign nationals working on a construction project in northern Bauchi state in February of this year. A video posted online later earlier this year showed that some of the hostages had been killed.

- **26 September 2013** - On Thursday, suspected Boko Haram militants opened fire on a church in the country's northeastern region, killing the pastor and his children before setting fire to the building and fleeing. A statement released by area military spokesman Eli Lazarus confirmed that attack on the church, adding that "two other houses in the community were burnt by the gunmen before fleeing the scene of the incident." The attack occurred in the town of Dorawa, which is located some 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the site of a brutal school attack in July which resulted in the deaths of dozens of students. While attacks on churches, including suicide bombings, were once a near weekly occurrence, in recent months there has been a decline in such attacks. Since the launch of a military operation four months ago, Boko Haram militants have largely targeted civilians as well as vigilante groups which have formed in order to help the military.
- **25 September 2013** - A video, purportedly showing the leader of Islamist militant group Boko Haram alive, has been released in Nigeria a month after the country's military stated that they may have killed Abubakar Shekau during a shoot-out. The video contains images believed to be that of Shekau, who states that the world "should know that he could not die except by the will of Allah." The man also makes references to recent events, such as the attack in Benisheik, Borno State, on 17 September which resulted in the deaths of at least 142 people. On 19 August, the Nigerian military indicated that intelligence suggested that they may have killed Shekau between 25 July and 3 August however there have not been any confirmations of his death. In turn, previous reports of his death were later proved to be unfounded. **Update (26 September)** - On Thursday, Nigeria's army indicated that it was trying to verify the authenticity of a video that appears to depict Boko Haram's leader mocking reports that he may have been killed. The emergence of the new video comes after a security task force last month stated that wanted Boko Haram commander Abubakar Shekau "may have died" from a gunshot wound after a clash with soldiers on June 30. The latest video depicts a man resembling past images of Shekau taunting the regional military spokesman who suggested he may have been killed. However the video's authenticity has yet to be confirmed. Army spokesman Ibrahim Attahiru has stated that currently "we cannot say at this juncture whether the claim is true or false until we authenticate the veracity of the video," adding that "the army authorities have to verify the claim. This is precisely what we are doing." While the initial statement pertaining to Shekau's possible death came from a military spokesman based in the northeast, national defense spokesman Chris Olukolade has since stated that that statement may have been issued prematurely and that the military at the time lacked definitive proof of Shekau's death.
- **20 September 2013** - Security forces in Nigeria's capital Abuja have indicated that a cell of suspected Islamist militants has opened fire on its forces. If confirmed, this would be the first time that Boko Haram has staged an attack in Abuja this year. In turn, it has cast doubts on claims that the group's rebellion has been contained. Attacks in the northeastern region of the country have increased recently despite the massive military deployment and state of emergency in the worst-affected areas. In the latest incident to occur in the northern state of Borno, officials have stated that at least eighty-seven people have been killed by militants, who disguised themselves in military uniforms at a checkpoint outside the town of Benisheik. Officials have reported that the militants shot dead those trying to flee. According to the State Security Service, Nigeria's spy agency, the clash occurred at about 03:00 local time after a tip off pertaining to the location of a suspected Boko Haram weapons cache. On the ground sources have indicated that the shooting occurred at a two-storey building which is under construction in Abuja's Apo district, which is home to a huge residential complex for Nigerian parliamentarians. Reports also indicate that the building has been

used by young men where they sleep at night. According to the agency, the security team which approached the building, had been acting on information that was received from two men. A statement from the State Security Service further noted that “no sooner had the team commenced digging for the arms, than they came under heavy gunfire attack by other Boko Haram elements.” The Agency did not provide an further details pertaining to the casualties however eye witnesses have reported seeing nine bodies. Meanwhile the attack in Benisheik took place on Tuesday however news of it has been slow to emerge as all phone lines in the region have been cut in an effort to help the ongoing military offensive. According to security sources, Boko Haram militants drove into the town in about twenty pick-up trucks. In what is one of the deadliest attacks to occur in the region since the state of emergency was declared, over the last three days, witnesses have reported health workers loading dead bodies onto trucks, with some reports indicating that the militants have killed more than 140 people. According to an officials within the state’s environmental protection agency, “apart from the dead bodies recovered today (Thursday), we collected 55 on Wednesday and the fact is that we did not go deep into the bush where I strongly believe that many people have fallen there.” There was also an attack that occurred on Wednesday night in neighboring Yobe State, which is also under a state emergency but which has not witnesses a high level of violence such as Borno state. Sources have indicated that Boko Haram militants attacked the town at about 22:30, burning the police station along with other public buildings. State police commissioner Sanusi Rufa’i has stated that “a soldier was killed in a shootout and the wife of the divisional police chief was burnt to death in her home. While this is attack is the first to occur in Abuja this year, Nigeria’s capital city had already suffered two major Boko Haram attacks two years ago. The first occurred when a suicide bomber rammed a car into the police headquarters in June 2011, killing eight people. Two months later, the group attacked the United Nations Headquarters, killing twenty-three people. This most recent attack however is startling as it comes at a time when the country is experiencing a military offensive in three northern states coupled with a state of emergency that has been in place since May of this year. In turn, the attack comes at a time when analysts have increasingly warned that while the military offensive may route out Boko Haram militants from the affected northern state, it may also drive them further south and into the neighboring states, therefore further exacerbating the issue.

- 19 September 2013** - Islamist insurgents have hit a northeastern town, setting public buildings on fire and killing a soldier and the wife of a senior police officer. The attack, which occurred on Wednesday but was confirmed by officials the following day, is the latest carnage to hit the region which in recent days has seen an upsurge in violence. According to police commissioner Sanusi Rufa’i, the Islamist militants stormed Yadi Buni, in Yobe state, around 10:00pm where they set fire to a makeshift police station, the fire service, a local education office and the home of the divisional police head, whose wife was burnt to death inside. According to the police commissioner, telecom towers in the town were also burnt down. The militants were armed with Kalashnikovs, rocket launchers and homemade bombs. The attack lead to a shootout with Nigerian troops in which one soldier was killed. This is the second time that Buni Yadi has been attacked by Boko Haram insurgents in the last few months. In turn, over the past few days, scores of people have been left dead as a result of Boko Haram’s attacks and the military raids. On Wednesday, the military claimed that a strike on a Boko Haram camp in the northeastern region last week had left about 150 Islamist militants and sixteen soldiers dead. However conflicting reports about the attack indicate that dozens of troops were killed as they were ambushed by Boko Haram militants. On Tuesday night, suspected Boko Haram members, dressed as soldiers, set up checkpoints in the area of Benisheik, killing a number of people and burning some fifty buildings. Some residents have reported that around twenty people were killed in Tuesday’s violence however there have been no official death tolls. The attacks, as well as the claims and counterclaims pertaining to last week’s violence, have again raised questions about the four-month-old military offensive which is seeking to end the years-long insurgency launched by Boko Haram.

- 18 September 2013** - On Wednesday, the army indicated that a military strike on Boko Haram's camp in Nigeria's northeastern region last week has left about 150 Islamist militants and sixteen soldiers dead, however reports have surfaced that dozens of troops may have been killed in the military operation. According to army spokesman Ibrahim Attahiru, the military strike occurred on "...a highly fortified insurgent camp with heavy weapons in (northeastern) Borno state," adding that the camp was located in the Kasiya forest. The forest where the alleged raid occurred is located some 70 kilometers (43 miles) northeast of Borno's capital Maiduguri while the area surrounding Kasiya has acquired a reputation for armed robbery. The army's claims of a major offensive against the Islamist insurgents on September 12, in which the details had not previously been made public, come at a time when local media are reporting that Boko Haram militants had ambushed a group of soldiers in the same area, killing forty and leaving dozens of others missing. Recently there has been speculation that Boko Haram has strengthened its presence in the remote area in recent months despite the ongoing military operation and state of emergency. Consequently if Boko Haram's ambush on the military is confirmed, this will likely cast doubt on claims that the insurgent's capacity to attack has been curbed. Military officials however have yet to comment on the reported Boko Haram ambush and with communication networks switched off, details of the attacks have been slow to emerge and difficult to verify. Residents, victims as well as local political leaders have been largely unreachable and military statements have been the only main source of information in the ongoing offensive against Boko Haram.

Domestic News

- 25 September 2013** - Nigeria's Senate has opened an investigation into the killing of at least seven people by security forces in Abuja amidst conflicting reports relating to the gun battle. In the wake of the clashes, authorities have indicated that the gun battle was between forces and Islamist militants however witnesses have reported that the attack targeted unarmed squatters. According to Nigeria's SSS intelligence services, its forces had come under fire and shot back while they had been searching an area near a residential compound for lawmakers on Friday after they received a tip-off from arrested Boko Haram members. According to a number of witnesses, security officials stormed a house owned by a military man, which was occupied by about 100 squatters. Zamfara State Senator Sahabi Yau indicated late on Tuesday that "the deadline given to them to vacate the property had not expired whereupon the owner of the property, allegedly a highly placed security official, leveraged the...SSS army to forcefully eject the squatters." If Boko Haram militants did open fire on the SSS forces in Abuja, this would be the first clash involving the Islamist militants in the capital city this year.
- 17 September 2013** - On Tuesday, lawmakers in Nigeria's Lower House exchanged punches over the presence in Parliament of a splinter group of the ruling party. Footage provided by private African Independent Television and Channels TV depicted a female member of Parliament angrily poking her finger in the face of a colleague while a male legislator was seen grabbing a chair in an attempt to hit a fellow lawmaker. Other lawmakers also engaged in the fight, which was apparently sparked by the visit of Kawu Baraje, the chairman of a dissident faction of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and several other state governors loyal to him. Although the Speaker of the House Representatives, Aminu Tambuwal, told MP's that Baraje had requested permission to address supporters during parliament's open session, the group's presence infuriated parliamentarians belonging to the main PDP and resulted in clashes occurring between the two sides, leaving Baraje to read out his address over the shouts of the arguing lawmakers. While the PDP controls twenty-three of the thirty-six states in Nigeria, the party, which has controlled Nigeria's presidency since a return to civilian rule in 1999, has recently found itself in unfamiliar territory as it has been affected by infighting coupled with facing a stronger opposition. The rift has been in the making for months, with factions within the party opposed to President Goodluck Jonathan's re-election and several members believed to be plotting their own rule. General elections are scheduled for 2015 and



whether the party can fix its differences and fend off the opposition will likely have immense implications for Africa's most populous nation and largest oil producer.



At Sea

Hijacks

- None reported during this time period.

Unsuccessful Attacks/Robberies

- None reported during this time period.

Weather Analysis

- **Gulf of Guinea** - Southerly winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
 - **Extended Forecast** - Southwest winds of 10 - 15 knots and seas of 4 - 6 feet.
- **Synoptic Discussion** - The Gulf of Guinea is under the influence of low pressure, bringing strong southerly winds and moisture into the area. Expect mostly cloudy conditions.



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

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