



The West Africa Report

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

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

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The West Africa Report ~ SUMMARY

November 25 – December 8, 2013



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Benin

Domestic News

- **29 November 2013** - On Friday, Benin freed a former militant leader from Nigeria's oil-rich Delta region after a personal intervention by Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan.

International Developments

- **4 December 2013** - On Wednesday, a court in France ruled against extraditing a businessman implicated in a plot to kill Benin's President Thomas Boni Yayi.
- **2 December 2013** - A judge, who angered the President of Benin after dismissing a case over an alleged coup plot, has fled the country over the weekend and is currently seeking political asylum in the United States.

Cameroon

- **3 December 2013** - The government of Cameroon has confirmed that it has deployed troops to its eastern border with the CAR in order to prevent rebels from entering the country.

Central African Republic

On the Ground Analysis

- **6 December 2013** - On Friday, France deployed nearly 1,000 troops to help restore security in the CAR.
- **3 December 2013** - Armed men killed at least twelve civilians and wounded thirty others, including children, in the northwest of the capital city.
- **28 November 2013** - Sources have indicated that French troops have begun to deploy to the CAR, airlifting men and equipment to Bangui in preparation for an intervention to restore order.

International Developments

- **6 December 2013** - The European Union has unblocked 50 million euros (US \$68 million) in order to support the foreign military operation in the CAR.
- **5 December 2013** - The fifteen member United Nations Security Council has reached an agreement on a French resolution that is aimed at restoring order to the lawless CAR and is expected to vote on it on Thursday.
- **30 November 2013** - On Saturday, officials in Britain announced that they will provide £10 million (US \$16.4 million; 12 million euro) in aid to the CAR in a bid to help tackle the humanitarian crisis in the country.
 - Meanwhile the French presidency has announced that Paris will host on December 7 a mini-summit on the crisis in the CAR, with leaders from neighbouring African countries and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon due to attend.
- **26 November 2013** - On Tuesday, officials in France indicated that they will triple its troop stretch in the CAR after the United Nations warned that the country was descending into "complete chaos."

Ghana

- **2 December 2013** - According to officials in Ghana, Ivory Coast agents were sent to Ghana in order to kidnap or assassinate supporters of Ivorian ex-President Laurent Gbagbo.

Guinea

- **25 November 2013** - At least one person was killed and several others wounded on Monday during a protest over the September 28 results of the parliamentary elections.

Ivory Coast

- **2 December 2013** - On Monday, officials in the Ivory Coast denied a report by the United Nations that it had sent hit squads into neighbouring Ghana in order to kill followers of former president Laurent Gbagbo, who was forced to cede power in 2011 after a post-election crisis.
- **29 November 2013** - According to President Alassane Ouattara, Ivory Coast will hold its next presidential elections in October 2015.
- **26 November 2013** - According to the Ivorian government, West African neighbour states Ghana and the Ivory Coast are aiming to settle a long dispute pertaining to their maritime boundary, a move which could defuse the occasional tense relations that have been endured by the two states and which will likely smooth the way for oil and gas exploration.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **4 December 2013** - A mass grave containing twenty-one bodies has been found by investigators in Mali who are searching for missing red beret soldiers.
- **1 December 2013** - Malian and French military officials have confirmed that a suicide bomber killed himself overnight Saturday in a failed attack against a French army position in northern Mali.
- **29 November 2013** - An ethnic Tuareg separatist group in Mali has announced that it is ending a five-month ceasefire agreement that was reached with the Malian government back in June of this year.
- **28 November 2013** - A Malian fugitive, known as "Cheibani" has been recaptured by French forces following his escape from a Niger prison in June of this year.
 - Meanwhile on Thursday, Tuareg demonstrators in the northeastern town of Kidal occupied an airport runway in order to prevent Mali's Prime Minister Oumar Tatom Ly from visiting the rebel-controlled town.
- **27 November 2013** - Amadou Sanogo, the leader of the 2012 coup which effectively plunged Mali into months of chaos, was on Wednesday charged with murder and complicity to murder.

Domestic News

- **4 December 2013** - Mali's government and Tuareg separatists have both accused France of not doing enough in order to resolve the political crisis.

- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly announced that the Malian government remains “open to talks” with Tuareg rebels despite one of their leaders declaring a return to war.
- **2 December 2013** - Mali's defence minister vowed Monday that he would not pose “any obstacle” to the court case against General Amadou Sanogo, the leader of a March 2012 coup that plunged the country into crisis.
- **27 November 2013** - Officials on Wednesday announced that Mali's parliamentary elections will enter a second round of voting on December 15, after no party secured an absolute majority in the first round of voting that took place on November 24.

International Developments

- **25 November 2013** - On Monday, officials from the European Union indicated that Mali's parliamentary elections had confounded fears over possible Islamist violence and were “another success” despite low-level protests in the north and a poor turnout.

Mauritania

- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, the elections commission announced that Mauritania's ruling party had won a sweeping victory in last week's legislative and local elections, with an Islamist party coming in second.

Niger

Domestic News

- **6 December 2013** - Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou revealed in Paris on Friday that his country wants to renew its uranium mining agreement with French nuclear giant Areva, however on more equitable terms.
 - Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou stated on Friday that Libya risks becoming a failed state similar to Somalia.

Regional Reporting

- **4 December 2013** - The presidents of Niger and Mauritania have appealed to the rest of the Sahel region to join their efforts in confronting terrorism and trans-Saharan smuggling.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, Nigeria's military restored the mobile phone service in the embattled city of Maiduguri, just one day after a major raid by Islamist militants that prompted a round-the-clock ban on movements.
- **2 December 2013** - A string of overnight attacks carried out by Boko Haram militants have forced authorities to impose a total ban on movement in Maiduguri, with no air traffic allowed in or out of the state of Borno.
- **30 November 2013** - Suspected Boko Haram militants killed twenty four people in two separate attacks in northern Nigeria on Saturday, just as the military announced an increase in security for the Christmas period.
- **28 November 2013** - According to military officials, air strikes on Boko Haram camps in northeastern Nigeria have killed “many” insurgents.
- **26 November 2013** - Nigeria's military has reported that gunmen have killed thirty-seven people in a pre-dawn raid carried out in Nigeria's central Plateau state.

Domestic News

- **4 December 2013** - Officials in Nigeria on Wednesday stated that 500 people who were arrested during security operations against Boko haram militants in three northeastern states should be put on trial for their offences.
- **1 December 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan's party has finished second in a state election that has largely been seen as a test of his popularity and opposition strength.
- **30 November 2013** - On Saturday, Nigeria's military pledged to secure communities near its northern and eastern borders with Chad, Niger and Cameroon over the Christmas and New Year periods as fears grow that Boko Haram militants will increase their attacks over this period.
- **29 November 2013** - Three Lebanese nationals, who were suspected of being Hezbollah members, have been cleared of terrorism charges on Friday, however one of the accused has been convicted of a weapons offence and jailed for life.
- **28 November 2013** - Politicians and activists have warned that Nigeria's 2015 presidential elections could descend into chaos if the alleged irregularities that occurred in a recent key local vote are repeated nationally.
- **26 November 2013** - In what has developed into the latest political blow to President Goodluck Jonathan, a group of Nigerian state governors, who defected the ruling party, have joined a new opposition party.

International Developments

- **29 November 2013** - On Friday, Human Rights Watch (HRW) called on Boko Haram to stop targeting ordinary Nigerians, claiming that the Islamist terrorist group had abducted scores of women and girls and used children as young as twelve in fighting.

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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.

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Guinea - Page 18

Guinea-Bissau - There are currently no restrictions on travel to Guinea-Bissau. Although the security situation is currently calm, the current political situation remains uncertain throughout the country and the possibility of civil or military unrest in Guinea-Bissau remains high. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northwestern regions of the country, specifically those which border the Casamance region of Senegal, including the Sao Domingos/Mpack road. The country's elections have been scheduled for 16 March 2014.

Ivory Coast - Page 19

Liberia - MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of Liberia, specifically those regions of the country that border with the Ivory Coast. There is a high level of crime in Monrovia, including armed robbery. The Liberian National Police has a very limited capability to prevent or detect crime, or to provide emergency response in any part of the country. Foreigners have been mugged in the Mamba Point and Sinkor areas of Monrovia (including Sinkor beach in broad daylight) where most international visitors stay. The roads from Monrovia to Roberts International Airport, the port town of Buchanan and to the border with Sierra Leone at Bo Waterside, and to the border with Guinea at Ganta, are mainly paved and in reasonable condition. Most other roads outside Monrovia are unpaved. Driving and road conditions will significantly deteriorate during the rainy season, which occurs from May to November. Many roads during this time become impassable. MS Risk advises against all travel at night outside of Monrovia, except to or from Roberts International Airport. This is because roads are treacherous and all the roads are unlit. Furthermore, vehicles often do not have any lights. As a result, travellers after dark are more vulnerable to being robbed at an illegal barricade. Liberia has become increasingly stable since the internal conflict ended in 2003. However the security situation remains fragile. Furthermore, although Liberian President Charles Taylor is currently serving out a long prison sentence in the UK, following his conviction by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Taylor's supporters have warned that UK travellers in Liberia may be at risk of reprisal. Consequently MS Risk advises all British travellers to be extra vigilant and to avoid discussing any political issues. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks could be carried out in Liberia, this is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. UNMIL peacekeepers are deployed to the main population centers around Liberia, and patrol the main roads.

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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 Skiring (which is often used by groups of tourists during daylight hours) and on the road north of the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, from Sao Domingos to Ziguinchor (N4 bis). If you travel on either of these roads, you should do so only during daylight hours and monitor the local security situation before travelling. 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. At least six people were killed in the accident. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

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



No Travel
Advisory

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

Domestic News

- 29 November 2013** - On Friday, Benin freed a former militant leader from Nigeria's oil-rich Delta region after a personal intervention by Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan. According to Benjamin Agon, spokesman for Benin's foreign affairs department, "it was under pressure from the Nigerian head of state that the authorities freed the rebel chief on Friday at around midday." Mujahid Dobubo-Asari had been arrested in Benin's capital city Cotonou on Tuesday, with sources indicating that officials in Benin had been investigating Asari's business interests in the country. A diplomat also indicated that Asari's group, the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, had been suspected of lending support to criminal activities in the Delta region. While Benin police declined to comment, Asari's lawyer confirmed that his client was released and that he was on his way back to Nigeria's capital Abuja. Like Nigeria's President, Asari comes from the Ijaw ethnic group and is best known for staging attacks in 2004 on oil infrastructure in the southern region of Nigeria.

International Developments

- 4 December 2013** - On Wednesday, a court in France ruled against extraditing a businessman implicated in a plot to kill Benin's President Thomas Boni Yayi. The French appeal court indicated that it could not extradite Talon because it had not been clear if an arrest warrant for him was still valid. While there was no immediate comments from authorities in Benin, Talon praised the verdict as "a good decision for democracy in my country." Patrice Talon, a successful Beninese businessman and one-time ally of the president, was accused in October 2012 of attempting to kill Boni Yayi by switching his medication for poison. Shortly after the incident, Talon, 55, fled his homeland, where he already faced accusations of graft, and was arrested in France in December last year but released on bail. Three people, the president's niece, his doctor and a former minister, were also arrested in Benin last year in connection with the alleged assassination plot. While the case against them was later dismissed, the three remain in detention after the President launched an appeal. Boni Yayi is expected to arrive in Paris this week in order to attend a France-Africa summit with forty African leaders.
- 2 December 2013** - A judge, who angered the President of Benin after dismissing a case over an alleged coup plot, has fled the country over the weekend and is currently seeking political asylum in the United States. Angelo Houssou has stated that he had hiked into neighbouring Togo, and then

waded across a river separating Togo from Ghana, where he boarded a New York-bound flight. Although upon his arrival to the US, officials indicated that his visa had been revoked, Mr. Houssou is now negotiating for asylum, stating that he fears for his life in Benin. Mr. Houssou was the judge who handled two high profile cases, including an alleged coup plot this March and an attempt to poison President Yayi Boni in 2012. Although Mr. Houssou ruled on May 17 that there was not enough evidence in either case, the President has since appealed.

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 Boulsa, 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.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

With the recent kidnapping of a French priest in northern Cameroon, MS Risk advises against all travel to the North and Far North regions of Cameroon. The threat of kidnapping and hostage taking remains high at this time, with further such incidents likely to occur. While officials in Nigeria have requested Cameroon to increase security along the shared border between these two countries, the border regions continue to be porous and remain a safe haven for Boko Haram militants seeking shelter from the ongoing military operation in northern Nigeria.

The killing of a Cameroonian police officer on 19 August has prompted officials in Cameroon to close its border with the Central African Republic (CAR). The death of the officer occurred after a number of Seleka fighters crossed over the border into Cameroon, where they were stopped by officers patrolling the border region. Despite being escorted over the border, the fighters returned and attacked the police. It is currently not known how long the border will be closed. Consequently MS Risk advises against all travel to the border regions with the CAR as it is highly likely that militant groups and pro-Seleka fighters may be patrolling the areas and may at times attempt to cross into Cameroon. Legislative and municipal elections took place on 30 September 2013. Although the election results have not yet been released, it is possible that protests may occur if fraud allegations by the opposition are announced. Such protests may turn violent with minimal warning. Consequently MS Risk advises any travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to avoid large crowds, political demonstrations and rallies. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria



declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamwa, Borno and Yobe. Both Adamawa and Borno border Cameroon's far North, North and Adamaoua provinces. It is possible that military operations there might have an impact across the border in Cameroon. MS RISK advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in 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 Analysis

- **3 December 2013** - The government of Cameroon has confirmed that it has deployed troops to its eastern border with the CAR in order to prevent rebels from entering the country. Most of the combat-ready soldiers that are deployed to cover the nearly 800 kilometre (497 miles) border between Cameroon and the CAR are of the elite corps known as the rapid intervention unit. Officials in Cameroon ordered the deployment in response to intelligence that rebels were escaping into eastern Cameroon after the arrival of more French troops in the CAR's capital. In mid-November, armed men from the CAR entered Cameroon and attacked the village of Biti. Seven people, including a civilian, died in a confrontation between the rebels and Cameroonian soldiers. At the time, the local population blamed the Cameroonian government for not doing enough to protect them. Officials have also indicated that the reinforced security measures not only cover the border with the CAR, but also with the Republic of Congo. The CAR has been driven into chaos ever since rebels overthrew President Francois Bozize in March. While more French and African troops are due to arrive in an effort to halt fighting, looting and lawlessness, hundreds of thousands of people have been left homeless and desperate for food. The deployment of troops near the border with the CAR comes a week after officials in Cameroon indicated that they would also secure the porous border that is shared with Nigeria. Due to the ongoing military intervention in northern Nigeria, which seeks to remove Boko Haram from its bases and end a four-year insurgency, militants linked to the terrorist group have been easily moving through the border regions between the two countries. The threat to security in northern Cameroon was highlighted in early November when a French priest was kidnapped by militants linked to Boko Haram and taken across the border into Nigeria.

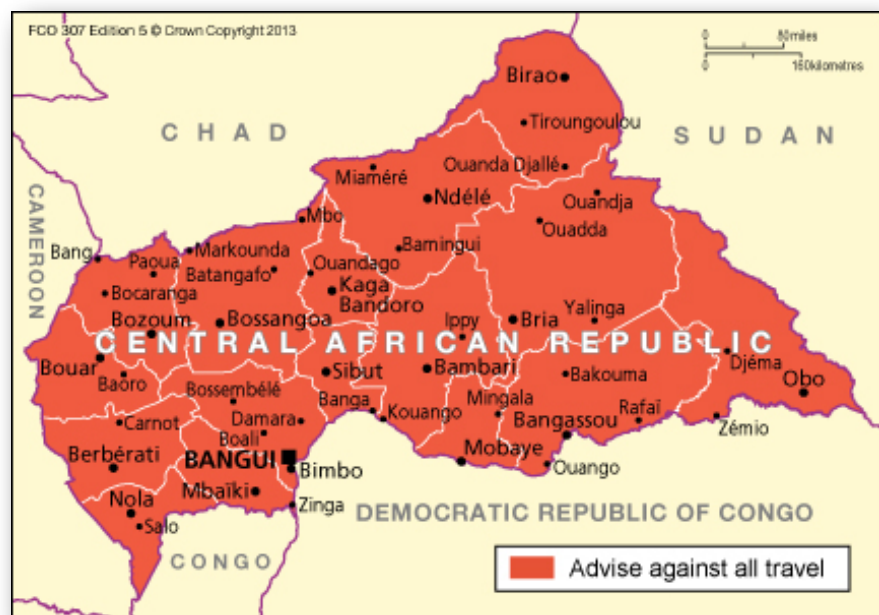
Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

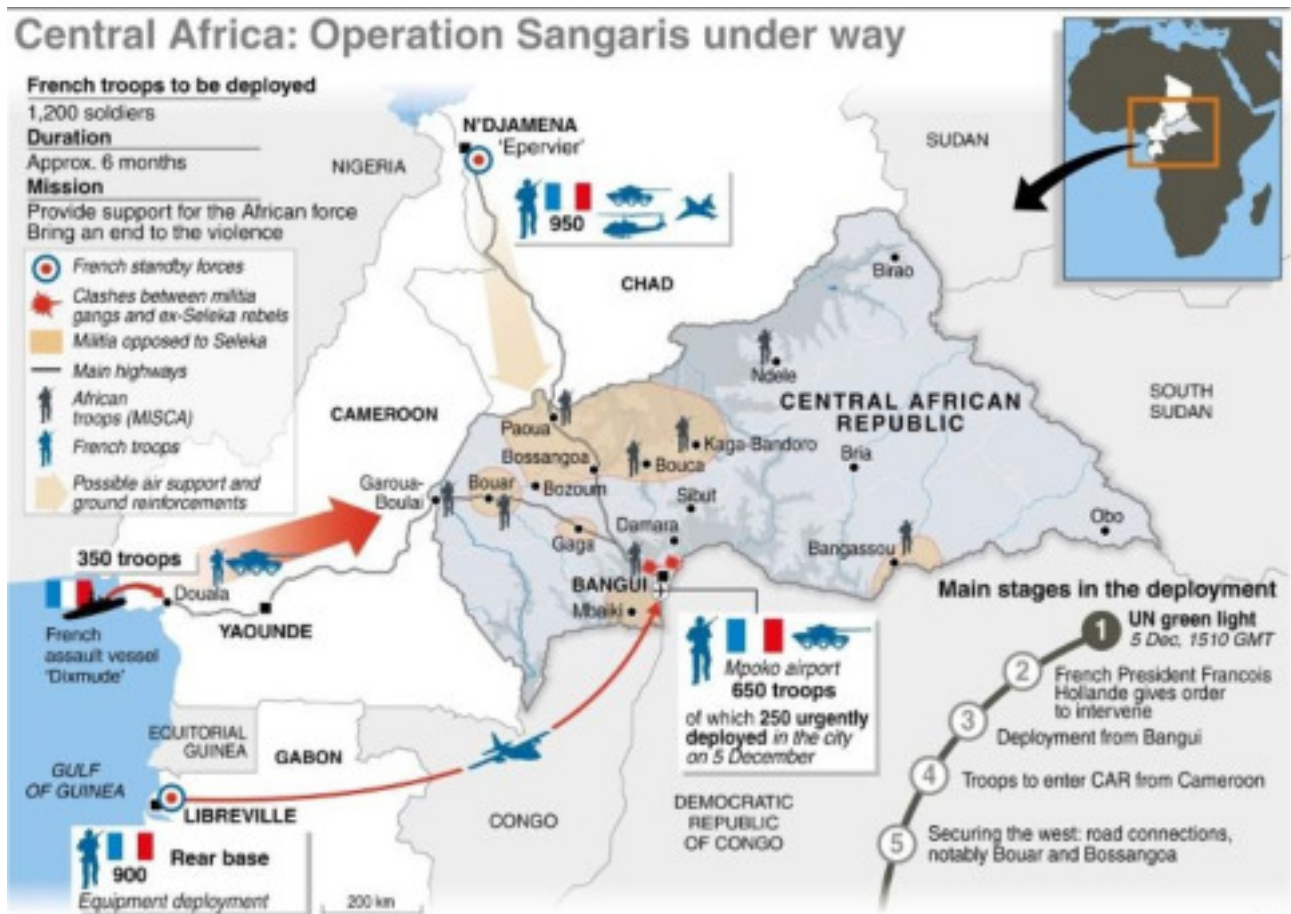
MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). The armed rebel coalition Seleka has renewed its offensive against President Francois Bozize's government and has taken control of the capital, Bangui. With Michel Djotodia officially sworn into office on August 18, security throughout 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. On 22 November 2013, the CAR's interim government announced a curfew from 10PM to 5AM. 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. Despite the French military intervention, Operation Sangaris, being launched in early December, security throughout the CAR remains unstable.



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.

On the Ground Reporting



- 6 December 2013** - On Friday, France deployed nearly 1,000 troops to help restore security in the CAR. French soldiers have already begun to patrol the streets of Bangui in armoured vehicles in a bid to ease tensions. According to officials at the Red Cross, violent clashes and massacres since Thursday have claimed the lives of at least 300 civilians. According to an official, the Red Cross has a provisional toll of 281 from counting bodies in morgues and in the streets, adding that medics have been unable to reach all the areas that have been hit by violence, where witnesses have reported several other uncollected bodies. Meanwhile medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reported that 92 deaths and 155 injured had been registered at one hospital in Bangui. In an effort to find refuge from the fighting in their neighbourhoods, thousands of residents have gathered in the vicinity of Bangui airport, where both French and African forces are based.
- 3 December 2013** - Armed men killed at least twelve civilians and wounded thirty others, including children, in the northwest of the capital city. The latest attack to hit the country comes just days before the United Nations Security Council is to vote on dispatching French reinforcements to restore order. BINUCA, as the United Nations office in Bangui is known, confirmed the attack, stating that unidentified armed men had targeted Boali, about 95 kilometres (60 miles) from the capital over the weekend. While the UN office did not give details on who was responsible for the attack, it warned that tensions between communities which will likely lead to “a climate of increasing violence” in the CAR.

- 28 November 2013** - Sources have indicated that French troops have begun to deploy to the CAR, airlifting men and equipment to Bangui in preparation for an intervention to restore order. According to an official, "French military aircraft have made several round trips in the past few hours coming mainly from Gabon, to bring in supplies," adding that "many patrol vehicles and troop transports, including light armoured vehicles, have arrived from Cameroon by road and headed directly for the M'poko military base," which is MISCA headquarters. Furthermore, "ground reconnaissance missions and joint patrols are being carried out right now by teams of French foreign legionnaires and men from the 410-strong French force already located in Bangui." Residents in the capital city have also reported more French military vehicles being seen, with a visible troop presence. On Tuesday, French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian announced plans to depot 1,000 soldiers to aid in halting the mounting violence in the country, where unprecedented religious clashes have aroused international fears of sectarian massacres. On Monday, Paris presented the UN Security Council with a draft resolution that is aimed at reinforcing a regional African military mission in the CAR (MISCA), with the goal of turning it into a UN peacekeeping force. Officials are hoping that the resolution will pass next week.

International Developments

- 6 December 2013** - The European Union has unblocked 50 million euros (US \$68 million) in order to support the foreign military operation in the CAR. The funds, which were confirmed by EU Commission head Jose Manuel Barroso shortly after France launched its intervention, comes on top of 245 million euros in development and humanitarian aid that have already been provided by the EU to help the African state. On Thursday, the United Nations Security Council gave the green light for French and African troops to be deployed to the CAR to restore order. Shortly after the announcement, French President Francois Hollande ordered an additional 600 troops to the country, doubling the force it already had in and around the capital, which was the scene of a sectarian bloodbath early Thursday that left more than 120 people dead.
- 5 December 2013** - The fifteen member United Nations Security Council has reached an agreement on a French resolution that is aimed at restoring order to the lawless CAR and is expected to vote on it on Thursday. The resolution will enable the African Union force in the country (MISCA) to be deployed for twelve months, with a review after six months, in order to help "the protection of civilians and the restoration of security and public order through the use of appropriate measures." The resolution also authorises French troops in the country to "take all necessary measures to support MISCA in the discharge of its mandate." The resolution, which is placed under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter regarding the use of force, also requests that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon issue a report to the Security Council within three months "on the possible transformation of MISCA to a UN peacekeeping operation." It will also provide for the creation of a commission to investigate human rights, an arms embargo to the CAR and targeted sanctions against anyone guilty of rights violations or attempting to block the political transition. The African Union force currently has about 2,500 troops deployed in the CAR, and is set to increase to 3,600 troops this month. However some Western officials have stated that this force is not big enough to cope with the crisis, an argument which was echoed in a recent report put forth by the Secretary General who indicated that 6,000 - 9,000 troops would be required if the UN steps in.
- 30 November 2013** - On Saturday, officials in Britain announced that they will provide £10 million (US \$16.4 million; 12 million euro) in aid to the CAR in a bid to help tackle the humanitarian crisis in the country. The support package, which comprises of emergency healthcare, clean water and logistical support, is intended to boost the relief programmes of international aid agencies that are operating in the strife-torn nation. While announcing the aid package, Britain's International Development Secretary Justine Greening stated that "it is clear the situation in the CAR is deteriorating rapidly with reports of violence and tension between communities," adding that "hundreds of thousands of people have already fled their homes and are entirely dependent on outside relief." The International Development Secretary noted that "this investment will help make

sure that we get urgent relief supplies to those in need and to protect vulnerable groups like girls and women.”

- Meanwhile the French presidency has announced that Paris will host on December 7 a mini-summit on the crisis in the CAR, with leaders from neighbouring African countries and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon due to attend. The gathering of leaders, which will also include the CAR's Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, will take place after the UN Security Council votes on France's plan to deploy about 1,000 soldiers to take on an active fighting role alongside a flagging African-led “stabilisation mission.” The French presidency also indicated that the summit had been requested by several countries and it would “enable discussion on ways of putting into action the resolution” in view of it being passed. France's resolution aims to strengthen an African stabilisation force in the country, which has about 2,5000 troops but which has been hampered by a lack of funds, arms and training.
- **26 November 2013** - On Tuesday, officials in France indicated that they will triple its troop stretch in the CAR after the United Nations warned that the country was descending into “complete chaos.” Speaking in Paris after meeting French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, Nicolas Tingaye indicated that officials in France will increase their troop numbers to 1,2000 once the uN Security Council votes on a resolution over the next week. Over the past few weeks, calls have been intensifying for an international reaction to the ongoing violence in the CAR amidst mounting warnings that the country was on the verge of genocide and was faced with a “human catastrophe of epic proportions.” Reports have described a litany of horrors in the landlocked country, with security forces and militia gangs razing villages, carrying out public execution-style killings and perpetrating widespread rapes. While France has already proposed a UN Security Council resolution that would authorise international troops to use force in its former colony, on Tuesday, Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian confirmed that Paris would send more troops to assist the beleaguered African mission. Le Drian indicated that “France will support this African mission with about 1,000 soldiers,” adding that the deployment would be “for a short period, in the range of about six months.” In contrast to its military intervention in Mali earlier this year, this time France will be working to assist “an African force that is already in the process of being set up.” The deployment of more troops to the CAR was confirmed by the CAR's Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye shortly after he held meetings in Paris on Monday. Le Drian also indicated that a draft Security Council Resolution could be passed by the 15-member council next week. According to the Defence Minister, the resolution aims to strengthen an African stabilisation force in CAR as a first step toward turning it into a formal UN peacekeeping mission. The force, known as MISCA, currently has about 2,500 troops however it has been hampered by a lack of funds, arms and training. While the force's numbers should increase to about 3,6000 when it is taken over by the African Union in December, the Security Council resolution would effectively allow African and French troops to use “all necessary measures” including force in order to protect civilians in the CAR and impose an embargo on all types of arms and ammunition. UN Deputy Secretary General Jan Elisasson has also called on the Security Council to act quickly on the crisis, stating that the CAR is “becoming a breeding ground for extremists and armed groups in a region that is already suffering from conflict.” Rights group Amnesty International has also urged the UN to tackle the “human catastrophe of epic proportions unfolding in the Central African Republic,” adding that “the situation is worsening on a daily basis in CAR, with extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings, rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls widely committed with total impunity for members of the security forces and armed groups alike.”



No Travel
Advisory

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.

Domestic News

- 2 December 2013** - According to officials in Ghana, Ivory Coast agents were sent to Ghana in order to kidnap or assassinate supporters of Ivorian ex-President Laurent Gbagbo. In a letter sent to the United Nations Security Council, officials in Ghana also indicated that the country had foiled two such attacks however a spokesman for the Ivory Coast's government has stated that "these are not our methods." Laurent Gbagbo was arrested in 2011 after months of unrest, which were sparked by his refusal to accept his defeat in the 2010 presidential elections and which resulted in the deaths of some 3,000 people. The former president is currently awaiting trial at The Hague on charges of crimes against humanity.

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



Guinea

The results of the 28 September legislative elections have been released, with the final results being confirmed on 15 November. So far, there have been reports of one death and several injuries as a result of riots that occurred in Conakry over the weekend of 16 and 17 November. Further riots and spontaneous demonstrations are possible, consequently MS Risk advises to remain vigilant, to monitor local media and to avoid large gatherings. 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 Analysis

- 25 November 2013** - At least one person was killed and several others wounded on Monday during a protest over the September 28 results of the parliamentary elections. Groups of youths barricaded the main roads around the capital Conakry, burning tyres and hurling rocks at the police who attempted to disperse them with teargas. A senior police officer confirmed the death, stating that several others, including six policemen, had been injured. The incident was the result of protests which had been called by Guinea's opposition parties to protest a Supreme Court decision that rejected complaints about the results of the election, which are meant to end the transition to civilian rule after a 2008 military coup. The court had confirmed the results of the elections, which gave President Alpha Conde's RPG party 3 out of 114 seats in parliament, just short of an outright majority. The opposition however has maintained that the elections were flawed. Guinea's transition to civilian rule has frequently been violent, hampering efforts to attract foreign investors to the country's rich iron ore, bauxite, gold and diamond reserves. Prior to the elections taking place, over fifty people were killed in a number of protests that have occurred in the capital city and throughout the country.



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. Since August 2012, there have been a number of shootings around the capital of Abidjan. Attacks have mainly occurred at night with the targets usually being police and military officials. Further such incidents cannot be ruled out at this time, consequently MS Risk advises those in the capital city to remain vigilant at all times.

Domestic News

- 2 December 2013** - On Monday, officials in the Ivory Coast denied a report by the United Nations that it had sent hit squads into neighbouring Ghana in order to kill followers of former president Laurent Gbagbo, who was forced to cede power in 2011 after a post-election crisis. According to government spokesman Bruno Kone, who has criticized "inadequacies" in the UN report, "at this stage, we can't give much credit to what has been said." The spokesman further noted that "the report itself says the experts are not in a position to independently verify the information given by the Ghanaian government," adding that "President Alassane Ouattara has been in power for two and a half years now....These aren't our methods." The report, which was written to the Security Council by experts charged with monitoring UN sanctions against Liberia, indicates that Ghana's government told sanctions experts that they "foiled" at least two missions this year by Ivory Coast agents to kill or abduct Gbagbo associates. Officials also indicated that the Ivory Coast had paid off Liberian mercenaries and Ivorian militia commanders to stop them from staging attacks to destabilize Ouattara's government. The Ivory Coast is still wading through the aftermath of the 2010 - 2011 crisis, when Gbagbo refused to accept his election loss to Ouattara, sparking four months of fighting that killed more than 3,000 people. The standoff concluded with Gbagbo's arrest at his presidential bunker in Abidjan by French and UN-backed forces. He is currently in custody at The Hague awaiting trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of crimes against humanity for his role in the crisis.
- 29 November 2013** - According to President Alassane Ouattara, Ivory Coast will hold its next presidential elections in October 2015. While the president did not declare definitively that he would seek a second term, on Friday he told supporters, who were gathered in central Ivory Coast's Bouake, that "I will be here campaigning in September 2015." Shortly after declaring the date for the next polls, Ouattara noted that he "...will not try to get back the time that was stolen from me because of the post-election crisis." The 2015 presidential elections in the Ivory Coast will be a test for the country which is still affected by the instability that occurred shortly after the 2010 presidential polls. Five months of deadly unrest followed the last elections as ex-President Laurent Gbagbo refused to concede defeat. The violence, which claimed more than 3,000 lives, ended after he was captured in April 2011. Gbagbo is currently in the custody of the International Criminal

Court (ICC) and has been accused of masterminding a campaign of violence during the standoff in the West African country.

- **26 November 2013** - According to the Ivorian government, West African neighbour states Ghana and the Ivory Coast are aiming to settle a long dispute pertaining to their maritime boundary, a move which could defuse the occasional tense relations that have been endured by the two states and which will likely smooth the way for oil and gas exploration. While the countries have never officially delimited the boundary, and with their maps showing offshore waters that overlap, so far only Ghana has been awarded acreage in the disputed area. Oil exploration in the Gulf of Guinea has accelerated since Ghana discovered its giant Jubilee oil and gas field in 2007. The field is estimated to hold around 2 billion barrels of oil reserves and another 1.2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Although the Ivory Coast drilled only a handful of offshore exploration wells during a decade-long political crisis that concluded in 2011, officials in the country are now seeking to expand its oil and gas industry and have asserted that some of the offshore areas that are being claimed by Ghana lie within the Ivory Coast's territorial waters. On Tuesday, a spokesman for the Ivory Coast government, Bruno Kone, stated that "the two heads of state...have formally decided that the resolution of this dispute should be peaceful. The decision taken will be a consensual decision," adding that the "Ivory Coast has set up a commission to work on the subject....So in June 2014, our two countries, Ghana and Ivory Coast, will be able to find a definitive solution to this dispute." With the return of political stability in the Ivory Coast, the country's economy grew by 9.8 percent last year. Despite this, the government aims to diversify, given the fact that cocoa accounts for 40 percent of exports. Furthermore, its potentially lucrative and largely undeveloped offshore blocks have also generated renewed interest. In April of this year, France's Total announced that it had discovered oil in the western part of CI-100, a block that it acquired in 2010 and which is adjacent to the disputed area with Ghana. Total, along with its partners Anardarko and Canada's CNR, plan to spend up to US \$300 million in order to drill exploration wells on three offshore blocks in waters off the western town of Sassandra.

Avoid ALL
travel to part(s)
of country

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



Mali

Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to Bamako. We also advise against all travel to the rest of Mali, especially to the northern regions of the country. Although Bamako is generally calm, the situation throughout the rest of the country is still volatile. Presidential elections were held on July 28 and August 11, and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and his new government took office in September 2013. Legislative elections took place on 24 November 2013. Election results are expected to be announced in the coming weeks, with a possible election runoff, if required, being held on 15 December. If you are in Bamako, MS Risk advises you to maintain a high level of

vigilance, to keep a low profile and to stay alert to the local political developments. We also advise that you avoid sensitive areas, including military installations and large gatherings of people. Night time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako, largely controlling access to military and government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn.

During the rainy season, which runs from May until October, torrential rains can cause floods and landslides, and may result in houses collapsing. In late August, there were reports of flash flooding



that occurred in Bamako. The neighborhoods of Bankoni, Taliko, Lafiabougou, Djicoroni Woyowayanko, Lafiabougou Bougouba and Bougoudani were all hit by floods during the rains storms which lasted most of the day. MS Risk advises anyone in the capital city to monitor the local weather reports and to expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Terrorism

There still remains a high threat from terrorism in Mali. No curfew is currently in place however MS Risk advises those in the country to monitor the local media for reports of any new measures.

Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. There is also a high threat of kidnapping in Mali by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and by the splinter group, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). Although AQIM uses the northern region of Mali as an operating base, it has proven its capability of travelling long distances in order to carry out attacks, some of which have occurred in neighboring countries. As such the kidnap threat cannot be isolated within the northern regional stronghold. In turn, criminal gangs have previously been engaged to carry out kidnappings for terrorist groups in return for financial rewards. Subsequently attacks can take place throughout Mali.

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

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

Kidnapping

In the past, a number of Westerners have been kidnapped by terrorists in Mali and in the Sahel region. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel. Victims have included tourists, NGO workers and diplomats of a variety of nationalities, primarily European. These attacks have on occasion resulted in the murder of the hostages. The recent kidnapping of a French citizen in the western region of the country has come as a shock as the area where he was taken has been perceived as being stable and under governmental control. In the past, kidnap threats have typically emanated from the Azawad region in the north and east part of the 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

- **4 December 2013** - A mass grave containing twenty-one bodies has been found by investigators in Mali who are searching for missing red beret soldiers. Mali's chief prosecutor, Daniel Tessougue, confirmed that the remains were found buried at Diago, which is located 20 kilometres (12 miles) north of the capital Bamako. The bodies were found near the coup leader's base near Bamako.

While a justice ministry official has indicated that the bodies were “probably” those of soldiers loyal to the former president, there have been no official confirmations. According to Mr. Tessougu, the discovery was made possible by information provided by military officials arrested along with General Sanogo last week. At least seven people have been charged as part of the investigation. President Amadou Toumani Toure was toppled in a coup last year. The general who led the rebellion, Amadou Sanogo, was charged with “murders and assassination” last Wednesday. The move is part of efforts by the newly elected government to assert control over the army. At the time of the coup, Gen Sanogo accused the president of not doing enough to combat a Tuareg-led rebellion. In the month that followed the coup, at least twenty-three soldiers loyal to the ousted president, known as red berets, disappeared.

- **1 December 2013** - Malian and French military officials have confirmed that a suicide bomber killed himself overnight Saturday in a failed attack against a French army position in northern Mali. According to a senior Malian army official, “the suicide bomber targeted a French army position in the town of Menaka....The French troops detected his presence and in the rush, the man set off his explosive belt, killing himself but causing no other casualties.” The Malian army official further noted that at least two other would-be suicide bombers fled the scene after they were apparently ordered to take part in the attack on the French troops. The attack in Menaka, which is located 300 kilometres (190 miles) east of Gao, has also been confirmed by the communications unit of the French military.
- **29 November 2013** - An ethnic Tuareg separatist group in Mali has announced that it is ending a five-month ceasefire agreement that was reached with the Malian government back in June of this year. While the rebels have previously threatened to pull out of the peace deal, accusing the central government in Bamako of failing to fulfil its promises, this is the first time they have formally ended the ceasefire. The rebels have confirmed that they will take up arms, following violence in the northern city of Kidal, a move which will likely effect the security and stability of the entire country as it heads into a second round of parliamentary elections. On Friday, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad announced that it would return to war against Mali’s army after indicating that one person was killed, and five others injured, in clashes with soldiers at an airport. The announcement, which has been described by the group’s leader as “...a declaration of war,” comes one day after clashes occurred between Malian troops and Tuareg protesters who prevented Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly from visiting the town of Kidal. According to Mahamadou Djeri Maiga, vice president of the MNLA, “what happened on Thursday is a declaration of war. We will deliver this war,” adding that “wherever we find the Malian army we will launch the assault against them. It will be automatic. The warnings are over.” On Thursday, several hundred Tuareg demonstrators occupied an airport runway in order to prevent Mali’s Prime Minister from visiting the rebel-controlled north-eastern town of Kidal. While protesters indicated on Thursday that Malian soldiers had fired directly at “women and children who were demonstrating peacefully,” the central government has since indicated that its soldiers stationed at the airport had been “taken to task by uncontrollable elements” and had fired warning shots after being shot at and hit with stones. One person was killed in the clashes on Thursday, while three women and two children were injured. One of the women is in serious condition. While Thursday’s incident has confirmed that tensions continue to exist between the Malian government and Tuareg rebels, the end of the ceasefire could potentially threaten security throughout Mali. Furthermore, this will likely have an impact on the second round of parliamentary elections, which are set to take place 15 December, and Mali’s overall process of returning to civilian rule after a Tuareg uprising that led to a coup last year and the occupation of the northern regions of the country by al-Qaeda-linked militants. The end to the ceasefire could potentially threaten security in northern Mali. After eighteen months of a political and military crisis, the peace deal was signed between the rebels and the Malian government in June of this year. The June accord, which was signed in Burkina Faso’s capital Ouagadougou, effectively opened the way for voting to take place in Mali, including in Kidal. Two rounds of a presidential election occurred in July and August. Furthermore, up until the agreement was reached, the MNLA, whose ultimate goal is the independence of Azawad, had refused to allow any government soldiers or civil servants

to enter the town. Under the June agreement, the rebels remained in Kidal however they were required to return to their barracks under the supervision of UN peacekeepers. They were also forced to stop carrying arms in public and dismantle all roadblocks.

- **28 November 2013** - A Malian fugitive, known as “Cheibani” has been recaptured by French forces following his escape from a Niger prison in June of this year. The fugitive, Alhassane Ould Mohammed, who escaped from a prison in Niger where he was serving a sentence for the killing of four Saudi tourists along with his alleged participation in the assassination of a US diplomat, was arrested by French soldiers in northern Mali on Tuesday. Mali’s Chief Prosecutor Daniel Tessogue confirmed the arrest, adding that Cheibani had been arrested along with three other people. According to Niger’s Justice Minister Marou Mohamed, Cheibani was captured after a tip-off from Niger security officials. He was found in a hideout situated between the towns of Gao and Kidal. Cheibani was amongst twenty-two prisoners who escaped from the jail in June after an attack on the prison was launched by suspected Islamist militants. Following the mass breakout, officials in the United States unsealed an indictment for his arrest. The indictment specified that Cheibani was wanted for the murder of US diplomat William Bultemeir, who was shot in December 2000 in Niger’s capital city as he was leaving a restaurant with his colleagues. In September, months after his escape, a US \$20,000 (£12,235) reward was announced for information that would lead to his recapture. At the time of his escape, Cheibani was serving a twenty-year prison sentence in Niger for the murder of four Saudi citizens who were travelling with a Saudi prince on a hunting trip in 2009.
- Meanwhile on Thursday, Tuareg demonstrators in the northeastern town of Kidal occupied an airport runway in order to prevent Mali’s Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly from visiting the rebel-controlled town. Shortly after the protests ended, demonstrators indicated that Malian soldiers had shot and wounded three demonstrators, however officials from the Malian army have denied these allegations. An African military source has indicated that although troops from the UN military supporting mission in Mali, MINUSMA, attempted to stop the demonstrators from occupying and blocking the runway, they failed to remove the protesters. Isamel Toure, an official in the regional governor’s office confirmed these reports, stating that as the airport was preparing to receive the prime minister’s plane, “several hundred youths and women backed by the MNLA went to Kidal aerodrome, determined to stop the plane from landing.” Aides of the Prime Minister confirmed the incident, stating that “for the moment,” the prime minister had cancelled his trip. According to his aides, prior to arriving in Kidal, the prime minister had been visiting Gao, which is located 300 kilometres (185 miles) south of Kidal. Despite a signed ceasefire between the Malian government and Tuareg rebels, which was reached in June of this year, tensions between the two groups continue to be an issue and a threat to Mali’s stabilisation process and lasting peace. The latest elections in Mali have been viewed as generally being peaceful by foreign and national monitors however observers nonetheless regretted the low turnout.
- **27 November 2013** - Amadou Sanogo, the leader of the 2012 coup which effectively plunged Mali into months of chaos, was on Wednesday charged with murder and complicity to murder. According to a judicial source, he has been placed in detention pending further investigations. According to a source close to the case, Sanogo has also been charged with kidnapping, with the source noting that “other people” close to the coup leader will be questioned. His arrest was ordered by investigating judge Yaya Karembe, who at a hearing in Bamako, charged the lieutenant-general with murder. The hearing in the capital city came just hours after several dozen Malian soldiers forcibly entered Sanogo’s residence, which is located in the city centre, in order to arrest him. Although Sanogo had been ordered in October to appear in front of a panel to answer questions pertaining to a number of deaths that occurred during a mutiny against him at his former headquarters in the central town of Kati, which is located near Bamako, the summons had been ignored by Sanogo, which sparked indignation amongst Malian politicians and activists. Despite launching a coup in March of last year, in May 2012, Sanogo, along with his former junta, were granted a general amnesty, with Sanogo receiving the status of former head of state, which included all the accompanying benefits. Although that status was later withdrawn, Mr. Sanogo was

controversially promoted from captain to lieutenant-general in August of his year, a promotion that prompted a number of fellow ex-junta members, who were also seeking promotions, to mutiny at his Kati barracks. This forced the Malian army to intervene in order to prevent another coup, and further destabilisation of security, from occurring. Shortly after the Malian military intervened, the bodies of three missing soldiers were discovered in and around the barracks. Around twenty officers, including Sanogo's former deputy, were subsequently arrested. Human Rights Watch (HRW), along with other politicians and activists, have called his promotion a "shameful act," and have argued that the former captain should have been investigated for his alleged involvement in torture.

Domestic News

- **4 December 2013** - Mali's government and Tuareg separatists have both accused France of not doing enough in order to resolve the political crisis. After winning adulation across Mali for a five-month military offensive earlier this year, which aided in dislodging al-Qaeda-linked militants in northern Mali, France is now caught in between the government in Bamako and rebels who are demanding some form of autonomy based Kidal. Despite the Malian interim government signing a peace agreement with Tuareg representatives in mid-June, effectively allowing national elections to take place, negotiations over the Tuareg's demands for greater autonomy have stalled. Furthermore, according to Mali's newly-elected President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, "the liberation of the country was done jointly between French and Malian troops up to Kidal, and then the Malian army was blocked....For someone like me, a friend of France, I can see a negative reaction to the enthusiasm towards France by the Malian population that had lauded the intervention." The comments by Mali's president come on the eve of a summit that is due to take place in Paris, where France will try to persuade African leader that it can no longer play policeman on the continent despite its troops preparing to act in a new conflict in the Central African Republic.
- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly announced that the Malian government remains "open to talks" with Tuareg rebels despite one of their leaders declaring a return to war. In an interview with pro-government daily L'essor, the Prime Minister downplayed the declaration of war, which was made on Friday by Mahamadou Djeri Maiga, vice president of the Tuareg's National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), stating that "it's not a declaration from the MNLA but...from a vice president of the MNLA." The Prime Minister further indicated that "we are open to discussions...to get to inclusive negotiations that should lead to peace in the region." In June, the MNLA signed a peace agreement to end their latest insurgency, which began in January 2012. However long standing Tuareg demands for autonomy for Azawad remain unresolved, with sporadic violence still occurring. As part of his declaration of war, the MNLA's vice president also stated that the MNLA will launch attacks wherever it finds the army.
- **2 December 2013** - Mali's defence minister vowed Monday that he would not pose "any obstacle" to the court case against General Amadou Sanogo, the leader of a March 2012 coup that plunged the country into crisis. While Sanogo still commands support in some circles, including key segments of the army, Defence Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maïa, who is part of the new government that was sworn in after the presidential elections, has stated that he will fully cooperate with judicial authorities. Speaking to journalists in Bamako, the Defence Minister stated that "I will not pose any obstacle. I will give my authorisation, I will give my assistance for all army elements involved in the judicial process, so that the people will have to go explain themselves before the judge." The Minister added that Sanogo's arrest was not at the "government's initiative," and that instead "it's a judicial process at the initiative of families that are trying to find out what happened to their relatives...whom they haven't heard from." In turn, "for us, it's also part of restoring the honour of the army, restoring the image that citizens should have of the army and restoring the ethic that soldiers themselves must have to conduct the missions that are expected of them." Sanogo, a divisive figure in the West African state, was arrested on November 27 and charged, along with

fifteen other people comprising mostly of fellow soldiers from his inner circle, for alleged crimes during the coup and its aftermath. According to officials in the government, Sanogo has been charged with complicity in kidnappings, however a source close to the case has indicated that the charges also include murder, complicity to murder and carrying out kidnappings.

- **27 November 2013** - Officials on Wednesday announced that Mali's parliamentary elections will enter a second round of voting on December 15, after no party secured an absolute majority in the first round of voting that took place on November 24. While some 6.5 million Malians were eligible to vote for a new national assembly, with more than 1,000 candidates running for the 147 seats, turnout reached only 38.4 percent. According to Moussa Sinko Coulibaly, the Minister of Territorial Administration, the turnout was "far short of our expectations." The goal of Mali's new president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, is to give his RPM party, and its allies, a comfortable majority in the new assembly. The November 24 polls mark Mali's second major step towards recovery after the country plunged into chaos in the wake of last year's military coup. They also mark a finalisation of Mali's transition to democracy after the process was started with the August presidential elections.

International Developments

- **25 November 2013** - On Monday, officials from the European Union indicated that Mali's parliamentary elections had confounded fears over possible Islamist violence and were "another success" despite low-level protests in the north and a poor turnout. Sunday's polls marked Mali's latest step towards recovery after the West African country plunged into chaos. Louis Michel, head of the bloc's election observation mission, paid tribute to "the success of the organisation of elections, particularly with regard to the logistical, material and human conditions that prevailed during voting operations."



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the 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. Despite the opposition boycotting the elections, on 23 November 2013, parliamentary and local elections were held in



Mauritania. Election results have been released, with the ruling party winning a majority of seats.

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

- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, the elections commission announced that Mauritania's ruling party had won a sweeping victory in last week's legislative and local elections, with an Islamist party coming in second. According to results from the 121 seats that were won in the first round of voting, the ruling Union for the Republic (UPR), along with its allied parties, won a large majority in the 147-seat parliament. The UPR won 56 seats, while another 34 seats were shared between fourteen small parties aligned to the ruling party. The main Islamist party, Tewassoul, which had been closely-watched as it took part in elections for the first time, won twelve seats. Three other opposition parties won a total of nineteen seats. Tewassoul, the only member of the 11-party Coordination of Democratic Opposition (COD) to not participate in the election boycott, has since claimed that the polls were marred by fraud. In the municipal elections, the UPR has so far won 81 of 218 local councils across the country. Tewassoul won three while another opposition party, El-Wiam, won two. A remaining 120 councils will be decided in the run-off vote. While there was no outright winner of the remaining twenty-six seats, a second round of voting, which the national electoral commission on Tuesday postponed for two weeks until December 21, will take place.

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



Niger

Security Summary

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

advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack by suspected Islamist militants. Travellers in Niamey should continue to monitor developments and be alert to announcements and remain vigilant at all times. On 23 May 2013,



a military barracks in the town of Agadez and a uranium processing facility near the town of Arlit, approximately 150 miles north of Agadez, were attacked. A number of people were killed and injured. The terrorist group which claimed responsibility for the two attacks has publicly threatened to carry out further attacks in Niger. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in its northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Borno and Yobe border southern Niger. Consequently there is a risk that instability may spill over the border from Nigeria to

Niger. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups including AQIM and MOJWA. These groups have kidnapped Westerners in Niger and in the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey and the north and west of Niger. Further kidnappings are likely to occur. There is a threat of retaliatory attacks in Niger, due to the country's participation in the French-led intervention in Mali. Levels of crime are high, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. Banditry, smuggling and other criminal activity is common in border areas, especially after dark. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises avoiding crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

Domestic News

- **6 December 2013** - Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou revealed in Paris on Friday that his country wants to renew its uranium mining agreement with French nuclear giant Areva, however on more equitable terms. The President, who is in Paris to attend a Franco-African summit on peace and security, stating on the sidelines that "the negotiations are proceeding normally," adding that "our aim is to balance out the relations between us and Areva." After more than four decades of mining at two sites on the southern edge of the Sahara, with a third under development, Areva's contract to extract uranium in the West African country expires on 31 December 2013. The French group and the Niger government are currently engaged in talks to renegotiate the terms for a further ten years, with officials in Niamey pressing for a greater share of revenue from Areva's activities. President Issoufou has stated that the content of the current conventions signed by the former French colony and Areva in the 1970's were shaped by "the balance of power of the time," pointing out that "the world has changed." Earlier this week, Areva chief executive Luc Oursel stating that "our cooperation with Niger has lasted for 40 years. Our goal is that it should also last for a very long time." The French nuclear company will also delay the start of uranium production from its Imouraren mine by at least six months, effectively at the end of 2015. The giant Imouraren mine, which is due to double Niger's production of the nuclear fuel was initially due to start production in 2012. The date has been repeatedly pushed back amidst security fears in the desert north.
- Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou stated on Friday that Libya risks becoming a failed state similar to Somalia. The comments by Niger's head of state occurred during a Franco-African summit in Paris and come just one day after gunmen in Libya shot dead an American teacher in the eastern city of Benghazi. Niger, which adjoins Libya to the south, has fought Islamist militants at home, and currently want to reinforce its military ties with Western partners and neighbouring states as al-Qaeda-linked militants regroup in southern Libya after being ousted from Mali earlier this year. Niger has seen a string of attacks this year, including on a French-run uranium mine, with the country's president now stating that there was not time to lose for countries in the Sahel desert region to pool their resources to create "mixed brigades" that could enter each other's countries to combat Islamist fighters. Regional rivalries have aggravated the problem with a lack of cooperation between the Saharan states aiding in militants fleeing when under pressure and regrouping in quieter parts of the vast desert region. Speaking to reporters ahead of the Franco-African summit, President Issoufou stated that "our fear is that Libya falls into the hands of Salafist terrorists and that the state becomes like Somalia," further noting that "sadly, we're seeing that the terrorists are there and that armed Salafist militia are in Benghazi, with people being killed almost every day. We must stabilise Libya." The comments by the President came after gunmen shot dead an American teacher working in Benghazi on Thursday. The attack came more than a year after Islamist militants stormed the US consulate there, killing the US ambassador and three others.

Regional Reporting

- **4 December 2013** - The presidents of Niger and Mauritania have appealed to the rest of the Sahel region to join their efforts in confronting terrorism and trans-Saharan smuggling. The appeal came as the heads of state concluded a two-day summit in Niamey which included delegations from both countries. During a press conference shortly after, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz stated that “joint action will enable the countries of the Sahel to confront challenges in various fields, especially the most pressing ones such as security.” The President added that “development cannot be achieved without a credible democracy and human rights in our countries cannot be advanced without overcoming this challenge,” adding that “Mauritania realised from the outset the risk of terrorist groups in the region and decided to fight this phenomenon through an integrated and sound strategy.” In turn, “the stability of Niger was built on respect, patience, and tolerance between the various components of its people....This very stability is threatened today by various risks, the most important of which is a misconception of religion based on tribalism and intolerance, a misconception that produced extremism and terrorism.” The president of Niger praised the agreement on military co-operation with Mauritania as an important step on the road to building a solid foundation for relations between the two countries. At the end of the Mauritanian president’s visit to Niger, a memorandum of understanding covering a number of co-operation agreements between the two countries was signed. The agreement included judicial collaboration, airborne rescue, Islamic affairs and the Arabic language as well as petroleum and minerals.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

Summary

In November, a French national was kidnapped in northern Cameroon, near the border with Nigeria, by suspected Boko Haram militants. It is currently believed that the French national has been taken across the border into Nigeria and is likely being held captive in the northern region of Nigeria. MS Risk advises all to avoid travelling to the northern regions of the country, especially to the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, which are currently under a state of emergency. Continued kidnappings of foreign nationals, especially French nationals, is highly likely to continue.

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. That state of emergency has now been extended for an additional six months. 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, Zamfara 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

- **3 December 2013** - On Tuesday, Nigeria's military restored the mobile phone service in the embattled city of Maiduguri, just one day after a major raid by Islamist militants that prompted a round-the-clock ban on movements. According to defence spokesman Chris Olukolade, the decision was made "because the situation on the ground is conducive." This explanation has raised questions as it comes one day after a daring Boko Haram attack on air fires and army bases in the city, which caused heavy damage to military hardware. The Borno state government later announced a relation of the curfew, ordering residents to stay of the streets from 7:00 PM (1800 GMT) to 6:00 AM. The phone services had initially been switched off in May when the state of emergency was first declared. At the time, the Nigerian military had stated that this would help block Boko Haram militants from coordinating attacks in the northeastern city. The recent daring Boko Haram raid in the Maiduguri has been an embarrassing setback for the security forces and has further eroded claims made by Nigerian officials that the militants have been significantly weakened. While the six-month-old offensive against the militants has made some gains, with sustaining pressure the best option in ending the four-year insurgency, prosecutes for peace remain bleak. The early morning attack on Monday, which was reportedly carried out by hundreds of heavily armed militants, targeted air force and army positions despite the military stating that the city had largely been secured. According to local residents, the rebels destroyed military aircraft, razed buildings and set shops and petrol stations ablaze.
- **2 December 2013** - A string of overnight attacks carried out by Boko Haram militants have forced authorities to impose a total ban on movement in Maiduguri, with no air traffic allowed in or out of the state of Borno. The announcement was made by state governor secretary Baba Ahmed Jidda who confirmed that "the Borno state government in consultation with the military has decided to impose a 24-hour curfew in Maiduguri," adding that "the imposition of the curfew is necessitated by an attack in Maiduguri by people suspected to be Boko haram members in the early hours of today." The apparently large attack that occurred in a major urban centre will likely cast further doubts on the military's claims that the Islamist insurgents have been pushed into remote and more rural parts of northeastern Nigeria. The 24-hour curfew also comes days after the military indicated that they would tighten security in communities near Nigeria's northern and eastern borders with Chad, Niger and Cameroon, due to fears that Boko Haram may carry out strikes over the coming Christmas and New Year period.
- **30 November 2013** - Suspected Boko Haram militants killed twenty four people in two separate attacks in northern Nigeria on Saturday, just as the military announced an increase in security for the Christmas period. Seven fishermen were ambushed and killed in the first attack that was carried out in Baga, a fishing community located on Lake Chad in Borno state. Seventeen people died in a

separate attack on Thursday when, according to eye witness accounts, gunmen in pick-up trucks torched more than one hundred shops and vehicles in the Sabon Gari area of the Damboa district, 90 kilometres (56 miles) from the state capital, Maiduguri.

- **28 November 2013** - According to military officials, air strikes on Boko Haram camps in northeastern Nigeria have killed “many” insurgents. The latest attack in an operation that is aimed at defeating the four-year Islamist insurgency occurred on Sunday when a bombardment targeted the notorious Sambisa Forest area of Borno state, which is considered to be an extremist fiefdom and which has become a key focus of the military’s ongoing offensive. While the attack occurred last Sunday and lasted until the early morning hours, news of the assault has been slow to emerge as the mobile phone network in Borno remains switched off. According to area army spokesman Mohammed Dole, “our men have identified and destroyed some camps of terrorists along the Sambisa area and the operation was a huge success,” adding that while “I cannot tell you the exact number of terrorists killed...but many of them have been killed during the airstrike which we strongly believe was precise.” A military source has also indicated that dozens of militants were likely to have been killed in the attack. Over the past few weeks, Nigeria’s military has claimed a string of recent successes against Boko Haram in the northeastern regions of the country.
- **26 November 2013** - Nigeria’s military has reported that gunmen have killed thirty-seven people in a pre-dawn raid carried out in Nigeria’s central Plateau state. According to officials, herdsmen from the Fulani ethnic group carried out the attack on villages that are mostly inhabited by the Berom community. Salisu Mustapha, the area military spokesman confirmed the attack, staging that “at about 2:00 am (0100 GMT) unknown gunmen carried out an attack” in four villages, “the attackers killed...13 persons in Katu Kapang, eight in Daron, nine in Tul and seven others in Rawuru.” The army spokesman has also indicated that “the gunmen fled on sighting the arrival of the troops,” noting that the situation was now “under control.” Over the past few years, Nigeria’s Plateau state has been affected by inter-ethnic and religious violence, which has killed thousands. The state lies in Nigeria’s so-called Middle Belt, which is the dividing line between the mainly Christian south and predominately Muslim north. Mostly Muslim herdsmen from the Fulani-Hausa ethnic group have in the past been blamed for scores of attacks on mainly Christian agriculturalists from the Berom ethnic community. Fulani leaders have stated that the Berom politicians who control the state have systematically suppressed the rights of herdsmen, denying them access to desperately needed grazing land. Furthermore, many believe that the conflict in the Plateau state has intensified due to provisions in Nigeria’s constitution which give enhanced rights to indigenous people. The Berom and linked ethnic groups are the state’s indigenes, giving them better access to education, land and political office.

Domestic News

- **4 December 2013** - Officials in Nigeria on Wednesday stated that 500 people who were arrested during security operations against Boko haram militants in three northeastern states should be put on trial for their offences. A statement issued by the country’s defence spokesman, Chris Olukolade, indicated that the 500 are amongst nearly 1,400 people who were detained in the states of Borno, Adamwa and Yobe between July and September of this year. The statement further noted that “high-profile suspects, some of whom were training other terrorists in weapon-handling, as well as those who confessed to being trained in Mali and other countries for the purpose of perpetrating terror in Nigeria” were among those recommended for trial. While human rights lawyers in the country cautiously welcomed the announcement, applauding the pledge to adhere to due process and the rule of law, human rights groups have criticised what they say were arbitrary detentions as well as torture and deaths in custody, calling for suspects to either be put on trial or released without charge.
- **1 December 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan’s party has finished second in a state election that has largely been seen as a test of his popularity and opposition strength. On Sunday, the country’s electoral watchdog, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

announced on its website that Jonathan's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had received 97,700 votes in the race for a new governor in southeastern Anambra state while the main opposition, the All Progressive Congress (APC) was just behind with 95,963 votes. Victory went to the All Progressive Grand Alliance, which retained the governorship with 180,178 votes. Voting in Anambra state was closely watched by officials, analysts and politicians throughout Nigeria as it has largely been seen as a test of Jonathan's public support before he is expected to run for re-election in 2015. Polling in Anambra first took place on November 16 however the PDP, APC and Labour Party all called for the election to be declared null and void amidst reports that ballot boxes, papers and other election material had gone missing. Prior to voting, police had also imposed tough restrictions on movement into and out of the state, which was viewed in some quarters as harassment and intimidation and raised fears for the running of the general election in eighteen months time. The INEC, which admitted that there were some "lapses" in organisation, ordered a partial re-run in a number of constituencies on Saturday. Turnout in the overall elections was low at just 26.3 percent.

- **30 November 2013** - On Saturday, Nigeria's military pledged to secure communities near its northern and eastern borders with Chad, Niger and Cameroon over the Christmas and New Year periods as fears grow that Boko Haram militants will increase their attacks over this period. The militant group has previously launched deadly attacks on and around the Christian festival. A wave of attacks against churches and police on 25 December 2011 left forty-nine people dead. According to area army spokesman Colonel Mohammed Dole, troops have been deployed to those frontier villages and towns in Borno state that have previously been targeted. Furthermore, the Nigerian military has "...identified their hideouts and we are determined to make all the border communities and the state generally free of Boko Haram activities so that people can move freely and celebrate the Yuletide peacefully."
- **29 November 2013** - Three Lebanese nationals, who were suspected of being Hezbollah members, have been cleared of terrorism charges on Friday, however one of the accused has been convicted of a weapons offence and jailed for life. Mustapha Fawaz, Abdallah Thahini and Talal Ahmad Roda were arrested in May after the discovery of an arms cache in a residence in the northern city of Kano. At the time, they were accused of plotting attacks against Western and Israeli targets in Nigeria, accusations which they have denied. On Friday, Federal High Court Judge Adeniyi Adetokunbo Ademola ruled that Hezbollah "is not an international terrorist organisation in Nigeria" and therefore membership is not criminal. The judge further noted that there was "no evidence" that the group was planning an attack or had received "terrorism training" as the prosecution had alleged. The three men have also been acquitted of money laundering charges however Mr. Roda was found guilty of conspiracy to import weapons into the country and sentenced to life imprisonment. A lawyer for the three men has indicated that he will consult with Mr. Roda about a possible appeal against his conviction and sentence. The trial of the three men had featured a number of unexpected twists, including a testimony by Mr. Roda who indicated that an extremist cell in Nigeria had plotted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador. In August, Mr. Fawaz had testified that he had been harshly interrogated by Israeli security agents shortly after his arrest. In court documents, Mr. Fawaz indicated that the grilling was carried out by "six Israeli Mossad agents and one masked white man" who were primarily concerned with his contacts in Lebanon and who demanded details of where weapons were stored in his home country. Mr. Thahini also testified that he had collapsed after being denied sleep for five days in a similar interrogation by purported Israeli agents. Shortly after their arrest, officials in Israel raised concerns over alleged efforts by Hezbollah members to plan attacks in West Africa.
- **28 November 2013** - Politicians and activists have warned that Nigeria's 2015 presidential elections could descend into chaos if the alleged irregularities that occurred in a recent key local vote are repeated nationally. Nearly two weeks after voters went to the polls to elect a new governor in the southeastern state of Anambra, provisional results have given victory to the All Progressives Grand Alliance party of incumbent governor Peter Obi, who is an ally of the current president. However the final election results have not been announced and Nigeria's electoral watchdog has ordered a re-run in some constituencies this weekend. Furthermore, the November

16 elections have been seen as an early indication of support for President Goodluck Jonathan, before he is expected to run for re-election in eighteen months.

- **26 November 2013** - In what has developed into the latest political blow to President Goodluck Jonathan, a group of Nigerian state governors, who defected the ruling party, have joined a new opposition party. While the seven governors had initially broke away from the PDP during the party's summer convention in August, later branding themselves as the New PDP, on Tuesday, the group announced its merger with the main opposition All Progressives Alliance (APC). During a press conference on Tuesday, Kawu Abubakar Baraje, the New PDP chief, told journalists that "the leadership of APC and the New PDP met this morning," adding that "the two parties agreed to merge and work together in order to rescue our fledgling democracy and the nation." While the New PDP's chief has insisted that all seven governors have backed the merger, there have been reports that two governors were non-committal. The breakaway governors include representatives from both the southern Christian and northern Muslim states. the leader of the key oil-producing Rivers state is among the group, as is the governor of Kano, which is the most populous state in the northern region of Nigeria. A rift within the ruling party has been brewing for months as a number of factions are opposed to Jonathan's re-election with several other members are believed to be plotting their own run. A great portion of the opposition towards the current president stems from an unwritten pact that is intended to rotate control of the presidency between Nigeria's predominantly Christian South and mainly Muslim north. Furthermore, according to many northerners, Jonathan, a Christian from the oil-producing Niger Delta region, should have never been allowed to run in the 2011 presidential elections as it had been the north's turn to elect a candidate. Although Jonathan's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has controlled the federal government since Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999, the party is currently facing unprecedented divisions ahead of the 2015 general elections.

International Developments

- **29 November 2013** - On Friday, Human Rights Watch (HRW) called on Boko Haram to stop targeting ordinary Nigerians, claiming that the Islamist terrorist group had abducted scores of women and girls and used children as young as twelve in fighting. The organisation has also called on the Nigerian government to investigate the forced disappearances of hundreds of men and boys at the hands of security services, as well as "credible" claims of torture and death in custody.