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THE CENTRAL AFRICA REPORT



Detailed Report Focusing on Security, Domestic News and
Developments that Impact the Central African Region

*Angola – Cameroon – Central African Republic – Chad- Republic of Congo –
Democratic Republic of the Congo – Equatorial Guinea – Gabon – São Tomé and
Príncipe*

FEBRUARY 10 – 23, 2014



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The Central Africa Report ~ Summary

February 10 - 23, 2014



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Angola

Domestic News

- *12 February 2014* – The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) have called on authorities in Angola to stop the country's security forces from intimidating journalists carrying out their work.

Cameroon

On the Ground Reporting

- **21 February 2014** – Reports have indicated that the number of refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) has sharply increased this month in Cameroon, as violence continues in the country.
 - Meanwhile, recent arms seizures and arrests of traffickers in Cameroon's Far North Region have highlighted the escalating insecurity caused by Boko Haram militants in neighboring Nigeria and the impact of the unrest in the CAR and Sudan.

Central African Republic

On the Ground Reporting

- **19 February 2014** – On Wednesday, heavy fighting erupted near the airport in the CAR's capital city as Christian militia attempted to block the evacuation of Muslims and disrupted a visit by a top United Nations aid official.
- **17 February 2014** – Red Cross officials in the CAR have confirmed that they retrieved thirteen bodies from a mass grave found in the capital city last week.
- **15 February 2014** - International troops went house to house for about four hours on Saturday in Bangui's Boy Rabe neighbourhood, the base of mostly Christian militias whose attacks have driven many minority Muslims from the city in recent weeks, sparking warnings of "ethnic cleansing."
- **11 February 2014** – On Tuesday, French troops uncovered a major arms cache, including explosives , in a house in a northern Bangui stronghold of the anti-balaka militia.
- **10 February 2014** – Overnight, gunmen killed a politician outside his house in the capital city.
 - Meanwhile the commander of French troops in the CAR has accused a militia, known as the anti-balaka, of being the country's "main enemy of peace," which should be treated as outlaws and thugs.

Domestic News

- **18 February 2014** – The new leader of the CAR has requested that French troops stay in the country until the next presidential polls, which are set to take place in early 2015.
- **12 February 2014** – The CAR's new interim president has declared that she will "go to war" with Christian militias who are killing Muslims.

Regional Reporting

- **18 February 2014** – African Union (AU) spokesman Eloi Yao has confirmed that a delegation from the AU will on Wednesday begin assessing the political and security situation in the CAR as part of the continental bloc's efforts to return the CAR to constitutional rule after a one-year transitional period.

International Developments

- **20 February 2014** – On Thursday, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for the urgent deployment of at least 3,000 additional troops to the CAR.
- **18 February 2014** – Chad's President Idriss Deby has called on the United Nations to create a UN peacekeeping mission in the CAR in order to end the ongoing crisis.
- **14 February 2014** – The French presidency has announced that France will hold a meeting of its top defence committee on the CAR on Friday and will later host Chad's President Idris Deby.
- **13 February 2014** – French President Francois Hollande has called on the United Nations to fast-track the deployment of peacekeepers to the CAR in order to quell the ongoing sectarian conflict.
- **12 February 2014** – On Wednesday, Amnesty International announced that "ethnic cleansing" is being carried out against Muslim civilians in the CAR, with international peacekeepers unable to prevent the crisis.
- **11 February 2014** – French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called on international forces deployed in the CAR to put an end to brutal attacks by the country's militias, "by force if needed."
 - Meanwhile UN chief Ban Ki-moon has spoken with French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius on increasing the number of European and African troops in the CAR.
- **10 February 2014** – On Monday, EU foreign ministers formally approved an EU military mission to the troubled CAR, with some 500 troops to be deployed to aid French and African Union forces already on the ground.

Chad

Domestic News

- **20 February 2014** – Chad's Prime Minister Kalzeube Payimi Deubet confirmed on Wednesday that Chad has ended an operation to repatriate thousands of its citizens trapped in violence in the Central African Republic.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 February 2014** – On Thursday, police officers opened fire on an opposition "caravan for peace" which was touring the DRC's troubled eastern region, wounding several people.

Domestic News

- **14 February 2014** – Officials have indicated that a United Nations team is due to visit the site of alleged mass killings in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- **13 February 2014** – A top official of the UN mission in the DRC has indicated that the UN plans to send more troops to the southern province of Katanga to respond to the unfolding humanitarian crisis.

- Meanwhile according to the UN Peacekeeping mission, armed groups wielding machetes have reportedly executed seventy people in the eastern region of the DRC.
- **10 February 2014** – On Monday, the International Criminal Court (ICC) heard that former warlord Bosco Ntaganda played a “key role” in ethnic crimes in the DRC, using child soldiers and capturing sex slaves for his rebel army.

International Developments

- **19 February 2014** – The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the DRC will deploy more troops to the Katanga province to help combat the worsening militia violence gripping the region.

São Tomé and Príncipe

Domestic News

- **19 February 2014** – In an attempt to quell the growing unrest within the army, and to head off potential instability, Sao Tome and Principe’s president on Wednesday swore in a new military chief.
- **11 February 2014** – The President of Sao Tome and Principe has warned of discontent within the island nation’s military after striking soldiers boycotted his presidential guard in protest at rising prices, however he has played down fears of a new uprising.

Central Africa Report ~ Security Summary

Angola – MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to certain regions of Angola. Specifically, we advise against all but essential travel to the provinces of Cabinda, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

Cameroon – MS Risk advises against all travel to the North and Far North Regions of Cameroon.

Central African Republic – MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic

Chad - MS Risk advises against all travel to the following areas: areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of the border with Libya, Nigeria, Niger and the Central African Republic; areas bordering Lake Chad, including the regions of Kanem and Lac to the west of the towns of Mao and Bol; areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of Cameroon from Lake Chad as far as Léré; the regions of Sila, Wadi Fira, Ennedi and Tibesti; the region of Ouaddaï except the town of Abéché; the region of Borkou except within 30km of the town of Faya Largeau. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to all remaining parts of the country, including the towns of Faya Largeau in Borkou region and Abéché in Ouaddaï region. Currently, MS Risk does not have any travel advisory for the capital city, N'Djamena.

Republic of Congo - MS Risk currently advises against all travel to the Likouala province. This is due to a large influx of displaced people coming in from neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The UNHCR currently estimates that there are around 110,000 refugees in Likouala province. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool region. There is currently a low level of terrorism in the Republic of the Congo.

Democratic Republic of the Congo - MS Risk advises against all travel to eastern and north-eastern DRC, including Goma. The only exception to this is the town of Bukavu, to which MS Risk advises against all but essential travel. MS Risk currently advises against all but essential travel to the remainder of the DRC. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

Equatorial Guinea - There are currently no travel advisories for Equatorial Guinea

Gabon - There are currently no travel advisories for Gabon.

São Tomé and Príncipe - There are currently no travel advisories for Sao Tome and Principe. However due to the current political situation, coupled with fears of a possible military coup, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to monitor reporting on the political situation.

Angola

Security Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to certain regions of Angola. Specifically, we advise against all but essential travel to the provinces of Cabinda, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. There is currently a low threat from terrorism. We advise that all international companies and organizations operating throughout Angola have strict security rules and regulations for their staff.

Luanda

There is a high level of crime in Luanda. Muggings, particularly to steal mobile telephones and other valuables, as well as armed robberies can occur in any area at any time during the day and night. It is advised that you avoid wearing jewelry or watches in public places. Do not change or withdraw large sums of money in busy public areas. Areas that are popular with foreigners are particularly targeted. You should avoid walking around Luanda, especially after dark.

Theft from slow-moving or stationary cars is common, especially in central Luanda. It is advised to keep valuables out of sight and do not use mobiles or laptops while in traffic. When driving, be wary if another car signals you to pull over. Thieves use the pretext of a minor traffic incident to get you out of your car to either steal the vehicle or rob you. A high proportion of the civilian population is armed.



If you choose to travel outside Luanda, and the provincial capitals, it is advised that you do so in the company of persons or organizations with experience of local conditions which can be difficult. There is widespread poverty, social exclusion and disease.

Cabinda Province

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to Cabinda Province. There are regular violent incidents, including rape, murder and kidnappings that involve foreigners and Angolans. Groups claiming responsibility for these attacks have declared their intention to continue attacks against foreigners.

Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the provinces of Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. Angolan authorities are sensitive to the presence of foreigners in the diamond producing areas. Consequently all travellers to the region may be subjected to movement restrictions or detention by security forces.

The presence of diamonds also increases the threat of crime and banditry, particularly on roads that lead to and from these areas. Armed hold-ups do occur from time to time.

Domestic News

- **12 February 2014** – The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) have called on authorities in Angola to stop the country's security forces from intimidating journalists carrying out their work. According to the IFJ and FAJ's affiliate, the Union of Angolan Journalists (SJA), the deputy editor of the Despertar private radio station, Queirós Anastácio Chilúvia was arrested on February 2 for broadcasting the shouts of prisoners calling for help for a very ill fellow inmate. Chilúvia was held for three days before a court gave him a six-month suspended jail sentence on 7 February. According to Gabriel Baglo, IFJ Africa director, "the charges against our colleague must be dropped immediately and unconditionally as he has only done his work as allowed by the country's constitution." The SJA also believes that certain representatives of the state are misusing their power in order to intimidate and harass the country's journalists. The SJA has indicated that the unfounded accusation of "illegal exercise of the press," which served as the basis for Chilúvia's conviction by the Municipal Court of Cacuo, demonstrates the apparent intention of the national police to violate press freedom rights and the rights to freedom of expression in Angola. The Union has also questioned the involvement of the national police in the country's legal matters.

Cameroon

Executive Summary ~ With the kidnapping, and later release, of a French priest in northern Cameroon in November 2013, 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. 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 Ndiang 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 Maroua in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future, which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country. Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.

On the Ground Reporting

- **21 February 2014** – Reports have indicated that the number of refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) has sharply increased this month in Cameroon, as violence continues in the country. Since the beginning of February, a total of 19,565 refugees from the CAR have crossed into Cameroon. This is up from 4,764 CAR refugees in the first week of the month. The latest influx brings the total number of CAR refugees who have fled to Cameroon since March 2013 to 35,142. On the ground sources in eastern Cameroon reported witnessing the arrival on 16 February of 100 trucks carrying civilians from the CAR. Additionally, some 3,000 people have been reported to have crossed the border into the town of Yokadouma in the southeastern region of Cameroon. They are coming from Bangui and mainly from localities such as Bossemptele, Bouar, Baboua, Beloko, Carnot, Boaro, Gambala, Berberatie and Nola in the western region of the CAR.
 - Meanwhile, recent arms seizures and arrests of traffickers in Cameroon's Far North Region have highlighted the escalating insecurity caused by Boko Haram militants in neighboring Nigeria and the impact of the unrest in the CAR and Sudan. According to officials, in January 2014, Cameroon's security forces arrested a man attempting to transport 655 guns to Nigeria, while in September 2013, 5,400 AK-47 rifles were seized on a pick-up truck in Maroua, which is the capital of the Far North Region. According to a Maroua Police officer, "many fire arms have been seized from traffickers in the regions in recent days, coming from crisis countries like Sudan and CAR. The number could be higher due to the disarmament taking place in CAR. This region remains a zone for traffickers because it is close to Nigeria." Although Cameroon has stepped up security in the Far North Region, following Nigeria's military crackdown on Boko Haram, which has pushed back the insurgents to border regions and forced thousands of civilians to flee into Cameroon, the borders between the two countries continue to be porous. Security threats in the Far North Region include kidnappings, the undocumented movement of foreigners and the influx of refugees from CAR, Chad, Nigeria and Sudan. Officials in Cameroon now fear that refugee camps may conceal militants or may eventually become targets for attack.

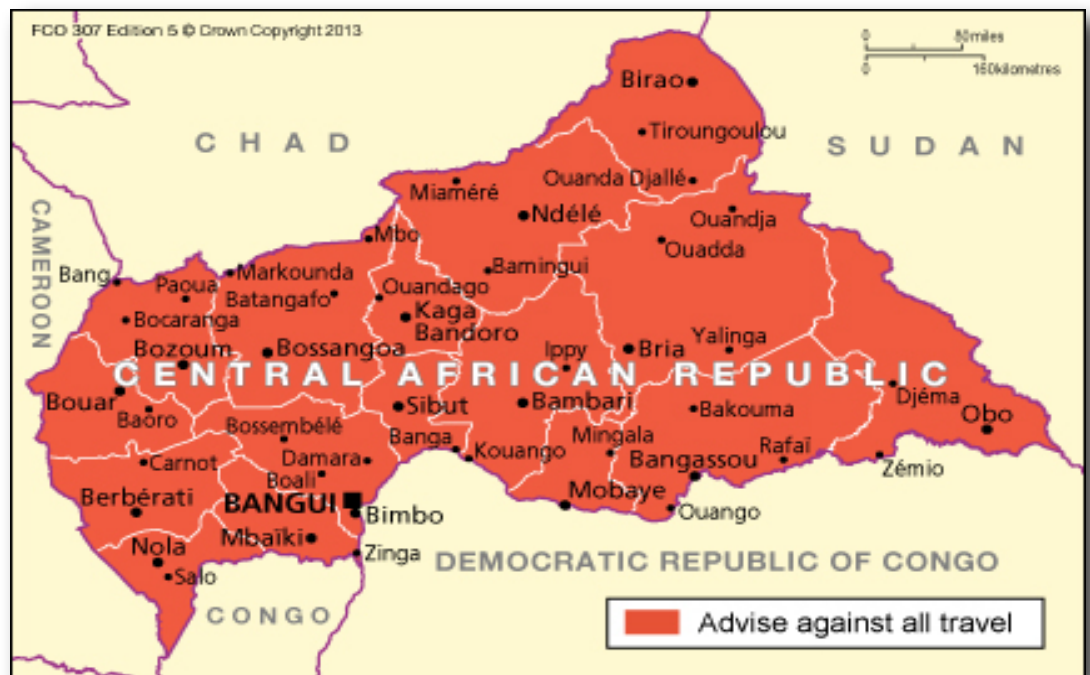
Regional Reporting

- *23 February 2014* – On Sunday, Nigeria’s military officials announced that a portion of its northeastern border with Cameroon was sealed in order to block the movement of insurgents and other criminal groups. The closure has been imposed in Adamawa state, one of the three states in the northeastern region of Nigeria, which was been placed under emergency rule in May 2013 following waves of attacks by Boko Haram militants. Officials in Nigeria claim that the militants have set up bases in sparsely populated areas of its northeastern neighbors – Cameroon, Chad and Niger – and that they flee across the border after staging attacks to avoid military pursuits. Brigadier General Rogers Iben Nicholas, the top military commander in Adamawa, confirmed the border closure, stating “what I did was completely seal off the borders, no going in, no going out.” He added that the measure had been in place since Monday and that it has already curtailed “the influx of miscreants and terrorist elements” into Nigeria.

Central African Republic

Security Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). Despite French troops deploying into CAR in early December, the situation throughout the country has continued to deteriorate. Reports of violence, looting and human rights abuses across the country have increased and fighting in Bangui alone has reportedly led to the deaths of over 400 people. There is also an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks can be indiscriminate, including in places that are visited by foreigners.

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

- **19 February 2014** – On Wednesday, heavy fighting erupted near the airport in the CAR's capital city as Christian militia attempted to block the evacuation of Muslims and disrupted a visit by a top United Nations aid official. According to local residents, the latest clashes began after Chadian troops tried to escort a convoy of Muslims out of the city. Their departure however was blocked by the anti-balaka militia, with one civilian reportedly killed. Sebastien Wenezoui, a spokesman for the anti-balaka, has since indicated that their fighters came out to defend the local population near the airport after they were targeted by Chadian troops who were escorting the convoy. Mr. Wenezoui stated that "when they drove in from Chad yesterday, the Chadians attacked civilians in Damara. Someone from the town called a radio programme to report what the Chadians did. This angered people in Bangui who set up roadblocks to prevent them from leaving." He added that African MISCA peacekeeping troops, along with French forces, later removed the roadblocks and dispersed the crowds, which led some anti-balaka fighters to respond with gunfire. This ultimately resulted in Chadian troops passing forcefully through the barricades. Although French army spokesman Gilles Jaron confirmed that there was sporadic gunfire in the direction of French troops, no further details have been released. A UN official also confirmed that African peacekeepers have since been dispatched to reinforce troops in the area near the airport. Another UN official indicated that this latest fighting had prevented Valerie Amos, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, from travelling to the northern regions of the country, where violence between Christian and Muslims has also scattered tens of thousands of civilians and left villages abandoned.
Update – Witnesses have reported that Chadian peacekeepers have killed at least twelve unarmed people over the past two days after fatally shooting six civilians in the capital city on Wednesday. The latest shootings occurred as the soldiers were escorting Chadian refugees to a military base near Bangui's M'poko airport, where more than 400,000 people displaced by the ongoing conflict have taken refuge. According to witnesses, the troops randomly shot at the civilians without provocation adding that the violence resulted in scores of people fleeing the refugee camp. The latest incident involving Chadian soldiers comes just one day after Chadian troops reportedly killed two civilians in Bangui as well as four civilians in the town of Damara, which is located about 45 miles north of the capital. The shootings also come two weeks after Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused Chadian peacekeepers of helping Muslim fighters in the CAR, including escorting Muslim Seleka rebels from bases at which they were confined by African Union peacekeepers to areas where they committed atrocities against Christians. At the time, Peter Bouckaert, emergencies director at the HRW stated that "if the African Union is truly going to protect civilians in the Central African Republic, it needs to rein in the rogue activities of the Chadian peacekeeping troops," adding that 'the Chadian forces should not be enabling the Seleka to prey on civilians.'
- **17 February 2014** – Red Cross officials in the CAR have confirmed that they retrieved thirteen bodies from a mass grave found in the capital city last week. Antoine Mbao-Bogo, president of the local Red Cross, confirmed Monday that the bodies had been removed from a military base used by Muslim rebels during their ten-month rule. Prosecutor Ghislain Gresenguet has also indicated that an investigation is currently underway after African peacekeepers found the grave last Wednesday.

- 15 February 2014** - International troops went house to house for about four hours on Saturday in Bangui's Boy Rabe neighbourhood, the base of mostly Christian militias whose attacks have driven many minority Muslims from the city in recent weeks, sparking warnings of "ethnic cleansing." Sources have indicated that automatic weapons, grenades and a large amount of munitions were seized and "more than a dozen" people were detained in the unprecedented operation that involved some 250 peacekeepers and police. A peacekeeper from the African Union MISCA mission stated that "all people who were found to have weapons in their homes have been identified and will be handed over to the police." According to Emotion Brice Namsia, a militia spokesman, amongst those detained Saturday was lieutenant Herve Ganazou who is "in charge of 'anti-balaka leadership' operations." Furthermore, despite surrounding the house of a senior militia leader, Patrice Edouard Ngaissona, the soldiers failed to capture the man who casts himself as the political coordinator of the fearsome "anti-balaka" militias. **UPDATE (16 February 2014)** – Officials in the CAR have confirmed that eleven men, including leaders of the Christian anti-balaka militant, have been transferred to the capital city's main prison. The men were detained during a disarmament programme on Saturday and they are the first prisoners taken into custody by the government of transitional President Catherine Samba Panza. Although Justice Minister Isabelle Gaudeville has declined to release the names of the suspects, or to specify the allegations against them, Jean-Pierre Sadou of the African peacekeeping mission did indicate that some of the arrested men included several anti-balaka leaders.
- 11 February 2014** – On Tuesday, French troops uncovered a major arms cache, including explosives, in a house in a northern Bangui stronghold of the anti-balaka militia. A French military official has indicated that currently, nothing is known about the owner of the weapons however they will be transferred to a French camp and destroyed.
- 10 February 2014** – Overnight, gunmen killed a politician outside his house in the capital city. So far no group has claimed responsibility for the killing of Jean-Emmanuel Ndjaraoua a day after he made a speech denouncing recent violence and calling for Christian militias to be confined to barracks. According to government officials, attackers followed Ndjaraoua, a Christian representative for eastern Haute-Kotto province, and shot him several times near his home in northern Bangui on Sunday Night. According to Etienne Bazouati, another parliamentarian, "he was returning home from town and he was shot down with eight gunshots by armed men". Amy Martin, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Bangui has stated that the killing will likely put additional strains on peacekeepers as officials seek more protection, adding that "it will be impossible for troops to protect both members of parliament and the neighborhoods." Ndjaraoua is amongst dozens of people killed in sectarian clashes which erupted in the capital city on Friday. Three lynchings were also reported last week, prompting thousands of Muslims to flee to neighboring Chad and Cameroon. According to Martin, Muslims in the capital city are now largely confined to the PK12 neighborhood in Bangui's northern region.

 - Meanwhile the commander of French troops in the CAR has accused a militia, known as the anti-balaka, of being the country's "main enemy of peace," which should be treated as outlaws and thugs. Speaking during a meeting in Bangui with the country's religious leaders, General Francisco Soriano stated that "those who call themselves 'anti-balaka' have become the main enemy of peace in the Central African Republic," accusing the militia of inciting violence by "stigmatizing" certain areas as Muslim. The remarks come as reports surfaced that a member of the country's transitional parliament, Jean-Emmanuel Ndjaraoua, was gunned down in a drive-by shooting in the capital city. The attack, which occurred just days after Ndjaraoua condemned violence against the Muslim residents of his district before parliament on Saturday, has since been blamed on anti-balaka. The

mainly Christian vigilantes have been accused of brutal attacks against Muslims after the ouster of president Francois Bozize in March 2013.

Domestic News

- *18 February 2014* – The new leader of the CAR has requested that French troops stay in the country until the next presidential polls, which are set to take place in early 2015. Catherine Samba Panza's appeal to the former colonial power came three days after France's decision to boost its contingent to 2,000. The request was confirmed by French MP Elizabeth Guigou who stated that "the interim president told us that they should stay until the elections, that is to stay until early 2015". Despite France launching operation Sangris in December 2013, in order to prevent mass sectarian killing, violence has continued throughout the country. Although French President Francois Hollande had initially envisioned a short deployment, French defence minister Jean-Yves Le Drian recently admitted that the French operation could last "longer than planned." The French parliament is due to vote on February 25 on whether the 2,000 troops deployed in the CAR can stay longer than their initial mandate, which is set to expire in April. France's right-wing opposition has asked for clarity on the operation's goals however it stopped short of calling for an early withdrawal.
- *12 February 2014* – The CAR's new interim president has declared that she will "go to war" with Christian militias who are killing Muslims. Catherine Samba Panza stated on Wednesday that the militias, called anti-balaka, had "lost their sense of mission" and had become "the ones who kill, who pillage, who are violent." The militias however are claiming that they are taking revenge for the atrocities carried out by Muslim rebels last year. The ongoing atrocities throughout the CAR have forced tens of thousands of Muslims to flee into Cameroon and Chad. Although Amnesty International has described the situation as "ethnic cleansing," Ms. Samba Panza has rejected this label, instead characterizing the violence as a "security problem". Many of the Muslims who have fled the country were traders or involved in the food business. Their absence has subsequently sparked a collapse in food distribution and has resulted in the worsening humanitarian crisis. Update (13 February 2014) – On Thursday, the self-proclaimed leader of the militias warned the new president not to attempt as she has vowed, to crack down on the anti-balaka. Richard Bejouane told hundreds of militiamen gathered in Bangui that "declaring war on the anti-balaka amounts to declaring war on the Central African population." He claims that the anti-balaka number 52,000 in the CAR, including 12,000 stationed in the capital. Although the anti-balaka militias were initially formed as self-defence groups in response to the abuses committed by rogue ex-Seleka rebels, who are now on the back foot following France's troop deployment two months ago, most of the ongoing violence has been blamed on anti-balaka attacks.

Regional Reporting

- *18 February 2014* – African Union (AU) spokesman Eloi Yao has confirmed that a delegation from the AU will on Wednesday begin assessing the political and security situation in the CAR as part of the continental bloc's efforts to return the CAR to constitutional rule after a one-year transitional period. According to Yao, there is a high level delegation from the political affairs division to assess the situation. During their stay, they will be meeting with various organizations, political leaders, religious leaders and government members," adding "with an election in 2015, the AU and its partners have to start early to engage the

people, assess the situation and see under which conditions the election can take place.” The AU spokesman also stated that the AU team will be joined by a group from the United Nations in order to assess the humanitarian conditions there following the violence that has displaced hundreds of thousands from their homes. According to Yao, the assessment is part of the AU’s effort to help organize the country’s election next year.

International Developments

- *20 February 2014* – On Thursday, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for the urgent deployment of at least 3,000 additional troops to the CAR. Speaking before the UN Security Council, the Secretary General appealed for more military forces to be sent “in the coming days or weeks,” requesting that they be equipped “with air mobility.” Despite the deployment of French and African Union forces to the CAR, over the past few weeks, Muslim-Christian bloodshed had left hundreds dead and hundreds of thousands displaced following a surge in killings, mutilations and rapes. Ban added “the international community must act decisively now to prevent any further worsening of the situation and to respond to the dire needs of the country’s people,” describing the violence as a “calamity with a strong claim on the conscience of humankind.” Ban’s call for more troops, combined with a call for donor countries to give more money to its CAR appeal, came less than a week after France and the European Union pledged to bolster their forces. Last Friday, officials in the EU indicated that 1,000 troops from the bloc would be on the ground “very, very soon,” while France confirmed that it was boosting its presence in the country to 2,000 military personnel. However despite the increases in troops, senior UN officials stationed in Bangui indicated Thursday that even greater numbers were needed. At the end of a two-day visit, UN humanitarian chief Valerie Amos indicated that troops from France’s Operation Sangaris and the 6,000-strong African Union-backed force MISCA are going a “good job” but additional forces are required in order to contain the bloodshed. Speaking to reporters, Amos stated that “there are not enough troops on the ground. So there are discussions going on right now about how can we further support those forces immediately with additional personnel.” She added that there was also a discussion on “whether or not the MISCA mission should become a UN peacekeeping mission in the long term.”
- *18 February 2014* – Chad’s President Idriss Deby has called on the United Nations to create a UN peacekeeping mission in the CAR in order to end the ongoing crisis. This is the first time that the region’s military heavyweight has publicly sought a UN intervention. Speaking at a conference shortly after holding talks with the CAR’s interim President Catherine Samba Panza in Ndjamena, Chad’s capital, President Deby warned that France and the African Union “cannot carry out their mission properly whatever their determination” as they did not have enough troops. The Chadian president further noted that “we need more men, more means,” adding that only the UN could provide troops in large numbers. President Deby also urged the CAR’s government to negotiate with the ex-rebel Seleka movement, stating “contacts should be established with Seleka elements that returned to their region in the north.” The debated UN peacekeeping operation could involve nearly 10,000 troops however it would require the green light from the African Union and a UN Security Council resolution prior to being deployed. Currently there are 2,000 French troops and some 5,400 African troops who are already on the ground. Additionally, 1,000 European Union troops will be sent to the country in the coming weeks.
- *14 February 2014* – The French presidency has announced that France will hold a meeting of its top defence committee on the CAR on Friday and will later host Chad’s President Idris Deby. The meeting of the

limited defence committee, which includes President Francois Hollande and top ministers, is to take place at 1000 GMT. The French president will then hold talks with Deby in Paris at 1700 GMT.

- **13 February 2014** – French President Francois Hollande has called on the United Nations to fast-track the deployment of peacekeepers to the CAR in order to quell the ongoing sectarian conflict. During a telephone call with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Hollande stated that UN troops were needed to help restore peace and to prop up the administration of new interim president Catherine Samba Panza. A statement released by the French presidency indicated that “the UN Security Council set a clear mandate for peacekeepers which must be quickly and firmly implemented. It’s a question mainly of speeding up the preparation of the peacekeeping operation, in close partnership with the African Union.” France is also racing to recruit hundreds of troops for the EU military mission in the CAR. According to General Philippe Ponties, who took up the post as the mission chief for the force earlier this week, the current objective is to deploy the first soldiers “as quickly as possible” in the capital Bangui.
- **12 February 2014** – On Wednesday, Amnesty International announced that “ethnic cleansing” is being carried out against Muslim civilians in the CAR, with international peacekeepers unable to prevent the crisis. Officials at Amnesty indicated that they had documented at least 200 killings of Muslim civilians by Christian militia groups. In a report released on Wednesday, Amnesty International indicated that “‘ethnic cleansing’ of Muslims has been carried out in the western part of the Central African Republic, the most populous part of the country, since early January 2014.” The report further added that “entire Muslim communities have been forced to flee, and hundreds of Muslim civilians who have not managed to escape have been killed by the loosely organized militias known as anti-balaka.” Amnesty International also stated that attacks against Muslims had been committed “with the stated intent to forcibly displace these communities from the country,” with many anti-balaka fighters viewing Muslims as “‘foreigners’ who should leave the country or be killed.” According to the report, “they appear to be achieving their aims, with Muslims being forced out of the country in increasingly large numbers.” Amnesty International has urged peacekeeping forces in the country to “take rapid steps to break anti-balaka control over the country’s road network, and to station sufficient troops in towns where Muslims are threatened.” It called for international troops to be granted the necessary resources to achieve this, warning of a “tragedy of historic proportions” that could set a precedent for other countries in the region struggling with sectarian or ethnic conflict. There are currently 5,300 African Union (AU) troops operating under a UN mandate in the CAR, with the force expected to reach 6,000 by March. France has also deployed 1,600 troops, while the EU has promised to deploy 500 troops at the beginning of March, with the United States set to provide logistical support.
- **11 February 2014** – French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian called on international forces deployed in the CAR to put an end to brutal attacks by the country’s militias, “by force if needed.” Speaking during a visit to Brazzaville in neighboring Congo, Le Drian stated “all militias, who continue to be involved in mob violence and commit murder, must stop.” He added that French troops and the African Union-led MISCA mission in the CAR must “implement the UN resolutions, by force if needed.”
 - Meanwhile UN chief Ban Ki-moon has spoken with French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius on increasing the number of European and African troops in the CAR. According to UN spokesman Martin Nesirky, Ban “asked what could be done to increase support to MISCA, to accelerate the deployment of the European Union troops, and whether additional troops might be envisaged.” Nesirky added that the secretary-general “stressed that the international response must be robust enough to stop the violence and prevent what has a high potential to result in additional widespread

atrocities.” He further noted that Ban “reiterated that the international community had collective responsibility towards the people of the CAR” and denounced the cycle of retaliatory attacks and sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians. The African peacekeeping-force MISCA has already deployed some 5,400 of 6,000 planned troops, and some 1,600 French soldiers are already on the ground in the CAR. In turn, the EU has promised to deploy 500 troops to Bangui at the beginning of March.

- *10 February 2014* – On Monday, EU foreign ministers formally approved an EU military mission to the troubled CAR, with some 500 troops to be deployed to aid French and African Union forces already stationed on the ground. EU foreign affairs chief Catherine Ashton has indicated that the “absolute priority is to protect the civilian population from any further violence...and to make sure that humanitarian aid can be provided.” A statement released by Ashton indicated that the mission, known as EUFOR RCA, “will deploy as soon as possible to back the remarkable efforts of France and our African partners.” With the legal basis set, the next step will be to put together the force, which is expected to be deployed in the capital city and to provide security at the airport, which will free up French soldiers. According to one EU official, “we are nearly there” in terms of the numbers, however major EU powers, such as Britain and Germany, have declined to commit troops on the ground, preferring instead to offer logistics support. Diplomats have indicated that if the EU is unable to provide all the required troops, Georgia may be ready to supply up to 100 troops. Estonia has already indicated that it will contribute 55 soldiers to join the 1,600 French forces already on the ground. EU foreign ministers have also agreed to fund 25.9 million euros (US \$35.3 million) in order to cover the initial costs of the operation.

Chad

Executive Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to the following areas: areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of the border with Libya, Nigeria, Niger and the Central African Republic; areas bordering Lake Chad, including the regions of Kanem and Lac to the west of the towns of Mao and Bol; areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of Cameroon from Lake Chad as far as Léré; the regions of Sila, Wadi Fira, Ennedi and Tibesti; the region of Ouaddaï except the town of Abéché; the region of Borkou except within 30km of the town of Faya Largeau. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to all remaining parts of the country, including the towns of Faya Largeau in Borkou region and Abéché in Ouaddaï region. Currently, MS Risk does not have any travel advisory for the capital city, N'Djamena.

MS Risk advises that you should only travel to those parts of the country to which we advise against all but essential travel if:

- *You are confident that you have in place adequate security precautions to protect you from violent crime;*
- *The correct Chadian authorities are aware of your journey;*
- *You have in place the right permits if required;*
- *And you hold comprehensive travel insurance.*



There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

Armed robberies, particularly from cars, in residential areas of N'Djamena are common, with foreigners sometimes being targeted. MS Risk advises all travellers to the capital city to remain vigilant and to take care. Keep doors locked and windows closed at all times. Do not carry any large sums of money, jewelry, or other valuables. Avoid isolated or less developed areas of the city and do not travel alone at night.

There have been a number of kidnappings in eastern Chad involving Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) workers and business people. Further such kidnappings are likely to occur. MS Risk advises all travellers to this region of Chad to be vigilant and take care at all times.

Nearly 350,000 Sudanese and Central African refugees and 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) are living in and around camps in eastern Chad. Although the Joint Border Force between Sudan and Chad has partially stabilized the situation, banditry and violent crime in eastern Chad continues to exist. Consequently the border between Chad and Sudan is subject to closures with minimal notice.

The area bordering Libya is also subject to closure and is heavily land-mined. The northern regions of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti continue to be unsafe.

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 February 2014** – Chad's Prime Minister Kalzeube Payimi Deubet confirmed on Wednesday that Chad has ended an operation to repatriate thousands of its citizens trapped in violence in the Central African Republic. Speaking to the media in the capital city, Prime Minister Deubet stated "today, I can say that 99 percent of all our citizens who were living in Bangui and wished to return home have been repatriated." Since December 2013, the Chadian government, along with the support of its humanitarian partners has managed to repatriate over 60,000 of its citizens and other nationals. However while Chad's repatriation programme has concluded, the country's Prime Minister stipulated that "the announcement of the end of repatriation operations does not exempt the government from its obligations vis-a-vis our citizens wherever they are found within the Central African Republic's territory. The government will continue to carry out its mandate and responsibilities each time need arises, anywhere our citizens will be faced with danger."

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Executive Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to eastern and north-eastern DRC, including Goma. The only exception to this is the town of Bukavu, to which MS Risk advises against all but essential travel. MS Risk currently advises against all but essential travel to the remainder of the DRC. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

The security situation in eastern DRC, including Goma, remains unstable. Any foreigners in North Kiou, including Goma, are currently advised to keep their security situation under review. During fighting in the region in recent months, shells landed on Goma, causing a number of civilian deaths and injuries. There was also shelling around the border with Rwanda and explosions in the town of Gisenyi on the Rwandan side of the border. Further shelling may occur. You are therefore advised to avoid travelling alone and at night.



In the Katanga Province, there has been unrest and reports of fighting which occurred on 7 January 2014. The current situation remains tense across the province, particularly around the town of Pweto. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers to the region to exercise a high level of caution.

There were shooting incidents in Kinshasa on 30 December 2013. The incidents occurred around the national TV and radio station RTNC, the airport and the main army barracks and Ministry of Defence at Ngaliema. There were also reports of fighting in Lubumbashi, Katanga Province and in Kindu, Maniema Province. While the situation in Kinshasa now appears to be returning to normal, the situation remains to be fragile and security forces continue to be on alert.

On the Ground Reporting

- *20 February 2014* – On Thursday, police officers opened fire on an opposition “caravan for peace” which was touring the DRC’s troubled eastern region, wounding several people. According to on the ground sources, the shooting erupted when several thousand demonstrators led by Vital Kamerhe, head of the opposition for the Union for the Congolese Nation (UNC), arrived in the city of Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu province. Hundreds of police officers stopped Kamerhe’s caravan as it arrived on Independence Square at the entrance to the city, preventing the demonstrators from proceeding. Local residents reported police using tear gas and opening fire on the crowd. At least five wounded people were taken to hospital. Kamerhe launched a tour of the resource-rich region, which has been the scene of nearly twenty years of conflict, on Tuesday in Goma, the capital of North Kivu province. Authorities in the DRC capital of Kinshasa had twice prevented him from travelling to the east for his planned two-week tour. Although Kamerhe was once a top ally of President Joseph Kabila, who has been in power since 2001 and won a new five-year term in a contested 2011 election, Kamerhe has since had a falling-out with the president and is now viewed as one of his fiercest opponents.

Domestic News

- *14 February 2014* – Officials have indicated that a United Nations team is due to visit the site of alleged mass killings in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The move comes after the UN mission in the country, known as MONUSCO, indicated that its reconnaissance flight had discovered three villages burnt to the ground. MONUSCO’s Ray Torres indicated that “we were able to carry out a reconnaissance flight in the afternoon, and we were able to observe from the air that three villages had been burnt,” adding that “we were not able to send yet any of our staff to the locations to verify, but we will be doing that tomorrow.” The UN mission has indicated that the killings were mainly committed in the North Kivu province in order to spread terror. Officials have indicated that most of the victims were killed with machetes. More than forty armed groups are known to operate in the region, with at least four of them posing a significant threat. Officials from MONUSCO also believe that more than seventy people had been summarily executed in late January and early February of this year. The UN force has increased its presence in the area after the defeat of the M23 rebel group in November 2013. The eastern DR Congo has suffered from two decades of violence that has been linked to ethnic rivalries and competition for control of the areas’ mineral resources. The violence has resulted in the deaths of an estimated five million. The unrest began when some of the ethnic Hutu militants, accused of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, fled into the DR Congo. Rwanda however has consistently denied repeated accusations from the UN that it backed the M23 rebels, whose uprising in North Kivu forced about 800,000 people from their homes.
- *13 February 2014* – A top official of the UN mission in the DR Congo has indicated that the UN plans to send more troops to the southern province of Katanga in order to respond to the unfolding humanitarian crisis. Peacekeepers in the region are currently combating elusive groups along the DR Congo’s border regions with Rwanda and Uganda. The announcement is in response to calls made by DR Congo officials and civil society groups for the UN to intervene more in Katanga, where armed groups have torched scores of villages and clashed with government forces. The crisis has already resulted in at least 400,000 people

fleeing their homes. Stabilizing Katanga is critical for the DR Congo as the province's vast natural resources account for a large portion of the national budget.

- Meanwhile according to the UN Peacekeeping mission, armed groups wielding machetes have reportedly executed seventy people in the eastern region of the DR Congo. Officials from MONUSCO have indicated that they have received reports of gross human rights abuses, including reports of summary killings at Nyamaboko villages I and II in Masisi territory of North Kivu province. While officials have not provided an exact timeline as to when the killings occurred, they did indicate that an investigation into the matter has already been launched. In a statement released Thursday, mission chief Martin Kobler stated that he had "serious concern over the allegations of the gross human rights violations deemed unacceptable. Any person involved in such act should face justice." He further indicated that crimes had been "committed mainly by armed groups to spread terror." Since 1996 millions of people have died as a result of violence, disease and hunger in the eastern region of the Congo, which has been fuelled by foreign powers and a struggle for the region's deposits of gold, diamonds, copper, cobalt and uranium. Much of the fighting has occurred in the North and South Kivu provinces, which border eastern neighbours including Rwanda and Uganda.
- **10 February 2014** – On Monday, the International Criminal Court (ICC) heard that former warlord Bosco Ntaganda played a "key role" in ethnic crimes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, using child soldiers and capturing sex slaves for his rebel army. The man, who is known as "the Terminator," appeared at the Hague-based court where judges will decide if there is enough evidence to charge him for crimes committed in the central African country a decade ago. According to ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, "Bosco Ntaganda...prosecuted civilians on ethnic grounds through deliberate attacks, forced displacement, murder, rape, sexual enslavement and pillaging..." During the court proceedings, Bensouda indicated that "Bosco Ntaganda's role was central to this army. He was the...military commander in charge of operations," adding that "he personally used child soldiers in attacks." Prosecutors also allege that Ntaganda, who handed himself in to face charges last year, led "by negative example," raping child and women soldiers and keeping them as sex slaves. This "communicated a message of official approval and further contributed to the crimes." The chief prosecutor now has five days to convince judges that he should be tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Ntaganda's rebel army in the DR Congo's restive eastern region between 2002 and 2003. Ntaganda is the founder of the M23 rebel group Kinshasa eventually defeated late last year, after an eighteen-month insurgency in the eastern DR Congo's North Kivu region. He is currently facing thirteen counts of war crimes and five of crimes against humanity over abuses allegedly committed a decade ago when he was a warlord in Ituri, further north. Prosecutors have indicated that at least 800 people were killed by Ntaganda's Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (FPLC) as they battled rival militias for control of the mineral-rich area.

International Developments

- **19 February 2014** – The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo will deploy more troops to the Katanga province to help combat the worsening militia violence gripping the region. General Carlos Dos Santos Cruz, the head of the UN military force in the DRC, has indicated that additional troops would be deployed to protect civilians in the so-called "triangle of death," which is one of the regions hardest hit by the violence. Although the 22,000-strong UN mission currently only has 450

soldiers deployed to Katanga, General Dos Santos Cruz indicated during a news conference held in the capital Kinshasa that “we are going to deploy one company, about 100 to 120 men. Then we want to launch joint operations with the Congolese army.” While Katanga province has been spared from most of the violence that has plagued large regions of the vast Central African state over the past two decades, since last year, the southern province, which is home to some of the world’s largest copper reserves, has seen a rise in attacks carried out by armed Bakata – Katanga secessionists. In 2013, hundreds of rebels attacked the Katangan capital Lubumbashi before surrendering after battles with security forces; however fighting in the city occurred again in January. Most of this is due to demands by the Bakata-Katanga militia for Katanga’s independence, whose rich mineral deposits have attracted international mining companies including Glencore and Freeport-McMoRan. While the violence in Katanga has not reached the intensity seen in the DRC’s eastern borderlands, where the UN-backed army last year defeated the M23 rebellion, over 400,000 civilians are currently displaced as a result of this violence.

Republic of the Congo

Executive Summary ~ MS Risk currently advises against all travel to the Likouala province. This is due to a large influx of displaced people coming in from neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The UNHCR currently estimates that there are around 110,000 refugees in Likouala province. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool region. There is currently a low level of terrorism in the Republic of the Congo.

Although crime levels are low in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, MS Risk advises all travellers to take sensible precautions in order to safeguard yourself and your belongings. We advise travellers to not walk in the streets after dark or to carry large amounts of money or valuables. The chance of being targeted by criminals is higher in the rural areas of the country. On 16 December 2013, there were reports of fighting and sporadic gunfire in Brazzaville. This is believed to have been an isolated incident as a result of resistance during a military arrest.



MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool Region. This is due to sporadic rebel activity and armed banditry in the area. There is a very low risk of rebel attacks in the coastal town of Pointe Noire however travellers in vehicles and trains have been robbed by armed criminal gangs around the Pool region. Road travel in the Pool region requires a permit from the Congolese army.

Equatorial Guinea

Executive Summary ~ 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

Executive Summary ~ There is currently no travel advisory for Gabon. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

Crime is on the rise 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.



São Tomé and Príncipe

***Executive Summary** ~ There are currently no travel advisories for Sao Tome and Principe. However due to the current political situation, coupled with fears of a possible military coup, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to monitor reporting on the political situation.*

Crime rates in Sao Tome and Principe are generally low however burglaries and armed robberies do occur. It is advised that you safeguard all valuables and cash.

Although Sao Tome and Principe is generally peaceful, economic difficulties and political rows over the handling of investments in the islands' development occasionally lead to civil unrest. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid any demonstrations or large gatherings.



Domestic News

- **19 February 2014** – In an attempt to quell the growing unrest within the army, and to head off potential instability, Sao Tome and Principe's president on Wednesday swore in a new military chief. Speaking briefly to journalists after his swearing-in, Colonel Justino Lima, who previously was the military adviser to President Manuel Pinto da Costa, promised to "impose military discipline in the barracks," and has called on the army to respect the law and the constitution. The previous military chief of staff, Brigadier Felisberto Maria Segundo, stepped down from his post on 13 February 2014, just three days after a presidential honour guard failed to report for duty at the airport as President Pinto da Costa departed on a state visit. Since then, about 300 junior and non-commissioned officers have gone on strike. Aside from requesting

better pay, the soldiers are demanding improved living conditions and have criticized what they consider the high salaries and generous perks received by senior officers. This strike has raised concerns that military officers may again seek to take power after two failed coups in 1995 and 2003.

- *11 February 2014* – The President of Sao Tome and Principe has warned of discontent within the island nation's military after striking soldiers boycotted his presidential guard in protest at rising prices, however he has played down fears of a new uprising. The President has stated that "there is discontent in the barracks," adding that the strike was a reflection of economic difficulties. The presidential honour guard failed to report for duty at the airport as President Manuel Pinto da Costa left on a state visit to Congo Republic late on Monday. Last Thursday, about three hundred junior and non-commissioned officers began their strike, raising concerns throughout the country that military officer may again seek to take power in the African country where political disputes have led to regular changes of government and have seen two failed military coups in 1995 and 2003. In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Gabriel Costa in December 2013, soldiers demanded higher wages and better housing and health care.