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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 24 – MARCH 9, 2014

About MS Risk

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MS Risk is always mindful and compliant to legislation and guidelines on the use of private security services including, but not limited to the US FCPA (1977), UK Bribery Act (2010), Canadian Bill C-48 (2007), ASX 8 Corporate Governance Principles, and the World Bank/IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Government and Private Security Forces. MS Risk is a signatory of the Swiss government's International Code of Conduct. It is transparent and compliant to market expectations on legal and ethical conduct in the performance of services.

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- Project Management
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 - Training
 - Special Assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis Response
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
- Virtual Security Director service for clients lacking a full time security executive.

References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

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The Central Africa Report ~ Summary

February 24 – March 9, 2014



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Angola

Domestic News

- *5 March 2014* – On Wednesday, during a visit by the Central African Republic's (CAR) new interim president, officials in Angola announced US \$10 million in aid for the CAR with a possible credit line in the future.

Cameroon

On the Ground Reporting

- **3 March 2014** – A Cameroonian security source has confirmed that seven people were killed on Sunday when Boko Haram militants launched an assault in northern Cameroon.

Central African Republic

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- **6 March 2014** – In an unprecedented meeting, leaders of rival militias, responsible for the ongoing violence, have vowed to work for peace.
- **1 March 2014** – Gunmen killed three former rebels in a drive-by shooting on Saturday in the CAR's capital.
 - Meanwhile a paramilitary police source has indicated that African peacekeepers engaged in a gunfight with anti-balaka militiamen in a mining hub in the southwestern region of the country.
- **28 February 2014** – Nearly three months into a difficult mission to stop the sectarian bloodshed, French President Francois Hollande arrived in the CAR on Friday.
- **24 February 2014** – A top commander with the international force has confirmed that two African peacekeepers were killed over the weekend during fighting with militiamen in the capital city, where fresh clashes erupted on Monday.
 - Meanwhile officials reported on Monday that African peacekeepers on Sunday had thwarted an attempt by leaders of the Central African Republic's anti-balaka militia to break out of Bangui prison with the help of the facility's head.

Domestic News

- **26 February 2014** – On Wednesday, the CAR's interim president called on French and African troops deployed in her country to make full use of their UN mandate in order to sideline rogue elements that are continuing to cause havoc in the troubled nation.

Regional Reporting

- **7 March 2014** – On Friday, the world's top Islamic body named former Senegalese foreign minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio as a special envoy to the CAR.
- **28 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

- **3 March 2014** – UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recommended Monday to deploy nearly 12,000 peacekeepers to the CAR in a bid to re-establish order in the country.

- *27 February 2014* – The commander of the French forces in the CAR, General Francisco Soriano, stated on Thursday that the country cannot “rely on the international community for everything” to enforce peace in their troubled nation.
 - Meanwhile officials in Georgia have indicated that they will contribute 150 troops to the European Union military force, which will be deployed in the CAR.
- *25 February 2014* – On Tuesday, as France prepared to extend the stay of its troops in the CAR, the United Nations sounded alarm over a potential new bloodbath in the Central African country.
- *24 February 2014* – Carl Haglund, the Finnish Minister of Defence, revealed during a meeting with his European counterparts in Athens, Greece, on Friday that roughly twenty Finnish special troops will take part in the European Union’s crisis management operation in the CAR. The majority of the Finnish troops to be deployed are expected to participate in mine clearance and explosives management operations.

Chad

International Developments

- *5 March 2014* – Amnesty International has indicated that thousands fleeing the on going violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) are now facing another humanitarian crisis in neighbouring Chad.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- *3 March 2014* – On Monday, five UN peacekeeping troops were wounded when two people on a motorcycle threw a grenade at their patrol in the eastern region of the DRC.
- *1 March 2014* – On Saturday, UN gunships targeted a base of the Ugandan Muslim rebel group ADF-Nalu in the eastern region of the DR Congo for the first time.

International Developments

- *7 March 2014* – On Friday, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is due to deliver its verdict in the trial of Congolese ex-militia boss Germain Katanga, who has been accused of using child soldiers in a 2003 attack on a village in the central region of the African country, killing 200 people.
- *6 March 2014* – The International Criminal Court (ICC) has confirmed that the Democratic Republic of Congo warlord Bosco Ntaganda will remain in custody after dismissing a defense appeal for release.
- *26 February 2014* – On Wednesday the International Criminal Court (ICC) called for the government of the DR Congo to arrest visiting Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who is currently wanted on charges of genocide in Darfur.
- *24 February 2014* – On Monday, the United Nations denounced armed groups in the restive eastern region of the DRC for carrying out murders of civilians, looting and burning down entire villages.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- *27 February 2014* – Police confirmed on Thursday that the self-styled political leader of a militia sowing terror in the Central African Republic has been arrested in north Congo and transferred to Brazzaville.

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, we 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 in order 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 experience in local conditions as conditions can be difficult. There is a widespread of 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

- **5 March 2014** – On Wednesday, during a visit by the Central African Republic's (CAR) new interim president, officials in Angola announced US \$10 million in aid for the CAR with a possible credit line in the future. Joaquim do Espirito Santo, Africa director in the foreign affairs ministry, told reporters that the aid was to support the transitional government and to respond to the on-going humanitarian crisis, adding that "there may be negotiations for an agreement opening a line of credit." During an official two-day visit to Luanda, the CAR's interim President Catherine Samba Panza stated that there were "still peeks of violence" but that the general situation was beginning to come under control. Despite this, the CAR's president stipulated that Central African needs are "huge" and that the country relies on the support of its "African brothers." The announcement of aid from Angola comes just days after UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recommended deploying nearly 12,000 peacekeepers in order to re-establish order amidst sectarian killings and chaos which erupted after a March 2013 coup.

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 Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Bouba Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroula in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future, which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country. Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.

On the Ground Reporting

- **3 March 2014** – A Cameroonian security source has confirmed that seven people were killed on Sunday when Boko Haram militants launched an assault in northern Cameroon. According to the source, “Boko Haram killed a Cameroonian soldier. Our soldiers killed six of their guys” and “captured” two others near the Nigerian border. A local Cameroonian NGO confirmed the assault, indicating that there were “victims,” however a specific number of casualties and injured has not been released. According to Mey Aly, from rights group Os-Civil Droits de l’Homme, “on Sunday, Boko Haram Islamists entered Cameroon...there was a clash between them and the soldiers,” adding that “around 30 heavily armed Boko Haram soldiers crept discretely into Cameroon. A villager saw them and raised the alarm.” Once the soldiers arrived at the scene, they blocked the path, resulting in a fire fight breaking out between the troops and Boko Haram militants. Cameroon’s rapid reaction force arrived later at the scene. Early on Monday, an official indicated that the suspected Islamist insurgents had killed 29 people in Nigeria’s north-eastern region on Sunday, in what is just the latest surge of violence which has already left more than 100 dead this month alone. Despite Cameroonian and Nigerian officials working together to increase security along their porous border, this latest attack has demonstrated Boko Haram capabilities of carrying out attacks anywhere and their easy movement in Nigeria and in neighbouring Cameroon. The attack also comes just days after Nigeria’s Information Minister Labaran Maku stated that much of the country’s problem with Boko Haram stemmed from its border with Cameroon. On Wednesday, the Information Minister called for an “increased partnership” from its northern neighbour. Nigeria has alleged that the Islamist militants have set up bases in the sparsely populated areas of its north-eastern neighbours, which includes Cameroon, Chad and Niger, in which they flee across the border after staging attacks in order to avoid military pursuit.

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

- **6 March 2014** – In an unprecedented meeting, leaders of rival militias, responsible for the ongoing violence, have vowed to work for peace. The chiefs of the country's former Seleka rebel force, which grabbed power in 2013, along with anti-balaka militias that have opposed them in recent months, made the promise during a gathering late Wednesday which was organized in the capital city by the country's interim prime minister Andre Nzapayeke. This is the first time that transitional authorities have brought the two sides to the table. The meeting was confirmed by both sides, with Herbert Gontran Djono Ahana, minister of public works who is also a prominent Seleka figure and the brother of Michel Djotodia, who was briefly president but was forced to resign late last year, stating "the prime minister received us to see...how to definitively lift our country out of this cycle of violence," adding "we told him we were ready to act to bring back peace." Joachim Kokate, the military chief of the anti-balaka, who was recently named as an adviser to the prime minister, also confirmed the meeting, stating "we have responded to the prime minister's appeal and told him of our wish to cooperate to end the violence." He added "we are ready to work so that peace returns to our country, so that machetes are no longer used by anti-balaka to kill Muslims, and that Muslims no longer use weapons to fire on their compatriots."
- **1 March 2014** – Gunmen killed three former rebels in a drive-by shooting on Saturday in the CAR's capital. According to a security source, the minority Muslim victims were riding in a taxi when they were shot and killed by gunmen in another vehicle. A fourth person was seriously injured in the incident. The driver of the taxi, who was unharmed, has indicated that he had picked up the former members of the Seleka rebel movement at a camp where they had been billeted and were headed to a mainly Muslim district of Bangui.
 - Meanwhile a paramilitary police source has indicated that African peacekeepers engaged in a gunfight with anti-balaka militiamen in a mining hub in the southwestern region of the country. According to a gendarmerie source, "clashes occurred Friday in Berberati between the anti-balaka and MISCA." He did not give a casualty toll other than noting that the town's anti-balaka chief had suffered fractures in both legs during the firefight. He also indicated that since the militiamen entered Berberati in early February, at least seventeen Muslims had been killed. Another local source indicated that the anti-balaka militiamen had refused to hand over their weapons under a major disarmament drive which had been launched two weeks ago. According to the source, "they tried to mount an armed resistance and that sparked a confrontation, "adding "heavy gunfire was heard, causing panic among the residents." The latest gun battle also coincided with a visit to the CAR by French President Francois Hollande, who warned against the partition of the country, which is mainly Christian, with Muslims concentrated in the north.
- **28 February 2014** – Nearly three months into a difficult mission to stop the sectarian bloodshed, French President Francois Hollande arrived in the CAR on Friday. Hollande is due to meet interim President Catherine Samba Panza as well as French troops who were first sent in to try and quell the violence in early December 2013. Although Hollande visited the former colony for the first time in early December, just days after French troops deployed to the country, three months into the mission, there is more hostility towards the French, as the violence has continued to escalate, sparking warnings by top aid officials that ethnic

cleansing is under way. His high-security visit to Bangui concludes a week that saw the French parliament extend Operation Sangaris and deploy another 400 troops.

- *24 February 2014* – A top commander with the international force has confirmed that two African peacekeepers were killed over the weekend during fighting with militiamen in the capital city, where fresh clashes erupted on Monday. According to Martin Tumenta, head of military operations with the African-led MISCA force, two Chadian peacekeepers and two fighters from the mostly Christian anti-balaka militia, died in the fighting Sunday. They had come under attack while travelling on foot through the neighborhood without authorization. On Monday, another Chadian soldier was seriously wounded in another outbreak of unrest which occurred in the same area of Bangui, known as the combatant neighborhood. This particular neighborhood of Bangui has seen a spike in violence over the past several weeks. On Saturday, three Muslim civilians were shot dead in Combattant, which is located near the Bangui airport, when their taxi was stopped by an angry mob.
 - Meanwhile officials reported on Monday that African peacekeepers on Sunday had thwarted an attempt by leaders of the Central African Republic's anti-balaka militia to break out of Bangui prison with the help of the facility's head. A statement released by the peacekeeping mission deployed in the CAR indicated that the jailbreak was stopped "thanks to the vigilance of the Rwandan unit" in the African MISCA force. According to a resident near the prison, "for five minutes we heard shots, then nothing for a while and the shots started again." Residents later reported that armored vehicles belonging to the MISCA force were later patrolling the area. The group that attempted the jailbreak was arrested in a mop-up operation carried out by the peacekeepers in Bangui on 15 February.

Domestic News

- *26 February 2014* – On Wednesday, the CAR's interim president called on French and African troops deployed in her country to make full use of their UN mandate in order to sideline rogue elements that are continuing to cause havoc in the troubled nation. During a press conference, which was held one day after French lawmakers elected to extend their country's military operation in the CAR, interim president Catherine Samba Panza stated that the escalating Christian-Muslim violence in the CAR was "being used by people who are not interested in restoring stability," adding "I call on the MISCA African force and French force to really use the mandates they have been given by the UN resolutions and wipe out these unchecked elements that poison our lives." Under UN resolution 2127, which was adopted in December 2013, international forces are to restore public order and security in the CAR.

Regional Reporting

- *7 March 2014* – On Friday, the world's top Islamic body named former Senegalese foreign minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio as a special envoy to the CAR. The Jeddah-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) confirmed that Gadio, who served as Senegal's chief diplomat from 2000 until 2009, would bring "vast knowledge, skills" to the position. The OIC has 57 member nations, bringing together much of the Islamic world and often mediates in conflicts involving Muslims.
- *28 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

- *3 March 2014* – UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recommended Monday to deploy nearly 12,000 peacekeepers to the CAR in a bid to re-establish order in the country. In a report to the fifteen members of the UN Security Council, Ban specified that the peacekeeping mission should focus, in the initial stage, on “the protection of civilians” as part of a “military surge.” However the Secretary General warned that “the scale of the needs in the CAR is daunting” and that it is understood that even in the best case, UN peacekeepers could not be deployed for another six months because of the time required to mount such an operation. The mandate of the proposed force would be progressively extended in order to support the political transition process, and would particularly focus on restoring the government’s authority over the country and organizing elections. The peacekeeping force would also be charged with safeguarding the delivery of humanitarian aid, the respect of human rights and the return of the estimated quarter of the country’s 4.6 million people who have been displaced by the ongoing violence. According to the report, “it is envisaged that the strength of the peacekeeping operation would comprise of up to 10,000 troops and 1,820 police personnel,” and would include logistical and transport support, such as helicopters. Although the deployment would be rolled out in stages, in order “to deal with immediate security needs, there will be an initial surge of military personnel and corresponding military enablers.” The report also indicated that “police will also be phased in and, as the security environment improves, should eventually replace the bulk of the initial military surge capacity,” first in the capital and then in the provinces. Despite French and African forces already deployed in the CAR, violence has continued and the interim government has minimal power outside of the capital city. The Secretary General has indicated that he was “deploy concerned about the dramatic deterioration of the situation” in the CAR and has paid tribute to the French and African forces for “their dedication and courage to implement their mandates.” However “in spite of the progressive effectiveness of MISCA and Sangaris, the current deployment of international security forces is not sufficient, and lacks the civilian component.” Therefore in order “to address the current situation of violence and impunity, a military response alone will not be sufficient, no matter how robust.” While the new UN report provides no figures on the cost of such an operation, a UN official has indicated that the costs would likely come to between US \$500 and \$800 million per year. The Security Council will now work on a draft resolution that will give a green light to the peacekeeping force, which the Security General has requested. Officials have indicated that France hopes to submit a text to its partners before the end of the month. Under a new mandate, the African Union (AU) would also have to accept turning over the reins of its operation to the United Nations. It is expected that once this is achieved, most of the 6,000 MISCA troops would become UN peacekeepers.
- *27 February 2014* – The commander of the French forces in the CAR, General Francisco Soriano, stated on

Thursday that the country cannot “rely on the international community for everything” to enforce peace in their troubled nation. Speaking to reporters one day after interim President Catherine Samba Panza called on French and African forces deployed throughout her country to make full use of their UN mandate to sideline rogue elements creating havoc in the country, Soriano indicated that Central African had to take responsibility for themselves for their country’s security, noting that “Central Africans need to participate in the reconstruction of their own country. We already do a lot. Now we want an internal security operation where we need to involve the Central African security forces more fully.” Although Soriano has stipulated that Central Africans need to be more involved in attaining peace in their country, he did concede that it was a problem that many of those in the Central African security forces went unpaid. Speaking about this issue, Soriano indicated “we need to work more with the police to put them back in the saddle. It is important to restore the authority of the state.”

- Meanwhile officials in Georgia have indicated that they will contribute 150 troops to the European Union military force, which will be deployed in the CAR. Speaking to reporters, Georgian Defence Minister Irakli Alasania indicated that for the small former Soviet Caucasus state neighboring Russia, “this is not only to give help to the EU but for us it is also a moral mission.” Alasania further indicated that nations had already offered 600 troops however its operation commander had indicated that the force would likely number between 800 and 1,000 depending on contributions from EU and other nations at talks which are set to take place next week. Many of the contributions are from eastern European nations, including Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Romania. Spain and Portugal are other likely contributors. French General Philippe Ponties, the operation commander, has indicated that the aim is to get the first troops on the ground in early March with the French-led force at full capability by the end of April, when its four-to-six months mandate will begin. According to the commander, the aim will be to create “a safe haven” at Bangui airport and in two nearby districts to allow the return of those refugees who have fled the violence. Georgia’s contribution to the force to help French and African Union troops head off the on going sectarian violence in the CAR will be the nation’s first involvement in an EU security and defence mission, and its first operation in Africa.
- *25 February 2014* – On Tuesday, as France prepared to extend the stay of its troops in the CAR, the United Nations sounded alarm over a potential new bloodbath in the Central African country. The UN’s refugee body has reported that more than 15,000 people were surrounded and under threat of armed attack in locations in the northwestern and southwestern regions of the country. According to UNHCR spokesman Adrian Edwards, the vulnerable, mainly members of the minority Muslim community, were “at very high risk of attack” and urgently needed better security in the form of more international peacekeepers. His warning came as French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius defended his country’s military intervention in its former colony, stating that there would have been genocide if France had not deployed its force in December 2013. The claims come ahead of a debate in the French Parliament to extend the military operation. Despite misgivings over the duration, goals and scale of the operation amongst some French lawmakers, both houses of parliament are expected to approve an extension of the French force’s mandate, which is currently set to expire in April. The number of French peacekeepers on the ground will also be increased from 1,600 to 2,000 in order to support the 6,000-strong African force. The European Union has also pledged to deploy a further 1,000 troops however it currently remains unclear which countries will be providing troops and when they will arrive in the CAR.
- *24 February 2014* – Carl Haglund, the Finnish Minister of Defence, revealed during a meeting with his European counterparts in Athens, Greece, on Friday that roughly twenty Finnish special troops will take

part in the European Union's crisis management operation in the CAR. The majority of the Finnish troops to be deployed are expected to participate in mine clearance and explosives management operations. They will also provide medical support, with Defence Minister Haglund adding "a couple of staff officers could be sent to the operational headquarters in Greece or to the local offices in Central Africa." According to the Finnish government, the plan is to deploy the troops in April. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Erkki Tuomioja, had previously estimated that Finland could deploy as many as one hundred troops in order to safeguard stability in the violence-ridden country.

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 undertake 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 particularly in the capital. 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.

International Developments

- **5 March 2014** – Amnesty International has indicated that thousands fleeing the on going violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) are now facing another humanitarian crisis in neighbouring Chad. In a report released on Wednesday, the organization indicated that many refugees, including a large number of children, are “suffering from severe malnutrition and with no shelter other than the shade of trees.” The report further added that “the rainy season is due to start shortly and unless shelter, food and medical facilities are urgently made available, their already desperate situation will quickly deteriorate.” Christian Mukosa, Amnesty International’s Central Africa research, has described the situation of refugees as “quite dire,” stating “we saw people who had been living in the open for weeks waiting for promised assistance. The rainy season is about to start, rendering many areas inaccessible, and bringing the added threat of waterborne diseases,” adding “it is unacceptable for thousands of men, women and children who were forced to leave CAR fearing for their lives, to die here in Chad for lack of even the most basic assistance.” Mukosa also stated “it is important that the Chadian government and the international community including the UN agencies urgently assist their people and ensure that they have security, access to food, medical services, and adequate shelter.” According to the UN, nearly 300,000 people have fled the violence in the CAR to Chad, Cameroon and Ethiopia. The Central African Republic has been facing deadly unrest since December 2013, when Christian armed groups launched coordinated attacks against the mostly Muslim Seleka group that toppled the government in March 2013. Last month, the violence in the CAR reportedly claimed 1,000 lives. Some 2,000 French troops, supported by a 6,000-strong African Union force known as MISCA, are currently deployed to the CAR. However the forces have so far failed to curb the violence.

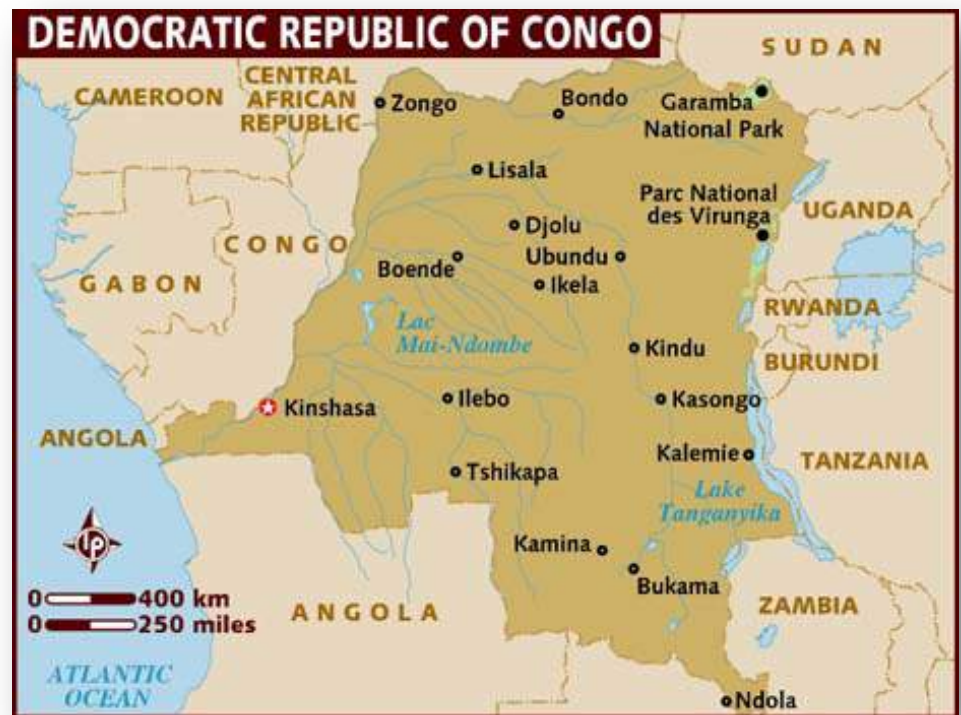
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

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 Kivu, 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

- *3 March 2014* – On Monday, five UN peacekeeping troops were wounded when two people on a motorcycle threw a grenade at their patrol in the eastern region of the DRC. A statement released by the UN mission for the stabilisation of the Country (MONUSCO) indicated that the attack occurred in the area of Beni in North Kivu province. However it did not indicate how seriously the troops were hurt. MONUSCO chief Martin Kobler stated in the statement that “this unacceptable attack...does not in any way reduce our support for FARDC (DRC Armed Forces) in the fight against armed groups,” adding “our belief is to neutralise all the illegal armed groups in the east of the DRC, and we are determined to carry it out.” Beni is located more than 300 kilometres north of Goma, the capital of North Kivu, which is a resource-rich province that borders Rwanda and Uganda. On 16 January, the FARDC regular armed forces launched an offensive against the Ugandan Muslim rebel group ADF-Nalu. By mid-February, FARDC had announced that it had inflicted severe losses on the rebels. The UN provides logistical and tactical support to the FARDC, however on Saturday, for the first time since the operation was launched, two MONUSCO attack helicopters fired on a large ADF-Nalu base. ADF-Nalu stands for Allied Democratic Forces – National Army for the Liberation of Uganda. It is one of the oldest, but lesser known, rebellions based in North-Kivu and is considered the only Islamist organization in the region.
- *1 March 2014* – On Saturday, UN gunships targeted a base of the Ugandan Muslim rebel group ADF-Nalu in the eastern region of the DR Congo for the first time. A statement released by MONUSCO, the UN mission that is currently deployed in the DR Congo, indicated that two attack helicopters struck an ADF-Nalu base northeast of Beni at 1255 GMT. According to MONUSCO chief Martin Kobler, “this operation, conducted with great precision, helps achieve a clear goal: bringing an end to ADF’s recent attacks against the civilian population.” The Congolese army had in recent weeks taken the lead in the drive to push ADF-Nalu out of the region.

International Developments

- *7 March 2014* – On Friday, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is due to deliver its verdict in the trial of Congolese ex-militia boss Germain Katanga, who has been accused of using child soldiers in a 2003 attack on a village in the central region of the African country, killing 200 people. Judge Bruno Cotte is to read the verdict at 0830 GMT in the case against Katanga, the one-time commander of the ethnic-based Patriotic Resistance Forces in Ituri (FRPI), operating in the DR Congo’s mineral-rich north-eastern region. Katanga, 35, went on trial more than four years ago, facing seven counts of war crimes and three of crimes against humanity, including murder, sexual slavery and rape, for his alleged role in the attack on the small village of Bogoro on 24 April 2003. During the trial, prosecutors alleged that the man and his forces of the Ngiti and Lendu tribes attacked villagers of the Hema ethnic group with machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and machetes, murdering around 200 people. According to the prosecution, “the attack was intended to ‘wipe out’ or ‘raze’ Bogoro village...” Child soldiers were used while women and girls were abducted afterwards and used as sex slaves, forced to cook and obey orders from FRPI soldiers. In 2004, as part of a policy to end the civil strife, Katanga was made a general in President Joseph Kabila’s army, a post he held until he was arrested in 2005. In October 2007, he was transferred to The Hague while his trial, together with that of his co-accused Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui, began two years later. In November 2012,

judges split the trials and a month later, Ngudjolo was acquitted after judges in that case indicated that the prosecution had failed to prove that he had played a commanding role in the Bogoro attack. This was the first time that the ICC had acquitted a suspect. Katanga, who has pleaded not guilty to the charges, has consistently maintained that he had no direct command or control over the FRPI fighters at the time. He also denied ever being present at the time of the attack on Bogoro, which is located 25 kilometres (15 miles) south of Ituri province's administrative capital Bunia, near Lake Albert. The Hague-based ICC has so far only convicted one other suspect, former Congolese rebel fighter Thomas Lubanga, who was sentenced in 2012 to 14 years for recruiting and enlisting child soldiers. **Update (7 March 2014)** – The ICC has found Germain Katanga guilty of war crimes but has acquitted him of sexual offences. He has been found guilty of complicity in the 2003 massacre and becomes just the second person to be convicted by the court since it was set up in The Hague in 2002. If he had been convicted of sexual offences, he would have been the first to be convicted of sexual crimes.

- **6 March 2014** – The International Criminal Court (ICC) has confirmed that the Democratic Republic of Congo warlord Bosco Ntaganda will remain in custody after dismissing a defense appeal for release. The ICC's appeals chamber indicated that it had rejected a defense challenge to release Ntaganda, who surrendered to the court last year. Ntaganda's defense team had argued that some of the evidence used by UN experts was based on hearsay. However the ICC indicated on Wednesday that the court ruled that the methodology used to collect information was "quite rigorous." It has also stated that the warlord's militia was working to protect civilians when DR Congo authorities were absent. Two arrest warrants were issued by the ICC for Ntaganda, who is charged with multiple counts of war crimes against humanity as leader of a rebel campaign in the DR Congo from 2002 to 2003. His confirmation of charges hearing, in order to determine if there is enough evidence to go forward with the trial, began last month. The DR Congo is struggling to restore national security after brokering an agreement with the rebel March 23 Movement, which waged war against the government from the country's eastern provinces. Human rights groups say that M23 was one of more than a dozen armed groups fighting in the region.
- **26 February 2014** – On Wednesday the International Criminal Court (ICC) called for the government of the DR Congo to arrest visiting Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who is currently wanted on charges of genocide in Darfur. The ICC has issued arrest warrants for Bashir on ten counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in the western Sudanese region of Darfur. The Hague-based ICC stated that Kinshasa must meet its obligations to arrest Bashir "immediately" and to hand him over to the tribunal, adding that "it reminds the Democratic Republic of the Congo of...its obligations to execute the pending decisions concerning the arrest and surrender of Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir to the court." The call has also been echoed by a number of international and local rights groups. Amnesty International released a statement indicating "the Democratic Republic of Congo should not shield President Omar al-Bashir from international justice." Almost 90 groups in the DR Congo have also signed a petition, calling on the government, which has ratified the treaty setting up the ICC, to arrest Bashir. Descartes Mpongo, of the Collective of Christian Human Rights Activists in the eastern South-Kivu province stated "the DRC must clearly demonstrate that it is on the side of justice and the victims, and not on the side of the suspects." The groups have also indicated that they were seriously considering pressing charges against Bashir in the DRC to "obtain a national arrest warrant against him." Bashir, 70, who in March 2009 became the first sitting head of state to be indicted by the ICC, is currently in Kinshasa to attend a summit of regional African leaders. Despite the arrest warrants, Bashir has freely travelled to several African countries who have refused to arrest him, with many on the continent accusing the IC of singling out Africans for prosecution.

- *24 February 2014* – On Monday, the United Nations denounced armed groups in the restive eastern region of the DRC for carrying out murders of civilians, looting and burning down entire villages. A statement released by the UN’s humanitarian coordinator in the DRC, Moustapha Soumare, indicated that over the past several weeks, the Masisis territory in the mineral-rich Nord-Kivu province “has been the scene of a number of assaults on civilians.” Mr. Soumare added that he had received alarming reports of killings, many based on ethnic origin, by armed groups in the southern region of the territory where nearly forty people died and villages were set ablaze. The homes of displaced people were later pillaged while health centres, which temporarily suspended their activities after medics fled, were also targeted.

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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **27 February 2014** – Police confirmed on Thursday that the self-styled political leader of a militia sowing terror in the Central African Republic has been arrested in north Congo and transferred to Brazzaville. A former minister under ousted President François Bozize, Patrice Edouard Ngaissona, who claims to be the coordinator of the mostly Christian anti-balaka (anti-machete) militia, was arrested Tuesday along with two

aides. On Thursday, police officials confirmed “Mr Ngaissona’s arrest took place without violence,” adding that “he virtually handed himself in. He is currently in a safe place in the capital.” The Congo’s northern Likouala region, which lies across the Ubagni river from the CAR, has since the end of 2013 hosted about 11,000 Christian and Muslim refugees, amongst the million civilians who have been displaced by the on-going violence in the CAR. Mr Ngaissona served as a lawmaker and headed the Central African football federation before becoming sports minister under former CAR President Bozize, whose ouster in a Muslim-led coup in March 2013 touched off a year of escalating inter-religious unrest. Mr Ngaissona went on to declare himself leader of the anti-balaka militia, which was set up in response to the atrocities that had been carried out by the Seleka rebellion who was behind last year’s coup. The anti-balaka rebels currently pose the biggest threat to security in the CAR, where French and African peacekeepers are struggling to restore order and protect civilians. Congo is deeply involved in the Central African crisis, as its officials have deployed 1,000 troops. **Update (28 February 2014)** – One day after police officials in the Congo indicated that a former CAR rebel leader had been arrested in the Congo, Patrice Edouard Ngaisson has denied that he had been arrested and transferred to Brazzaville. Mr Ngaissona has since stated that “contrary to what has been said on foreign channels and in certain newspapers, I have not been arrested in Congo and I wasn’t transferred to Brazzaville.” Currently there have been no remarks made by officials in the Congo or in the CAR about Mr Ngaissona’s whereabouts.

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.

