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West Africa Report

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

April 28 – May 11, 2014

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MS Risk supports clients in a variety of business sectors with the following services::

- Security Consulting
 - Risk assessments and intelligence reporting
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 - Due diligence and investigations.
- Project Management
 - Interim security
 - Training
 - Special assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis management
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
- Virtual Security Director service for clients lacking a full time security executive.

References are always available.
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Summary

April 28 – May 11, 2014



Sahel Region

- **8 May 2014** – On Thursday, France announced that it will deploy 3,000 soldiers to combat Islamist violence in the vast and largely lawless Sahel region of Africa.

Gambia

On the Ground Reporting

- **1 May 2014** – Gambia has been hit by an acute fuel shortage for several days, affecting the movement of people for business and other economic and social activities.

International Developments

- **1 May 2014** – Gambian president Yahya Jammeh has reportedly dismissed the entire staff of the Gambian Embassy in the United Kingdom.

Guinea

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 May 2014** – According to the communication officer for Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) Sam Taylor, despite remarkable reduction in the number of new Ebola cases being reported, the disease has not been totally eradicated in Guinea, and medical teams are still alert to respond in case of any eventual outbreak.
- **2 May 2014** – The latest update from the Ministry of Health has reported 226 clinical cases of Ebola, including 149 deaths.
- **30 April 2014** – Guinean President Alpha Conde has stated that Guinea's Ebola outbreak is under control, but the death toll could rise as sick patients remain in hospital.

Guinea - Bissau

- **30 April 2014** – Two aides to Guinea Bissau's former navy chief, Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, have pleaded guilty in New York to their roles in a major cocaine trafficking enterprise.

Liberia

- **28 April 2014** – The US government has reaffirmed its readiness and commitment to assist the Liberian government to build the capacity of the Liberia National Police.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 May 2014** – The French government confirmed Thursday that a French soldier has been killed while on operation in northern Mali.
- **6 May 2014** – Military sources indicated Tuesday that armed Islamist militants in northern Mali have set up a commando unit that has executed alleged collaborators accused of helping French troops and Tuareg rebels.
- **2 May 2014** – Nine people were killed in clashes in northern Mali between suspected Islamists and Tuareg separatist forces. North of Timbuktu, clashes involved separatists and suspected members of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), according to a separatist spokesman and two anonymous military sources.
- **30 April 2014** – Prime Minister, Moussa Mara has told parliament that Mali's constitution will be reviewed as part of a series of measures aimed at improving the country's democratic framework.
- **29 April 2014** – Mali's new Prime Minister, Moussa Mara, pledged to revive peace talks with rebels in the north, while armed groups from the region said they would hold a preparatory meeting with Algeria ahead of the negotiations.

Regional Reporting

- **6 May 2014** – Algeria's defense ministry has confirmed that its armed forces have killed nine armed militants near the Malian border.

Mauritania

- **7 May 2014** – Mauritania's Constitutional Council announced Wednesday that a woman has put forward a rare bid for the presidency of Mauritania, a West African nation that is run under strict Islamic law.
- **5 May 2014** – A coalition of Mauritania's most prominent opposition parties has announced that they will boycott next month's presidential election, citing concerns that opposition leaders were not sufficiently consulted before the date of the elections was set.

Niger

- **8 May 2014** – Niger's regional governor confirmed Thursday that fourteen suspected members of Nigeria's Boko Haram militant group were arrested in neighbouring Niger on Tuesday after an attack on an army patrol in the eastern region of Diffa.
- **30 April 2014** – A Niger state governor, Dr. Muazu Babangida Aliyu, has set up a two-man committee to investigate the activities of an Islamic sect based in Bida that allegedly practises Islam the same way as the Boko Haram.
- **29 April 2014** – A 72 year-old man has been arrested by the Guards Brigade of the Nigerian Army for operating four gun factories, one in Suleja Niger State and three in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **9 May 2014** – According to Amnesty International officials, Nigeria's military had advanced warning of the April 14 attack by Boko Haram, which led to the kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls, however they failed to take immediate action.
- **8 May 2014** – World powers, including the United States and China, have joined in the search for the more than 200 schoolgirls who were abducted by Boko Haram militants.
- **6 May 2014** – Residents reported Tuesday that suspected Boko Haram militants have kidnapped eight more girls from Nigeria's embattled northeastern region.
- **5 May 2014** – Military officials announced Monday that three Dutch national were kidnapped in Nigeria's oil producing region.
 - On Monday, the leader of Boko Haram confirmed that the militant group was behind the abduction over 200 girls kidnapped three weeks ago in north eastern Nigeria last month, threatening to sell them.
 - According to eyewitnesses, scores of Boko Haram gunmen riding in armored vehicles razed a remote northeastern town on Monday, opening fire on residents who attempted to flee into neighboring Cameroon.
- **3 May 2014** - Security forces have raided areas near the site of two bombings in Nigeria's capital, detaining eight suspects.
- **2 May 2014** – Police Commissioner Tanko Lawan, speaking from Maiduguri, the northeastern capital of Borno state, said that the number of kidnapped schoolgirls missing in Nigeria has risen to 276, up by more than 30 from a previous estimate.
 - At least 19 people were killed and 60 injured after a car bomb exploded in Nyanya, only 200 metres from the site of an April 14 bombing that killed at least 75 people and wounded 141.
 - The Nigerian military is expected to begin a major operation near the Sambisa Forest, where the Nigerian government believes terrorists are holding some 276 young girls.
- **1 May 2014** – Halite Aliyu, of the human rights group Borno-Yobe People's Forum, has said that the 200 girls who were kidnapped two weeks ago had been sold into marriage to their Boko Haram abductors for US \$12 (£7).
- **30 April 2014** – The government's failure to rescue the 200 abducted girls has prompted Nigerian protesters to march on the country's parliament on Wednesday.

- **28 April 2014** – A group of 100 youth from Delta state have committed to join a number of volunteers ready to defend Nigeria against Boko Haram and search for the nearly 200 missing girls that were abducted in April.
 - A Nigerian NGO has written to President Goodluck Jonathan requesting permission to recruit, train and arm thousands of civilian volunteers to fight the Boko Haram militant group.

International Developments

- **7 May 2014** – Amidst growing international pressure over the fate of over 200 missing schoolgirls, the United States has deployed military experts to Nigeria to help rescue hundreds of girls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants three weeks ago.
- **6 May 2014** – In the wake of Boko Haram claiming responsibility for the abduction of over two hundred students, and threatening to sell the girls as “slaves,” the international community has called on the United States to help find and free the hundreds of schoolgirls who were kidnapped in northern Nigeria three weeks ago aid in the search, she did dismiss suggestions that the US would deploy military assets on the ground.
 - Meanwhile British Foreign Minister William Hague has offered to help Nigeria secure the release of more than 200 schoolgirls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram militants last month.
 - The United Nations human rights office warned Tuesday that the threatened sale into slavery of hundreds of schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants may constitute a crime against humanity.

Senegal

- **6 May 2014** – On Tuesday, Senegal's government reopened the border with Guinea, which was closed after an outbreak of the Ebola virus claimed scores of lives in the neighboring country.
- **30 April 2014** – The most high-profile rebel leader in Senegal's southern Casamance region declared a ceasefire, raising hopes that three decades of low-level insurgency could be nearing its end.
- **30 April 2014** – Senegal has announced that the nation will soon reopen its borders with Guinea. The border had been closed in March to stop the spread of the Ebola virus, which had killed over one hundred people.

Sierra Leone

- **29 April 2014** – Deputy Health and Sanitation Minister, Dr. Abu Bakarr Fofanah, has commended District Health Management Teams throughout the nation for their level of cooperation and vigilant response in the fight against the Ebola virus.

Security Summaries for West African States

Sahel Region – Page 9

Benin

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

Burkina Faso – Page 11

Gambia – Page 13

Ghana

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea and Liberia. While there have been no confirmations of the deadly disease in Ghana, officials are currently testing blood samples taken from a 12-year-old girl who recently died of a viral fever. MS Risk advises all travellers to or near the affected areas to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat. Although there is currently no travel advisory for Ghana, the country has seen an increase in violent robbery in 2013. In May, an expatriate's vehicle was stopped by an armed individual who forced his way into the car demanding money. On being paid, the individual left the vehicle. In a separate incident, an expatriate was robbed of her wallet while attempting to pay a taxi driver. There have also been reports of two Westerners being shot while driving alone at night. In a separate incident, two westerners were robbed at gunpoint while at a restaurant. Both incidents occurred in the Accra Area however there have been reports of robberies in the Tema area which in one case resulted in the death of a Westerner. There have also been reports of foreign nationals being held at gunpoint in their homes and while walking in the street. Most armed robberies occur at night however there have been some reports of such incidents occurring during daytime. A common tactic has been to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force the targeted vehicle to stop. As a result of ongoing local Chieftancy and land disputes, isolated inter-ethnic violence and civil unrest can occur at any time, including in the Northern, Upper East and Volta regions. A dusk to dawn curfew has been put in place on the Hohoe community in the Volta region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of the Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering travelling to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of flooding which is common in the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions during the rainy season, which spans from March to November. We advise that you monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Guinea – Page 14

Guinea-Bissau – Page 17**Ivory Coast**

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the western regions of Dix-Huit Montagnes, Haut-Sassandra, Moyen-Cavally and Bas-Sassandra. Since August 2012, there have been a number of shootings around the capital of Abidjan. Attacks have mainly occurred at night with the targets usually being police and military officials. Further such incidents cannot be ruled out at this time, consequently MS Risk advises those in the capital city to remain vigilant at all times.

Liberia – Page 18**Mali – Page 20****Mauritania – Page 25****Niger – Page 27****Nigeria – Page 30****Senegal – Page 40****Sierra Leone – Page 42****Togo**

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

Sahel Region

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

There is a very real threat of kidnap to westerners in the Sahel and surrounding regions. The Sahel region includes Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, however the kidnap threat extends to other countries, including Algeria, Cameroon, Libya and Nigeria. Following the military intervention in Mali, which was launched in January 2013, the threat of kidnap and terrorist attacks has increased, with further attacks highly likely to continue.

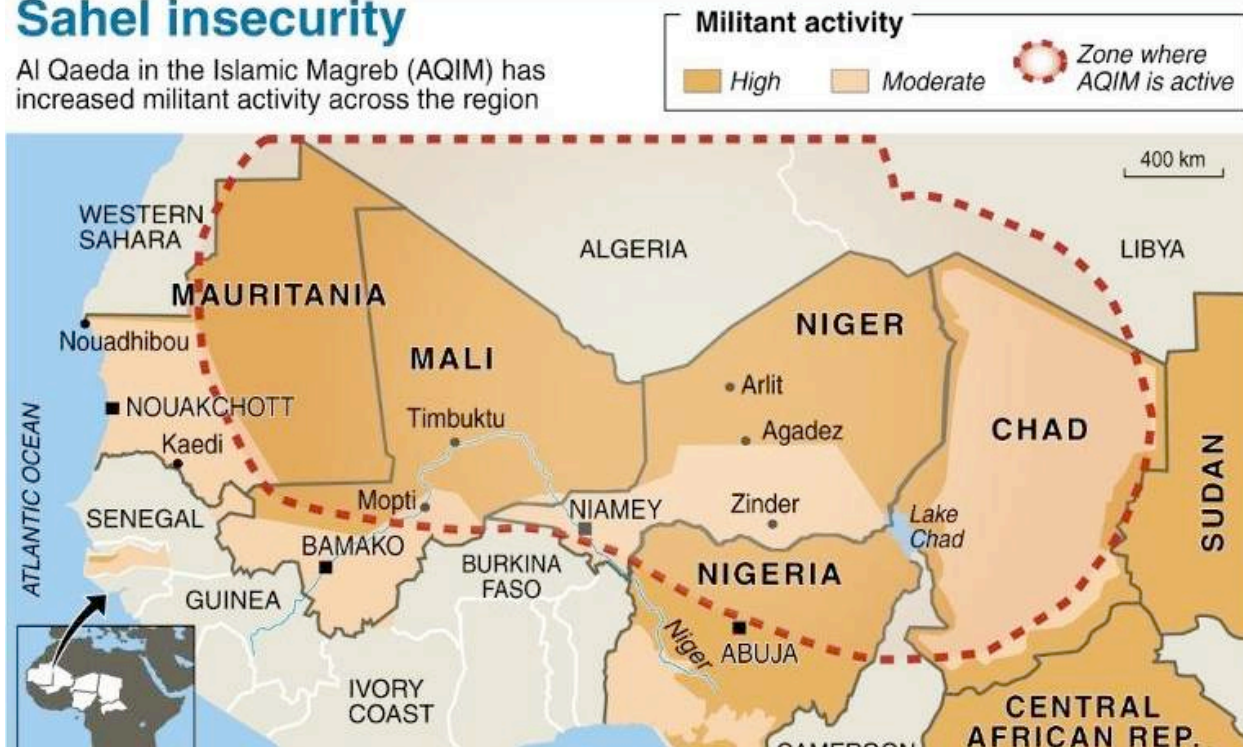
There are currently around six hostages being held in the Sahel and surrounding regions. Victims in the region have included construction workers, NGO workers, tourists and diplomats of various nationalities, primarily European. Some hostages have been killed.

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 May 2014** – On Thursday, France announced that it will deploy 3,000 soldiers to combat Islamist violence in the vast and largely lawless Sahel region of Africa. During a television interview, Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian stated “our role is to pursue counter-terrorism in north Mali, the north of Niger and in Chad,” adding that France is “...reorganising our contingent so that 2,000 French soldiers are in that zone.” Le Drian also indicated that France was “in the process of ending its frontal war phase” in Mali but added that 1,000 French soldiers will remain. They will be based near the town of Gao in the insurgency-hit northeast of the country. According to Le Drian, “a certain number of jihadist groups still want to regroup in the North....There are far fewer of them but they have nothing to lose, they have abandoned their lives, so we must fight with extreme precision against any attempt to regroup.” Underlining the continued threat in the region, the French presidency announced Thursday that a French soldier was killed by a roadside bomb overnight. The death brings the number of French soldiers killed in Mali to eight. However he did note that the conflict had entered “a different phase” with UN forces now present in the country and with the Malian army rebuilding itself. In January 2013, France launched a military operation to support the Malian army and drive back Islamist militants advancing towards the southern regions of the country.

Sahel insecurity

Al Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb (AQIM) has increased militant activity across the region



Burkina Faso

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Anyone traveling to, or residing in, Burkina Faso is urged to maintain a high level of security awareness at all times. While the political situation remains generally stable, since February 2011, there have been an increasing number of demonstrations.

Threats and Concerns

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

Kidnapping Threats

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



Crime

There is also a high risk of armed groups stopping vehicles (including public buses to rob them. Such incidents have occurred in various parts of the country, particularly at night. Therefore, all travel between towns by road at night is to be avoided, especially from Ouagadougou to Po where there is a heightened risk. This is especially severe on market days when bandits often target merchants with stock or cash en route to and from the urban areas.

MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:

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

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

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

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

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

Gambia

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

There is no travel advisory for Gambia, however MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid travel by road from The Gambia to the Casamance, in the southern region of Senegal. The Casamance region of south western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Due to the French military intervention in Mali, coupled with the Gambia's stated commitment to participate in the intervention, there is a possibility that retaliatory attacks against Western interests in the region may be carried out. Travellers to the country are warned to remain vigilant as attacks can take place at anytime and anywhere.

On the Ground Reporting

- **1 May 2014** – Gambia has been hit by an acute fuel shortage for several days, affecting the movement of people for business and other economic and social activities. The shortage which began on Monday evening has brought many businesses to a standstill. In Banjul and urban areas in the country people struggling to find transport to reach their destinations. There is no estimate of how long the shortage will last. The Gam Petroleum, the institution responsible for the overall importation of petroleum in The Gambia could not be reached to shed light on the situation. The shortage comes weeks after the Gambian government announced the liberalisation of importation of petroleum products into the country.

International News

- **1 May 2014** – Gambian president Yahya Jammeh has reportedly dismissed the entire staff of the Gambian Embassy in the United Kingdom. According to the Gambian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the president cited no official reasons, but officials said the regime is displeased with the way the embassy is operating, particularly regarding dealings with Gambian diaspora in the UK. The officials added that the regime is also accusing some in the embassy of compromising their diplomatic status by revealing the regime's secrets to the government of David Cameron. In October 2013, the regime decided to pull The Gambia out of the Commonwealth of Nations. Jammeh's decision to withdraw came after his visit to New York when pro-democracy activists protested in large numbers. Under Jammeh, Gambia has been cited several times for human rights violations.

Guinea

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



Security Summary

An outbreak of contagious hemorrhagic fever, which has been identified as the Ebola virus, has been confirmed in the Forest region of south-eastern Guinea and in the capital city. The outbreak is currently concentrated in the Forest region of south eastern Guinea, in the districts of Macenta, Guekedou and Kissoudgo and there have been confirmed cases of Ebola reported in the capital, Conakry. Several suspected cases have also been reported in Dabola and Dinguiraye in central Guinea. There have already been over 90 deaths reported in Guinea, out of 150 suspected cases, including 202 cases in Conakry. MS Risk advises all travellers to Guinea, and those already in the country, to not travel to the affected areas. It is strongly advised that you closely monitor the official health advice issued by Guinean authorities, maintain strict standards of hygiene and avoid eating bush meat. Despite the outbreak, Guinea's airports and borders have remained open.



At least two deaths, several injuries and destruction of property were reported during riots that broke out in the eastern suburbs of Conakry on 18 February 2014. Since then, riots have continued throughout the capital city and in nearby towns. The riots and protests are a result of frequent power cuts. Further such violence is likely to continue over the coming weeks. Violence has broken out in Kankan, in the "Upper Guinea" region in the east of the country. At least three deaths have been reported since 14 December as well as a number of injuries and destruction of

property. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid this region of the country as further instability is likely to continue.

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

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 May 2014** – According to the communication officer for Medecins Sans Frontiere (MSF) Sam Taylor, despite remarkable reduction in the number of new Ebola cases being reported, the disease has not been totally eradicated in Guinea, and medical teams are still alert to respond in case of any eventual outbreak. He further indicated that the search for people who had contact with Ebola patients was still going on, adding “all stakeholders should continue to remain vigilant, ensuring that the population receive the correct information and that patients are rapidly taken to hospitals for medication.” He also indicated that medical teams are continuing to receive new patients in Conakry and Guekedou, where MSF teams are working with officials from Guinea’s health ministry to eradicate the disease. The Ebola fever will only be declared as officially eradicated if there are no new cases reported within forty-two days. An official statement released on Saturday by Guinea’s health ministry indicated that 127 Ebola cases were confirmed, out of which 81 people have died so far.
- **2 May 2014** – The latest update from the Ministry of Health has reported 226 clinical cases of Ebola, including 149 deaths. Of 210 patients tested, 127 cases have been laboratory confirmed for Ebola virus, (EVD) including 81 deaths. There were also 44 cases (including 34 deaths) that have met the probable case definition for EVD, and 55 cases (34 deaths) that are suspected cases. Twenty-five healthcare workers have been infected (18 confirmed), with 16 deaths (11 confirmed). The geographical distribution of cases is: Conakry (53 cases, including 24 deaths), Guekedou (140/99), Macenta (22/16), Kissidougou (6/5), Dabola (4/4) and Djingaraye (1/1). The most recent confirmed cases were on 30 April in Conakry and Guekedou. As incubation for EVD can be up to three weeks, Guinean health authorities may report new cases in the coming weeks. Additional suspected cases may also be identified in neighbouring countries.
- **30 April 2014** – Guinean President Alpha Conde has stated that Guinea’s Ebola outbreak is under control, but the death toll could rise as sick patients remain in hospital. Conde warned, “There haven’t been any new cases. But of those who remain in quarantine, there certainly will be some who will die.” Guinea remains on high alert against the virus, and is working with the UN health agency and aid groups. On 29 April, the health ministry said that 74 people had died so far this year in one of the worst ever outbreaks of the virus, with 121 confirmed cases. Four people are receiving treatment in the capital Conakry, and six in

Gueckedou, in the south of the country, which has seen some of the most serious outbreaks. A larger number of people have been diagnosed with haemorrhagic fever, but not all those cases have been confirmed as Ebola. No new cases have been recorded since Sunday. There is no vaccine or cure for Ebola, which can be caught from handling the blood or the bodily fluids of sick or dead forest animals. In the US, researchers have confirmed that the Guinea outbreak began after contact with bats caught for their meat in the country's southern forests, then spread within the hunters' communities and to health workers who initially failed to identify the risk posed by feverish patients. The government has advised Guineans to stop eating bats and other "bush meat" when possible, and has also strived to apply infection-control measures. Although fewer cases of Ebola are being reported, Doctors without Borders are still treating the outbreak as an epidemic. A spokesman for Doctors without Borders Guinea, Sam Taylor, says the infection rate appears to be slowing down: "Our activities are continuing even though, to be honest, we don't have that many patients at the moment."

Guinea – Bissau

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

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

International Developments

- **30 April 2014** – Two aides to Guinea Bissau's former navy chief, Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, have pleaded guilty in New York to their roles in a major cocaine trafficking enterprise. Tchamy Yala and Papis Djeme entered their pleas in Manhattan federal court, telling a U.S. judge they conspired to import cocaine to Guinea Bissau in West Africa for eventual distribution to Europe and the US. Former navy chief Na Tchuto was arrested in a sting operation by US. Authorities in 2013. The US claims the Guinea-Bissau war hero is a kingpin of West Africa's illicit drug trade. The UN says Guinea Bissau is a major transfer point for Latin American cocaine on its way to Europe, and American and European authorities have long suspected that the country's military is involved in trafficking. According to U.S. prosecutors in New York, Na Tchuto, Djeme, and Yala met with confidential Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) informants posing as representatives of Latin American drug traffickers and were recorded discussing shipments of cocaine to Guinea Bissau. Na Tchuto was seized from a luxury yacht off the coast of Guinea Bissau. He has denied the charges against him, and his trial is scheduled for June. Djeme said through a translator that he conspired with "the Admiral", referencing Na Tchuto while entering his guilty plea. Both Yala and Djeme are scheduled for sentencing in September, and could face a 20 year prison sentence. The US Drug Enforcement Agency had also targeted Guinea Bissau's army chief, Antonio Indjai. Indjai avoided arrest when he decided not to leave the shore, and has also denied running drugs. The U.S. undercover operation angered Guinea Bissau officials, with one government spokesman calling the sting a "kidnapping".

Liberia

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



Security Summary

On the 23 March 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) was notified by the Ministry of Health in Guinea of confirmed cases of Ebola hemorrhagic fever. This is the first outbreak of Ebola reported in Guinea. Since



then, cases have been reported in the forested areas of south-eastern Guinea, including in the Guekedou, Kissidougou, Macenta and Nzerekore districts. The deadly disease has now spread to Guinea's capital, Conakry. There have been confirmed cases in areas of Liberia near the border with Guinea. Although the Ministry of Health, WHO and other international partners are assisting in the investigation and management of the outbreak, the outbreak is nevertheless rapidly evolving, with case numbers expected to increase in the coming days.

MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of Liberia, specifically those regions of the country that border with the Ivory Coast. There is a high level of crime in Monrovia, including armed robbery. The Liberian National Police has a very limited capability to prevent or detect crime, or to provide emergency response in any part of the country. Foreigners have been mugged in the Mamba Point and Sinkor areas of Monrovia (including Sinkor beach in broad daylight) where most international visitors stay. The roads from Monrovia to Roberts International Airport, the port

town of Buchanan and to the border with Sierra Leone at Bo Waterside, and to the border with Guinea at Ganta, are mainly paved and in reasonable condition. Most other roads outside Monrovia are unpaved. Driving and road conditions will significantly deteriorate during the rainy season, which occurs from May to November. Many roads during this time become impassable. MS Risk advises against all travel at night outside of

Monrovia, except to or from Roberts International Airport. This is because roads are treacherous and all the roads are unlit. Furthermore, vehicles often do not have any lights. As a result, travellers after dark are more vulnerable to being robbed at an illegal barricade. Liberia has become increasingly stable since the internal conflict ended in 2003. However the security situation remains fragile. Furthermore, although Liberian President Charles Taylor is currently serving out a long prison sentence in the UK, following his conviction by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Taylor's supporters have warned that UK travellers in Liberia may be at risk of reprisal. Consequently MS Risk advises all British travellers to be extra vigilant and to avoid discussing any political issues. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks could be carried out in Liberia, this is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. UNMIL peacekeepers are deployed to the main population centers around Liberia, and patrol the main roads.

International Developments

- **28 April 2014** – The US government has reaffirmed its readiness and commitment to assist the Liberian government to build the capacity of the Liberia National Police. However, Ambassador Deborah Malac stressed the need to improve police conduct, saying it is “significant in a democratic environment such as Liberia.” The US decision is based on the level of professionalism the LNP has exhibited in the execution of its statutory mediate, especially the improved provision of security for the people of Liberia. With the potential drawdown of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), it was significant for the police force to be fully equipped to meet the security needs of the Liberian people. To that end, the US assistance will provision of spare parts for broken down police vehicles to have them back in full police operations. Commenting on the conduct of police officers, Police Director Colonel Clarence Massaquoi assured Ambassador Malac of his administration's commitment in addressing misconduct in the police, citing measures his administration has taken to curb misdoing in the police.

Mali

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

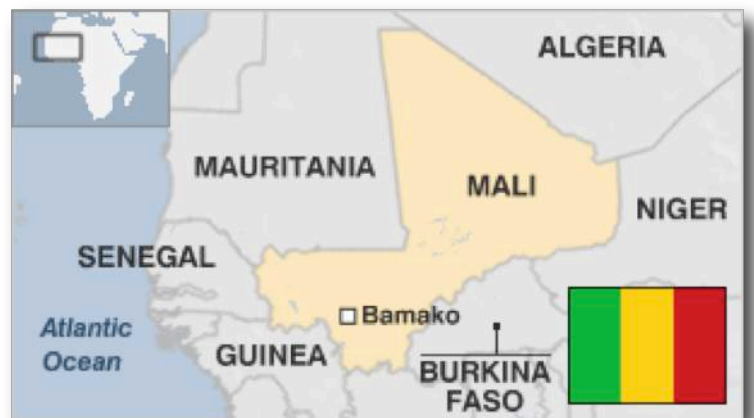
Security Summary

Summary

There has been an outbreak of the Ebola virus which has been confirmed in south-eastern Guinea. While there were reports of suspected cases in areas of Mali, specifically near the border with Guinea, these cases have since tested negative for the Ebola virus. Nevertheless, if you are travelling near the border areas with Guinea, MS Risk advises that you take caution, maintain strict standards of hygiene and avoid eating bush meat.

MS Risk advises against all travel to Bamako. We also advise against all travel to the rest of Mali, especially to the northern regions of the country. Although Bamako is generally calm, the situation throughout the rest of the country is still volatile. Presidential elections were held on July 28 and August 11, and President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and his new government took office in September 2013.

If you are in Bamako, MS Risk advises you to maintain a high level of vigilance, to keep a low profile and to stay alert to the local political developments. We also advise that you avoid sensitive areas, including military installations and large gatherings of people. Night time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako, largely controlling access to military and government facilities.



Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn.

During the rainy season, which runs from May until October, torrential rains can cause floods and landslides, and may result in houses collapsing. In late August, there were reports of flash flooding that occurred in Bamako. The neighborhoods of Bankoni, Taliko, Lafiabougou, Djicoroni Woyowayanko, Lafiabougou Bougouba and Bougoudani were all hit by floods during the rains storms which lasted most of the day. MS Risk advises anyone in the capital city to monitor the local weather reports and to expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

Terrorism

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

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

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

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

Kidnapping

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

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

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

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

Local Travel

Although the military intervention has regained control of the major northern cities in Mali, the situation remains tense in the region and there continues to be a high risk of retaliatory action by terrorist groups. MS Risk advises against all travel to the northern region of Mali, especially to the cities/towns of Gao, In Khalil, Kidal, and Timbuktu as well as the surrounding areas. Landmines have been used by groups operating in the north and northeast of Mali.

Night-time checkpoints continue to operate in Bamako. These checkpoints largely control access to military and Government facilities. Checkpoints are in place from approximately 9PM until dawn. MS Risk advises to keep vehicle and personal identification documents with you at all times while travelling by road. Furthermore, approach security checkpoints slowly and comply with instructions that are given.

MS RISK Guidance to Organizations in Mali:

With western diplomatic missions all warning against unnecessary travel to Mali, those companies with fixed interests in the country need to take measured precautions if they have not done so already. This is especially an issue for organizations with any interest in the so-called Azawad region - that portion of the country, which is under insurgent control. Preparations should include the following:

- Thinning out non-essential staff and dependents
- Restricting expat and local national internal travel
- Seeking advice from the security forces
- Ensuring journey management systems are in place and work

- Reviewing crisis management contingencies and carrying out exercises of these plans
- Registration of expatriates with relevant diplomatic missions and seeking advice on what support will be forthcoming (if any) if conditions deteriorate
- Liaison with insurers to know any exclusions or limits to existing cover

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 May 2014** – The French government confirmed Thursday that a French soldier has been killed while on operation in northern Mali. According to France's Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, the unidentified soldier, from the 2nd Foreign Parachute Regiment, died overnight Thursday after being struck by an improvised explosive device (IED). The death brings the total number of French soldiers killed in Mali to eight since France launched military operations in the country in January 2013 after Islamist fighters seized control of the northern regions of the country. A statement released by President Francois Hollande's office expressed the French President's "deep sadness" over the soldier's death, which has highlighted the fact that the Islamist militant threat in Mali continues to prevail. Pockets of al-Qaeda-linked fighters are still present across the northern region of the country. Despite being scattered across Mali and into neighbouring countries, in recent months, these militant groups have regrouped and have stepped up their operations.
- **6 May 2014** – Military sources indicated Tuesday that armed Islamist militants in northern Mali have set up a commando unit that has executed alleged collaborators accused of helping French troops and Tuareg rebels. According to one of the Malian security sources, "at least 11 people accused of being informers for Serval or the MNLA have been slain in the past 11 months by the Islamists." The latest killing was that of Sidati Ag Baye, who was shot by two men on a motorcycle in Kidal, a stronghold of the Tuareg desert people and their rebel movement in Mali's far northeast. Although he was initially seriously wounded, Ag Baye died of his injuries on Saturday after being transported by the French army to a hospital. Sources believe that his death was "a targeted assassination," as he had been suspected of "working for the enemy." As a result, he was placed under surveillance for 10 days by both al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Sources believed that his death was "a targeted assassination." Ag Baye's death comes just two months after armed militants showed up at a market in the northwestern Timbuktu region and handed out leaflets, threatening informers and spies for "foreign forces" – a reference primarily to the French troops who are helping in stabilizing the country.
- **2 May 2014** – Nine people were killed in clashes in northern Mali between suspected Islamists and Tuareg separatist forces. North of Timbuktu, clashes involved separatists and suspected members of the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), according to a separatist spokesman and two anonymous military sources. Akay Ag Mohamed, a spokesman in the northern town of Kidal for the separatist National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) said, "The fighting is over. The MNLA fighters have returned to Kidal. We took seven prisoners and killed nine of the enemy." A spokesman for the U.N. military mission in Mali, MINUSMA, said he was informed of clashes but declined to give further details.
- **30 April 2014** – Prime Minister, Moussa Mara has told parliament that Mali's constitution will be reviewed as part of a series of measures aimed at improving the country's democratic framework. Mara did not

elaborate on how the revision will be conducted, but hinted that the changes will seek to strengthen the country's institutional framework and democratic culture: "We will quickly engage important system reforms and electoral process as well as the laws governing the activities of political parties." Mara also raised the notion of better protection for political opponents. He also announced goals of press reforms, with a view to building large groups of private capital, and security and defence by providing the army with capabilities of speed and flexibility in order for them to provide armed and unarmed responses to threats inside the country's borders.

- **29 April 2014** –Mali's new Prime Minister, Moussa Mara, pledged to revive peace talks with rebels in the north, while armed groups from the region said they would hold a preparatory meeting with Algeria ahead of the negotiations. Mara said, "We will invite the armed groups and also legitimate representatives of the north so that any agreement has the best possible chance of being the last one concluded for northern Mali." He did not give details of a timeframe for the talks. In a separate event the same day, four armed groups from northern Mali released a combined statement in which they resolved to "harmonize" their political platforms. The spokesman for the "movements of Azawad" (the area of land claimed by rebels) said the groups would hold a preparatory meeting with neighbouring Algeria. In the past, Algeria acted as a mediator for a past Tuareg rebellion. In an email, spokesman Mohamed Ousmane Ag Mohamedoun elaborated, "We have solicited Algeria to facilitate a meeting with all the movements to harmonize our platform and form a bloc for the negotiations." The joint statement is a departure from custom, and shows unity following a rift among the Tuareg armed movement after the departure of prominent National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) member Ibrahim Ag Mohamed Assaleh. Tensions have also been high between the MNLA and Malian President Keita after the latter's accusation earlier this month that the MNLA had been seeking Russian arms. Meanwhile, isolated attacks by Islamists in northern Mali have continued despite the presence of thousands of French and U.N. peacekeepers. A mine exploded in the town of Kidal last week, seriously injuring a U.N. peacekeeper but not affecting a delegation of visiting diplomats.

Regional Reporting

- **6 May 2014** – Algeria's defense ministry has confirmed that its armed forces have killed nine armed militants near the Malian border. According to a statement released by the ministry, the "terrorist group of nine criminals" died after clashes with the army in the Taoundert border area yester, 80 kilometers (50 miles) west of Tin Zaoutine in Tamanrasset province. The statement further added that eight automatic Kalashnikov-type rifles, an RPG-7 rocket launcher, technical equipment and a "large amount" of ammunition were seized, noting that the clampdown came after "effective use of information on suspicious movement so a terrorist group." The clampdown also comes just days after al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) claimed responsibility for an April ambush in Algeria's restive Kabylie region, which killed eleven soldiers. The attack was the deadliest on the military in years and came two days after ailing President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was re-elected for a fourth term. While Islamist-linked violence rocked Algeria in the 1990's, it has declined considerably in recent years, however jihadists continue to operate in the mountainous Kabylie region. The previously largest attack there by Islamist groups occurred in April 2011, when ten soldiers were killed at a military post in Azazga, east of the regional capital Tizi Ouzou.

Mauritania

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

Summary

Due to the current Ebola outbreak in Guinea, with possible cases being tested in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Mauritania has closed some of its southern border crossings. MS Risk advises all travellers to the area to check with local officials.

Presidential elections have been set for 21 June 2014. On 5 May 2014, the country's opposition party announced that it will boycott the upcoming elections. While there have been no reports of protests occurring in Nouakchott, are throughout the rest of the country, protests may occur as the election date draws near. MS Risk advises all travellers to Mauritania to be alert at all times and to avoid any large public gatherings as they may turn violent with minimal warning.

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



due to extremist groups and armed smugglers that are active in these areas, which has resulted in high threats of terrorism as well as a heightened risk of banditry and kidnapping.

Since early 2012, there have been demonstrations in a number of locations across the country, including Nouakchott. In general, demonstrations have been peaceful however some have involved clashes with police, resulting in the use of tear gas. On 3 March 2014, one person died and at least 15 were injured in Nouakchott during a demonstration over an alleged case of apostasy. Protests have been located near the Presidency and the main market area. Smaller demonstrations have taken place in other towns, including Nouadhibou. There is a possibility that further such demonstrations will occur. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers to avoid all political gatherings and demonstrations.

Terrorism

Following the French military intervention in Mali there has been a heightened possibility of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. Attacks could be indiscriminate and by occur in places that are frequented by foreigners. Consequently we advise vigilance.

Kidnapping

There is a high risk of kidnapping throughout Mauritania and Westerners are the favoured target. In the past, hostages have been held captive for several months before being released. MS Risk advises anyone traveling to Mauritania to take particular caution in the region of Inchire (Akjoujt is the capita) as well as in the areas that border Mali and Morocco.

For companies with employees remaining in Mauritania, MS Risk advises you to arrange a trustworthy escort that is familiar with the country. The use of varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one location to another is also highly advised. Exercise a high awareness of personal security at all times and monitor the local developments. 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.

Domestic News

- **7 May 2014** – Mauritania's Constitutional Council announced Wednesday that a woman has put forward a rare bid for the presidency of Mauritania, a West African nation that is run under strict Islamic law. A statement released by the body indicated that "Lalla Mariem Mint Moulaye Idriss dropped off a file at the Constitutional Council containing her candidacy for the June 21 presidential elections." Ms Idriss, 57, an independent candidate, is only the second woman to ever seek election in a presidential poll in Mauritania, following the candidacy of Aicha Mint Jedeine, who ran in 2003. Ms Idriss is the head of the governing body of the Mauritanian news agency AML. Two other candidates have also filed their intention to run for president. They are President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who is seeking reelection and Boidel Ould Houmeid, the head of the moderate EI-Wiam party, which currently counts seven lawmakers in the 1470seat parliament. Women are weakly represented in Mauritania, occupying only 20 percent of elected posts despite calls for equality in politics having increased in the past few years.
- **5 May 2014** – A coalition of Mauritania's most prominent opposition parties has announced that they will boycott next month's presidential election, citing concerns that opposition leaders were not sufficiently consulted before the date of the elections was set. The 17-Party National Forum for Democracy and Unity indicated that the June 21 election date, which was announced last month, was chosen unilaterally despite

government-initiated talks between the two sides. Current President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz assumed power in the West African nation following a 2008 coup. He won a presidential vote the following year and has since become a key ally of the West in its bid to fight against terrorism. The president's party, the Union of the Republic, secured a majority of seats in last year's parliamentary elections, which were also boycotted by a majority of the opposition group. If there is no majority winner on June 21, a runoff will be held on July 5.

Niger

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road linking Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka; areas within 40 km of the border with Nigeria in Diffa, Zinder and Maradi provinces. MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack by suspected Islamist militants. Travellers in Niamey should continue to monitor developments and be alert to announcements and remain vigilant at all times. On 23 May 2013, a military barracks in the town of Agadez and a uranium



processing facility near the town of Arlit, approximately 150 miles north of Agadez, were attacked. A number of people were killed and injured. The terrorist group which claimed responsibility for the two attacks has publicly threatened to carry out further attacks in Niger. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in its northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Borno and Yobe border southern Niger. Consequently there is a risk that instability may spill over the border from Nigeria to Niger. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups including AQIM and MOJWA. These groups have kidnapped Westerners in Niger and in the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey and the north and west of Niger. Further kidnappings are likely to occur. There is a threat of retaliatory attacks in Niger, due to the country's participation in the French-led intervention in Mali. Levels of crime are high, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. Banditry, smuggling and other criminal activity is common in border areas, especially after dark. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises avoiding crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

Since May 2013, outbreaks of cholera have been reported in several places in Niger. As of 25 November 2013 a total of 577 cases, including 13 deaths, have been reported.

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 May 2014** – Niger's regional governor confirmed Thursday that fourteen suspected members of Nigeria's Boko Haram militant group were arrested in neighbouring Niger on Tuesday after an attack on an army patrol in the eastern region of Diffa. Yacouba Soumana Gaoh, the regional governor of Diffa, confirmed that the army had detained two Boko haram suspects who had robbed a man at gunpoint early on Tuesday in the commune of Chetimari. Speaking to reporters, Gaoh indicated 'the security forces then fell into an ambush laid by presumed members of Boko Haram. After fierce fighting, reinforcements were sent in but the attackers were able to cross over the border.' The governor further indicated that three suspected militants were captured during the fighting, two of whom suffered gunshot wounds. There were no casualties among the army troops, but one of their vehicles was hit by a number of bullets. The governor also noted that nine other suspects were later arrested in the regional capital Diffa and the surrounding area. A military source has indicated that officials have not found a link between the arrests and the kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls by Boko haram militants in northern Nigeria last month. A further eleven girls were kidnapped from a village by suspected Boko Haram gunmen on Tuesday. Diffa, which is located 1,400 kilometres east of Niger's capital Niamey, borders the Nigerian state of Borno, which is the centre of Boko Haram's five-year insurgency. In the wake of the on-going military operations in northern Nigeria, tens of thousands of refugees have fled the fighting to the arid region, prompting local Niger officials to voice their concerns over Boko Haram's infiltration in the region.
- **30 April 2014** – A Niger state governor, Dr. Muazu Babangida Aliyu, has set up a two-man committee to investigate the activities of an Islamic sect based in Bida that allegedly practises Islam the same way as the Boko Haram. The governor's action comes after a receiving a report from Niger State Jumaat Imams Forum, which states that the Islamic sect contravened the proper practice of Islam and is capable of "impeaching the peace of the state." The Imams added that the name, the position and belief system of the group was almost the same with that of the Boko Haram. Aliyu's committee consists of the Commissioner for Religious Affairs and the Commissioner for Local Government. They are to investigate the group and report within three days. Earlier in the day, Secretary of Niger State Jumaat Imam Forum, Sheik Umar Farouk, informed the governor of the group and shared a recent encounter. Although he did not give their

name, he stated, “They came here; what they were saying really baffled us. Though they said they are not Boko Haram, we have our reservations because we don’t want to compromise peace of the state. [...]We were also told that the leader of the sect in Bida travels for three months to an unknown places with his phones off, and he only switches on if he want[s] to talk to anybody and come back.”

- **29 April 2014** – A 72 year-old man has been arrested by the Guards Brigade of the Nigerian Army for operating four gun factories, one in Suleja Niger State and three in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The illegal gun dealer will be handed over to the State Security Service for further interrogation and prosecution. The military recovered 44 dane guns, three pistols, several tools for the fabrication of guns and other weapons. Initial investigations suggest that the suspect may three more local gun factories located within the FCT. The 72 year-old suspect, who had an expired license for the factories, said that he had been doing the business for 45 years. He sold products mostly to hunters and members of vigilance groups, but added that he sold to anyone in need of guns. He promised never to go back to the business if released.

Nigeria

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Summary

The 14 April 2014 terrorist bomb attack on a bus park in the Nyanya area, which is located in the eastern outskirts of Abuja, was followed by a further explosion in the same area on the evening of 1 May. Both attacks caused multiple casualties and extra security in the area has caused severe traffic congestion. MS Risk advises all

travellers to the capital city to keep clear of the affected areas.



The United States State Department has issued a warning to US citizens of a plan to attack one of two Sheraton hotels located near Lagos, Nigeria's busy main commercial hub. The statement says those behind the plot were "groups associated with terrorism", but gave no further details. In recent weeks, Nigeria has suffered two bomb attacks on the edge of the capital Abuja, which have heightened security concerns ahead of the World Economic Forum (WEF) for Africa that will be held between 7 and 9 May. Boko Haram, which is mostly active in the northeast, it has struck across

the north and in Nigeria's capital, in the centre. The group has never conducted an attack in Lagos; however its leader Abubakar Shekau has threatened to do so. The State Department said, "As of late April, groups associated with terrorism allegedly planned to mount an unspecified attack against the Sheraton Hotel in Nigeria, near the city of Lagos. There was no further information regarding which of the two Sheraton Hotels

in Lagos was the possible target ... There is no further information regarding the timing or method of attack." MS Risk advises all travellers to Nigeria to remain cautious. This includes in the capital city and in Lagos.

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

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

On 14 May, the Nigerian Government declared a State of Emergency in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. That state of emergency has now been extended for an additional six months. Since the announcement, military operations have been going on in all three states and curfews have been put in place in parts of Maiduguri, Borno state and Adamawa state. Curfews can be imposed, amended and lifted at a short notice. Consequently you should be alert to announcements made by the respective State Governments and you are advised to monitor any developments in the affected states. There may be an increased threat of retaliatory attacks elsewhere in Nigeria following the commencement of military operations. MS Risk advises against all travel to: the Riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Cross River States; Warri city, Kano city, Okene City.

We advise against all travel to Adamawa State, Borno State, Yobe State, Gombe State and Bauchi State. This is due to the frequent violent attacks which have been occurring over the past months. More recent attacks have increasingly focused on public places, including bars and restaurants. These attacks have resulted in a large number of deaths and injuries. We also advise against all travel to Kano City and Okene City, which has also seen a frequent number of high levels of violence.

We advise against all but essential travel to Kano state, Kaduna State, Jigwa State, Katsina State, Sokoto State, Zamfara State, Kebbi State, Jos City, Riyom and Barkin Ladi Local Government Areas in Plateau State; Okene Region of Kogi State. These areas have witnessed an increase in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to Mubi Town in Adamawa State and the area north of Mubi Town that borders Borno State where there has also been a rise in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to the non-riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, Abia State, Kaduna City, Zaria City.

Companies with workers in northern Nigeria, even in areas which are not subject to specific advice against travel, will require a high level of security. In light of the recent kidnappings of Westerners, employers are advised to review their security arrangements and to ensure that compounds are protected.

There is a high threat of terrorism occurring in Nigeria. A bomb attack that occurred at a bus station in Kano city on 18 March 2013 resulted in multiple casualties. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including government, security and educational institutions, international organisations as well as public venues and areas such as restaurants, bars, markets, hotels, shopping centers, places of worship and other areas that are frequented by expatriates,

foreign tourists and business travelers. Terrorist attacks have been known to occur on religious and public holidays. There have been regular attacks on churches in northern Nigeria at times of worship. The US government has published an Emergency Message for US citizens, detailing information that Boko Haram may be planning attacks in Abuja. This information has been assessed as being credible and attacks could occur at any time, including against international hotels that are frequently visited by Westerners. There is also an increased level of kidnap threat in Nigeria in which foreign nationals have typically been the targets of such kidnaps.

Kidnapping

Although recent incidents of kidnapping have mostly occurred in northern Nigeria, MS Risk advises that such kidnappings can take place anywhere in the country.

- On 16 February 2013, after storming the compound of Lebanese-owned construction firm Setraco in Bauchi state, gunmen killed a security guard and abducted a Briton, an Italian, a Greek, two Lebanese and two Syrian workers. The British construction worker is believed to have been killed along with the six other foreign nationals. This was the worst case of foreigners being kidnapped in the mostly Muslim north of Africa's most populous country since an insurgency by Islamist militants intensified two years ago.
- In December 2012, a French national was kidnapped by armed men in Katsina State in northern Nigeria, reportedly from a residential compound.
- In 2012, a Lebanese national was kidnapped in Kaduna State. His Lebanese colleague was killed during the abduction
- In January 2012, a German national was killed in Kano city. He was killed on 31 May 2012.
- In May 2011, a British national and an Italian national were kidnapped together in Kebbi State. Both hostages were killed in Sokoto on 8 March 2012.

Threats and Terrorism

Attacks by Islamist groups in northern Nigeria have become the biggest threat to stability in Africa's top oil producing country. This has been exacerbated by the fact that Western governments are currently concerned that militants may link up with groups elsewhere in the region, including al-Qaeda's North African wing, AQIM. These concerns have been further intensified by the conflict and military intervention in nearby Mali.

On the Ground Reporting

- **9 May 2014** – Intelligence sources believe they know where some of the schoolgirls, kidnapped in Nigeria last month, are. The sources believe they have been split into at least four different groups, which has complicated the search to find the girls who were abducted by Boko Haram militants. Reports have indicated that both British and American officials are using advanced equipment to scan the Sembisa forest where the schoolgirls are thought to be, with one on the ground source indicating that if this intelligence is

true, it would be “much more difficult to mount simultaneous raids” to rescue them. The intelligence comes as claims have emerged that Nigerian security forces failed to respond to warnings about Boko Haram’s planned abduction of the 276 girls from a boarding school in Chibok in the northern Borno State on April 14. According to Amnesty International, they were able to verify reports from several credible sources who claimed the military was aware of the impending attack close to four hours before it took place. The Nigerian government however has rejected the claims, stating that the findings are “unfounded.”

- The bombing and destruction of a small bridge, which links Nigeria with Cameroon in Borno State, on Thursday, has caused mass destruction. According to local sources, the bombing occurred on the outskirts of Gamboru Ngala, site of the attack by Boko Haram which claimed the lives of over 100 people on Monday. At least thirty people were killed during the late afternoon hours on Thursday, the same day of a mass burial in the town of Gamboru Ngala. The bridge links the immigration checkpoints of both Cameroon and Nigeria.
- **8 May 2014** – World powers, including the United States and China, have joined in the search for the more than 200 schoolgirls who were abducted by Boko Haram militants. Amidst global outrage over the kidnapping of the teenagers, the US, Britain and France have announced that they will be deploying specialist teams to Nigeria. China has also promised to supply “any useful information acquired by its satellites and intelligence services” to Nigeria. British Prime Minister David Cameron has condemned the kidnappers as “pure evil,” adding that a small team of planning and coordinating specialists would head to Nigeria as soon as possible. Britain is expected to send Abuja-based liaison officers from the SAS Special Forces to help the rescue mission. Meanwhile Nigeria’s police have offered a US \$300,000 (£177,000) reward to anyone who can help locate and rescue more than 200 abducted schoolgirls.
- **6 May 2014** – Residents reported Tuesday that suspected Boko Haram militants have kidnapped eight more girls from Nigeria’s embattled northeastern region. News of the kidnappings comes just one day after the extremist group’s leader claimed responsibility for abducting more than 200 schoolgirls last month. According to one eyewitness, the militants arrived in two trucks and “...moved door to door looking for girls,” adding that “they forcefully took away eight girls between the ages of 12 and 15.” Another eyewitness reported that the militants also seized animals and food from the village. The latest kidnappings occurred late Sunday in the village of Warabe, which is located in Borno State. Due to poor communications in the area, details of the latest kidnappings has been slow to emerge. The area around Warabe is known to be a stronghold of the Islamist group while the village is located close to the Sambisa forest, where the first group of schoolgirls is believed to have been taken. **Update (7 May 2014)** – According to Gwoza local government official Hamba Tada, suspected Boko Haram militants kidnapped an additional three girls in northeastern Nigeria, bringing the latest kidnapping total to eleven. Speaking to reporters, the official stated that “after leaving Warabe, the gunmen stormed the Wala village which is located five kilometers (three miles) away and abducted three more girls.” The official also confirmed the attacks in Warabe.
- **5 May 2014** – Military officials announced Monday that three Dutch nationals were kidnapped in Nigeria’s oil producing region. According to Mustapha Anka, the military spokesman in the Niger Delta, two men and a woman from the Netherlands were abducted on Sunday in the Ekeremor area of Bayelsa state. Dutch foreign ministry spokeswoman Joanne Doornewaard has confirmed the nationality of the hostages. Judith Oosting of the printing company Gerrits & Leffers also confirmed that two of its employees were amongst those abducted, adding that the pair were in Nigeria to help Niger Delta peace activists publish a magazine. Officials have indicated that the kidnapping occurred while the nationals were on their way to inspect a hospital that was built by US oil giant Chevron, with sources adding that the group was not being guarded by security officials. While employees of foreign oil companies are required to have an armed escort when

travelling through the Delta region, international journalists, aid workers and others typically avoid taking a security detail when travelling through the region. In the past, scores of foreigners have been abducted in the southern Niger Delta region, which is home to Africa's largest oil industry. Many have been released upon the payment of a ransom. **Update (6 May 2014)** – Niger Delta gunmen have released two Nigerians who were kidnapped two days ago, however three Dutch nationals, who were abducted at the same time, remain in captivity. In an interview with Dutch television, Amsterdam-based Nigerian activist Sunny Ofehe confirmed that he and another kidnap victim were “released in the creek of Niger Delta last night by the gunmen. The other 3 colleagues are yet to be freed.” During the interview, he indicated that the group was seized after armed men in a dinghy approached their boat, shooting out its motor. He added that the gunmen yelled “keep you faces down, if you make a single sound, we will shoot you.” According to Nigerian police officials in Lagos, the kidnappers had made a ransom demand for Ofehe, however it remains unclear whether his release was linked to any payment. Dutch and Nigerian authorities confirmed Monday that three Dutch national, two men and a woman, had been kidnapped in Nigeria's oil producing region while on their way to inspect a hospital. Nigerian media reports indicated that the two Nigerians were kidnapped at the same time. **Update (8 May 2014)** - The kidnappers of three Dutch nationals have demanded a payment of N500 million for the release of the three non-governmental organization officials. The kidnappers have also insisted that the ransom must be paid preferably in euros or dollars.

- On Monday, the leader of Boko Haram confirmed that the militant group was behind the abduction over 200 girls kidnapped three weeks ago in north eastern Nigeria last month, threatening to sell them. In a 57-minute video released Monday, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau confirmed that his militants were behind the kidnappings, adding “I will sell them in the market, by Allah....Allah has instructed me to sell them. They are his property and I will carry out his instructions.” In the video, Shekau also notes that the girls should not have been in school in the first place, but rather should get married. On 14 April, Boko Haram militants stormed an all-girl secondary school in the village of Chibok, in Borno state. The girls, aged 16 to 18, were forced onto trucks and taken into the remote areas along the border with Cameroon. Unconfirmed sources have indicated that the girls have been taken across the border and into neighboring countries, including Chad and Cameroon, with unconfirmed reports indicating that some of the girls had been forced to marry their abductors, who paid a nominal bride price of US \$12 (£7). While Boko Haram's five-year insurgency in northern Nigeria has over the past year seen an intensification in its tempo, the attack and kidnapping of the girls has shocked Nigerians and has resulted in an international outcry for their safe return. Since the launch of military operations in northern Nigeria last May, Boko Haram, which continues to be the main security threat in the country, has grown bolder in its attacks and has extended its reach. The kidnapping occurred on the day a bomb blast, also blamed on Boko Haram, killed seventy-five people near Abuja, the first attack to be carried out in the capital city in two years. More than two weeks later, the militants, who say they are fighting to create an Islamic state, carried out a second bomb attack, killing 19 people and wounding 34 in the suburb of Nyanya. The girl's abduction has been a huge embarrassment for the government, which has failed to locate them. The incident also threatens to overshadow the country's first hosing of the World Economic Forum (WEF) for Africa, which is set to take place on May 7 – 9 in Abuja.
- According to eyewitnesses, scores of Boko Haram gunmen riding in armored vehicles razed a remote northeastern town on Monday, opening fire on residents who attempted to flee into neighboring Cameroon. The incident occurred in the town of Gomboru Ngala, which is located in Borno state. One eyewitness stated “they have burnt the market, customs office, police station and almost every

shop in the town and killed many people but I can't say how many," adding "they have taken over the whole town....They have been going house-to-house shooting people who could not flee in time." Another resident reported that the gunmen had arrived in huge numbers at roughly 1:30PM (1230 GMT) in "armored tanks and patrol vans all painted in military and police colors," adding "the attack forced residents to cross the border into Fotokol in Cameroon." Boko Haram's five-year extremist uprising has killed thousands in Nigeria, however the last several weeks have underscored the major threat that the Islamist pose to the country. Two car bombings in the last three weeks on the outskirts of the capital Abuja coupled with the mass abduction in Chibok have raised doubts about Nigeria's ability to contain the violence. Amidst the continuing Boko Haram violence, Nigeria is also preparing to host a World Economic Forum (WEF) summit, which is set to open in Abuja on Wednesday.

Update (7 May 2014) – An attack by Boko Haram militants in a northeastern Nigerian town near the Cameroonian border has killed at least 125 people. On Wednesday, regional Senator Ahmed Zanna indicated that the town of Gamboru Ngala had been left unguarded because the soldiers based there to protect the population had been redeployed north towards Lake Chad in an effort to rescue more than 200 schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram on April 14. According to sources, gunmen riding in armored vehicles and on motorcycles stormed the town on Monday and razed much of the area. Residents have indicated that survivors fled when the attack began, with the insurgents targeting civilians as they attempted to run to safety into Cameroon. Casualty figures had remained unclear in the hours after the attack because the town had been overrun by extremist figures and it was not possible to return to assess the loss of life. According to the Senator, "from information reaching me from the town, the death toll from the attack is around 300," adding "all economic and business centers have been burnt. The market in the town which attracts traders from all over the area...has been completely burnt."

- **3 May 2014** - Security forces have raided areas near the site of two bombings in Nigeria's capital, detaining eight suspects. All schools and government offices in Abuja, will close during the May 7-9 World Economic Forum on Africa, in accordance with a presidential order following two bomb attacks in three weeks that killed nearly 100 people. A statement Friday night said the measure "is to ease the flow of traffic" during the conference. The government will also deploy 6,000 police and troops to help secure the event, and President Goodluck Jonathan has assured delegates they will be safe. Major General Chris Olukolade, the Defence Ministry spokesman said in a statement that the eight people detained Saturday "are helping ongoing investigation with useful information," adding that most of them are foreigners of unspecified nationality. In the northeast, a Chadian named Usman Mecheka who was "operating with the terrorists around Lake Chad" has been detained. Olukolade said the Chadian had been trying to extract a ransom from herdsmen and farmers after an earlier attack. Extremists killed four villagers in a pre-dawn attack Saturday on the outskirts of Maiduguri. Security forces used mortar shells to repel the militants and kept them out of the city.
- **2 May 2014** – Police Commissioner Tanko Lawan, speaking from Maiduguri, the north-eastern capital of Borno state, said that the number of kidnapped schoolgirls missing in Nigeria has risen to 276, up by more than 30 from a previous estimate. He added that the actual number abducted by Islamic extremists on April 14 was more than 300. Lawan also said that the number of girls and young women who have escaped also has risen to 53. The figures of missing girls continues to increase because students from other schools were brought into one school for final exams last month, after all schools in Borno state were closed due to attacks by Boko Haram.

- At least 19 people were killed and 60 injured after a car bomb exploded in Nyanya, only 200 metres from the site of an April 14 bombing that killed at least 75 people and wounded 141. Since April 14, a checkpoint has been in place, but according to witnesses, traffic had built up at the checkpoint before the bomb exploded



on Thursday. Witnesses reported that a man parked his car near the checkpoint and walked away before the explosion. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack; however Boko Haram did claim responsibility for the April 14 bombing. In a video message after that attack, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau said: "We are in your city, but you don't know where we are."

- The Nigerian military is expected to begin a major operation near the Sambisa Forest, where the Nigerian government believes terrorists are holding some 276 young girls. There are conflicting reports on how many girls were abducted from the Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok, in northeast Nigeria. Borno State Police released new figures Friday, saying that at least 276 girls have been held for 17 days. Their captors are believed to be members of Boko Haram, which is known to hideout in the Sambisa Forest. Four battalions from various national military divisions are expected to take positions around all access routes around the Sambisa Forest. Nigerian Air Force fighter jets and police surveillance helicopters are waiting for the command to begin joint security operations to rescue the girls. By surrounding all roads to in and out of the forest, the military is hoping to trap the militants and prevent their escape. In addition, trained counterterrorist units, and land mine and anti-bomb experts will aid rescue efforts. The government has also set up medical personnel, facilities, and ambulances to attend to any injuries sustained in the mission. The failure to rescue the girls has been a source of embarrassment to Nigeria's government and the military, adding to the mounting criticism over its inability to curb the terror network during their 5 tenure. President Goodluck Jonathan used May Day celebrations to reiterate his determination to bring the Boko Haram insurgency to an end, vowing that the abducted girls must be found and rescued. Jonathan, who is from the predominantly Christian south of Nigeria, has been accused of insensitivity to the plight of people in the north, who are mainly Muslims.
- **1 May 2014** – Halite Aliyu, of the human rights group Borno-Yobe People's Forum, has said that the 200 girls who were kidnapped two weeks ago had been sold into marriage to their Boko Haram abductors for \$12. Aliyu said information was given about mass weddings from villagers in the Sambisa Forest, on Nigeria's border with Cameroon, and where Boko Haram was known to have a number of hideouts.

Unverified reports had suggested the girls were taken across the borders, some to Cameroon and some to Chad. Community elder Pogu Bitrus, speaking from Chibok, where the girls were abducted, called it "A medieval kind of slavery. You go and capture women and then sell them off." He added, "We learned that one of the 'grooms' brought his 'wife' to a neighbouring town in Cameroon and kept her there." Meanwhile, a civic leader said the Boko Haram network was reportedly negotiating over the students' fate and demanding an unspecified ransom for their release. The abductors have also claimed that two of the girls have died from snake bites. Fifty of the kidnapped girls managed to escape from the captors in the first days after their abduction, but some 220 remain missing. According to the principal of the Chibok Girls Secondary School, they are between 16 and 18 years old and had been recalled to the school to write a physics exam. Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau first threatened to treat captured women and girls as slaves in a video released in May 2013. The government has said the security forces are searching for the girls, but its critics say it is not doing enough.

- **30 April 2014** – The government's failure to rescue the 200 abducted girls has prompted Nigerian protesters to march on the country's parliament on Wednesday. The march, dubbed "A Million-Woman March" was promoted on Twitter and attracted several hundred women and men, mostly dressed in red, carrying placards that read "Find Our Daughters." Parents have voiced fury at the military's rescue operation, accusing the security services of ignoring their daughters' plight. At the start of the march, former World Bank Vice President and ex-Nigerian cabinet member Obiageli Ezekwesili, addressed protesters, accusing the military of having "no coherent search-and-rescue" plan: "If this happened anywhere else in the world, more than 200 girls kidnapped and no information for more than two weeks, the country would be brought to a standstill." The protest highlighted that large parts of north-eastern Nigeria remains beyond the control of the government.
- **28 April 2014** – A group of 100 youth from Delta state have committed to join a number of volunteers ready to defend Nigeria against Boko Haram and search for the nearly 200 missing girls that were abducted in April. In a statement, Prince Kpokpogri said the youth believed the leadership is not involved as it would be if their children were amiss with the terrorists in the jungles of Borno. The 200 girls were seized by terrorists, their whereabouts unknown. Although this is the largest abduction case, it is among the several weekly abductions of girls and boys in the past, who have reportedly been taken as sex-slaves and forced conscripts among Boko Haram.
 - A Nigerian NGO has written to President Goodluck Jonathan requesting permission to recruit, train and arm thousands of civilian volunteers to fight the Boko Haram militant group. In the letter, the group Every Nigerian Do Something (ENDS) told the president that nearly 25,000 Nigerians – including retired soldiers and policemen – had volunteered to work under supervision of the Nigerian security department as civilian armed forces, taking the battle against Boko Haram to the insurgents' hideouts, provided they are allowed to carry arms. The letter by ENDS says, "This commitment will require funding, it will require training and it will require collaboration and cooperation with the security services. We hereby request that you give approval and direct the corresponding arms of government to act necessarily," ENDS is not asking for government funding, but seek approval to carry arms so that government troops would not kill their volunteers and advertise them as Boko Haram fighters. The letter comes after a great deal of criticism of the government's handling of the abduction of hundreds of schoolgirls by suspected Boko Haram militants. Two weeks after the abduction, neither the government nor the military has given answers to the mystery surrounding the fate of the schoolgirls. ENDS assured the president that their plan of engagement will be in league with the Nigerian military, with biometric documentation and registration of weapons used "during the duration

of the force majeure." ENDS has already been working with the Civilian Joint Task Force (JTF), helping the government fight Boko Haram in the Borno State. JTF, armed with daggers, swords, knives, machetes and sticks, have been credited for chasing out the insurgents from Maiduguri to the forest. In part, their success is due to their ability to identify Boko Haram members in the midst of a crowd, made possible because at least four in five insurgents reportedly grew up in Borno. ENDS acknowledged contributions of JTF, and added "role and potential of good civilians in this conflict cannot be undermined and can no longer be underexploited. Young men and women in Borno state, under the civilian JTF, have shown the way. The rest of Nigeria's good men and women are now prepared to follow." JTF also tracked Boko Haram in the search for the abducted schoolgirls for over 100 kilometres, "and of course there was no soldier," the letter states. It is doubtful that the president will grant the request to carry guns since the law restricts arm bearing by civilians. Last year, the parliament turned down requests by two northern states to arm vigilante groups set up to tackle rising insecurity in their domains.

International Developments

- **9 May 2014** – According to Amnesty International officials, Nigeria's military had advanced warning of the April 14 attack by Boko Haram, which led to the kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls, however they failed to take immediate action. A statement released by the human rights group Friday indicated that "damning testimonies gathered by Amnesty International reveal that Nigerian security forces failed to act on advance warnings about Boko Haram's armed raid on the state-run boarding school in Chibok, which led to the abduction." Amnesty further indicated that it had verified the information about the abduction with "credible sources," adding "Amnesty International has confirmed...that Nigeria's military headquarters in Maiduguri was aware of the impending attack soon after 7:00 PM (1800 GMT) on 14 April, close to four hours before Boko Haram began their assault on the town." According to Amnesty, the Nigerian military could not assemble the troops needed to suppress the attack "due to poor resources and a reported fear of engaging with the often better-equipped" militants. The 17 army personnel based in Chibok were overpowered by the attackers and had to retreat. According to Netsanet Belay, Amnesty International's Africa Director for research and advocacy, "the fact that Nigerian security forces knew about Boko Haram's impending raid, but failed to take the immediate action needed to stop it, will only amplify the national and international outcry at this horrific crime."
- **7 May 2014** – Amidst growing international pressure over the fate of over 200 missing schoolgirls, the United States has deployed military experts to Nigeria to help rescue hundreds of girls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants three weeks ago. US President Barack Obama made the announcement as it emerged that 11 more girls had been kidnapped late Sunday in the country's restive northeastern region. The second kidnapping, which targeted the Gwoza area of Borno State, occurred Sunday when gunmen stormed the village of Warabe and went door-to-door looking for girls. According to local government official Hamba Tada, the militants seized eight girls aged between 12 and 15 from Warabe before moving to the nearby village of Wala, where they abducted three more. Details of the attack took two days to emerge from the remote, deeply impoverished area, where the mobile phone network often does not function. Concerns have also been mounting about the fate of the girls after Boko Haram chief Abubakar Shekau claimed responsibility for the kidnappings, stating his group was holding the schoolgirls as "slaves" and threatening to "sell them in the market." Speaking to reporters Tuesday, President Obama stated "it's a heartbreaking situation, outrageous situation," adding "this may be the event that helps to mobilize the

entire international community to finally do something against this horrendous organization that's perpetrated such a terrible crime." The team deployed to Nigeria consists of "military, law enforcement, and other agencies," and will work to "identify where in fact these girls might be and provide them help." While US officials have voiced fears that the girls have already been smuggled into neighboring countries, such as Chad and Cameroon, the governments of both have denied that the girls were in their countries. It is however evident that Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan's acceptance of US military assistance does show that he has realized his administration cannot manage the Boko Haram uprising without international assistance. Britain's Foreign Secretary William Hague this week also condemned the kidnappings as "disgusting," stating that London was offering "practical help." French President Francois Hollande has also indicated that his government would do all it could to assist the Nigerian authorities. **Update (8 May 2014)** – Despite the arrival of a number of US troops in Nigeria, the Pentagon has announced that the US does not plan to launch any military operations in the country. Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren has indicated that fewer than ten troops are being sent as part of the larger US assistance team, which will include State Department and Justice Department personnel. Col. Warren also indicated that the US was talking with Nigeria about information and intelligence sharing, however nothing has been decided. There are already about seventy military personnel in Nigeria, including 50 regularly assigned to the embassy and twenty Marines have been there for training.

- **6 May 2014** – In the wake of Boko Haram claiming responsibility for the abduction of over two hundred students, and threatening to sell the girls as "slaves," the international community has called on the United States to help find and free the hundreds of schoolgirls who were kidnapped in northern Nigeria three weeks ago. In a 57-minute video released Monday, Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, confirmed that the militant group was behind the kidnapping of 276 students from their boarding school in Chibok, northern Nigeria. Shekau further stated "I will repeat this: Western education should fold up. I abducted your girls. I will sell them in the market, by Allah," adding that his group was holding the girls as "slaves." The latest video released by the militant group has sparked international outrage, with US officials stating that they were worried that many of the students, who are aged 16 to 18, had now been smuggled across Nigeria's borders into other countries, which could further complicate the so far fruitless efforts to find them. Unconfirmed reports from local officials in Chibok have indicated that the girls have been taken into Chad and Cameroon and sold as brides for as little as US \$12. Six US senators have also introduced a resolution calling for action, with Senator Dick Durbin stating "we and our African allies should do everything to help the Nigerian government rescue innocent girls and return them to their families. Meanwhile State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf has condemned the abduction as "despicable," adding that Washington was standing by to assist "in any way we think that is appropriate." While she has declined to outline the specific details of how the US would aid in the search, she did dismiss suggestions that the US would deploy military assets on the ground. In the wake of the incident, Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan has been under increasing pressure to act since gunmen stormed the girls' school on April 14, forcing them from their dormitories and onto trucks before driving them into the bush. While fifty-three of the girls managed to escape from the militants, 223 are still being held.
 - Meanwhile British Foreign Minister William Hague has offered to help Nigeria secure the release of more than 200 schoolgirls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram militants last month. Speaking to reporters as he arrived for a Council of Europe meeting in Vienna, to discuss ways to defuse the situation in Ukraine, where the government is attempting to quell an insurrection by pro-Russian activists, Mr Hague stated that the UK government is "...offering practical help," adding "what has happened here...the actions of Boko Haram to use girls as the spoils of war, the spoils of terrorism, is

disgusting. It is immoral.” Mr Hague declined to discuss further the details of what help Britain was offering to Nigeria.

- The United Nations human rights office warned Tuesday that the threatened sale into slavery of hundreds of schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants may constitute a crime against humanity. Rupert Colville, spokesman for UN rights chief Navi Pillay stated “we are deeply concerned about the outrageous claims made in a video believed to be by the leader of Boko haram in Nigeria yesterday, in which he brazenly says he will sell the abducted schoolgirls ‘in the market’ and ‘marry them off,” referring to them as ‘slaves.’” Mr Colville also told reporters that the UN human rights office “condemns the violent abduction of these girls,” adding “we warn the perpetrators that there is an absolute prohibition against slavery and sexual slavery in international law. These can, under certain circumstances, constitute crimes against humanity. The girls must be immediately returned, unharmed, to their families.” A total of 276 students were kidnapped three weeks ago from their boarding school in Chibok, northern Nigeria. While several managed to escape, over 220 girls are still being held. Although Pillay has written to Nigeria’s President Goodluck Jonathan, urging his government to spare no effort to bring the girls home safely and to protect children’s rights overall, anger and frustration have escalated in Nigeria at the government has failed to locate the girls.

Senegal

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

On 6 May 2014, Senegal's government reopened the border with Guinea, which was closed after an outbreak of the Ebola fever, which has claimed scores of lives in the neighboring country. The border crossings at Kolda and Kedougou, in the southern region of Senegal, had been previously affected by the closure order.

Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Senegal, MS Risk advises avoiding road travel in the Casamance region, to the west of Kolda. The Casamance region of south-western Senegal (between the southern border of Gambia and the northern border of Guinea-Bissau) remains affected by incidents involving armed separatist groups and banditry, particularly in the regions of Bignona and Sindian. There has been an increase in clashes between the Senegalese army and suspected elements of the armed separatist group Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC). MS Risk advises against all road travel in the Casamance region to the west of Kolda, other than on the main road from Ziguinchor to Cap Skiring (which is often used by groups of tourists during daylight hours) and on the road north of the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, from Sao Domingos to Ziguinchor (N4 bis). If you travel on either of these roads, you should do so only during daylight hours and monitor the local security situation before travelling. Severe water shortages in Dakar have led to a number of demonstrations in the suburbs. Youths have blocked some roads with burning tyres and have clashed with police. MS Risk advises travellers to avoid all demonstrations and to leave any affected areas at the first sign that unrest may develop. There have been a number of deaths and injuries. There is currently an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. With the ongoing French military intervention in Mali, authorities in Senegal have increased security in the capital city as well as along the border with Mali. MS Risk advises that al-Qaeda militants may cross the border into Senegal and they may target Western interests as well as foreigners.

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 May 2014** – On Tuesday, Senegal's government reopened the border with Guinea, which was closed after an outbreak of the Ebola virus claimed scores of lives in the neighboring country. A statement

released by Senegal's Interior Minister Abdoulaye Daouda Diallo indicated "in view of the positive progress of this epidemic, the government of Senegal has decided to open anew" its borders from 8:00 AM (0800 GMT) on Tuesday, adding that "this reopening takes account of security requirements, but also of the longstanding ties that the Senegalese and Guinean peoples maintain, particularly in social and economic terms. The border was closed on 30 March 2014 in a bid to prevent the deadly virus from spreading into Senegal. While no Ebola cases have been reported in Senegal, over the past month, the highly contagious disease has spread from Guinea's southern forests, where the outbreak is believed to have started, to the capital Conakry. According to the Guinean government's latest figures, Guinea has 127 confirmed Ebola cases, including 81 deaths. The latest outbreak, which began in January, has also emerged in neighboring Liberia. The World Health Organization (WHO) has described the West African regions' first Ebola outbreak as one of the most challenging since the virus was first identified in 1976 in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo.

- **30 April 2014** – The most high-profile rebel leader in Senegal's southern Casamance region declared a ceasefire, raising hopes that three decades of low-level insurgency could be nearing its end. Salif Sadio, leader of the armed wing of the Movement of the Democratic Forces, has been fighting for Casamance independence since the early 1980s. Sadio argues that the region, which is separated from the rest of Senegal by the nation of Gambia, is culturally distinct from the rest of the nation and has suffered from inattentiveness from the Dakar government. In a statement, Sadio said, "We have decided to observe a ceasefire to give a chance to on going peace negotiations over Casamance." Sadio also took his announcements to local radio stations. Although he does not speak for all rebels in the region, he is the most powerful. Senegal's government expressed hope that all rebels would soon endorse the peace process. Government spokesman Abdou Latif Coulibaly said, "It facilitates the search for peace. A ceasefire has us going in the direction of appeasement. This is highly appreciated by the government." The Movement of the Democratic Forces has largely targeted Senegal's security forces; the government has not provided numbers for these deaths, however observers estimate that more than 100 Senegalese soldiers have died in the conflict, along with civilian victims. Senegal's anti-mine agency says there have been 805 victims of landmines set by the rebels, including deaths and injuries. In addition, the rebel group has conducted a series of kidnappings, including taking 12 employees of a South African bomb disposal firm hostage in May 2013. The victims, all Senegalese nationals, were eventually released. Sadio says the ceasefire is partly in response to negotiations between government and rebel representatives in Rome in February, during which the government agreed to lift an arrest warrant against him. Senegal President Macky Sall campaigned on the platform of ending the conflict in Casamance during 2012 election season. After he won the election, he appointed a "Casamance Adviser" to engage in the peace process. The first person to fill that position, James R. Bullington, said in his farewell marks in September 2013 that "conditions looked favourable for success."
- **30 April 2014** – Senegal has announced that the nation will soon reopen its borders with Guinea. The border had been closed in March to stop the spread of the Ebola virus, which had killed over one hundred people. Senegalese Foreign Affairs Minister, Mankeur Ndiaye, made the announcement on Monday but did not elaborate on the issue. Aside from its border with Guinea, Senegal had also shut down the weekly market in Diaobe, a town located in the southern department of Velingara, where people from Guinea and Mali intermingle. Air and port traffic between Dakar and Conakry have not been affected by the border lock-down.

Sierra Leone

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

On the 23 March 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) was notified by the Ministry of Health in Guinea of confirmed cases of Ebola hemorrhagic fever. This is the first outbreak of Ebola reported in Guinea. Since then, cases have been reported in the forested areas of south-eastern Guinea, including in the Guekedou, Kissidougou, Macenta and Nzerekore districts. Four cases have been confirmed in Guinea's capital city Conakry while suspected cases in the border areas of neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone are still being investigated. Although the Ministry of Health, WHO and other international partners are assisting in the investigation and management of the outbreak, the outbreak is nevertheless rapidly evolving, with case numbers expected to increase in the coming days.

There is currently no travel advisory for Sierra Leone. Violent incidents have taken place under cover of crowds in the streets of Freetown. There are also occasional small riots between rival groups of youths in the central and eastern areas of Freetown. If you encounter such an incident, you should leave the area immediately. There is a low threat from terrorism. There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks may be carried out in Sierra Leone. This is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. During the rainy season, May to October, roads can become extremely difficult, even for off-road vehicles. On 9 August a bridge in the capital city of Freetown collapse due to a landslide caused by heavy rain. At least six people were killed in the accident. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

Domestic News

- **29 April 2014** – Deputy Health and Sanitation Minister, Dr. Abu Bakarr Fofanah, has commended District Health Management Teams throughout the nation for their level of cooperation and vigilant response in the fight against the Ebola virus. Accelerated efforts have been put in place with support from the World Health Organisation and other partners in the area of case Management, Coordination Communication and Sensitization. Dr. Fofanah added that as of April 18, 2014 no confirmed case has been reported, however the outbreak in Guinea and Liberia, is threatening. Commenting on the closure of the borders of Guinea-Liberia, Dr. Fofanah explained that closure provide a false security, and could exacerbate the situation by

triggering a rise in illegal entry routes into the Sierra Leone, making tracing and tracking of any potential patients difficult. Meanwhile, the government has banned the importation of corpses from Guinea and Liberia, increased sensitization and education of about Ebola, as well as Lassa Fever and cholera.



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