



MS | RISK

West Africa Report

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

May 26 – June 8, 2014



About MS Risk

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MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

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

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

References are always available.
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Summary

May 26 – June 8, 2014



Sahel Region

- **31 May 2014** – On Saturday, the West African bloc announced plans to increase cooperation with Central African states in the battle against “terrorism,” amidst increasing fears that Boko Haram’s five-year insurgency is spreading across the region.

Burkina Faso

- **31 May 201** – Tens of thousands of people protested Saturday against any move by President Blaise Compaore in his bid to attain a fifth term in office.

Guinea

- **4 June 2014** – World health officials indicated Wednesday that after a deadly spike in recent days, some 208 people have now died from the Ebola virus in Guinea.

Guinea – Bissau

- **3 June 2014** – Court sources indicated Tuesday that Guinea-Bissau's former navy chief, who was arrested in a high-profile drug sting on the West African coast, has secretly pleaded guilty ahead of a trial on charges that he conspired to import narcotics into the United States.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 June 2014** – Senior Malian government officials confirmed Friday that a Malian army officer has been arrested for “an attempted coup.”
- **3 June 2014** - A television station in Dubai has released a video of a French hostage kidnapped in Mali by al-Qaeda militants. He is believed to be the last French hostage held worldwide.
- **30 May 2014** – Officials confirmed Friday that two Malian aid workers were killed when their vehicle drove over a landmine in the northwest of Mali.
- **26 May 2014** – Mali's Defense Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga indicated Sunday that around fifty soldiers had been killed during recent fighting with armed rebels in the northern desert town of Kidal.

Regional Reporting

- **4 June 2014** – Mali has sent a peace envoy to neighboring Mauritania for talks with the leaders of rebel groups waging an insurgency against the Malian government in Bamako.
- **27 May 2014** – Mali's Defense Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga resigned Tuesday, one week after government troops were defeated by armed rebels in the restive northeastern town of Kidal.

Domestic News

- **5 June 2014** – After clashes between northern Tuareg separatists and the army last month, the Malian government has announced that the country is to introduce compulsory national service for men and women aged 18 to 35.

International Developments

- **28 May 2014** – On Wednesday, the UN Security Council urged Mali to fully implement a ceasefire signed between the government and armed rebel groups following fresh fighting in the northern desert town of Kidal.

Mauritania

- **6 June 2014** – Mauritania's presidential election campaign was launched Friday, with President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who is expected to win the upcoming election, starting his re-election campaign in the southern city of Kaedi.

Niger

On the Ground Reporting

- **3 June 2014** – Niger's justice ministry indicated Tuesday that in the wake of clamping down on gangs ferrying people across the desert, the country has stopped more than 500 would-be migrants attempting to cross the Sahara into neighboring Algeria over the past four months.
- **28 May 2014** – A man in Niger has been sentenced to four years in jail in what is the first ever conviction for slavery in the country.
- **26 May 2014** – After promising to pay more taxes and to invest in local development, French nuclear manufacturer Areva has reached a deal with Niger's government in order to continue uranium mining.

Domestic News

- **4 June 2014** – Six Niger opposition figures, including a former government minister, were charged Tuesday with "violating the security of the state," and remanded in custody.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 June 2014** - According to a new report, Boko Haram's reign of terror in the northern regions of Nigeria has forced nearly 800 people to flee the area on a daily basis, with over 3,000 people killed in the last year alone.
- **5 June 2014** – At least forty-five people were killed by suspected Boko Haram gunmen pretending to be preachers in a village on the outskirts of Maiduguri.
- **4 June 2014** – Security sources reported Wednesday that suspected Boko Haram militants have killed dozens of civilians in four villages in a region of northeastern Nigeria that has been hit almost daily by militant attacks.
- **1 June 2014** – A series of suspected Boko Haram attacks, carried out in three villages in Nigeria's northeastern region, has killed several people.
 - Meanwhile a bomb attack Sunday evening targeted fans at a football match in Nigeria's northeastern region, killing at least forty people.
- **30 May 2014** – On Friday, Boko Haram militants killed a Nigerian Islamic monarch in the northeastern state of Borno, in an attack that also targeted two other Muslim royals, who escaped unhurt.
- **29 May 2014** – Military sources and residents reported Thursday that Boko Haram gunmen killed thirty-five people after carrying out attacks on three villages located in northeastern Borno state, near the border with Cameroon.
- **29 May 2014** - While reports surfaced late Wednesday indicating that four more girls, kidnapped by Boko Haram militants last month, had escaped than previously believed, authorities in northeast Nigerian on Thursday revised the number and denied reports that the hostages had escaped from the militants in recent days.
- **27 May 2014** - Meanwhile According to security sources and witnesses, Boko Haram gunmen attacked a Nigerian military base and adjacent police barracks in the northeastern town of Buni Yadi on Tuesday, killing at least thirty-three people.
- **26 May 2014** – Nigeria's Chief of Defense Staff indicated Tuesday that the Nigerian military knows where the girls kidnapped by Boko Haram are however they will not attempt a rescue. of those missing, many Nigerians will likely be skeptical about this statement, which is impossible to verify.
 - Suspected Boko Haram gunmen stormed a Christian village in northeastern Nigeria, killing twenty residents.

International Developments

- **5 June 2014** – Britain’s Foreign Secretary William Hague will host a meeting of African and Western officials in London next week.
- **2 June 2014** – On Monday, the European Union (EU) announced that it has imposed sanctions on Boko Haram.

Senegal

- **30 May 2014** – A government official announced Friday that Karim Wade, the son of a former Senegalese president, will go on trial over multi-million-dollar corruption charges on July 31.

Sierra Leone

- **30 May 2014** – Officials in Sierra Leone on Friday raised the death toll from Ebola and doubled the number of confirmed cases of the virus, raising fears that the deadly epidemic is continuing to spread in West Africa.
- **28 May 2014** – According to an official, six people suspected of having the deadly Ebola virus in Sierra Leone have been “aggressively” taken away from a clinic, in defiance of medical staff, by their relatives.
- **27 May 2014** - A second person has died from the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone.
- **26 May 2014** – On Monday, officials in Sierra Leone confirmed the first death from the Ebola virus, with several more suspected to have succumbed to the deadly virus, which has swept across neighboring Guinea.

Security Summaries for West African States

Sahel Region

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

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.

Ghana

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone 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 gun-point in their homes and while walking in the street. Most armed robberies occur at night however there have been some reports of such incidents occurring during daytime. A common tactic has been to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force the targeted vehicle to stop. As a result of ongoing local Chieftancy and land disputes, isolated inter-ethnic violence and civil unrest can occur at any time, including in the Northern, Upper East and Volta regions. A dusk to dawn curfew has been put in place on the Hohoe community in the Volta region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of the Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering travelling to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of flooding which is common in the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions during the rainy season, which spans

from March to November. We advise that you monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

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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. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by foreigners.

Liberia

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.

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

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Sierra Leone – Page 37

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

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.

- **31 May 2014** – On Saturday, the West African bloc announced plans to increase cooperation with Central African states in the battle against “terrorism,” amidst increasing fears that Boko Haram’s five-year insurgency is spreading across the region. In the final communiqué of a recent security summit, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) stated that it would “establish a high level partnership with Central African states to effectively combat terrorism.” Officials in Nigeria have in the past repeatedly stated that they need more help from its central African neighbours, particularly Cameroon, Chad and Niger, in a bid to end the insurgency that is being waged by the militants. Nigeria now insists that in many cases, Boko Haram fighters escape military pursuit by fleeing across the porous borders of its northeastern neighbours, with some sources now indicating that senior Boko Haram commanders are believed to be based in Cameroon, away from the on-going military operations in northern Nigeria. Officials in Nigeria have long accused Cameroon of not doing enough in order to help defeat Boko Haram. In regards to the on going issues in Mali, ECOWAS urged the United Nations to strengthen the peacekeeping force, known as MINUSMA, deployed in the country. It also asked that the UN Security Council consider imposing “targeted sanctions against the armed groups or individuals who impede the peace process” in Mali.

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 Boulsa, which is 25 km north of the capital of Ouagadougou. We particularly advise against all travel to the regions that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel region, and a number of these hostages continue to be held. AQIM operates directly or through criminal gangs who carry out kidnappings on their behalf or pass on their kidnap victims in return for payment.



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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **31 May 2014** – Tens of thousands of people protested Saturday against any move by President Blaise Compaore in his bid to attain a fifth term in office. Responding to calls by Burkina Faso's opposition, to protest against the bid, thousands of people arrived at Ouagadougou's largest stadium, filling it to its 35,000 capacity and voicing their anger against any move by the 63-year-old to extend his decades-long hold on power. According to Benewende Sankara, president of the Union for Rebirth/Sankarist Movement Party, one of the thirty opposition parties present at the rally, people have "turned out en masse" to show that "from now on, change is no longer a dream. Change is here and now." Despite a two-term constitutional limit, President Compaore has hinted that he may seek a referendum that would extend his 26-year reign in the upcoming presidential polls, which will take place in 2015. This has resulted in tensions growing against a planned vote on whether to modify Burkina Faso's constitution, which limits the president to a maximum of two five-year terms in office and which would have prevented President Compaore from extending his 26-year reign. President Compaore seized power in an October 1987 coup in which his former friend, Thomas Sankara, was ousted and assassinated. In December 2013, President Compaore hinted that he may seek to extend his reign after the end of his second five-year term. He had already completed two seven-years terms, ending in 2005 before constitutional limits were introduced.

Guinea

No Travel Restrictions



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 now almost entirely concentrated in the Forest region of Guekedou in southeastern Guinea. There have been no reported new cases of Ebola in Conakry since 26 April. The city has therefore passed the 21-day gestation period and is now considered Ebola-free. Travel may be undertaken to Guinea subject to sensible precautions, such as maintaining good personal hygiene and avoiding bush meat.

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

- **4 June 2014** – World health officials indicated Wednesday that after a deadly spike in recent days, some 208 people have now died from the Ebola virus in Guinea. Officials have indicated that at least 21 people

died and 37 new cases of suspected Ebola were found between May 29 and June 1, bringing the total number of cases in the West African country to 328. Of these, 193 have been confirmed by laboratory tests. Over this period, three confirmed and ten suspected new cases were also recorded in neighbouring Sierra Leone. Six people are believed to have died there and ten have died in Liberia. More than half of the new deaths in Guinea occurred in the southern region of Gueckedou, which is where the outbreak is centred. Medical charities have reported that one of the reasons behind the sudden increase in cases is that some people are refusing to go to hospital to seek treatment, preferring instead to seek help from traditional healers. While Ebola can kill up to 90% of those infected, people have a better chance of surviving if it is identified early and they receive medical attention. Experts from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Doctors Without Borders charity are currently in the region, where about 600 people are under observation after having possible contact with the Ebola virus.

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. Presidential elections occurred peacefully and the results from the second round-off have been announced. While Jose Mario Vaz won the elections, his rival, independent Nuno Gomes Nabiam, has rejected the results. While political tensions in Guinea-Bissau remain calm, this could change at any moment. All travellers to the country are advised to monitor the political situation and remain vigilant at all times. 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

- **3 June 2014** – Court sources indicated Tuesday that Guinea-Bissau's former navy chief, who was arrested in a high-profile drug sting on the West African coast, has secretly pleaded guilty ahead of a trial on charges that he conspired to import narcotics into the United States. Court sources have indicated that while the trial of Jose America Bubo Na Tchuto, 64, had been scheduled to be on Monday at the US District Court in Manhattan, Na Tchuto, who US authorities state is a kingpin of West Africa's illicit drug trade, pleaded guilty at a May 13 proceeding. The transcript of that proceeding was immediately sealed and it remains unknown what charges Na Tchuto plead guilty to or the terms of any deal he received. While the official court record does not indicate that a plea or hearing took place, guilty please are often sealed when defendants agree to cooperate with the authorities. The plea deal comes a year after the arrest of Na Tchuto, who was seized in April on a luxury yacht off the coast of Guinea-Bissau following a months long DEA undercover operation. According to US prosecutors, Na Tchuto and his two co-defendants, met with confidential DEA informants who posed as representatives of Latin American drug traffickers. During those meetings, the defendants were recorded discussing shipments of cocaine to Guinea-Bissau. The DEA operation also targeted Guinea-Bissau's army chief, Antonio Indjai, who led a coup in 2012 that derailed elections in the former Portuguese colony. Before his plea, Na Tchuto faced life in prison if convicted of a previously unannounced charge of conspiring to distribute 5 kg (11 pounds) or more of cocaine, knowing or intending that the cocaine would be imported into the United States. Guinea-Bissau is seen by the United

Nations as a major waypoint for Latin American cocaine that is headed for Europe. Both American and European authorities have long suspected that the country's military is involved in the drug trade.

Mali

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

Security Summary

Summary



MS Risk advises against all travel to the provinces of Kidal, Gao, Timbuktu and Mopti, as well as parts of the provinces of Kayes, Koulikoro and Segou. Fighting in Kidal, in the northern region of Mali, broke out between rebel groups and government forces on 17 May 2014, resulting in casualties on both sides. While a ceasefire between the Malian government and three rebel groups was signed on 23 May 2014, the situation in the country remains tense. There have also been related violent protests that have occurred in the capital, Bamako, and there is a strong possibility of further unrest. MS Risk advises all travellers to Mali to avoid large crowds and demonstrations.

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.

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

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

Terrorism

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

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

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

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

Kidnapping

In the past, a number of Westerners have been kidnapped by terrorists in Mali and in the Sahel region. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel. Victims have included tourists, NGO workers and diplomats of a variety of nationalities, primarily European. These attacks have on occasion resulted in the murder of the hostages. The recent

kidnapping of a French citizen in the western region of the country has come as a shock as the area where he was taken has been perceived as being stable and under governmental control. In the past, kidnap threats have typically emanated from the Azawad region in the north and east part of the county, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

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

Since the coup in March 2012, and due to the ongoing political unrest, MS RISK judges that there is a continued heightened threat of kidnap for ransom in Mali and as such further attacks and kidnappings are highly likely to occur. Furthermore, although it is difficult to forecast how severe this threat will emerge, all affected 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

- **6 June 2014** – Senior Malian government officials confirmed Friday that a Malian army officer has been arrested for “an attempted coup.” The reports come one day after his family reported that he had been kidnapped. According to an official, “Lieutenant Mohamed Ouattara has been arrested – and not abducted – for an attempted coup, for a bid to destabilize the institutions of the republic and for a breach of state security.” Several other arrests have also been made, with more likely to follow. An official document has indicated that Lieutenant Ouattara, along with other military officers and “accomplices,” aimed to overthrow the regime of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who was elected last year, marking the return to civilian rule following the March 2012 coup. On Thursday, Lieutenant Ouattara’s family, including his father retired Colonel Yaya Ouattara, stated that the lieutenant had been kidnapped in Bamako by “armed individuals wearing military uniform.” Lieutenant Ouattara is a member of the Red Berets paratroop corps, who remained loyal to their former commander, president Amadou Toumani Toure, after his ouster in the 2012 coup, which was led by Captain Amadou Haya Sanogo. One month after the coup, the Red Berets were foiled in a bid to carry out a counter-coup and were later hunted down by Sanogoo’s forces. In December 2013, almost thirty bodies, believed to be those of Red Beret troops captured by Sanogo’s regime, were found in near Kati, which is a garrison town located 15 kilometers (nine miles) from Bamako. After President Keita was sworn into office last September, Sanogo and a number of his aides were charged and jailed for “complicity in kidnapping, kidnappings, and assassinations” in an official probe into the disappearance of Red Beret soldiers.
- **3 June 2014** - A television station in Dubai has released a video of a French hostage kidnapped in Mali by al-Qaeda militants. He is believed to be the last French hostage held worldwide. The video, which aired Tuesday by Dubai-based Akhbar Al Aan television, depicts Serge Lazarevic, who was abducted in 2011. During the video, Mr Lazarevic states “I take this opportunity today may 13 2014 to call on Francois Hollande, the president of France, to do everything to negotiate my release.” He also states that he is “suffering from several health problems and from difficult environmental conditions.” In the video, Mr Lazarevic, who is a dual French and Serbian national, is seen wearing a black turban and is accompanied by two masked gunmen. French authorities have acknowledged the video, stating that it’s authenticity is currently being examined by French officials. Mr Lazarevic, 50 years old, was kidnapped along with another Frenchman, Philippe Verdon, on 24 November 2011. The two men were seized at gunpoint by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) militants at a small hotel in the town of Hombori, which is located in central Mali. According to his relatives, Mr Lazarevic had been accompanying Mr Verdon on a business trip. Mr Verdon was killed in July last year. His body was discovered in northern Mali, with French prosecutors later indicating that he had been shot in the head. At the time of his death, AQIM, which often takes Western hostages in a bid to gain ransom payments to fund their terrorist operations, indicated that it had killed Mr Verdon in retaliation for France’s intervention. Mr Lazarevic is believed to be the last Frenchman held in captivity worldwide. Another French hostage, Gilberto Rodrigues Leal, was killed in April 2014 after being held in captivity since 2012. He was also kidnapped by al-Qaeda-linked militants in Mali. Last October, following secret talks led by negotiators in Niger, four French hostages seized by al-Qaeda-

linked gunmen in Niger were released. One of the four hostages, Thierry Dol, later described spending almost a month with Mr Lazarevic before being freed, however the two men were not allowed to talk. While reports indicated that a ransom payment was made for the release of the four hostages, the French government has denied these reports. While French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius recently indicated that the French government was working discreetly to find Mr Lazarevic, Tuesday's video is not only a proof of life but also a clear signal to France to begin serious negotiations. France deployed troops to Mali in January 2013 after al-Qaeda-linked militants threatened to take over the capital city, Bamako.

- **30 May 2014** – Officials confirmed Friday that two Malian aid workers were killed when their vehicle drove over a landmine in the northwest of Mali. An official from the governorate of Timbuktu confirmed, “two Malian humanitarian workers, who were on board a UNHCR vehicle, were killed when their vehicle blew up Thursday on a landmine in the north-west of Mali.” Sources have indicated that the blast took place near Goundam, which is located about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Timbuktu, with a local police officer stating that the two aid workers were employees of the Norwegian Refugee Council. According to a regional security source, militant groups have recently been placing landmines in northern Mali in a bid to “hurt opposition troops.” In the wake of recent clashes in Kidal, tensions in the northern region of the country have been rising despite a recent ceasefire signed between the Malian government and northern militant groups.
- **26 May 2014** – Mali's Defense Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga indicated Sunday that around fifty soldiers had been killed during recent fighting with armed rebels in the northern desert town of Kidal. Speaking to reporters, Mr Maiga stated, “we have about 50 killed, unfortunately, and 48 injured. We don't know the toll of the other side but we know they also suffered losses.” Armed groups, including the Tuareg separatist National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) humiliated the Malian army in a deadly offensive across the northern desert last week, which saw them seize control of Kidal, which is located 1,500 kilometers (900 miles) northeast of the capital, Bamako. While the armed groups had indicated last week that the settlement of Menaka was also under its control, on Sunday, Mr Maiga denied these claims however he did admit that the Malian army was “cohabitating” with armed groups in the town, which is located 660 kilometers (410 miles) from Kidal. He further noted “aside from Kidal, we are holding all our positions in the Kidal region, that is Tessalit, Aguelhok, and then in the Gao region in Menaka, Ansongo, Almoustarat.” After a week of increased tensions, which began with the Prime Minister's visit to the northern region of the country, on Friday, the Malian government signed a ceasefire agreement with the MNLA, as well as the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUC) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) after mediation talks, which were organized by the African Union (AU). Kidal is the cradle of Mali's Tuareg separatist movement, which wants independence for a vast swathe of northern desert it calls “Azawad,” launching a number of rebellions since the 1960's. The MNLA ended a nine-month occupation of the Kidal governor's office in November 2013 as one of the conditions of a June peace deal, which paved the way for presidential election. However the process deployed divided the MNLA, whose ultimate goal is the independence of Azawad. Up until the agreement, the Tuareg group had refused to allow any government soldiers or civil servants to enter Kidal.

Regional Reporting

- **4 June 2014** – Mali has sent a peace envoy to neighboring Mauritania for talks with the leaders of rebel groups waging an insurgency against the Malian government in Bamako. Modibo Keita stated Wednesday that he has “...made contact with these organizations to first get to know who they are, then to pass on the

message of the president favoring dialogue and to receive their suggestions.” Mr Keita, who was appointed by President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita in April to negotiate with the rebels, met with members of the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA) and the Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Forces for Resistance. The moves comes shortly after the regional ECOWAS bloc of countries urged the United Nations to strengthen its peacekeeping force and to consider imposing “targeted sanctions against the armed groups or individuals who impede the peace process” in Mali. The UN Security Council urged the Malian government last week to fully implement a ceasefire that was recently signed between them and the armed rebel groups. Tensions rose in the northern regions of the country two weeks ago when armed groups, including the MAA and Tuareg separatist National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) humiliated the army in a deadly offensive. The offensive was sparked by an official trip to Kidal by the country’s prime minister.

- **27 May 2014** – Mali’s Defense Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga resigned Tuesday, one week after government troops were defeated by armed rebels in the restive northeastern town of Kidal. According to a presidential spokesman, “Mali’s defense minister has offered his resignation and it has been accepted,” adding that a successor will soon be named. Last week, armed groups, including the Tuareg separatist National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) humiliated the army in a deadly offensive in the northern region of the country, which saw them seize control of Kidal, which is located 1,500 kilometers (900 miles) northeast of Bamako. Although Mali’s government on Friday signed a ceasefire agreement with the MNLA as well as with other rebel groups, including the High Council for the Unity of Azawad (HCUC) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), tensions in the northern region of the country remain high. **Update (28 May 2014)** – On Wednesday, a retired air force colonel was appointed as Mali’s defense minister after his predecessor resigned over last week’s deadly rebel takeover of the northern city of Kidal. On Wednesday, the Malian presidency announced that Ba N’Dao will replace Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga, a veteran politician who has also held the jobs of foreign minister and intelligence chief.

Domestic News

- **5 June 2014** – After clashes between northern Tuareg separatists and the army last month, the Malian government has announced that the country is to introduce compulsory national service for men and women aged 18 to 35. The last time Mali held national service was from 1983 until 1991. A communiqué issued, following Wednesday’s cabinet meeting, indicated that President Boubacar Keita’s government has taken the decision to impose six-month national service “to develop a feeling of patriotism and the instinct for national defense.” According to Mahamar Mohamed El Moctar, chief of staff at the Youth Ministry, “the legislative texts will be adopted by the end of the year so the scheme can start from 2015....As well as the military aspect, it will involve training in handling weapons and fostering in our youth a sense of citizenship, of civic spirit, of the nation and the homeland,” adding that the national service would be compulsory for both women and men. Last month, the Malian army suffered an embarrassing defeat after Tuareg separatists attempted to seize control of their stronghold of Kidal. However popular faith in the army had already been shaken by the ease with which it was overrun in early 2012 by a coalition of Tuareg separatists and Islamist militants who seized the northern region of Mali. Furthermore a series of student protests in recent months has also created frustration, with some critics stating that there is a lack of patriotism amongst the youth.

International Developments

- **28 May 2014** – On Wednesday, the UN Security Council urged Mali to fully implement a ceasefire signed between the government and armed rebel groups following fresh fighting in the northern desert town of Kidal. The 15-member Council recently held close consultations on the crisis in the Western Africa state, where the defense minister confirmed Sunday that fifty soldiers had been killed in recent clashes. The Council has “urged signatories to implement the ceasefire fully” and reiterated their “full support” in contributing towards the stabilization of Mali and the launching of peace talks. The move by the UN Security Council came just hours after the Malian presidency appointed a retired air force colonel as defense minister after the predecessor resigned over last week’s deadly rebel takeover of Kidal. In the wake of an official trip by the country’s Prime Minister, hundreds protested in Kidal, with armed groups, including the Tuareg separatist National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), later defeating the army in a deadly offensive in the northern region of the country. On Friday, after mediation by the African Union (AU), the Malian government signed a ceasefire agreement with the MNLA and other rebel groups.

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 cases also being reported 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. Campaigning begins on 6 June and will end on 19 June. During this time there may be some rallies that have been organized by supporters of the Presidential candidates. MS Risk advises all travellers to Mauritania to avoid any political gatherings and demonstrations. 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

- **6 June 2014** – Mauritania's presidential election campaign was launched Friday, with President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who is expected to win the upcoming election, starting his re-election campaign in the southern city of Kaedi. During his first stop, the President told his supporters that since he came to power, the country has made "great strides" in security and economic growth, adding that he has transformed the country into a regional haven of peace, thanks to his reorganization of the military and security forces. Under President Abdel Aziz's rule, the Mauritanian army has conducted a number of "preventative" raids against al-Qaeda's regional branch in north and West Africa. As the head of the African Union (AU), the president has also been heavily involved in peace talks between separatist rebels and the government in neighboring Mali. While many believe that the president's successes in fighting terror in the region are "undeniable," his opponents have denounced his "authoritarian" regime. After negotiations over opposition participation broke down earlier this year, the opposition parties have called for a boycott of the "sham" June 21 presidential elections. This has sparked a number of protests. On Wednesday, thousands of supporters of the National Forum for Democracy and Unity (FNDU), an umbrella grouping of numerous

opposition groups, demonstrated in the capital Nouakchott against the way that the election was being organized.

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

- **3 June 2014** – Niger's justice ministry indicated Tuesday that in the wake of clamping down on gangs ferrying people across the desert, the country has stopped more than 500 would-be migrants attempting to cross the Sahara into neighboring Algeria over the past four months. According to a statement released by the ministry, thirty-nine people, including twenty-nine women have been detained on charges of human trafficking in the northern uranium mining town of Arlit. Niger is located at a crossroads of migrant routes that link Northern Africa to the rest of the continent. Most of the migrants that travel to Algeria are women and children from Niger's remote southeast, and are often sent to the neighboring country to beg outside mosques. New initiatives to end mass migrations were launched after the government promised to crack down on smuggling in the wake of ninety-two migrants dying while attempting to make the same trip to Algeria last year. The fate of over a dozen migrants remains unknown after smugglers abandoned them in the Sahara desert in May of this year. So far at least thirteen, of a group of fifty, have been found dead while fourteen others have been rescued.
- **28 May 2014** – A man in Niger has been sentenced to four years in jail in what is the first ever conviction for slavery in the country. Officials at Anti-Slavery International confirmed Wednesday that a 63-year-old man was convicted of having what is known as a "fifth wife." The conviction occurred in the town of Birnin Koni, in southwestern Niger, close to the border with Nigeria. In Niger, under a local interpretation of Islamic law, men are allowed to have four wives however with a "fifth wife," no marriage takes place and the woman is treated solely as property. According to Anti-Slavery International, "fifth wives" are often girls of slave descent sold to wealthy men who view the purchase of young women as a sign of prestige. In such cases, the woman faces a lifetime of physical and psychological abuse and forced labor. Although Niger officially banned slavery in 2003, anti-slavery organizations say that thousands of people still live in subjugation.



- **26 May 2014** – After promising to pay more taxes and to invest in local development, French nuclear manufacturer Areva has reached a deal with Niger’s government in order to continue uranium mining. Officials at Areva SA indicated in a statement that its chief executive signed a deal Monday with Niger ministers, effectively renewing its mining contracts. Under the deal, negotiated for 18 months, Areva agreed that a 2006 mining law sharply increased taxes on minerals extracted would apply to the Somair and Cominak operations in the northern region of the country, which it partially controls. However the operations will be exempt from sales tax over the course of the five-year deal. Areva has also promised to name Nigerians to management positions in subsidiary companies along with investing 117 million euros in roads and development of the Irhazer valley region. The issue of revenue had been the main sticking point in the talks since the government considered that the previous contracts, which expired at the end of last year, were unfavorable to the country, which is the fourth-biggest producer of uranium in the world. Uranium is crucial to providing electricity to France, a country that is roughly 75 percent powered by nuclear plants, with about 20 percent of France’s energy coming from Niger’s uranium. The partnership between the French state operators and the Niger government dates back to the colonial era and has often been criticized as being unfair.

Domestic News

- **4 June 2014** – Six Niger opposition figures, including a former government minister, were charged Tuesday with “violating the security of the state,” and remanded in custody. An MP for the Nigerian Democratic Movement (MODEN) confirmed Wednesday former health minister Soumana Sanda, former Niamey mayor Oumarou Dogari, and retired army colonel Abdourahamane Saidou, Amadou Salah were amongst the six opposition figures remanded in custody. According to their party, the six are close to parliament speaker, and head of MODEN, Hama Amadou, who is seen by his followers as the principal rival of President Mahamadou Issoufou in the 2016 presidential elections. Sources have indicated that a judge had initially questioned thirty-five people, however twenty-nine of them were later released due to a lack of evidence. The six others were detained at Kollo prison, located south of the capital city. Since May 21, about forty-four MODEN activists have been arrested. On May 24, Interior Minister Hassoumi Massoudou indicated that 40 MODEN militants had been arrested in the wake of an investigation into shots that were fired at a home of a member of parliament, located close to government, and a firebomb that targeted the ruling party’s headquarters. Mr Amadou however has stated that the arrests had been deliberately orchestrated “to organize reprisals against us at a later stage.” Prosecutors in Niamey also indicated Saturday that they were investigating claims made by My Amadou that an unidentified person had attempted to poison him.

Nigeria

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Summary

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.

Northern Nigeria

Travelling anywhere in the northern region of Nigeria is extremely dangerous as there is a high risk of travellers being kidnapped or caught up in a terrorist or other violent incident. While taking the right precautions will aid in reducing the risks,

this will not eliminate them all together. MS Risk advises all travellers to the northern region of the country to not maintain regular patterns of travel or movement.

If you live in northern Nigeria, you are advised to review your security regularly and to strengthen it accordingly. Due to the risks, particularly of terrorism, having increased in the past few years, good security two years ago is unlikely to be adequate now.

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

- **6 June 2014** - According to a new report, Boko Haram's reign of terror in the northern regions of Nigeria has forced nearly 800 people to flee the area on a daily basis, with over 3,000 people killed in the last year alone. A new report issued by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) has indicated that a total of 3.3 million Nigerians have now been driven from their homes as a result of Boko Haram attacks, however there are fears that the group's relentless attacks on civilians, including the high-profile kidnapping of over 200 school girls in April, could have implications for the wider region, as West Africa's wider security is increasingly becoming at risk. This has been reflected by Alfredo Zamudio, director of IDMC, who has stated "the group is growing in its ambition, capability and reach, creating fears that it will become a regional destabilizing force, on par with Kony's Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa, " adding "as the government struggles to contain the group's southward spread towards Abuja, questions for the future of regional stability have been raised, which have weakened Nigeria's relations with Cameroon, Niger and Chad." The local economy has also been affected by the violence, which could have devastating consequences in the next few months. Over 60 per cent of farmers in the northern region of the country were displaced just before the start of the planting season. This has sparked worries of severe food insecurity and escalating food prices. Despite Nigeria's on going counterinsurgency operations, and the imposition of a state of emergency in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe by the Nigerian government in May 2013, Boko Haram attacks have escalated in frequency and impact over the past year. According to figures from the United Nations, at least 3,000 people have been killed since the state of emergency was imposed while at least 250,000 people have fled their homes over the same period. The latest figures come just days after hundreds of people are suspected to have been killed in new Boko Haram attacks that were carried out in the north-eastern region of the country on Tuesday. According to residents, gunmen laid siege to four villages, razing homes, churches and mosques, and killing many.
- **5 June 2014** – At least forty-five people were killed by suspected Boko Haram gunmen pretending to be preachers in a village on the outskirts of Maiduguri. Residents reported that the attack occurred at about 9:30 PM (2030 GMT) on Wednesday in Barderi, on the outskirts of Maiduguri near the University of Maiduguri, adding that the attackers had told the villagers that they had come to preach before firing on a crowd that had gathered. Police sources have indicated that after the attack, the militants fled across the river, setting fire to houses in a nearby village. The latest attack follows an attack on the village of Attagara in the remote Gwoza area of Borno state, where gunmen dressed in military uniforms convinced residents that they had come to provide protection after an earlier attack that was carried out Sunday. According to one witness, the militants had gathered people together in the center of the village before they began "to fire continuously



for a very long time until all that had gathered were dead.” Attagara is just one of six villages in the area that was attacked over the past few days, resulting in at least 200 people dead. The villages affected are located near the Mandara Mountains, close to the border with Cameroon where Boko Haram militants are known to operate. There are reports that the group’s jihadist flags are flying in several villages in Gwoza.

- **4 June 2014** – Security sources reported Wednesday that suspected Boko Haram militants have killed dozens of civilians in four villages in a region of northeastern Nigeria that has been hit almost daily by militant attacks. Security sources have indicated that gunmen dressed in combat uniforms rode army trucks on Tuesday through Borno state’s Gwoza area, firing on villages and burning houses and churches to the ground. About three-quarters of the residents residing in the villages of Attagara, Agapalawa, Goshe and Aganjara, all of which are located near the border with Cameroon, are Christians however it remains unclear whether Tuesday’s attacks had targeted them specifically. Officials in the area have not released a death toll however a local resident of one of the villages has reported that at least forty-five people were killed in the latest attack. While Boko Haram militants have often targeted Christians, and have bombed a number of churches, they have also attacked mosques and Muslim civilians. **Update (5 June 2014)** – Hundreds of people are now feared dead after suspected Boko Haram militants attacked four villages in northeastern Nigeria. Late Tuesday, gunmen disguised in military uniform struck the Gwoza district of Borno state, razing homes, churches and mosques and killing residents who attempted to flee the violence. Reports from the remote region indicated that the insurgents had continued their attack on Wednesday, stealing livestock and food and burning property. Some community leaders are now placing the death toll at 200, however there has not been any independent verification of these claims because of poor communication and difficulties by the emergency services in accessing the area. If confirmed, the attack on the villages of Goshe, Agapalwa, Attagara and Aganjara would be one of the deadliest attacks in the militant groups deadly five-year insurgency.
- **1 June 2014** – A series of suspected Boko Haram attacks, carried out in three villages in Nigeria’s northeastern region, has killed several people. According to sources, the latest unrest occurred in the villages of Nuwar, Musari and Walori on Saturday, where gunmen, some dressed as soldiers and riding in 4x4 trucks, opened fire on civilians and razed much of the area, with witnesses reporting that the militants “...burnt all the villages and took away all our livestock.” All of the targeted villages are in the Gamboru Ngala district, which is located near the border with Cameroon.
 - Meanwhile a bomb attack Sunday evening targeted fans at a football match in Nigeria’s northeastern region, killing at least forty people. A local police officer in the town of Mubi confirmed the attack, stating “there has been a bomb explosion at a football field this evening and so far more than 40 people have been killed.” The bomb exploded at around 6:30 PM (1730 GMT) at the pit in Mubi’s Kaban area and targeted fans who were trying to leave the field after watching a local club match. The town of Mubi is located in the state of Adamawa, one of three in the northeastern region of Nigeria, which has been under a state emergency for more than a year as the military has attempted to end Boko Haram’s five-year insurgency. The militant group has carried out a number of attacks on targets it states are the product of Western influence, including sports venues and schools teaching a secular curriculum. **Update (2 June 2014)** – Nigeria’s military stated Monday that it had made an arrest in connection with the bombing of a football match that killed at least forty people on Sunday. Defence spokesman Chris Olukolade told reporters “a key suspect in the terror bomb explosion that rocked Kabang community in Mubi, Adamawa state...has been arrested by troops who cordoned off the area in swift response by the explosion.” A resident of Mubi has indicated that the blast appeared to come from within the crowd of people who were walking across the pitch and heading home after

the final whistle.

- **30 May 2014** – On Friday, Boko Haram militants killed a Nigerian Islamic monarch in the northeastern state of Borno, in an attack that also targeted two other Muslim royals, who escaped unhurt. According to the Borno state government, the Emir of Gwoza, Idrissa Timta, was shot dead in the Tashan Alade area of Borno state while travelling by road to the funeral of another senior cleric. The Emir of Uba, Ali Ibn Ismaila Mamza, and the Emir of Askira, Abdullahi Ibn Muhammadu Askirama, were also in the convoy, however they sustained no injuries. A statement released by Borno's state secretary, Baba Ahmed Jidda, indicated "the gunmen...specifically targeted the vehicle conveying the three emirs and opened fire," adding Timta "was killed around 9:00 am (0800 GMT) Friday following a bloody attack by some gunmen believed to be members of Boko Haram." While reasons behind the attack have not been released, the incident follows calls from activists for Nigeria's Islamic royals, including the Borno monarch, to play a greater role in curbing Boko Haram's violence and helping secure the release of over two hundred schoolgirls who are still being held hostage by the insurgents. In a public address at the national Mosque last week, the leader of Nigeria's Muslims, the Sultan of Sokoto, Sa'ad Abubakar III, called for unity in the battle against Boko Haram militants, urging his followers to support the government. Such prominent displays of support for the Nigerian government from the country's top cleric may have caught the attention of some Boko Haram commanders. While there was no immediate evidence linking Friday's attack to the militants, or to the Sultans recent remarks, initial reports did indicate that the gunmen were looking to abduct the emirs, a move which reflects an increasing trend for ransom kidnappings by militants in a bid to fund their anti-government uprising. The militants, who over the past five years have killed thousands, have in the past repeatedly targeted Nigeria's Islamic monarchs, whom they accuse of betraying the faith by submitting to the authority of the secular government. In July 2012, a suicide bomber attempted to kill Nigeria's third most powerful emir, the Shehu of Borno, Umar Garbai El-Kanemi, as he left Friday prayers. While the monarch survived the attack, five other people were killed. In another attack last year, the convoy of the Emir of Kano, Nigeria's number two Islamic leader, was also targeted.
- **29 May 2014** – Military sources and residents reported Thursday that Boko Haram gunmen killed thirty-five people after carrying out attacks on three villages located in northeastern Borno state, near the border with Cameroon. According to sources, dozens of Boko Haram gunmen dressed in military uniform, stormed the towns of Gumushi, Amuda and Arbokko in all-terrain trucks and motorcycles, opening fire on residents and torching homes with petrol bombs. A military officer in the state capital Maiduguri confirmed the attacks, stating "Boko Haram attacked the three villages Wednesday morning in which 35 people were killed, including 26 in Gumushi....The insurgents hurled petrol bombs into homes, setting them ablaze and shot residents as they tried to escape." He further indicated that the gunmen had raided the town of Gumushi around 6:00 AM (0500 GMT), where they killed twenty-six residents. Witnesses confirmed the coordinated attacks on the neighboring farming villages of Amuda and Arbokko, located 125 kilometers from Maiduguri. Nine people were killed and scores of homes were destroyed. According to one resident, "the attackers came at 2:00 AM (01:00 GMT) when people were asleep and went about throwing Molotov cocktails into homes which exploded and set fire." News of the latest deadly raids came on the same day as Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan vowed a "total war against terrorism."
- **29 May 2014** - While reports surfaced late Wednesday indicating that four more girls, kidnapped by Boko Haram militants last month, had escaped than previously believed, authorities in northeast Nigerian on Thursday revised the number and denied reports that the hostages had escaped from the militants in recent days. On Wednesday, a source at the government in north eastern Borno state had indicated that the number of girls who are currently missing was now 219, not 223 as was previously reported. Education

commissioner Musa Inuwa confirmed that four girls have since been reunited with their parents. A senior Borno state official also indicated that it remains unclear when they escaped, adding that it may have been several weeks ago, as the parents did not contact authorities when the girls returned. However on Thursday, authorities in Borno denied these reports, adding that the 223 girls are still missing. The girls were taking exams at a secondary school in the remote north eastern village of Chibok on April 14 when the militants surrounded it and loaded 276 girls onto trucks and carted them off. According to authorities in Borno state, fifty-three escaped shortly afterwards. Wednesday's reports came just one day after Chief of Defense Staff Air Marshal Alex Badeh indicated that the Nigerian military knew where the abducted girls were but ruled out a rescue by force for fear that this would endanger them. Currently, most officials believe that any raid to rescue the kidnapped girls would run a high risk and that the girls would be killed by their captors as, in the past, Boko Haram has repeatedly showed ruthlessness in targeting civilians. The United States State Department also indicated Tuesday that it did not have information, which could "support Nigeria's claim it has located the kidnapped girls." The girls abduction has placed the militant group in an international spotlight. Its violent bid to establish an Islamist state in northern Nigeria has killed thousands of people over the past five years and has transformed them into the biggest threat to security in Africa's top-oil producing state, with international officials now fearing it will develop into a regional issue.

- **27 May 2014** - Meanwhile According to security sources and witnesses, Boko Haram gunmen attacked a Nigerian military base and adjacent police barracks in the northeastern town of Buni Yadi on Tuesday, killing at least thirty-three people. A source has indicated that eighteen soldiers and fifteen police lost their lives in the assault, which began at about 8:00 PM (1900 GMT) on Monday. According to a witness and resident of Buni Yadi, the militants arrived in an armored personnel carrier and six Toyota Hilux pickup trucks before dismounting and firing into the air, with sources indicating that they fired rocket propelled grenades at both bases. According to the witness and two security sources, one in Yobe state and another at the army's northeast headquarters in Maiduguri, at least eleven soldiers and fourteen police officers were killed, however local officials have reported that the numbers may increase over the coming days.
- **26 May 2014** – Nigeria's Chief of Defense Staff indicated Tuesday that the Nigerian military knows where the girls kidnapped by Boko Haram are however they will not attempt a rescue. Speaking to demonstrators, who had marched to the ministry of defense in Abuja in support of the military's fight against Boko Haram, Chief of Defense Staff Air Marshal Alex Badeh indicated that this was "good news for the parents," however he did admit that the military will not risk "going there with force," as "...we can't kill our girls in the name of trying to get them back." This news comes a week after a deal to release some of the girls, which was apparently close to being completed, was called off by the Nigerian government. According to a source, an intermediary met leaders of the Islamist group and visited the place where they were being held, adding that an agreement was almost reached to release fifty of the girls in exchange for the release of 100 Boko Haram prisoners. However the Nigerian government pulled out of the deal after President Goodluck Jonathan attended a conference on the crisis in Paris last Saturday. The reason for the sudden withdrawal remains unclear. While news that the Nigerian military knows where the girls are being held is a glimmer of hope to the parents and families of those missing, many Nigerians will likely be skeptical about this statement, which is impossible to verify. **Update (27 May 2014)** - On Tuesday, the United States indicated that it did not have independent information to confirm Nigeria's claims of knowing the whereabouts of the kidnapped girls. US officials also questioned the wisdom of making public such information. US State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki confirmed Tuesday that "we don't have independent information from the United States to support these reports..." adding "we, as a matter of policy and for the girls' safety and wellbeing, would not discuss publicly this sort of information, regardless."

- Suspected Boko Haram gunmen stormed a Christian village in northeastern Nigeria, killing twenty residents. According to local government spokesman Ahmed Soji, the heavily armed gunmen stormed Waga village in Adamawa state on Sunday and opened fire, adding, “gunmen believed to be Boko Haram insurgents in trucks and on motorcycles attacked the village where they killed 20 people and burnt several houses.” He further indicated, “the whereabouts of several other people are still unknown but it is assumed they fled into the bush to escape the attack and are yet to return.” A second attack on the nearby village of Gublak was reportedly repelled by soldiers in the area. Adamawa state, which is one of three states under emergency law, along with Borno and Yobe, has seen a string of deadly Boko Haram attacks. In February, the militant group killed thirty-four people and burnt a number of homes in coordinated bombing and shooting attacks carried out on the towns of Michika, Kirchiga and Shuwa, which border Borno state. In recent weeks, the militants have intensified their attacks in the state’s countryside, raiding villages where they kill residents, loot food supplies and set fire to homes.

International Developments

- **5 June 2014** – Britain’s Foreign Secretary William Hague will host a meeting of African and Western officials in London next week. According to his office, the meeting will be aimed at increasing international efforts to defeat Boko Haram. The 12 June meeting will be attended by the Nigerian foreign minister and representatives from neighboring African countries, including Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger. Officials from Canada, Britain, France, the United States and the European Union will also be present. A statement released by the Foreign Office indicated “the meeting will consider what can be more done both to improve regional coordination, and on economic and social development to counter the threat of Boko Haram.” A statement released by Mr Hague’s office stated, “the London Ministerial on Security in Northern Nigeria will...consider further options to combat terrorism. This shows the determination of those in the region, with the support of the international community, to defeat Boko Haram.”
- **2 June 2014** – On Monday, the European Union (EU) announced that it has imposed sanctions on Boko Haram. The decision to blacklist the militant group comes just two weeks after the United Nations designated Boko Haram a terrorist movement. Boko Haram was added to the EU list late last week, along with Syria’s jihadist Al-Nusra Front for the People of the Levant. The EU’s decision will effectively subject Boko Haram and Al-Nusra, along with people or entities that support the two militant groups financially or materially, to sanctions that include an arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban.

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. Local elections are set to take place in Senegal on 29 June 2014. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid all outdoor rallies and demonstrations as they may turn violent. 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

- **30 May 2014** – A government official announced Friday that Karim Wade, the son of a former Senegalese president, will go on trial over multi-million-dollar corruption charges on July 31. The first hearing of the trial, which had initially been expected to begin in June, will be open to the public. Mr Wade, who has been in custody for over a year, is accused by Senegalese authorities of corruptly acquiring a fortune of US \$242 million (178 million euros) when he was a “super minister” in his father's cabinet. Mr Wade was charged and detained in Dakar in April last year, accused of having acquired companies, real estate and a fleet of luxury

cars valued at US \$1.4 billion by corrupt means, however that sum was later greatly reduced. Mr Wade, who according to sources held so much power under his father that he was dubbed the “minister of the universe,” has stated that the charges against him are “political and fanciful.” He has consistently denied any wrongdoing and says that his wealth was acquired legitimately. His lawyers, who confirmed the trial date, claim that the case has been launched in a bid to prevent Mr Wade from running in the 2017 presidential elections against current President Macky Sall. The 45-year-old is the son of Abdoulaye Wade, who was president of Senegal between 2000 and 2012.

Sierra Leone

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

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 as well as in the capital city, Conakry. There have been confirmed cases of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone. These cases have been reported in the regions near the border with Guinea.

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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 May 2014** – Officials in Sierra Leone on Friday raised the death toll from Ebola and doubled the number of confirmed cases of the virus, raising fears that the deadly epidemic is continuing to spread in West Africa. Sierra Leonean health ministry official Abass Kamara confirmed, “four people are dead out of fourteen cases of Ebola,” that have been confirmed in the country since Monday. The official added that the two new deaths were from a group of patients who were forcefully taken out of hospital by their relatives who said they needed traditional healing. On Wednesday, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned of likely further contagion in Sierra Leone after four of the six patients were taken back to their home village. WHO scientist Pierre Fromenty told reporters in Geneva that the patients had been removed from an isolation facility in the eastern region of the country by family members who were unwilling to see them remain in a hospital far from home. Earlier in the week, Sierra Leone’s government had confirmed two deaths, the first in the country, and seven cases of the deadly virus, which has killed more than 100 people in West Africa since it began in January. The deaths occurred in the eastern regions of Kailahun and Kenema, which are located near the border with Guinea, the epicenter of the outbreak.
- **28 May 2014** – According to an official, six people suspected of having the deadly Ebola virus in Sierra Leone have been “aggressively” taken away from a clinic, in defiance of medical staff, by their relatives. Dr Amara Jambai, the director of disease prevention and control at Sierra Leone’s health ministry indicated Wednesday that staff at the clinic in the town of Koindu, in eastern Sierra Leone, had attempted to stop the six patients from being removed, however the families had been “aggressive” as they took their relatives away. Dr. Jambai further added that four of the six patients had tested positive for Ebola while one of them has since died amidst fears that the highly contagious virus could spread. Authorities currently do not know the whereabouts of the other five patients. While it remains unclear why relatives did this, a Sierra Leonean official has speculated that it may have been because they thought their loved ones would die in the clinic or would be transferred to a hospital in Kenema, the main city in the region. Nearly 200 people have died of Ebola in West Africa since the outbreak was first reported in Guinea in March. In Sierra Leone, two people have died of the virus. While there is no cure or vaccine for Ebola, people have a better chance of surviving if it is identified early and they receive medical care.
- **27 May 2014** - A second person has died from the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone. Dr Brima Kargbo, the chief medical officer, stated Tuesday “one of seven Ebola patients, a woman admitted at the Isolation Centre in the Government Hospital in Kenema, died on Tuesday,” adding that the six other patients were “undergoing treatment.” The announcement of the woman’s death comes just two day after Sierra Leone confirmed its first fatality from the Ebola virus. In response to the deaths, officials in the country have restricted travel in some areas in a bid to stop the deadly virus from spreading further. The eastern regions of Kailahun, where the first case was confirmed, and Kenema, have been designated as “high risk.” Officials have arrived in the area to encourage residents to cooperate with health workers. Ministers have also reaffirmed an earlier ban on trips to attend funerals in neighboring Guinea. Authorities have also urged the public to remain vigilant.



- **26 May 2014** – On Monday, officials in Sierra Leone confirmed the first death from the Ebola virus, with several more suspected to have succumbed to the deadly virus, which has swept across neighboring Guinea. Sierra Leone's health ministry official Amara Jambai stated Monday "I can categorically confirm that the Ebola sickness has materialized." Although Jambai had initially stated that four cases of the Ebola fever had been identified in Sierra Leone, he later clarified that while four people had died, only one person had so far been confirmed to have had the virus, with the cause of death of the other three still being investigated. Jambai also indicated that eleven people with acute diarrhea and vomiting had been admitted to the Koindu Community Health Centre in a region that borders southern Guinea. The deadly hemorrhagic fever, which has no cure, erupted in Guinea in January where, according to government figures released three weeks ago, it has claimed eighty-one lives. The deadly virus has also spread to Liberia. The World Health Organization (WHO) has described the region's 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. According to a May 23 statement released by the WHO, 258 cases of viral hemorrhagic fever, of which 174 have resulted in deaths, have been reported in the Republic of Guinea. Out of the 258 cases, the Guinean government has said that 146 were confirmed Ebola cases, 95 of them deadly. In Liberia, which borders both Guinea and Sierra Leone, six cases of the Ebola virus have been confirmed out of 12 cases of hemorrhagic fever, nine of them deadly.



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