



**MS | RISK**

## **West Africa Report**

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

**September 15 - 28, 2014**

## About MS Risk

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

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
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  - 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.  
More information is found at [www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

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## Summary

September 15 - 28, 2014



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### Sahel Region

#### *Regional Reporting*

- **23 September 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) warned Tuesday that the number of Ebola infections will likely triple to 20,000 by November, effectively increasing by the thousands every week, if efforts to stop the outbreak are not significantly increased.
- **22 September 2014** – While the deadliest Ebola epidemic ever has now killed 2,793 people in West Africa, World Health Organization (WHO) officials disclosed Monday that outbreaks in Senegal and Nigeria have been basically contained.
  - On Monday, BBC World Service radio began nightly Ebola broadcasts for West Africa, which will concentrate on efforts to combat the deadly virus, which continues to spread rapidly throughout the region.

- **18 September 2014** – New data released by the World Health Organization (WHO) Thursday indicated that more than 700 Ebola cases emerged in West Africa in one week.
- **15 September 2014** – The United States ambassador to the United Nations disclosed Monday that the UN Security Council will hold an emergency meeting on the Ebola crisis on Thursday.

### *International Developments*

- **17 September 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced Wednesday that Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone could receive an additional US \$127 million in funding in order to help deal with the worst-ever outbreak of the Ebola virus.
  - Meanwhile Australia has announced that it will immediately provide an additional 7 million Australian dollars (US \$6.4 million) to help the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.
  - According to the World Bank, if the largest-ever outbreak of Ebola is not contained, it could drain billions of dollars from economies in West Africa by the end of next year.
- **16 September 2014** – On Tuesday, United States President Barack Obama announced a major expansion of the US' role in attempting to halt the spread of the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa, citing that the current outbreak was a looming threat to global security.

## Guinea

- **24 September 2014** - In what is the latest in a string of assaults that are further hindering efforts to control the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, a Red Cross team was attacked while collecting bodies believed to be infected with Ebola in southeastern Guinea.
- **19 September 2014** - On Friday, Guinean officials vowed to hunt down the killers of an Ebola education found dead two days after they were attacked by angry locals in a town at the epicenter of the outbreak.
- **18 September 2014** – Days after a team of officials went missing while visiting a village in Guinea in a bid to raise awareness about Ebola, officials confirmed late Thursday that all nine members were killed by local villagers.

## Guinea – Bissau

- **25 September 2014** – Guinea-Bissau has reached a 2.7 billion CFA francs (US \$5.27 million) loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- **16 September 2014** – Guinea-Bissau's new president has dismissed the head of the armed forces, General Antonio Indjai.

## Liberia

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **23 September 2014** – Liberian officials have warned that the country may slip back to civil war, along with neighboring Sierra Leone, if the Ebola epidemic is allowed to continue to spread.
- **16 September 2014** – World Health Organization (WHO) Assistant Director General Bruce Aylward disclosed Tuesday that the Ebola response in Liberia, which has been the worst-hit country in the outbreak, will focus on community-level care units as new treatment centers are not likely to be ready for weeks or months.

### *International Developments*

- **18 September 2014** – A spokesman for Belgium's prosecutors disclosed Thursday that police officers have arrested a high-ranking member of the rebel movement that plunged Liberia into conflict more than two decades ago.

## Mali

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **21 September 2014** – Just days after five Chadian peacekeepers were killed in northern Mali, military sources confirmed Sunday that at least two civilians were killed when their car drove over a landmine in a rebel stronghold in northeastern Mali.
- **18 September 2014** – A spokesman for the United Nations peacekeeping mission operating in Mali confirmed Thursday that five UN peacekeepers were killed in the northern region of the country when their vehicle hit an explosive.

### *Domestic News*

- **26 September 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reached an agreement with Mali that could restart aid to the West African country after it was suspended by the IMF and World Bank earlier this year.

## Nigeria

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **23 September 2014** - Nigerians military has retracted a statement that indicated that some of the schoolgirls, kidnapped by Boko Haram from a remote village in northeastern Nigeria in April of this year, had been freed by the Islamist militants.
- **22 September 2014** - New claims emerged this week that Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau may be dead, however this is not the first time that such rumors have emerged.
- **20 September 2014** – Officials and eyewitnesses reported Saturday that dozens were killed after Boko Haram militants attacked a rural market in the northeastern Nigerian town of Mainok.
- **17 September 2014** – At least thirteen people were killed and 34 others wounded when police fought with suspected Boko Haram suicide bombers in Kano, northern Nigeria.
  - A statement released by Nigeria's army Wednesday disclosed that several Boko Haram insurgents were killed in a fierce battle with Nigerian troops in a northeastern town located near Borno state capital Maiduguri.
- **16 September 2014** – On Tuesday, twelve Nigerian soldiers were sentenced to death for mutiny and attempted murder after shots were fired at their commanding officer in the restive northeastern city of Maiduguri earlier this year.
  - A senior military source disclosed Tuesday that suspected Boko Haram gunmen opened fire on a military convoy over the weekend in central Nigeria's Kogi state.

### *Domestic News*

- **17 September 2014** – On Wednesday, state governors from Nigerian President Goodluck's ruling party disclosed that they will back the president's bid to run for a second term in office – a strong indication that he will likely stand for re-election in February 2015.

## Senegal

- **23 September 2014** - The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Tuesday that two of the five countries dealing with the deadly Ebola outbreak are managing to halt the spread of the virus - positive news as Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone continue to struggle in containing the spread of the contagion within their respective borders.

## Sierra Leone

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **25 September 2014** – A statement released by President Ernest Bai Koroma indicated that Sierra Leone has put three more districts under indefinite quarantine in a bid to fight the on-going spread of the deadly Ebola virus.
- **23 September 2014** - As authorities consider repeating a nationwide lockdown, officials disclosed Tuesday that health teams, who went door to door during the unprecedented exercise over the past weekend, have discovered 130 confirmed Ebola cases.
  - According to officials, Sierra Leone's army has "sealed off" the borders with guinea and Liberia in a bid to halt the spread of Ebola.
- **22 September 2014** - While authorities in Sierra Leone have disclosed that a controversial three-day lockdown, which concluded Sunday, was a "success," frustrated residents reported food shortages in some neighborhoods of Sierra Leone's capital city.
- **18 September 2014** – On Thursday, Sierra Leonean officials prepared for an unprecedented three-day nationwide lockdown aimed at containing the spread of Ebola.



# Security Summaries for West African States

## Sahel Region – Page 10

### Benin

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant. There is currently an Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. While Benin currently has no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus, MS Risk advises all travellers to remain cautious, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

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 15

### The 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.

Due to the current Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the Gambian government has closed its air borders to Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria, however the air border with Senegal remains open. The government has also announced that any international traveller who has been present in one of these four countries within 21 days of arrival in The Gambia will not be allowed to enter. Officials have not disclosed how long these closures will be in place. The Gambia current has no confirmed Ebola cases.

The Casamance region of south-western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. An outbreak of the Ebola virus has been confirmed in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While there have been no confirmed cases of the virus in The Gambia, as part of efforts to prevent the deadly virus from spreading into the country, Gambia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has set up a task force to control the border areas. MS Risk is currently advising all travellers to the country to maintain a high level of vigilance. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. 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, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia. There currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in Ghana. In April, health officials confirmed that a girl suspected of having Ebola tested negative. MS Risk advises all travellers to Ghana 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. Throughout 2014, there have been a number of cases of violent robberies involving foreign nationals who have been attacked and robbed while travelling in taxis after dark. There have also been incidents where an assailant has been concealed in the trunk of the taxi. Recently, a number of foreign nationals in Tamale have been attacked and robbed by machete wielding individuals. MS Risk advises all travellers to the Tamale area to travel by private car and to avoid walking on the roads, or using a motor scooter or bicycle after dark.

Most armed robberies occur at night however there have been some reports of such incidents occurring during daytime. A common tactic has been to deliberately cause a minor road traffic accident in order to force the targeted vehicle to stop. As a result of ongoing local Chieftancy and land disputes, isolated inter-ethnic violence and civil unrest can occur at any time, including in the Northern, Upper East and Volta regions. A dusk to dawn curfew has been put in place on the Hohoe community in the Volta region. This is due to communal clashes over the exhumation of the Chief Imam of Hohoe. If you are considering travelling to the Northern Region, MS Risk advises you to remain alert to the potential of new outbreaks of flooding which is common in the Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions during the rainy season, which spans from March to November. We advise that you monitor the local weather reports and expect difficulties when travelling to affected areas during this season.

**Guinea** – Page 17

**Guinea-Bissau** – Page 21

**Ivory Coast** – Page 23

**Liberia** – Page 24

**Mali** – Page 27

**Mauritania** – Page 32

**Niger** – Page 34

**Nigeria** – Page 36

**Senegal** – Page 44

**Sierra Leone** – Page 46

**Togo**

There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. Crime is on the rise in Lome. Local authorities warn of a rise in violent robberies and car-jacking incidents that target both foreigners and Togolese alike. Togolese authorities have also warned motorists to



only stop for individuals in uniform, particularly after dark. You should avoid travelling alone where possible even within Lome city limits, especially after dark. There is a possibility of retaliatory attacks in Togo, due to its participation in the intervention in Mali.

## Sahel Region

**Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country**

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

### Security Summary

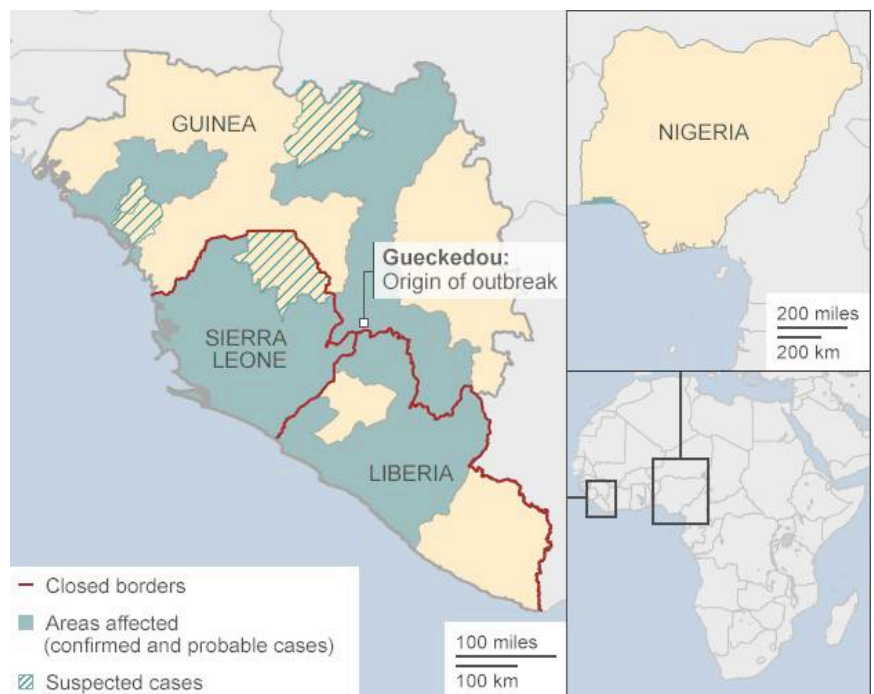
On 8 August the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. The current Ebola outbreak affects Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to these countries. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions.

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.

### Regional Reporting

- **23 September 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) warned Tuesday that the number of Ebola infections will likely triple to 20,000 by November, effectively increasing by the thousands every week, if



efforts to stop the outbreak are not significantly increased. In a study released this week, WHO officials disclosed “without drastic improvements in control measures, the number of cases of deaths from Ebola are expected to continue increasing from hundreds to thousands per week in the coming months.” The current outbreak in West Africa has already claimed more than 2,800 lives and infected more than 5,800 people however the WHO study forecasts that if no significant action is taken, “the cumulative number of confirmed and probably cases by November 2...will be 5,925 in Guinea, 9,939 in Liberia and 5,063 in Sierra Leone.” The total for those three countries alone will therefore surpass 20,000 cases, which will also translate in an increase in the number of deaths as experts have suggested that the fatality rate in the current outbreak is much higher than the widely estimated one in two. According to the WHO study, if only cases of deaths and recovery were taken into account, the fatality rate stands at about 71 percent. Prior to the current outbreak, the deadliest Ebola epidemic was the first one on record, in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1976, when 280 people died. Officials have noted that the current outbreak is acting similar to previous outbreaks however what has changed is the increasing mobility of the affected population. Cultural practices, such as washing and touching dead bodies, have also added to the problem, leading to the widespread contagion of the virus. The very slow response in countries never before hit by the virus as well as the international community had also allowed the virus to take hold.

- **22 September 2014** – While the deadliest Ebola epidemic ever has now killed 2,793 people in West Africa, World Health Organization (WHO) officials disclosed Monday that outbreaks in Senegal and Nigeria have been basically contained. A statement released by the UN health agency also published the results of the latest meeting of its Ebola emergency committee. According to new figures released by the WHO, as of 18 September a total of 5,762 people have been infected with the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in five Western countries. Guinea, where the outbreak initially began at the start of this year, along with neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone currently account for the most cases and continue to see their numbers rise. Liberia has especially been the hardest hit, with 3,022 cases and 1,578 deaths. The WHO did note however “the outbreaks in Senegal and Nigeria are pretty much contained.” According to officials, Senegal has not reported any new cases of the deadly virus since it registered its first and only case on August 29 - a Guinean student who has since recovered. Meanwhile Nigeria, where twenty-one people have been infected, eight of whom have died, has not reported any new cases since September 8. While no reports of new cases in Senegal and Nigeria does signify that both countries are slowly recovering, the WHO has not yet deemed them transmission free as the incubation period for Ebola is 21 days and double this time must pass without any new cases arising before a country can be deemed transmission free. In a statement released Monday, the WHO also indicated that during a meeting of its Ebola emergency committee last week, officials had determined that the outbreak remains to be a “public health emergency of international concern.” The WHO has disclosed that the committee reiterated its opposition to general bans on international travel or trade, noting that people infected with Ebola, or those who had come into contact with Ebola patients, should not be permitted to travel. The committee also warned that blocking flights to or from affected areas and other travel restrictions only served to “isolate affected countries, resulting in detrimental economic consequences, and hinder relief and response efforts risking further international spread.” The emergency committee did stress that in cases where measures like quarantines are deemed necessary, countries must ensure that “they are proportionate and evidence-based, and that accurate information, essential services and commodities, including food and water are provided to the affected populations,” insisting that “adequate security measures” should be put in place in order to ensure the safety and protection of health workers, who face high infection rates and sometimes violence from frustrated and frightened populations. Last week, eight members of an Ebola education team, said to include local health

officials and journalists, were found dead after they were attacked by angry locals in southern. This is the first such incident where health workers combatting EVD were killed.

- On Monday, BBC World Service radio began nightly Ebola broadcasts for West Africa, which will concentrate on efforts to combat the deadly virus, which continues to spread rapidly throughout the region. The nine-minute programme will be broadcast at 1950 GMT on the shortwave frequencies 9915 kHz and 12095 kHz. The "News About West Africa" programme will include a round-up of developments, particularly from Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, which are the three-hardest hit countries. According to a statement released by the British Broadcasting Cooperation, "through local stories, correspondents and interviews, the broadcast will include the latest information about local, regional and international effort to contain and combat the disease," adding "there is a great deal of new information emerging about how best to respond to Ebola and the programme aims to share that with an African and global audience."
- **18 September 2014** – New data released by the World Health Organization (WHO) Thursday indicated that more than 700 Ebola cases emerged in West Africa in one week. Three weeks ago, the number of new cases for a one-week period was around 500. Thursday's new data indicates the outbreak is accelerating. The number of people believed to have been killed is now more than 2,600, an increase of roughly 200 from the last estimate, with WHO officials indicating that most of the deaths occurred in Liberia. New figures from the UN health agency also indicate that the disease is believed to have infected more than 5,300 people, with just under half of those cases recorded over the last three weeks. Some 318 health care workers have contracted the deadly virus, and about half have died.
- **15 September 2014** – The United States ambassador to the United Nations disclosed Monday that the UN Security Council will hold an emergency meeting on the Ebola crisis on Thursday. According to US Ambassador Samantha Power, the Council will meet to find ways on how to increase the global response to the epidemic, noting that council members will "...discuss the status of the epidemic, confer on a coordinated international response and begin the process of marshaling our collective resources to stop the spread of the disease." The UN has appealed for US \$600 million for supplies, as part of a massive surge in aid, and has requested that countries deploy doctors, nurses, beds, equipment, trucks and other vehicles to the affected countries. While the World Health Organization (WHO) has set a goal of stopping the spread of Ebola within the next 6 – 9 months, aid agencies have disclosed that help is slow in reaching those in need. Sources have also revealed that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is planning a "high-level event" on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, which opens next week, in order to draw attention to the crisis and the need for action.

## International Developments

- **17 September 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced Wednesday that Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone could receive an additional US \$127 million in funding in order to help deal with the worst-ever outbreak of the Ebola virus. In a statement released Wednesday, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde disclosed "the Ebola outbreak is a severe human, social and economic crisis that requires a resolute response from the international community," adding "the governments of the three countries have requested additional IMF support to help cover the acute financing needs they are facing as a result of the outbreak." The IMF has proposed a US \$40 million loan to Guinea, US \$48 million for Liberia and US \$39 million for Sierra Leone, noting that economic growth in Liberia and Sierra Leone had been particularly

impacted by the outbreak's effects on agriculture, mining and the services sector. The organization also called on other countries and multilateral agencies to provide budget support for the three countries, noting that, according to preliminary figures, at least 40 percent of their financing needs remain unfilled. The funds, which are still to be approved by the IMF's executive board, would help cover an estimated US \$300 million financing gap in the West African countries over the next six to nine months, when the IMF expects the impact of the outbreak to be most acute. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are amongst the poorest countries in the region, and the Ebola outbreak has killed nearly 2,500 people in the region. The proposed funding would represent an expansion of the three countries' current IMF loan programmes. Guinea already has a US \$200 million programme from the IMF while Liberia is receiving about US \$80 million from the fund and Sierra Leone has an IMF programme of about US \$96 million.

- Meanwhile Australia has announced that it will immediately provide an additional 7 million Australian dollars (US \$6.4 million) to help the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The country has previously committed AU \$1 million to the international response. In a statement, Australia's Foreign Minister Julie Bishop disclosed that the new funding includes AU \$2 million, which was requested by Britain to help that country deliver medical services in Sierra Leone while another AU \$2.5 million will go to the World Health Organization's (WHO) consolidated regional response and AU \$2.5 million will be given to Doctors Without Borders (MSF) for medical services. Australia's new funding announcement comes just one day after US President Barack Obama declared that the current Ebola epidemic in West Africa could threaten security around the world.
- According to the World Bank, if the largest-ever outbreak of Ebola is not contained, it could drain billions of dollars from economies in West Africa by the end of next year. The global development lender has predicted that the slow containment of the deadly virus in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone could lead to broader regional issues, particularly through trade and tourism. According to World Bank officials, under the worst-case scenario, Guinea's economic growth could be reduced by 2.3 percentage points next year while Sierra Leone's growth would be cut by 8.9 percentage points. Officials warn that Liberia would be the hardest hit, with a reduction of 11.7 percentage points next year. Officials have also indicated that even under the best-case scenario, countries would need a "massive" scaling up of their response to contain the epidemic in the next four to six months.
- **16 September 2014** – On Tuesday, United States President Barack Obama announced a major expansion of the US' role in attempting to halt the spread of the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa, citing that the current outbreak was a looming threat to global security. Speaking at the Atlanta headquarters of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), President Obama disclosed "the reality is that this epidemic is going to get worse before it gets better....But, right now, the world still has an opportunity to save countless lives. Right now, the world has the responsibility to act, to step up and to do more. The United States of America intends to do more." Obama's plan calls for the deployment of 3,000 troops, including engineers and medical personnel; establishing a regional command and control center in Liberia's capital, Monrovia, which will be commanded by Major General Darryl Williams who arrived in Liberia's capital on Tuesday; and forming a staging area in Senegal in order to help distribute personnel and aid on the ground. The plan also calls for building seventeen centers with 100 beds each; placing US Public Health Service personnel in new field hospitals in Liberia; training thousands of healthcare workers for six months or longer and creating an "air bridge" to get health workers and medical supplies into West Africa more quickly. The White House however has disclosed that troops will not be responsible for direct patient care. President Obama reasoned the decision to deploy troops to the region by stating that the outbreak was now a global security threat. The American President indicated that if the outbreak is not stopped now,

hundreds of thousands of people may become infected, “with profound political and economic and security implication for all of us....This is an epidemic that is not just a threat to regional security. It’s a potential threat to global security, if these countries break down, if their economies break down, if people panic. That has profound effects on all of us, even if we are not directly contracting the disease.” While the new US plan, which is a dramatic expansion to Washington’s initial response last week, has already garnered praise from the World Health Organization (WHO), aid workers and officials in West Africa, experts are warning that it is not enough to contain the epidemic, which is rapidly spreading and causing already-weak local public health systems to crumble under the strain of fighting it.



## 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.

There is currently an Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. While there currently have been no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus in Burkina Faso, MS Risk advises all travellers to remain cautious, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene. As a precautionary measure, Burkina Faso's environmental ministry has banned all special hunting for bats, which is the main carrier of the deadly virus.

#### 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 Boulou, 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 Organizations 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.

## Guinea

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



### Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Guinea, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

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. On 13 August 2014, President Alpha Conde declared that the deadly Ebola outbreak is now a health emergency. The announcement came after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Guinea. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. Enhanced screening measures have been introduced for outbound passengers at Conakry airport. Delays are likely to be experienced at Guinea's land border crossings, particularly those with Liberia and Sierra Leone. This is due to enhanced screening measures. Guinea-Bissau has closed its land borders with Guinea in a bid to prevent the deadly virus from spreading.

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

- **24 September 2014** - In what is the latest in a string of assaults that are further hindering efforts to control the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, a Red Cross team was attacked while collecting bodies believed to be infected with Ebola in southeastern Guinea. According to a spokesman for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, one Red Cross worker is recovering after being wounded in Tuesday's attack, which occurred in Forecariah. One resident reported that while family members of the dead had initially set upon the six volunteers and vandalized their cars, eventually a crowd gathered and headed to the regional health office, where they threw rocks at the building. Tuesday's attack is the most recent in a series of incidents that have plagued teams working to bury bodies, provide information about Ebola and disinfect public places. However the most shocking incident to date has been the abduction and killing last week of a team of several health workers and journalists in Guinea who were educating people on how to avoid contracting the deadly virus when they were attacked. The deadliest Ebola outbreak has been greatly affected by rumors that have spread across the region. According to officials at the Red Cross, there are deeply held beliefs about how dead bodies should be treated and buried in the region and teams that are forced to interfere with those practices are often targeted. Much of the resistance occurs in the remote, insular areas, where attitudes change slowly. This has made it a difficult task to combat the virus even on issues that are not so sensitive, such as burials.
- **19 September 2014** - On Friday, Guinean officials vowed to hunt down the killers of an Ebola education team found dead two days after they were attacked by angry locals in a town at the epicenter of the outbreak. A statement released by government spokesman Damantang Albert Camara indicated "everyone involved in these murders will be hunted down and brought before the courts to be sanctioned under the law." The spokesman further added that eight bodies were recovered from the septic tank of a primary school, revising the toll, which was up from seven victims initially reported Thursday. Local police officials confirmed Friday that at least twenty-one people were wounded during the unrest. Police lieutenant Richard Haba revealed "the villagers violently attacked the delegation led by the governor, Lancel Conde, with stones and sticks," adding that the protesters had thought that the outreach team had come "to kill them because they think Ebola is nothing more than an invention of white people to kill black people." The victims, which included local health officials and journalists, had been missing since Tuesday, when the team was pelted with stones during an outreach visit in the town of Womey. The spread of the Ebola virus in Guinea has been affected by fear and paranoid by villagers who feel the government and the international community cannot be trusted. Many Guineans believe that local and foreign health care workers are part of a conspiracy, which either deliberately introduced the outbreak to the region or invented it as a means of luring Africans to clinics in order to harvest their blood and organs. **Update (24 September 2014)** – On Wednesday, government officials confirmed that police have arrested twenty-seven suspects over the murders of an eight-member Ebola education team that was attacked by angry locals in an area that is at the epicenter of the outbreak. According to Justice Minsitr Cheikc Sacko, "most of the main perpetrators of these crimes have been placed under arrests – a total of 27 people," adding that the suspects were being questioned by the public prosecutor in the southern city of N'Zerekore. The victims, which included local health officials and journalists, went missing after their delegation came under attack

during an outreach visit to the southern town of Womey on Tuesday last week. Two days later, eight bodies were recovered.

- **18 September 2014** – Days after a team of officials went missing while visiting a village in Guinea in a bid to raise awareness about Ebola, officials confirmed late Thursday that all nine members were killed by local villagers. In August, MS Risk analysts warned that attacks on Ebola workers in West Africa may spark similar reactions to those carried out against polio workers, in which a number of volunteers have been killed while administering polio vaccinations. This death of nine members of a team attempting to raise awareness about Ebola signifies that the threat to health workers and local authorities trying to combat the disease is high, and will likely intensify as the virus continues to spread. Further such incidents will be likely be reported in the affected countries. Steps to combat myths about the disease, which are common across the region, must be taken in order to ensure health workers' safety and to curb the virus' spread. On Tuesday the group of nine Guineans, which included two journalists, local officials and several health workers, fled the village of Wome, located in the southern Nzerekore region, after their group was pelted with stones. A journalist who managed to escape later told officials that she could hear villages looking for the group while she was hiding. On Wednesday a government delegation, led by the country's health minister Remy Lahah, had been dispatched to the region however they were unable to reach the village by road as the main bridge was blocked. Officials disclosed Friday that seven of the bodies were located in a septic tank in a village school near the city of Nzerekore while the other two were located in the bush. According to officials, the bodies showed signs of being attacked with machetes and clubs. Six people have been arrested, with on the ground sources reporting that the village is now deserted. According to local police officials, at least 21 people were wounded during the unrest. While the motive for the killings has not been confirmed, it is believed that the villagers' suspicions of officials attempting to combat the disease lead to the group being attacked and its members murdered. Many Guineans believe that local and foreign health workers are part of a conspiracy, which either deliberately introduced the outbreak, or invented it as a means of luring Africans to clinics in order to harvest their blood and organs. Some still do not believe that the disease exists despite more than 2,600 people killed by the virus. In recent weeks, tensions have been rising across West Africa as the Ebola epidemic continues to rise. A number of incidents of frustrated civilians attacking local officials have been reported however this is the first incident in which officials were killed for attempting to combat the deadly virus. Last month, riots erupted in Nzerekore, Guinea, 50 kilometers (30 miles) from Wome, after rumors emerged that medics who were disinfecting a market were contaminating people. There have also been a number of reports of people in the region refusing to cooperate with health authorities over fears that a diagnosis means certain death. Myths such as these have emerged over the past few months and have greatly impacted the spread of the current outbreak. Officials at the WHO have confirmed that the already difficult conditions are made more difficult by public misunderstanding caused by "rumors on social media claiming that certain products or practices can prevent or cure Ebola Virus Disease." Such myths have not only impacted Guinea, but other countries, including Nigeria, where at least two people died as a result of drinking salt water after stories circulated that doing so would protect against the deadly disease. Other supposed cures for the virus include raw onions, coffee, condensed milk and holy water. Some civilians have opted to hide infected family members at home, or prefer to take them to local doctors instead of an Ebola treatment center. Health officials in Sierra Leone disclosed in August that the Ebola outbreak spread from Guinea after an herbalist in the remote eastern border village of Sokoma claimed to have powers to heal the deadly virus. Officials have since confirmed that the virus spread in Sierra Leone after cases from Guinea cross over the border, seeking treatment. Fears over the deadly virus have also sparked riots and attacks on health



workers. As the Ebola outbreak continues, such attacks may spark similar reactions to those carried out against polio workers. At the start of the outbreak, a team from MSF had to stop working at an isolation ward in Guinea after local residents mistakenly believed that they had brought the virus with them. Groups of health workers from MSF, the Red Cross and from the ministry of health have been pelted with rocks as they attempted to reach Ebola-hit areas. In Liberia, a number of Ebola patients escaped a healthcare facility after it was attacked by rioters. Due to the region's recent history of bloody civil war, some believe that the army's deployment to control the affected areas is a sign that the government is deliberately infecting people in a bid to have an excuse to enforce martial law.



## Guinea - Bissau

### No Travel Restrictions

### Security Summary



There are currently no travel restrictions for Guinea-Bissau. An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia. While there currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in Guinea-Bissau, the country has taken preventative measures, including closing all land borders with Guinea. MS Risk advises all travellers to Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

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. 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.

### Domestic News

- **25 September 2014** – Guinea-Bissau has reached a 2.7 billion CFA francs (US \$5.27 million) loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to Felix Fisher, the head of an IMF mission to the West African state, the loan will enable Guinea-Bissau's new government to tackle urgent issues, including salary arrears and public investment, both of which are necessary in order to restart the country's economy following a 2012 military coup and democratic transition. Shortly after the announcement, the country's Finance Minister Geraldo Martins told a news conference that the economy was expected to grow 2.5 percent in 2014, versus 0.3 percent growth last year. Following the coup, Guinea-Bissau's economy, which is largely dependent on cashew nut exports, plummeted, leading to an increase in poverty and food insecurity as donors cut aid and civil servants went for months without pay.
- **16 September 2014** – Guinea-Bissau's new president has dismissed the head of the armed forces, General Antonio Indjai. While no reason was provided for his dismissal, which was announced on state radio Monday evening, President Jose Mario Vaz has been under increasing pressure to reform the country's military. A replacement has not been named however it is expected that a member of Gen Indjai's Balanta ethnic group, which dominates the military, will likely be named new army chief. Gen Antonio Indjai

rose to prominence during the civil war in the 1990's. He became head of the army after staging an army mutiny in 2010 and in 2012, he overthrew the government of then Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior between the first and second rounds of a presidential election. A democratic transition process, which led to the election of Jose Mario Vaz as head of state in May 2014, followed Gen Indjai's coup. In April 2013, the army chief was indicted in the United States, accused of plotting to traffic cocaine and selling weapons to Colombian rebels. Weeks prior to his indictment in the US, his former colleague, Rear Admiral Jose America bubo Na Tchuto, appeared before a New York court on similar charges linked to cocaine trafficking. Labeled by US officials as a "drug kingpin," Tchuto, the former chief of Guinea-Bissau's Navy, was arrested in international waters in a sting operation carried out by US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents. He currently awaits trial. A number of senior officers have been accused of turning the country into a narco-state as it is a major hub for cocaine that is smuggled from Latin America to Europe. Guinea-Bissau, one of the poorest countries in the world, has a history of coups and no elected leader has served a full term since the country gained its independence from Portugal in 1974. **Update (17 September 2014)** – Guinea-Bissau President Jose Mario Vaz has appointed a close confidante, and head of the presidential guard, to the post of army chief, replacing General Antonio Indjai who was dismissed earlier this week. The appointment of General Biague Na Ntan, 61, who is a member of the same Balanta ethnic group as Gen Indjai, is expected to smooth over any resentment from the ethnic group, which makes up 60 percent of the army and security forces and 25 percent of Guinea-Bissau's population. The new army chief is a veteran of the country's war of independence from Portugal, and was formerly in charge of the customs security service prior to taking command of the presidential guard.

## Ivory Coast

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



### Security Summary

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia. While there currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in the Ivory Coast, the country has taken preventative measures, including banning all flights from countries that have been affected by the outbreak. MS Risk advises all travellers to the Ivory Coast to take the necessary precautions, including maintaining strict standards of hygiene and avoiding eating bush meat.

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

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



### Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Liberia, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

On 8 August, the World Health Organization (WHO) released a statement following a meeting of the International Health Regulation Emergency Committee, declaring the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Cases of the Ebola virus have been confirmed in a number of areas of Liberia, including in the capital city. A nationwide curfew has been announced, with no movement allowed between the hours of 11 PM and 6 AM.

While there are currently no travel restrictions for Liberia, on July 27, the government announced that all borders of Liberia have been closed, with the exception of major entry points including the Roberts International Airport, James Spriggs Payne Airport, Foya Crossing, Bo Waterside Crossing and Ganta Crossing. The Liberia Airport Authority has also introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. In August, British Airways announced that they were suspending flights to Liberia and Sierra Leone until the end of this year. This is due to the deteriorating public health situation. Some other airlines have also suspended flights to Liberia. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Liberia. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. The Liberian Airport Authority has introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat.

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.

## On the Ground Reporting

- **23 September 2014** – Liberian officials have warned that the country may slip back to civil war, along with neighboring Sierra Leone, if the Ebola epidemic is allowed to continue to spread. On Tuesday, Liberia's Information Minister Lewis Brown disclosed that the lack of urgency in the international response risked allowing a breakdown of societies in the region, where the outbreak has already claimed nearly 3,000 lives, noting "hospitals are struggling, but so too are hotels. Businesses are struggling. If this continues the cost of living will go to the roof. You have an agitated population....The world cannot wait for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, to slip back into conflict, which could be the result of this slowness in response." According to the latest figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 3,000 people have been infected in Liberia, and almost 1,600 people have died, with health workers now forced to turn away a number of possible Ebola patients due to chronic shortages of beds and staff at treatment units across the country. Liberia has spent a decade recover from two ruinous back-to-back civil wars, which ran from 1989 to 2003, and which effectively left a quarter of a million people dead and the economy in tatters. Sierra Leone is also struggling to recover from its own linked 11-year civil war, which concluded in 2002.
- **16 September 2014** – World Health Organization (WHO) Assistant Director General Bruce Aylward disclosed Tuesday that the Ebola response in Liberia, which has been the worst-hit country in the outbreak, will focus on community-level care units as new treatment centers are not likely to be ready for weeks or months. Speaking to reporters, Mr Aylward revealed, "the absolute first priority is to establish enough capacity to rapidly isolate the cases so that they are not infecting others. We need Ebola treatment centers to do that, very very quickly, but they take time to build, as you've seen.... It takes weeks, if not months, to get these facilities up and running. We have firm commitments for more than 500 additional beds in Liberia and we think we will hear announcements that will take that even further over the coming weeks." While the WHO still has a goal to "bend the curve" in total Ebola case numbers across West Africa in the coming three months, some areas may be freed of the disease sooner. Specifically Nigeria and Senegal. The number of cases has decreased to one single confirmed Ebola patient in Senegal, after two cases were ruled out. Although Senegalese officials have disclosed that the only Ebola patient has since been cured, Mr Aylward disclosed that currently he "...cannot say Senegal is safe. Remember, if a country has Ebola, the incubation period is about 21 days. I'd like to see at least two incubation periods without any cases to be absolutely sure. So that would take us way out into October..." In Nigeria, the cases have remained steady at twenty-one. According to Mr Aylward, "in some capitals – Freetown, Conakry – we should be able to get those free in the near term. Guinea should be able to get most of the country free in the very near term as well." In Sierra Leone and Liberia, the situation is more complex as the disease is more entrenched over large geographic areas, with Mr Aylward citing that the Liberian capital Monrovia remains to be a "particular challenge."

## International Developments

- **18 September 2014** – A spokesman for Belgium’s prosecutors disclosed Thursday that police officers have arrested a high-ranking member of the rebel movement that plunged Liberia into conflict more than two decades ago. Jean-Pascal Thoreau indicated Thursday that Martin Johnson, former head of heavy artillery for the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, was arrested this week in Belgium on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. She is only the second Liberian to be charged for international crimes committed during Liberia’s two civil wars that spanned 14 years, and which killed hundreds of thousands before ending in 2003. Ms Johnson has been described as a leader of Operation Octopus, a brutal battle for Liberia’s capital city in 1992. According to Mr Thoreau, Ms Johnson is set to appear before a judge on Friday.



# 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 Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria. While there currently are no confirmed reports of Ebola cases in Mali, 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

- **21 September 2014** – Just days after five Chadian peacekeepers were killed in northern Mali, military sources confirmed Sunday that at least two civilians were killed when their car drove over a landmine in a rebel stronghold in northeastern Mali. The incident occurred Friday night in the same area where 10 Chadian soldiers from the United Nations' MINUSMA peacekeeping force were killed by three landmine explosions over the past two weeks. According to a Malian source, "at least two civilians were killed in the night from Friday to Saturday in northeastern Mali, near the town of Aguelhok, when their car hit a mine." The latest incident occurred just one day after five UN peacekeepers from Chad were killed when their truck drove over a mine in the Aguelhok locality, which is located 150 kilometers (90 miles) south of the Algerian border, in the restive Kidal region. While no militant group has claimed responsibility for the latest incidents, the attacks follow the restart of negotiations between the Malian government and six armed rebel groups in the Algerian capital, which are aimed at clinching a lasting peace agreement in the deeply-divided nation. The Bamako government and various rebel groups, mostly Tuareg but also including Arab organizations, are seeking to resolve a decades-old conflict, which effectively created a power vacuum in the desert north that was later exploited by al-Qaeda militants.
- **18 September 2014** – A spokesman for the United Nations peacekeeping mission operating in Mali confirmed Thursday that five UN peacekeepers were killed in the northern region of the country when their vehicle hit an explosive. This latest incident has cast a shadow over ongoing peace talks between the Malian government and rebel militias. Olivier Salgado of the UN peacekeeping mission confirmed that a car containing Chadian troops hit the roadside bomb Thursday near Aguelhok, killing five and wounding three other peacekeepers. The attacks follow the restart of negotiations between the Malian government and six armed rebel groups in the Algerian capital. The talks are aimed at clinching a lasting peace agreement. In recent weeks, the region has seen a number of similar incidents, including one that killed four UN peacekeepers and wounded several others earlier this month. The peacekeeping operation in Mali is aimed at stabilizing the country after a French-led war ousted Islamist militants from power in 2013. However continued attacks, and incidents such as the one that occurred Thursday, continue to indicate that the security situation in the northern region of the country remains unstable despite the election of a democratic government and continued presence of French forces. **Update (19 September 2014)** - On Friday, just one day after five Chadian peacekeepers operating under a United Nations peacekeeping mission in northern Mali were killed by a landmine, the Chadian government denounced the "discriminatory" treatment of its troops in Mali, accusing the UN peacekeeping mission of using them as a "shield." The incident, which occurred Thursday, brought to ten the number of Chadian soldiers in the MINUSMA peacekeeping force killed in three incidents over the past two weeks in the northern Malian district of Kidal. A statement released by the Chadian administration disclosed, "the Chadian government regrets that its contingent continues to maintain its position in northern Mali and doesn't get any leave. Worse still, our contingent is experiencing enormous difficulties securing adequate logistics, transport and food." According to the statement, the Chadian troops are being "used as a shield for the other forces of MINUSMA positioned further back." The Chadian government has also revealed that it will give the UN mission a week in order to carry out necessary changes to offer better protection to Chadian troops, warning, "after this time, Chad deserves the right to take appropriate action." Chad deployed 2,000 soldiers to Mali in 2013 as part of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), which was at the forefront of a

French-led military intervention to oust Islamist rebels. In the initial stages of the battle, Chad lost at least 38 men, with the heaviest fighting taking place in the northeastern Ifoghas mountain. In July last year, the MINUSMA peacekeeping force replaced AFISMA however there have been minimal solutions implemented to change some major issues. Complaints about pay and conditions have been a recurring feature of the Chadian's tenure in Mali. In September last year, a group of 160 Chadian MINUSMA troops deserted their posts in the northeastern town of Tessalit in a dispute over pay and conditions.

## Domestic News

- **26 September 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reached an agreement with Mali that could restart aid to the West African country after it was suspended by the IMF and World Bank earlier this year. The IMF had halted nearly US \$70 million in financing after officials expressed concern in May over the Malian government's purchase of a US \$40 million presidential jet and increased spending on military supplies. On Friday, Christian Jozs confirmed that the IMF and Malian government "...reached an agreement to move forward," adding "we are in a position to recommend that the IMF board of directors conclude the first and second review programmes." Mr Jozs further disclosed that an audit had revealed over-billing of 29 billion CFA francs (US \$56.55 million) in the military contract and other shortcomings in the awarding of the contract, noting "Mali is now committed towards transparency. It is up to the government to implement the recommendations of the various reports and identify perpetrators of the over-billing. The IMF reached an agreement with Mali on new spending rules and also on the amendment of Mali's 2014 budget in order to correct the over-billing. Last year, Mali secured over US \$4 billion in donor pledges in a bid to rebuild the country after twin crises in 2012.



# 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, Liberia, Nigeria 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. Mauritanian authorities have decided to deny entry to citizens arriving from those African countries that have been affected by the current Ebola outbreak.

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 Adamawa, 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.

# 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.

## Nigeria

**Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country**

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



## Security Summary

### Summary

On 8 August, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.



Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public health situation. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Nigeria. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain. Dedicated healthcare facilities

for Ebola can also be under pressure and many medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. The Nigerian government has introduced new protocols for arriving at all airports, including Ebola screenings. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain

strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat.

#### *Boko Haram's Islamic State*

Over the past several weeks, Nigeria has been rapidly losing control of large areas of the northeast to Boko Haram, which is attempting to carve out an Islamic State. With reports surfacing on 12 September 2014 that the militant group has

“completely surrounded” the city of Maiduguri, if the Nigerian military fails to carry out military operations to secure the area and reinforce the capital city, it is highly likely that Borno state, along with some areas of neighboring Adamawa and Yobe states, will fall to the militant group in the coming weeks. Boko Haram appears to be carrying out a two-pronged assault, from the northeast to the southeast, with militants likely to be reinforcing the captured areas prior to taking over Maiduguri. Boko Haram was founded in Maiduguri in 2002, making the state capital a high value target for them. Boko Haram have seized territory along at least two of the main approaches to the capital city, while their control of towns and settlements to the south and near the border with Cameroon have effectively cut off the Nigerian military, preventing them from responding quickly and carrying out operations to recapture the area. In recent weeks, Boko Haram militants have destroyed several key bridges, including one on the road from Biu to Maiduguri, a bridge near Gamboru Ngala that links Nigeria to Cameroon, a bridge in Potiskum that links Maiduguri and Damaturu to Abuja and a bridge in Yobe that links to the southern areas of Borno and Adamawa. Some of the destroyed bridges were strategically linked to Maiduguri and have now made it difficult for the Nigerian military to reinforce Maiduguri and other towns in Borno state.



Further out, in Borno, Boko Haram are believed to have seized Gamboru Ngala, Dikwa, Gwoza and Marte. Bama has also been reported captured by the militants however the Nigerian military and some locals have contested these reports. Damboa, which was seized in July, has since been reported to have been retaken. In Adamawa state, Madagali has been captured while in Yobe, Buni Yadi has been taken. Other communities in the northeastern region of Nigeria, which are



believed to have been seized or heavily contested, include Banki, Kerawa, Ashigashiy, Ngoshe, Pulka and Goniri. Further seizures of towns in the area, and which border Cameroon, cannot be ruled out at this time.

Despite Boko Haram's recent takeover of a large area of Nigerian territory, actions similar to the recent lightning advance achieved by IS militants in Iraq, Nigeria's military has continued to deny the severity of the threat. On Friday, Nigeria's defence ministry dismissed "alarmist" reports pertaining to Maiduguri, stating, "Security Arrangements for the Defence of Maiduguri has been upgraded to handle any planned attack." If Boko Haram are successful in taking over Maiduguri, the fall of the state capital will mean a significant symbolic and strategic victory for the militant group, effectively enabling them to control a major city and an international airport, a victory that has not yet been seen in the militant group's five-year insurgency.

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.

There is currently a high threat from terrorism. Over the past few weeks there have been a number of explosive attacks in Damaturu, Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Abuja and Lagos. Further such attacks are highly likely to occur. MS Risk currently advises all travellers in Nigeria to avoid public places, especially where crowds gather.

On 16 July 2014, a German national was kidnapped near Gombi, in northeastern Nigeria. While no group has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping, officials in the region are blaming Boko Haram.

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

- **23 September 2014** - Nigerians military has retracted a statement that indicated that some of the schoolgirls, kidnapped by Boko Haram from a remote village in northeastern Nigeria in April of this year, had been freed by the Islamist militants. While Army spokesman Major General Chris Olukolade had indicated that there were a number of girls currently in military custody, they were not the girls from Chibok, as was previously thought. Earlier, Gen Olukolade had indicated that there was an ongoing exercise aimed at releasing the kidnapped schoolgirls from Chibok and that some of them were safe in a military barracks. However he later retracted this statement, indicating that the authorities were trying to confirm the identities of the girls who are in the custody of the military, noting however that they did not come from Chibok. In

April, more than 200 schoolgirls were seized by Boko Haram militants from a boarding school in northeastern Borno state. The mass kidnapping caused worldwide outrage and sparked a social media campaign. A number of protests were organized under the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls, which called for the Nigerian authorities to do more in order to locate and free the girls. In recent days there have been unconfirmed reports that the Nigerian government has been negotiating a deal with Boko Haram to exchange the abducted schoolgirls for imprisoned Islamist fighters.

- **22 September 2014** - New claims emerged this week that Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau may be dead, however this is not the first time that such rumors have emerged. Rumors began circling last Thursday when the military indicated that "a seriously wounded high ranking terrorist leader" had been captured during clashes in Konduga, Borno state. According to military officials. The unnamed militant was wounded and said to have been treated at a military medical facility. Speculation further increased over the weekend after a photograph began circulating depicting a heavily bearded man said to have been killed in Konduga. On Monday, army spokesman General Olajide Olaleye disclosed "at this point, I will not be able to confirm or deny the information," adding that an investigation was ongoing. However with two previous public statements about Shekau's death, the international community has not been quick in applauding Nigerian efforts in combating the militant group. On 30 July 2009, police in Maiduguri disclosed that Sheau, then deputy to Boko Haram founder Mohammed Yusuf, was one of about 200 members of the group killed during clashes. That claim was dispelled less than a year later when Shekau appeared in a video clip. On August 19 last year, the security task force in northeastern Nigeria issued a statement indicating that Dheaku "May have died" from a gunshot wound after a clash with Nigerian soldiers. However several weeks later, another video emerged. Since September last year, there have been ten Boko Haram videos released, the latest of them on August 24 when Shekau proclaimed the captured Borno town of Gwoza as part of an Islamic caliphate.
- **20 September 2014** – Officials and eyewitnesses reported Saturday that dozens were killed after Boko Haram militants attacked a rural market in the northeastern Nigerian town of Mainok. According to on the ground sources, gunmen shot at traders and customers as they raided the busy market for food supplies on Friday, with the gun battle continuing into Saturday. While the number of casualties has not been confirmed by local authorities, some reports have suggested that as many as thirty people were killed in the attack. In recent weeks, Boko Haram militants have taken control of a series of towns and villages in northeastern Nigeria, effectively encircling Borno state capital Maiduguri. Mainok is located some 56 kilometers (35 miles) northwest of Maiduguri. Authorities however have struggled to defeat the militant group, which has been waging an insurgency in Nigeria since 2009. As the north-eastern region of Nigeria continues to slip further out of the government's control, a growing humanitarian crisis is affecting the region and neighboring states.
- **17 September 2014** – At least thirteen people were killed and 34 others wounded when police fought with suspected Boko Haram suicide bombers in Kano, northern Nigeria. According to Kano State police commissioner Adelere Shinaba, the gunmen, whom he described as "insurgents," ran onto the ground of the Federal College of Education after exchanging fire with police outside. The police commissioner disclosed that the gunmen were "...obviously suicide bombers. One of our officers shot at one of the gunmen and the explosives on him went off, killing him on the spot....Another gunman was also killed. Thirteen people were killed by the gunmen and 34 others have been taken to hospital with injuries." In recent months, educational establishments in Kano, which is the commercial capital of the north and a center of Islamic scholarship that dates back centuries, have been hit several times. On July 30, a female suicide bomber killed six people after detonating her explosives at a noticeboard on the campus of the Kano

Polytechnic College while students were crowded around it. The attack was the fourth to be carried out by a female suicide bomber in the city in a week and prompted authorities to cancel celebrations marking the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Days earlier, on July 27, another female bomber blew herself up outside a university in Kano after police prevented her from entering the campus. A previous bombing on June 23 killed at least eight when it went off in the grounds of the city's School of Hygiene. All the bombings were linked to Boko Haram, who is opposed to what it calls "Western education."

- A statement released by Nigeria's army Wednesday disclosed that several Boko Haram insurgents were killed in a fierce battle with Nigerian troops in a northeastern town located near Borno state capital Maiduguri. According to an army spokesman, pick-up vehicles with mounted machine- and anti-aircraft guns, an armored carrier and assorted arms and ammunition were recovered from the battle, which occurred late Tuesday. Brigadier General Olajide Olaleye confirmed "during the fight, several terrorists were killed and those fleeing Konduga with gunshot wounds are being pursued. Konduga is located 35 kilometers (22 miles) from Maiduguri, which is believed to be Boko Haram's next target in their bid to carve out an Islamic State in northern Nigeria.
- **16 September 2014** – On Tuesday, twelve Nigerian soldiers were sentenced to death for mutiny and attempted murder after shots were fired at their commanding officer in the restive northeastern city of Maiduguri earlier this year. A nine-member military tribunal in Abuja convicted the soldiers following the May 14 incident, when troops from the Nigerian army's 7<sup>th</sup> Division 101 Battalion opened fire at a convoy containing the 7<sup>th</sup> Division commander General Amadu Mohammed at an army medical center in Maiduguri. The soldiers had demanded that Gen Mohammed speak to them after a number of their colleagues were killed in an ambush while on their way back from Chibok. Witnesses reported that the soldiers later became unruly, throwing stones at an officer when he arrived and firing shots into the air. Gen Mohammed was later forced to take cover as the soldiers aimed their guns on him however he was not injured in the incident. Eighteen soldiers, ranking from private to corporal from the 7<sup>th</sup> Division, which has been tasked with combatting Boko Haram insurgents in the northeastern region of the country, were charged with mutiny, criminal conspiracy, attempted murder, disobeying orders, insubordination and false accusation. While all eighteen plead not guilty, twelve were sentenced to death for mutiny, one was given 28 days' hard labor on another count and five were acquitted. Court President Brigadier General Chukwuemeka Okonkwo disclosed that while the sentences were still subject to confirmation by Nigeria's military authorities, he noted that there was no doubt about the gravity of the offence, adding that the panel had considered "its likely effect on the counter-insurgency operations in the northeast as well as its implications on national security." Although Nigeria's army has been under increasing pressure to end Boko Haram's five-year insurgency, which has claimed thousands of lives, made tens of thousands of others homeless and has seen the militants achieve lightening territorial gains in the northeast in recent weeks, front-line troops have frequently complained of a lack of adequate weapons and equipment, an issue that has only added to the army's already low morale. Residents living in towns raided by the Islamist militants have corroborated reports of the Nigerian army being ill equipped, reporting that the insurgents are often armed with rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft weapons mounted on trucks, and in some cases, armored personnel carriers. In contrast, Nigerian soldiers have at times reported lacking ammunition and being sent out to the bush to fight without basic communication equipment. Lack of adequate weaponry and equipment forced dozens of Nigerian soldiers last month to refuse to deploy for an offensive aimed at recapturing Gwoza, in Borno state, which the Islamist claim is part of an Islamic caliphate. A number of the soldiers' wives have also demonstrated at the gate of a military base in Maiduguri in an attempt to prevent their husbands from heading to Gwoza without proper equipment. While President Goodluck Jonathan has

requested that the country's lawmakers approve a US \$1 billion foreign loan to upgrade the capacity of the military, this request was seen as a tacit acknowledgement that troops are being outmatched. Nigeria's top military brass have continued to deny that troops have mutinied and have rejected claims that hundreds of troops fled their posts in border towns overrun by Boko Haram. Nigeria's military spokesman Chris Olukolade disclosed that Nigerian soldiers would never mutiny as they are "too disciplined and patriotic to indulge in this dangerous offence." Tuesday's verdict is likely to have a two-pronged effect. Within Nigeria's army, troop morale is likely to decrease further and may lead to anger amongst those troops fighting in northeastern Nigeria. In turn, Boko Haram militants will likely use this verdict as an attempt to demonstrate to Nigerians that their government is making minimal efforts to ensure the safety of its troops.

- A senior military source disclosed Tuesday that suspected Boko Haram gunmen opened fire on a military convoy over the weekend in central Nigeria's Kogi state. Although the soldiers repelled the attack, four troops sustained gunshot wounds. According to the source, the convoy of 850 soldiers came under fire late Sunday near the town of Okene as they were driving towards Kogi state capital Lokoja. The source added that the troops were to undergo counter-terrorism training for deployment to the northeast to fight Boko Haram militants. An investigation is currently being carried out as officials fear that military insiders may have notified Boko Haram militants about the confidential troop movement.

## Domestic News

- **17 September 2014** – On Wednesday, state governors from Nigerian President Goodluck's ruling party disclosed that they will back the president's bid to run for a second term in office – a strong indication that he will likely stand for re-election in February 2015. Speaking to reporters shortly after a meeting in Abuja, the chairman of the PDP governors' forum, Godswill Akpabio, from southern Akwa Ibom state, disclosed that the body "endorses President Goodluck Jonathan for a second term of office" and pledges him their support, adding "the PDP governors' forum urges all PDP faithful across the country to support this decision and this gesture, which we believe will enable Mr President to become the sole Presidential candidate for our great party come 2015 elections." Presidential elections are due to be held on February 14 and the PDP is due to hold a National Executive Council meeting on Thursday in order to approve dates for party primaries. While President Jonathan has yet to formally announce whether he will seek office for another four years, the issue has already divided his Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and has led to the defection of a number of governors and lawmakers to the main opposition party. Governors from the Muslim-majority north, who defected to the All Progressives Congress (APC) party late last year, claimed at the time that the President, a southern Christian from Bayelsa state, reneged on an agreement to serve only one four-year term. Jonathan won the last presidential election in 2011, just a year after stepping up from vice-president following the death of president Umaru Yar'Adua. Currently, former vice-president Atiku Abubakar is the only high-profile candidate to announce his election bid. Last week, Mr Abubakar announced that he will seek the APC presidential ticket after two previous failed bids in 2007 and 2011.

## International Developments

- **18 September 2014** – With a newly published report documenting widespread abuses within Nigeria's criminal justice system and military, Amnesty International (AI) on Thursday urged Nigeria's government to

criminalize torture. The report, compiled by the London-based rights group and titled “‘Welcome to Hell Fire’ – Torture and other Ill-treatment in Nigeria,” catalogues the testimonies of hundreds of victims collated over the past ten years. A statement released by AI’s research and advocacy director, Netsanet Belay, disclosed that the report’s findings go “...far beyond the appalling torture and killing of suspected Boko Haram members....Across the country, the scope and severity of torture inflicted on Nigeria’s women, men and children by the authorities supposed to protect them is shocking even to the most hardened human right observer.” AI has called on the Nigerian government to criminalize torture, noting that it “...is not even a criminal offence in Nigeria. The country’s parliament must immediately take this long overdue step and pass a law criminalizing torture. There is no excuse for further delay.” While AI’s newly released report details cases of torture and other acts against humanity spanning over a period of ten years, it is not the first time that the country has been accused of institutionalized abuses. In May of this year, AI named the country as one of five worldwide where routine torture was of particular concern. Despite Nigeria being a signatory to seven regional and global agreements and its own constitution, which bans the practice, there is little evidence that the problem has been tackled seriously by the government. In February 2012, Nigeria’s then police chief, Mohammed Abubakar, admitted that the force had carried out extra-judicial killings and had detained innocent people. In an address to senior officers, he confirmed “justice has been perverted, people’s rights denied, innocent souls committed to prison, torture and extra-judicial killings perpetrated,” adding that anti-robbery squads had become “killer teams” while corruption-ridden officers had lost the trust and confidence of the public “to do any good thing.” Although Nigeria’s police has since introduced a human rights course at training colleges for new recruits, the issue remains unresolved. In its new report, AI revealed that it had identified twelve commonplace torture methods, including beatings and shootings, suspending detainees upside down by their feet, starvation, sitting on sharp objects and choking. The report further disclosed that detainees were regularly held incommunicado while some police stations have what it termed an “officer in charge of torture,” meting out treatment that ranges from electric shocks and sexual violence to nail and teeth extractions to elicit confessions and information. AI has indicated that since 2007, as a result of interviews with victims, their families, lawyers and rights defenders, some 500 allegations of torture have been documented. AI and other human rights organizations previously highlighted the alleged abuse of suspected Boko Haram members detained in inhumane conditions in military facilities across the country’s restive northeast. Inevitably a lack of accountability has formed an institutionalized culture of abuse that continues to go unchecked. Furthermore, the AI’s comments echo previous statements from United Nations’ representatives on human rights and torture, which date back as far as 2005. The government of Nigeria has taken minimal steps to curb this issue, with a bill to outlaw torture having been held in parliament for the last two years.



# Senegal

## No Travel Restrictions



## Security Summary

On 29 August, Senegal's health minister confirmed that a Guinean in Senegal had been diagnosed with Ebola. On 22 August 2014, Senegal's government reclosed the border with Guinea in a bid to prevent the Ebola virus from entering the country.

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 Skirring (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

- **23 September 2014** - The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Tuesday that two of the five countries dealing with the deadly Ebola outbreak are managing to halt the spread of the virus - positive news as Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone continue to struggle in containing the spread of the contagion within their respective borders. An update from the WHO's regional director in Africa disclosed, "on the whole, the outbreaks in Senegal and Nigeria are pretty much contained." In Senegal, officials had confirmed only one Ebola case and all contacts with the index patient have successfully completed a 21-day follow up, the incubation period of the disease, with no further cases of the virus found. Meanwhile in Nigeria, the



number of cases has been cut from 21 to 20 after a suspected case was ruled out. An additional 696 contacts have completed the 21 day follow up, with three still in Lagos and 175 in Port Harcourt still under surveillance. In the three worst hit countries, the situation is quite different as the disease has continued to spread, with case numbers and deaths rapidly rising in recent weeks. The Guinean district of Kindia also confirmed its first case of Ebola. More than half of all the deaths recorded in Liberia, where 1578 people have died. Another 632 have died in Guinea and 593 in Sierra Leone. A separate Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has killed 41 people, with 68 cases reported as of 18 September.

## Sierra Leone

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



### Security Summary

MS Risk currently advises all but essential travel to Sierra Leone, except for those who are involved in the direct response to the Ebola outbreak.

On 30 July, President Koroma declared a State of Public Emergency over the current Ebola outbreak. A number of measures have been implemented throughout the country. The government has closed all schools and banned public gatherings in Kailahun district. All vehicles and their passengers entering and leaving Kailahun district must undergo screening by the authorities at checkpoints. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat. A planned nationwide house-to-house government visit programme has been declared. It is currently scheduled for 3 days from 19 to 21 September. During this time, all those in Sierra Leone will be required to remain in their homes/accommodation. MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to make sure that you are well prepared in advance and have access to adequate provisions, including food and water, during this time.

There is currently no travel advisory for Sierra Leone. Violent incidents have taken place under cover of crowds in the streets of Freetown. Over the weekend of 25 – 27 July, there were reports of demonstrations and local disturbances occurring in Kenema and Freetown. These events were related to the Ebola outbreak. Further such demonstrations and disturbances cannot be ruled out. MS Risk advises all travellers to Sierra Leone to follow local news reports, be alert to any developments and void all large crowds and demonstrations as they may turn violent. 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

- **25 September 2014** – A statement released by President Ernest Bai Koroma indicated that Sierra Leone has put three more districts under indefinite quarantine in a bid to fight the on-going spread of the deadly Ebola virus. This effectively means that five of the country's fourteen districts have now been isolated. The quarantined districts include Port Loko and Bombali in the north and Moyamba in the south. According to

the statement, “the isolation of districts and chiefdoms will definitely pose great difficulties for our people in those districts....but the life of everyone and the survival of our country take precedence over these difficulties.” On Thursday, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the death toll from the Ebola outbreak had now killed 2,917 people this year, including nearly 600 people in Sierra Leone.

- **23 September 2014** - As authorities consider repeating a nationwide lockdown, officials disclosed Tuesday that health teams, who went door to door during the unprecedented exercise over the past weekend, have discovered 130 confirmed Ebola cases. According to the country's Deputy Minister for Political and Public Affairs Karamoh Kabba, about seventy more suspected Ebola cases are currently being tested. Additionally health teams found 92 bodies however it remains unclear how many of those bodies were positive for Ebola. While initially many experts had raised doubts about the lockdowns ability to slow the outbreak, saying that it would be difficult to keep the country's 6 million people at home, the government has hailed the exercise a success, adding that it was currently considering to carry out another one. The committee coordinating the Ebola response is currently analyzing the results of the lockdown, with officials indicating that President Ernest Bai Koroma will listen to the committees advice on whether or not to implement another lockdown.
  - According to officials, Sierra Leone's army has "sealed off" the borders with Guinea and Liberia in a bid to halt the spread of Ebola. The nations army spokesman confirmed Tuesday that troops had been sent to all border crossing points. New figures released by the World Health Organization have indicated that more than 2,800 people across the three worst affected countries have died since the Ebola virus was discovered in Guinea earlier this year.
- **22 September 2014** - While authorities in Sierra Leone have disclosed that a controversial three-day lockdown, which concluded Sunday, was a “success,” frustrated residents reported food shortages in some neighborhoods of Sierra Leone's capital city. A three-day curfew, which began Friday in a bid to contain the spread of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, has been declared a success by authorities. According to the head of Sierra Leone's Emergency Operations Centre Stephen Gaojia, the exercise was largely successful and the compliance and receptiveness of Sierra Leoneans was “overwhelming.” Speaking to reporters, Mr Gaoji further disclosed that officials “...were able to discover quite a lot of people who have been infected...” Deputy Chief Medical Officer Sarian Kamara confirmed that authorities managed to discover 22 new cases of the virus during the curfew, adding that between 60 and 70 Ebola victims had been buried over the past two days. There was only one incident of violence reported over the three-day period. On Saturday, local civilians attacked health workers trying to bury five bodies in a district located 20 kilometers east of the capital city Freetown. Police reinforcements later arrived to the area and the health workers were eventually able to complete the burial. Although on Sunday rumors had circulated in Freetown that officials were opting to extend the lockdown, a Health Ministry statement issued Sunday evening confirmed that the lockdown had ended. The statement further disclosed that 75 percent of the targeted 1.5 million households had been contacted by outbreak teams, adding that outreach groups would continue to operate in “hot spots” across the country. Some residents also complained of food shortages in some neighborhoods of Freetown. While the World Food Programme provided food packages including rice, beans and a form of porridge throughout the three-day lockdown, staffers were not going door-to-door and were instead focusing on serving houses placed under quarantine by medical teams. While agency officials confirmed that their workers had distributed two weeks' worth of rations to 20,000 households, many residents complained that the provisions they received were insufficient. The West African country announced the extreme measure in early September, announcing that the lockdown would effectively confine its population of six million to their homes for a period of 72 hours in a bid to stem the further spread

of the deadly Ebola virus, which has already claimed more than 2,600 lives in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Only essential workers, such as health professionals, were exempt from the lockdown, as were some 30,000 volunteers who went door-to-door to provide advice on halting the contagion and handing out bars of soap. Despite most residents in the capital city welcoming teams of health workers and volunteers bearing information about the deadly virus, rumors continued to persist in some areas of the city, with some believing that soap which was distributed by health teams, was poisoned. Persistent rumours such as this one suggest that public education campaigns have not been entirely successful. According to new data released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Friday, the Ebola virus has killed more than 560 people in Sierra Leone and more than 2,600 across West Africa, in what is the largest outbreak of the deadly virus ever recorded. The disease, which is also affecting Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal, is believed to have sickened more than 5,500 people. Sierra Leone's three-day curfew is the most aggressive measure to be taken against the virus by a West African country.

- **18 September 2014** – On Thursday, Sierra Leonean officials prepared for an unprecedented three-day nationwide lockdown aimed at containing the spread of Ebola. The lockdown, which was announced by the government last week, has been met with negative feedback as experts are claiming that it could worsen the epidemic. The population of six million will be confined to their homes from midnight (0000GMT) going into Friday as almost 30,000 volunteers go door-to-door in a bid to locate any patients and bodies that may have been hidden in people's homes. The government however has specified that teams will not enter people's homes and are not tasked with collecting patients or bodies. Instead they will call emergency services or burial teams "if by chance the teams happen to bump into such situations." Volunteers will also hand out bars of soap and information on how to prevent infection as well as setting up "neighborhood watch"-style community Ebola surveillance teams. Additional beds have been set up at schools and hospitals across the country, including 200 around Freetown. The government is projecting a 15 – 20 percent upsurge of cases as new patients are discovered over the coming three days. Sierra Leone's ministry of health has enlisted fourteen burial teams across the western area of the country, including the capital city, and a fleet of motorcyclists who will deliver specimens from dead bodies to regional laboratories for testing. Community activists and civil society leaders have been recruited in order to help the thousands of police and soldiers enforce the curfew. Health workers, the emergency services and other security forces have been deemed exempt from the lockdown, along with the media and other professionals deemed key workers. Air passengers have been given special dispensation to get to Freetown's airport. While the president is due to launch the shutdown in a televised address to the nation, which is expected to be broadcast Thursday evening, experts are warning that coercive measures to stem the epidemic, such as confining people to their homes, could not only backfire, but will be extremely difficult to implement effectively. Jean-Herve Bradol, a former director of medical aid group Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has disclosed that the goal seems "highly unrealistic," noting "the country doesn't have the capacity to visit every household in just three days. MSF officials have echoed Bradol's view that health workers will find it extremely difficult to accurately identify cases through door-to-door screening, warning that such lockdowns and quarantines may only end in driving people underground "and jeopardize the trust between people and health providers." Despite fears that the crisis will only worsen as a result of this three-day lockdown, community leaders and local residents in Freetown have broadly welcomed the upcoming shutdown. The worst-ever outbreak of Ebola has claimed more than 500 lives in Sierra Leone.



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