



MS | RISK

West Africa Report

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

September 29 – October 12, 2014

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 - Training
 - Special assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis management
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
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Summary

September 29 – October 12, 2014



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Sahel Region

Regional Reporting

- **10 October 2014** – New figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) Friday indicate that the total number of deaths attributed to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has now risen above 4,000.
- **8 October 2014** – During a summit in Niger, West African leaders announced that a regional force, put in place to counter the threat emanating from Boko Haram in Nigeria, will begin operations in November.
- **7 October 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced Tuesday that sub-Saharan Africa's rapid economic growth is set to continue this year and into next, however officials have warned that the ongoing Ebola outbreak coupled with budget problems have exposed the region's vulnerabilities.

- **5 October 2014** – The Ugandan government announced Sunday that a hospital technician has died of the Ebola-like Marburg virus in Kampala.
- **30 September 2014** – United States health authorities disclosed Tuesday that the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) has been contained in Nigeria and Senegal as no new cases have been reported for nearly a month.

International Developments

- **9 October 2014** – On Wednesday, officials from the US and Canada announced that they will increase airport screening measures to look for passengers carrying Ebola.
- **8 October 2014** – The World Bank warned Wednesday that the deadly Ebola epidemic could cost the West African economy at least US \$32 billion if officials in the region fail to get the outbreak under control.
- **30 September 2014** – The first case of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) diagnosed on US soil has been confirmed in Dallas, Texas.

Burkina Faso

- **7 October 2014** – Talks aimed at easing tensions between Burkina Faso's ruling party and the opposition party have broken down with no apparent solution to the issue of whether President Blaise Compaore can seek constitutional changes in his bid to stay in power beyond next year.

The Gambia

- **7 October 2014** – The Gambia Bird, the country's national airline, is due to resume services from London to Ebola-affected Sierra Leone later this month.

Guinea

- **30 September 2014** – Guinean security forces have intensified their Ebola screening efforts at the border with Sierra Leone.

Ghana

- **29 September 2014** – The United Nations mission to combat Ebola has opened its headquarters in Ghana, where officials will co-ordinate aid aimed at accelerating the response to the West African crisis.

Guinea – Bissau

- **30 September 2014** – According to a decree, Guinea-Bissau's newly elected president has pardoned a group of soldiers who were convicted in a failed 2012 coup attempt.
- **29 September 2014** – On Monday, officials in Guinea-Bissau called on the international community to help its new government in stabilizing the country as it emerges from a post-conflict period.

Ivory Coast

- **1 October 2014** – On Tuesday, public testimony ended in the Ivory Coast's truth commission, which was formed to probe nearly a decade of bloody political violence.
- **30 September 2014** – A delegation from the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division is currently in the Ivory Coast in order to assess the country's needs for the conduct of credible elections in 2015.

Liberia

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 October 2014** – A union leader for Liberia's health workers confirmed Monday that the country's health workers are planning to stage a work slowdown in a bid to press demands for hazard pay.
- **1 October 2014** – Meanwhile the United Nations mission in Liberia confirmed Wednesday that one of its employees is the first victim of the Ebola epidemic.

Domestic News

- **10 October 2014** – On Friday, lawmakers in Liberia debated whether to grant President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf additional powers to restrict movement and public gatherings in a bid to fight the Ebola outbreak, as one parliamentarian warned that such powers could effectively transform the country into a "police state."
- **9 October 2014** – A government statement released Thursday disclosed that officials have suspended the country's nationwide Senate polls after the election commission admitted that it would not be able to stage the ballot safely.

International Developments

- **8 October 2014** – On Wednesday, officials at the Pentagon confirmed that 100 US Marines will be deployed to Liberia on Thursday, along with helicopters and other transportation to assist the military in getting to locations around the country in order to help with the ongoing Ebola fight.
- **1 October 2014** – The Pentagon announced Wednesday that deployments of US troops to fight the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa will accelerate this month when 1,400 troops are deployed to Liberia, which has been the hardest-hit country in the epidemic.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 October 2014** - On Wednesday, Malian Foreign Minister Abdoulay Diop disclosed in front of the UN Security Council that urgent measures were now needed following the recent killings of UN peacekeepers.
- **7 October 2014** - Days after nine Nigerien peacekeepers were killed in northern Mali, on Tuesday a Senegalese United Nations peacekeeper was killed when a joint French-UN military camp in the northern Malian town of Kidal was hit by rocket fire.
- **3 October 2014** – In another incident that targeted United Nations peacekeepers in Mali, on Friday nine UN peacekeepers were killed in an ambush on their convoy, the deadliest attack to occur on the UN mission in Mali.

Mauritania

- **29 September 2014** – On Monday, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz met with his French counterpart Francois Hollande in Paris to discuss the current security situation across the region and to urge more international commitment to restore stability in the continent.

Niger

Domestic News

- **10 October 2014** – Officials have indicated that French forces battling al-Qaeda-linked militants in the Sahel region have destroyed an arms convoy shipping weapons from Libya to Mali.
- **5 October 2014** – Despite the death of nine United Nations peacekeepers in northern Mali on Friday, Niger's President has indicated that troops will remain in the country in order to stabilize the region.
- **29 September 2014** – Judicial sources disclosed Monday that Niger has issued an arrest warrant for the parliamentary speaker, a leading opposition figure who fled the country after being sought for questioning on suspicion of being involved in a baby-trafficking ring.

Regional Reporting

- **5 October 2014** – Algeria's defense ministry revealed Friday that the Algerian army has killed five foreign "criminals" near the border with Niger.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 October 2014** – Reports surfaced Monday indicating that Boko Haram militants killed seven people in the remote northeast of Nigeria, with residents and officials reporting that the victims were beheaded in an apparent revenge attack. The overnight attack occurred in the town of Ngamdu in Borno State.
- **3 October 2014** – On Friday, officials from Nigeria's northeastern states of Borno and Yobe imposed a travel ban during the Muslim holiday weekend in a bid to prevent Boko Haram from carrying out deadly attacks.
 - Nigeria's military on Friday dismissed claims that a man beheaded by Boko Haram militants, which was depicted in the group's latest video released earlier in the week, was an air force pilot in a fighter jet that went missing three weeks ago.
 - Sources have reported that three suspects, reportedly linked to Boko Haram, have been tried and convicted in secret on terror charges.
- **2 October 2014** – A new video released Thursday dismissed Nigerian military claims that Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau was dead.
- **1 October 2014** – Nigeria's army has disclosed that on Thursday it will begin court martials of soldiers hesitant at taking part in the recent increased campaign against Boko Haram's insurgency.

Domestic News

- **2 October 2014** – In a statement released Thursday, President Goodluck Jonathan assured the international community that his government will stage free and credible elections next year.

Sierra Leone

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 October 2014** – According to the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, a strike by burial teams has effectively resulted in the bodies of Ebola victims being left in the streets as workers protest over not being paid.
- **2 October 2014** – According to officials at Save the Children charity, five people are being infected with Ebola every hour in Sierra Leone, noting that demand for treatment beds is far outstripping supply.

International Developments

- **2 October 2014** – On Thursday, Britain will host an international conference in a bid to help organize aid and funding in the fight against Ebola in Sierra Leone.

Security Summaries for West African States

Sahel Region – Page 9

Benin

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant. There is currently 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.

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Senegal

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 Skiring (which is often used by groups of tourists during daylight hours) and on the road north of the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border, from Sao Domingos to Ziguinchor (N4 bis). If you travel on either of these roads, you should do so only during daylight hours and monitor the local security situation before travelling. Severe water shortages in Dakar have led to a number of demonstrations in the suburbs. Youths have blocked some roads with burning tyres and have clashed with police. MS Risk advises travellers to avoid all demonstrations and to leave any affected areas at the first sign that unrest may develop. There have been a number of deaths and injuries. There is currently an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. With the ongoing French military intervention in Mali, authorities in Senegal have increased security in the capital city as well as along the border with Mali. MS Risk advises that al-Qaeda militants may cross the border into Senegal and they may target Western interests as well as foreigners.

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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

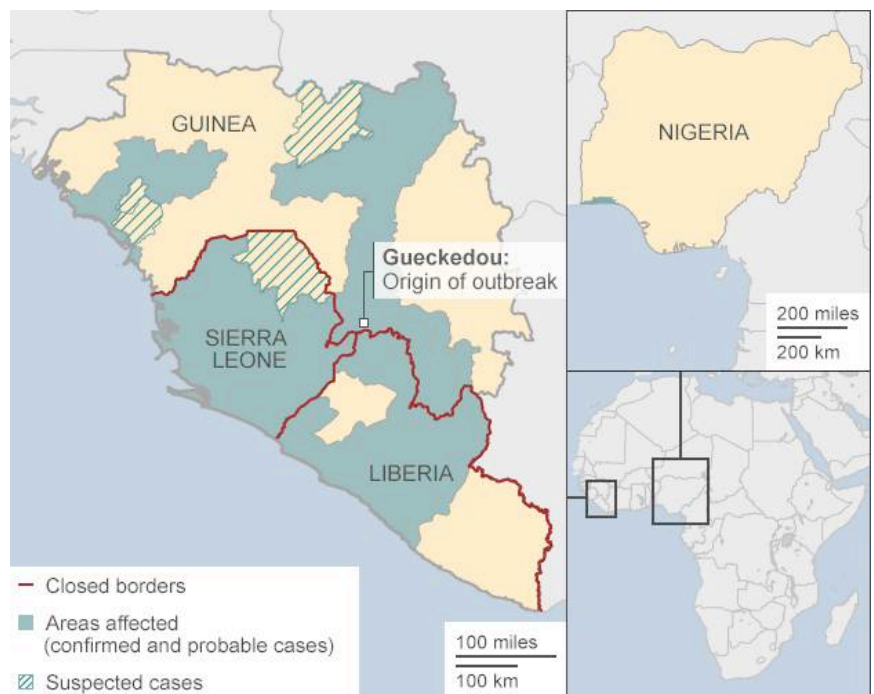
On 8 August the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. The current Ebola outbreak affects Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Some airlines have suspended flights to the affected countries due to the deteriorating public 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

- **10 October 2014** – New figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) Friday indicate that the total number of deaths attributed to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has now risen above 4,000. There



are currently 4,033 deaths confirmed, probable or suspected to have been caused by Ebola. All but nine of them were in the three worst affected countries – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Eight of them were in Nigeria, with one patient dying in the United States. As of the end of Wednesday, a total of 8,399 confirmed, probable and suspected cases of Ebola have been reported in seven countries. The three worst affected countries accounted for 8,376 cases.

- **8 October 2014** – During a summit in Niger, West African leaders announced that a regional force, put in place to counter the threat emanating from Boko Haram in Nigeria, will begin operations in November. In a joint statement released Tuesday, the heads of state indicated that they have agreed to speed up the formation of a headquarters for the force and have military battalions deployed “to our respective borders” by November 1. According to the statement, the new headquarters for the force is scheduled to be completed by November 20. The announcement followed a day of talks held between the leaders of Benin, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and the foreign minister of Cameroon. Speaking to the press shortly after the conclusion of the talks, Niger’s President Mahamadou Issoufou disclosed “after gaining independence, the survival of our countries has never been so threatened by the menace of terrorism, by the forces of division and by organized crime.” The latest round of talks come after French President Francois Hollande held a summit in Paris, where he called on African leaders to cooperate against the militant group through a number of measures, including joint border patrols and intelligence sharing. In July, officials from Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria each pledged 700 soldiers in order to create a multi-national force to fight the Nigeria-based group, which has killed thousands since it launched its insurgency in 2009. In recent weeks however the militant group has changed tactics, opting to seize control towns in northeastern Nigeria instead of carrying out hit-and-run attacks. The militant group is now believed to be in control of more than two dozen towns and villages in the region, with the country’s military continuing to struggle to meet its vow of retaking all lost ground as part of an offensive launched by the Nigerian government in May 2013.
- **7 October 2014** – The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced Tuesday that sub-Saharan Africa’s rapid economic growth is set to continue this year and into next, however officials have warned that the ongoing Ebola outbreak coupled with budget problems have exposed the region’s vulnerabilities. The IMF has forecasted 5.1 percent growth this year and 5.8 percent in 2015, making it the fastest growth outside Asia, however it warned, “the Ebola virus is exacting a heavy economic toll.” As more than 3,000 people have died as a result of the deadly virus, border closures have limited trade links between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone and the rest of the world. If the Ebola outbreak spreads to other countries in the region, “it would have dramatic consequences for economic activity in the West African region.” Unrest in the region will also have an impact on the continent’s economic growth, particularly the on-going crises and insecurity in Central African Republic and South Sudan. Other risks for the region, including the fact that many governments, such as the one in South Africa, are borrowing and importing more than they can afford, will also have an impact. According to the IMF, “in contrast to robust activity in much of the region, growth in South Africa has remained lackluster, dragged down by protracted strikes, low business confidence, and tight electricity supply.” Countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda are particularly running large current account deficits. While investors seem to be happy to largely overlook these fiscal red flags, IMF officials have warned that such attitudes are likely to quickly change.
- **5 October 2014** – The Ugandan government announced Sunday that a hospital technician has died of the Ebola-like Marburg virus in Kampala. According to the authorities, the man, 30, died in the Mengo hospital on 28 September, eleven days after falling ill. Tests later confirmed the presence of the disease. A

statement released by the ministry of health has revealed that the victim's brother and one other person he was in contact with have so far "developed signs" of the disease, adding "so far, a total of 80 people who got into contact with the initial confirmed case have been identified and isolated" for the 21-day incubation period. This includes thirty-eight health workers from Mengo hospital and twenty-two health workers from Mpigi Health Centre IV. The Marburg virus is one of the most deadly known pathogens, and like Ebola, it causes severe bleeding, fever, vomiting and diarrhea. Like Ebola, it is transmitted via contact with bodily fluids, with the fatality rate ranging between 25 and 80 percent. Uganda's Prime Minister Dr Ruhakana Rugunda has indicated that the government could deal with any government, noting that the country "...has previously successfully handled similar situations of health threats involving hemorrhagic fevers." In October 2012, a Marburg outbreak in Uganda killed ten people, about half of those who were confirmed to have been infected with the disease.

- **30 September 2014** – United States health authorities disclosed Tuesday that the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) has been contained in Nigeria and Senegal as no new cases have been reported for nearly a month. Officials from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have indicated that the outbreak could be declared over in Nigeria next month if no further cases are reported. The outbreak however continues in other parts of West Africa, particularly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where more than 3,000 people have died. The outbreaks in Nigeria and Senegal have been far smaller than those in the other West African countries, with twenty confirmed cases in total between the two countries. Nigeria, Africa's most populace country, had 19 confirmed cases of the virus and eight deaths since the first confirmed case in July. According to the CDC, the last reported case in Nigeria was discovered on 5 September. In Senegal, there was only one confirmed case in August, where the infected person survived. CDC officials have indicated that Ebola has an incubation period of 21 days, noting that once two consecutive 21-day periods have passed with no new cases reported, a country effectively will be able to declare that the outbreak is over. If no further Ebola cases are confirmed, both Nigeria and Senegal will be able to declare their outbreaks officially over by mid-October. In a speech last week, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan declared the end of the outbreak in his country, a claim many medical experts believe to have been premature.

International Developments

- **9 October 2014** – On Wednesday, officials from the US and Canada announced that they will increase airport screening measures to look for passengers carrying Ebola. In Washington, officials announced increased screening at the country's five major airports in New York, Washington, Chicago, Atlanta and New Jersey. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will send extra staff to take to the designated airports where they will be tasked with measuring the temperatures of people arriving from the Ebola-affected countries. According to White House spokesman Josh Earnest, the "vast majority of people" coming from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone will be screened. CDC Chief Frieden further indicated that about 150 travelers come to the US daily from the affected region, noting that the screening measures are "manageable." Canadian health minister Rona Ambrose also announced Wednesday that passengers arriving from West African countries affected by the outbreak must go through tightened controls. The announcement comes as the deadly virus killed a Liberian man in Texas, with the worldwide toll nearing 3,900. The spillover of the virus, with the first diagnosis in the US and the first case of infection in Spain, has raised fears that the virus may spread in the West. The latest figures issued by the World Health Organization indicate that the Ebola virus has killed 3,865 people out of 8,033 infected so far this year,

mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The WHO however has sought to contain concerns of a wider outbreak in Europe, after a Spanish nurse was infected with the virus, with regional director Zsuzsanna Jakab stating that sporadic cases in Europe were “unavoidable,” but that the risk of a full outbreak was “extremely low.”

- **8 October 2014** – The World Bank warned Wednesday that the deadly Ebola epidemic could cost the West African economy at least US \$32 billion if officials in the region fail to get the outbreak under control. A newly released report disclosed that if efforts to halt the spread of disease in the three core-countries – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone – are not successful by December, then the entire region faces a threat to its economy. According to the report, “in broader regional terms, the economic impact could be limited if immediate national and international responses succeed in containing the epidemic and mitigating aversion behavior,” noting “if, on the other hand, the epidemic spreads into neighboring countries, some of which have much larger economies, the cumulative two-year impact could reach US \$32.6 billion by the end of 2015.” The report did however highlight that small outbreaks in Nigeria and Senegal have been quickly contained, effectively demonstrating the potential for quick and resolute reactions. The Ebola virus has so far killed nearly 3,500 people, and has already taken a toll on the economy of the worst affected countries. In the best case scenario, officials at the World Bank indicated that if the outbreak is brought under control by the end of this year, the economic cost will be about US \$359 million in the three countries this year, and another US \$129 million next year. For all of West Africa, the cost will run from US \$3.8 to \$ 9 billion. If containment is slowed in the three affected countries, and the outbreak surfaces in other neighboring states, then the cost will soar for the entire region.
- **30 September 2014** – The first case of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) diagnosed on US soil has been confirmed in Dallas, Texas. Officials confirmed Tuesday that the unidentified male patient is being kept in isolation at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital and have pledged to contain the virus that has already killed more than 3,000 people in West Africa. It is believed that the man contracted the virus in Liberia prior to traveling to the US to visit family members nearly two weeks ago. He arrived in the US on September 20. Symptoms of the virus became apparent on September 24, with the patient being admitted to hospital on the 26th and placed in isolation on September 28. While previously US aid workers have come back to the US, after catching Ebola in West Africa, this is the first case of a patient developing the virus on US soil. It is believed that the patient was not in Liberia as part of on-going efforts to combat the spread of the virus there. Health officials have disclosed that they are currently identifying all people who came into contact with the unnamed patient while he was infectious however officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have cautioned that since he was not sick on the plane, he was unlikely to have infected other travellers as Ebola is not contagious until the patient begins to display symptoms, which can include fatigue, fever, muscle aches, vomiting, diarrhea and bleeding. According to CDC chief Tom Frieden, “at this point there is zero risk of transmission on the flight. The illness of Ebola would not have gone on for 10 days before diagnosis...he was checked for fever before getting on the flight and there is no reason to think that anyone on the flight that he was on would be at risk.” Anyone to have had contact with the patient will be monitored for a period of 21 days. According to Mr Frieden, currently there are only a “handful” of people, mainly family members, believed to have come in contact with the patient while he was sick. While measures, such as checking temperatures, have been implemented at airports and border crossings across the affected countries in West Africa, this case has demonstrated that patients deemed Ebola-free when leaving an infected region may not necessarily be free of the virus, but may only be not displaying any symptoms at the time. Latest figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicate that the world’s largest outbreak of Ebola has infected more than 6,500 people across five West

African countries, killing 3,091 since the start of this year. The beginning of the West Africa outbreak has been identified as a two-year-old boy in Guinea who became sick with EVD in December 2013. While experts do not know how the child came down with the virus, some believe that he may have come in contact with an infected fruit bat, which are the natural hosts for the virus. Since then, the disease has spread rapidly, primarily affecting Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In July, Ebola was confirmed in Nigeria when a dual US-Liberian citizen, who flew on a plane from Liberia to Lagos, died days later. The outbreak there killed eight and infected 20 people, however WHO officials have indicated that while Nigeria is not yet Ebola-free, the spread of the deadly virus has been contained, with no new confirmed cases reported since the beginning of September. One patient was also confirmed to have Ebola in Senegal, however like in Nigeria, the spread of the disease has been contained. The last confirmed case of Ebola reported in Senegal occurred on 28 August. **Update (2 October 2014)** – Liberian authorities disclosed Thursday that they will prosecute the man diagnosed with Ebola in the US, accusing him of lying over his contact with an infected relative. According to Liberian officials, when he left the country last month, Liberian national Thomas Eric Duncan filled in a questionnaire disclosing that none of his relatives were sick, however officials have since revealed that the man had taken a sick relative to a clinic. Mr Duncan is currently in serious condition in a hospital in Dallas, Texas. He is the first case of Ebola to be diagnosed on US soil and the first to occur outside of Africa during this outbreak. **Update (8 October 2014)** – A Liberian man who was the first person diagnosed with Ebola in the US died in a Texas hospital Wednesday. Mr Duncan died despite receiving an experimental drug to fight off the disease. He is believed to have been infected with Ebola before he left Liberia to visit family in Texas. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has indicated that there is “zero risk” he had infected any fellow travellers because he was not symptomatic until days after the flight.

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.

Domestic News

- **7 October 2014** – Talks aimed at easing tensions between Burkina Faso's ruling party and the opposition party have broken down with no apparent solution to the issue of whether President Blaise Compaore can seek constitutional changes in his bid to stay in power beyond next year. The talks, which were launched last week, were aimed at addressing a number of reforms, including whether or not to hold a referendum over the limit on presidential terms. Zephirin Diabre, head of the opposition delegation, has indicated that the opposition party had suspended participation in the talks after a deadlock over the referendum issue. The party blame's the President's camp for failing to make progress on the issue. Assimi Kouanda, leader of President Compaore's CDP party, however has indicated that the opposition is at fault for the breakdown. In power since a coup in 1987, President Compaore has been a leading mediator in regional crises and a key ally of those Western nations that are fighting al-Qaeda-linked militant groups operating in West Africa. Domestically however the President is facing growing dissent while an army mutiny in 2011 highlighted the potential threats to his rule. While the President has not publicly announced his desire to run for a third term in office in next year's presidential elections, the CDP has held rallies in support of this idea, adding that a referendum is the only way of resolving this issue, which has already deeply divided the country. Opposition leaders have held their own rallies, indicating that they will do everything within their legal means in order to prevent the referendum from being held.

The Gambia

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



Security Summary

There is no travel advisory for Gambia, however MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid travel by road from The Gambia to the Casamance, in the southern region of Senegal.

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.

International Developments

- **7 October 2014** – The Gambia Bird, the country's national airline, is due to resume services from London to Ebola-affected Sierra Leone later this month. Sources have indicated that the Gambia Bird service is due to be reinstated as of October 17 and will operate a twice-weekly service from Gatwick Airport. The airline is amongst several carriers that have suspended flights to the region affected by the deadly virus. Other airlines, including Brussels Airlines and Royal Air Marco, continue to operate flights to the region.

Ghana

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, 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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 September 2014** – The United Nations mission to combat Ebola has opened its headquarters in Ghana, where officials will co-ordinate aid aimed at accelerating the response to the West African crisis. The opening of the headquarters comes as criticism over the international response to the outbreak has increased in recent weeks, with officials indicating that the response has been too slow and haphazard. The response has been further impacted by a number of countries opting to close their borders with the worst affected nations coupled with a suspension of flights into and out of them. This has effectively cut off

routes for supplies and healthcare workers into Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While Senegal officially opened a humanitarian corridor this past weekend, and with UN flights can now having regular access into the affected countries from Dakar, the needs of the outbreak are still not being met. According to WHO officials, around 1,500 treatment beds have either been built or are in the process of being constructed however this still leaves a gap of more than 2,100 beds. A further 1,000 – 2,000 international healthcare workers are needed while they and local doctors and nurses will require millions of disposable protective suits in order to stay safe. According to Christy Feig, director of communications for the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) will be tasked with figuring out where the greatest needs are and making sure aid gets there. The head of the mission, Anthony Banbury, and his team are expected to arrive in Ghana's capital city today. The spread of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) has developed into the worst ever outbreak. While officials at the WHO have linked more than 3,000 deaths to the disease, this number is likely to be an underestimation of the true toll. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone have been the hardest hit by the outbreak and while Nigeria and Senegal have confirmed cases, neither country has reported any new cases in recent weeks.

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

- **30 September 2014** – Guinean security forces have intensified their Ebola screening efforts at the border with Sierra Leone. According to on the ground sources at the Madina Oula town crossing, people are subjected to rigorous health checks, with Guinean security forces checking for fever and instructing all travellers to wash their hands with soap prior to entering Guinea. Kindia, the district capital, is a short distance away, and is located 150 kilometers from the Guinean capital of Conakry. While the district was previously Ebola-free, in recent weeks, Kindia's Ebola crisis committee has responded to a number of suspected Ebola cases, with all but one having tested negative. According to District Senior Health officer Dr. Mory Togba, "a single case of Ebola has been reported in Kindia...it concerned a female medical student who had travelled to attend a funeral ceremony for a Catholic priest in Conakry," adding that she began to display symptoms once she had returned to Kindia and has since been transferred back to Conakry for treatment.

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

- **30 September 2014** – According to a decree, Guinea-Bissau's newly elected president has pardoned a group of soldiers who were convicted in a failed 2012 coup attempt. Sources have indicated that amongst the six soldiers pardoned Tuesday was Pansau Ntchama, the army captain accused of leading the coup plot. Authorities have accused Ntchama of leading the gunmen who attacked a military base in an attempted coup, which failed after the army fought back. The attack was an attempt to unseat the ruling junta, which itself had been seized just months earlier. The coup occurred before a runoff in a presidential election. In recent weeks, other soldiers have received similar amnesty from the president.
- **29 September 2014** – On Monday, officials in Guinea-Bissau called on the international community to help its new government in stabilizing the country as it emerges from a post-conflict period. Guinea-Bissau's Prime Minister Domingos Simoes Pereira made the appeal during a speech at the annual high-level debate of the UN General Assembly, which entered its fifth day Monday. Speaking to diplomats, the Prime Minister stated "Guinea-Bissau is a post-conflict state with fragile institutions and scarce financial resources, suffering the severe political, economic, environmental, and social consequences of our crisis," noting that the country "...faces a complex and difficult situation and calls on the international community for assistance, which will be essential in stabilizing our country in this post-conflict period." According to the Prime Minister, "this approach to international assistance, which is at the center of our dialogue with our international partners, is based on the government agenda, which has three key components: Urgent

Programme, Contingent Programme, Medium-Term Development Programme.” Under the Urgent Programme, Guinea-Bissau must ensure food safety and social stability through support for agricultural production and distribution, improving access to food and income for part of the population, provide basic health, education and water and power supply services to the population, as well as pay civil servants’ overdue salaries. According to the Prime Minister the Contingent Programme, is essentially designed to ensure transparency and accountability in the concession of all natural-resources and exploitation agreements, while “the Medium-Term Development Programme will be submitted to our international partners in a Donor Conference to be held late this year or early next year, for which we request the essential support of the United Nations and all multilateral and bilateral partners.” The Prime Minister also noted that while the country requires international assistance to continue its stabilization process, “Guinea-Bissau must strengthen the state’s institutional capacity, reduce poverty and the vulnerabilities of our people, ensure social stability, legitimize our government, and re-launch our economy.” After being postponed a number of times, presidential elections finally took place this past April, the first to take place since a 2012 military coup ousted interim President Raimundo Pereira. The elections were widely seen as essential in restoring constitutional order, economic growth and development. Despite gaining its independence from Portugal in 1974, the country has been plagued a number of coups, misrule and political instability.

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. A previous ban on all flights from countries that have been affected by the outbreak has now been lifted. 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.



On the Ground Reporting

- **1 October 2014** – On Tuesday, public testimony ended in the Ivory Coast's truth commission, which was formed to probe nearly a decade of bloody political violence. During the three weeks of public testimony, eight people, including victims and perpetrators, gave their statements however they were only a fraction of the tens of thousands of witness statements concerning the country's crisis following the presidential election of opposition leader Laurent Gbagbo in 2000. While former prime minister Charles Konan Banny, who chaired the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR) in the West African country's capital city Abidjan disclosed that witnesses "reflected as much as is possible..." a lack of television broadcasts from the commission coupled with low key media coverage effectively means that powerful witness statements had minimal impact across the country. This has raised questions over whether the commission could meet its goals of healing the national trauma. The Ivory Coast's inquiry opened on September 8, almost three years after the 11-member panel was sworn in. The hearings were modeled on South Africa's truth commission, which anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela introduced in 1995 as a way of allowing the country to confront and overcome its past. In that case, apartheid victims were able to pardon those who admitted to perpetrating crimes.
- **30 September 2014** – A delegation from the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division is currently in the Ivory Coast in order to assess the country's needs for the conduct of credible elections in 2015. According to Tadjoudine Ali, head of the delegation, and Deputy Chief, the UN system is ready to support officials in the Ivory Coast in achieving peaceful and credible presidential elections next year, noting that the interest of the UN was to see that the Ivory Coast enjoys a smooth and peaceful electoral process. A statement released by the mission disclosed "we have met with critical political stakeholders in the country since we began this mission on September 22; we want to have a balanced assessment....After this exercise, we will make recommendations to the UN Secretary-General on the parameters on which Ivory Coast and the UN will work together to organize a credible election." During the previous presidential election, the Ivory Coast was hit by post-election violence, which caused the death of some 3,000 persons. A truly independent election commission and sincerity on the part of the government are seen as crucial factors in averting a recurrence of violence in 2015.

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

- **6 October 2014** – A union leader for Liberia's health workers confirmed Monday that the country's health workers are planning to stage a work slowdown in a bid to press demands for hazard pay. The protest, which was first announced last week, comes despite a plea from the UN health agency that health workers avoid such strikes, which will likely further impact the already slow response to containing the Ebola outbreak. Nearly 2,000 people have died from Ebola in Liberia, out of at least 3,696 infected. The virus has also had an affect on health workers, with George Williams, the secretary general for the National Health Workers Association of Liberia, indicating that the government should "...revisit health workers' wages and allowances and make sure that they have insurance that is appropriate and proper," adding that the work slow down will begin Friday unless the union's demands are met.
- **1 October 2014** – Meanwhile the United Nations mission in Liberia confirmed Wednesday that one of its employees is the first victim of the Ebola epidemic. Speaking to reporters in the capital Monrovia, Karin Landgren, head of the UNMIL, disclosed that the worker, a Liberian man, had died last week of probable, but unconfirmed, Ebola infection. The UNMIL's chief did however note that the mission "...will continue to strengthen the measures we put in place to protect our staff, and to remind them to protect themselves and their families outside working hours." The mission has since taken steps in order to educate personnel and to help them protect themselves against the virus. According to data released by UNMIL, Liberia, the hardest-hit country in the outbreak, has seen almost 2,000 deaths since the outbreak was announced in Guinea earlier this year.

Domestic News

- **10 October 2014** – On Friday, lawmakers in Liberia debated whether to grant President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf additional powers to restrict movement and public gatherings in a bid to fight the Ebola outbreak, as one parliamentarian warned that such powers could effectively transform the country into a "police state." State media reported that the House of Representatives would convene a special session on Friday in order to discuss the proposed measures, which were outlined in an October 1 letter and which include the power to restrict public gatherings and appropriate property "without payment of any kind or any further judicial process" to combat Ebola. The letter also disclosed that the President can "limit the right to assembly for any reason." In August, the Liberian government imposed a three-month state of emergency, effectively beginning August 6, with a statement warning that this would involve suspending some rights and privileges. The new proposals however have resulted in some protest after being read out in a plenary session earlier this month. In August, a quarantine of a neighborhood in the capital city sparked unrest and

was derided as being counterproductive before being lifted. Liberia has been the hardest hit country in the current Ebola outbreak, recording more than 2,200 deaths.

- **9 October 2014** – A government statement released Thursday disclosed that officials have suspended the country's nationwide Senate polls after the election commission admitted that it would not be able to stage the ballot safely. While almost three million voters had been due to go to the polling station this Tuesday, organizers have indicated that there was no way a "mass movement, deployment and gathering of people" could go ahead without endangering lives. The decision was made after the election commission recommended the postponement because it could not conduct "a free, fair, transparent and credible election" because of the ongoing Ebola epidemic, adding that it would consult political parties and candidates with a view to fixing a new day, before the end of this year if possible. Chairman of the electoral commission, Jerome George Korkoya also disclosed that the Ebola outbreak has prevented the training and deployment of 25,000 staff needed for the 4,700 polling stations across the country, adding that the election would also require 365 "educators" to raise awareness of the polls in 73 electoral districts across Liberia as well as 400 election supervisors. The decision to suspend the elections was made by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who exercised powers under a state of emergency, announced in August, "to suspend...any and all rights ordinarily exercised, enjoyed and guaranteed to citizens." Modeled after the US system, Liberia's upper house is composed of thirty senators, two representing each of the country's fifteen counties for nine-year terms. In 2011, fifteen senators were elected while another fifteen seats in the chamber were supposed to go up for election this year.

International Developments

- **8 October 2014** – On Wednesday, officials at the Pentagon confirmed that 100 US Marines will be deployed to Liberia on Thursday, along with helicopters and other transportation to assist the military in getting to locations around the country in order to help with the ongoing Ebola fight. The Marines will bring four MV-22 Ospreys and two KC-130 refueling aircraft in order to help get troops and supplies to remote locations. According to Pentagon press secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Marines will be part of a special air-ground task force out of Spain, noting that this will be a temporary assignment, with the Marines remaining in Liberia until soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division arrive. The division is set to arrive in Liberia later this month. The Marines and troops are part of up to 4,000 US troops authorized by the Obama administration to deploy to Africa to help contain the Ebola outbreak.
- **1 October 2014** – The Pentagon announced Wednesday that deployments of US troops to fight the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa will accelerate this month when 1,400 troops are deployed to Liberia, which has been the hardest-hit country in the epidemic. According to Pentagon press secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby, the troops are expected to arrive in late October and will join nearly 200 Department of Defense (DoD) personnel who are already on the ground. Half of the soldiers are from the headquarters element of the 100th Airborne Division, which is based at Fort Campbell, Ky., while the other 700 will include combat engineers from units around the US, charged with overseeing the construction of 17 Ebola treatment centers with a total of 1,700 beds. While officials with the 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas, and Joint Task Force Carson at Fort Carson, Colo., have confirmed that troops from these installations will be deployed to Liberia later this month, the size of the deployments are still being determined. Amongst the troops already on the ground is a team composed of 15 Seabees who are based in Djibouti and tasked with handling site preparation for the facilities. According to Rear Adm. Kirby, equipment for a 25-bed field hospital that will be used to treat medical personnel in the capital, Monrovia, arrived in Liberia in recent

days, adding that the troops will arrive “in waves” in order to provide logistical support and to continue construction of a system of facilities around Liberia aimed at treating the highly contagious virus. Due to the Ebola virus being passed through body fluids, Rear Adm. Kirby disclosed that US troops will deploy with training on how to avoid the virus as well as with protective gear, noting however that they will not be in contact with disease sufferers. Currently there is no end date to the deployment; with US officials indicated that the mission will last as long as necessary.

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

- **8 October 2014** - On Wednesday, Malian Foreign Minister Abdoulay Diop disclosed in front of the UN Security Council that urgent measures were now needed following the recent killings of UN peacekeepers. He warned that the region once again ran “the risk of becoming the destination of hordes of terrorists,” noting that “urgent measures” were needed to bolster the UN mission, which must have “appropriate means to fulfill its mandate.” The UN’s peacekeeping chief agreed that Malian forces have been unable to fill the gap left by the departure of French troops. The appeal for more robust action in the northern Malian region comes amidst some of the deadliest violence that has targeted a UN peacekeeping mission in recent years. On Tuesday, a Senegalese soldier was killed just days after nine peacekeepers from Niger were killed by Islamist militants. According to UN peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous, in all, thirty-one peacekeepers have been killed and 91 injured since the mission, known as MINUSMA, was established in July 2014. According to the chief, UN soldiers operating in the region are now facing “a whole range of threats: rockets fired randomly, mortar shells, suicide attacks, ambushes.” While Malian officials have not disclosed what force they are envisioning the UN will deploy, Mr Ladsous did reveal that in the coming months, the UN mission will be sent combat helicopters and drones. Some nineteen months after being driven out of northern Mali by a French-led military intervention, a number of Islamist groups have increased their campaign of violence, carrying out roadside bombs, rocket attacks and ambushes on UN peacekeepers operating in the region. The militants have also begun to target civilians. In September, an ethnic Tuareg civilian, along with four members of his family, was kidnapped near Timbuktu. Reports later surfaced that militants beheaded the man, with relatives indicating that he was killed by members of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), who had suspected him of being an informant for international forces in Mali. While three jihadist groups, AQIM, Ansar Dine and Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) controlled northern Mali for ten months in 2012, before being largely ousted by the French and African troops in January 2013, small pockets of armed militants remain active and continue to carry out deadly attacks in the desert region. Specifically the situation in the northern town of Kidal, the Tuareg rebel stronghold which the Malian government has never been able of fully controlling, has declined in recent months, particularly in the wake of a defeat of the Malian army by main Tuareg and Arab fighters in May of this year. With France unveiling a new mission in July, dubbed “Operation Barkhane,” which will counter Islamist militants in a border area that spans five countries along the southern rim of the Sahara, a majority of French troops previously deployed under Operation Serval in Mali have now been relocated to other regions of the continent. This decline in numbers of troops operating in the northern Malian region has likely contributed to a resurgence of militants operations, with several sources disclosing that now several hundred militants can be seen operating on the ground in northern Mali.
- **7 October 2014** - Days after nine Nigerien peacekeepers were killed in northern Mali, on Tuesday a Senegalese United Nations peacekeeper was killed when a joint French-UN military camp in the northern Malian town of Kidal was hit by rocket fire. Olivier Salgado, spokesman for the UN force, which is known as MINUSMA, confirmed the attack, stating that between six and eight rockets had been fired at the camp. Officials in Senegal later confirmed that the peacekeeper who was killed in the attack was a member of Senegal’s 845-strong contingent deployed in Mali as part of the UN’s peacekeeping mission. Two other Senegalese peacekeepers were lightly injured. While it remains unclear who is behind the latest attack, sources believe that Iyad Ag Ghaly, who led a Tuareg rebellion in the Sahara before forming Ansar Dine,

may be the reason why Islamist insurgents operating in the region have recently increased their attacks on UN peacekeepers operating in Mali. After disappearing in January 2013, shortly after French troops intervened in a bid to drive Islamist insurgents away from the capital Bamako, Iyad Ag Ghaly resurfaced last month, issuing a video message signaling a return to combat. In the video, he indicated that his group was “ready to unite with our brothers on the ground to face up to the crusaders and infidels who have united to fight Islam in our land.” Sources from UN’s MINUSMA force in Mali believe that his militant group is likely behind the recent attacks however the reduction of French troops, coupled with the absence of Malian troops from the region, has also likely contributed to the recent upsurge of militant activity. UN peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous has also attributed the instability in southern Libya to the recent increase in attacks, stating that it is “a factor that plays a role in the fact that these jihadists...have restarted their activities. They have without doubt re-acquired equipment.” On Friday, nine UN soldiers, all from neighboring Niger, were killed in the northeastern desert region when armed men on motorbikes targeted them. That attack was claimed by a militant with links to Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). Friday’s attack brought the number of deaths in the UN mission since its deployment in July 2013 to thirty. Three Senegalese peacekeepers have now died in northern Mali. For a period of ten months in 2012, Islamist groups Ansar Dine, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and MUJAO occupied the northern desert region of Mali, a region that makes up nearly two thirds of the country, before they were ousted by a French-led military operation launched in January 2013. While stability has generally been brought back to the region, militants have continued to carry out attacks, specifically targeting French troops. UN troops are now trying to stabilize the northern region while peace talks between the Malian government and Tuaregs continue.

- **3 October 2014** – In another incident that targeted United Nations peacekeepers in Mali, on Friday nine UN peacekeepers were killed in an ambush on their convoy, the deadliest attack to occur on the UN mission in Mali. According to Olivier Salgado, spokesman for the mission, the peacekeepers, who were all from neighboring Niger, came under attack from heavily armed gunmen on motorbikes between the northeastern towns of Menaka and Ansongo. A statement released by the UN mission indicated “this morning, a convoy of MINUSMA peacekeepers from the Nigerien continent was the target of a direct attack while travelling to Indelimane, in the Menaka-Asongo corridor. A provisional toll indicated nine deaths.” UN officials have deployed aircraft to the region to secure the area where the attack took place, just 15 kilometers (9 miles) east of Indelimane. While MINUSMA officials have not disclosed who was behind Friday’s attack, a UN officer from Niger has indicated that militants from the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), an al-Qaeda-linked Islamist militia, were behind it. Sources have reported that MUJAO recently formed an alliance with militants from the Fulani ethnic group in the Gao region, where Friday’s attack took place. Menaka, an isolated desert town in eastern Mali is used mainly as a temporary refuge for nomadic Tuareg tribes however in May, it was the scene of intense fighting between the Malian government and three main separatist rebel groups. In recent weeks, attacks on UN peacekeepers have sharply increased. Over the past few weeks, roadside bombs in the Kidal region have killed ten UN peacekeepers, all from Chad. The attacks prompted the government in N’Djamena to issue a statement to the UN indicating that the Chadian contingent of MINUSMA was suffering discrimination. In August, MUJAO claimed responsibility for a rocket attack on a MINUSMA base located close to the border with Algeria. They were also blamed for a suicide attack on August 16 that killed two soldiers from Burkina Faso serving with MINUSMA in the settlement of Ber, near the city of Timbuktu. Friday’s attack further underlines the fact that security in the northern region of Mali continues to be fragile, with militant groups continuing to operate in the region, and carrying out hit-and-run attacks despite the presence of foreign forces. **Update (5 October**

2014) – On Sunday, a Malian jihadist close to MUJAO claimed responsibility for an attack that killed nine UN peacekeepers in the northern region of the country. In a statement released early Sunday, Sultan Ould Bady indicated, “in the name of all the mujahedeen’s, we have attacked the soldiers of the Niger government, which works with the enemies of Islam....” The militant added that “three groups of mujahedeen’s were on the ground,” and warned of further attacks. Ould Bady is known for his ties to the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and has on previous occasions claimed responsibility for other attacks that have occurred in northern Mali.

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.

Domestic News

- **29 September 2014** – On Monday, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz met with his French counterpart Francois Hollande in Paris to discuss the current security situation across the region and to urge more international commitment to restore stability in the continent. As the current African Union (AU) chairman, President Abdel Aziz discussed African security issues with the French President, however talks also focused on the promotion of trade and investment between the two countries, particularly in the fields of energy and urban development.

Niger

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road linking Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka; areas within 40 km of the border with Nigeria in Diffa, Zinder and Maradi provinces. MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the rest of Niger, including the capital city of Niamey. There remains a high threat from, including kidnapping, in Niger. On 1 June 2013, three guards were killed and twenty-two inmates escaped from the main prison in Niamey during an attack by suspected Islamist militants. Travellers in Niamey should continue to monitor developments and be alert to announcements and remain vigilant at all times. On 23 May 2013, a military barracks in the town of Agadez and a uranium processing facility near the town of Arlit, approximately 150 miles north of Agadez, were attacked. A number of people were killed and injured. The terrorist group which claimed responsibility for the two attacks has publicly threatened to carry out further attacks in Niger. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in its northern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Borno and Yobe border southern Niger. Consequently there is a risk that instability may spill over the border from Nigeria to Niger. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups including AQIM and MOJWA. These groups have kidnapped Westerners in Niger and in the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey and the north and west of Niger. Further kidnappings are likely to occur. There is a threat of retaliatory attacks in Niger, due to the country's participation in the French-led intervention in Mali. Levels of crime are high, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. Banditry,



smuggling and other criminal activity is common in border areas, especially after dark. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises avoiding crossing the border with Nigeria during the hours of darkness.

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

On the Ground Reporting

- **10 October 2014** – Officials have indicated that French forces battling al-Qaeda-linked militants in the Sahel region have destroyed an arms convoy shipping weapons from Libya to Mali. A statement released by the French presidency Friday disclosed that French and Nigerien forces destroyed the convoy Thursday night in northern Niger, capturing several al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) militants. It was not immediately clear how the shipment was destroyed or how many people were captured. A number of sources believe that al-Qaeda-linked militants operating in northern Mali have begun to regroup, and are likely responsible for two attacks over the past week, which killed ten United Nations peacekeepers.

Domestic News

- **5 October 2014** – Despite the death of nine United Nations peacekeepers in northern Mali on Friday, Niger's President has indicated that troops will remain in the country in order to stabilize the region. One day after nine of its peacekeepers were killed in an ambush in the neighboring country, Nigerien officials disclosed that they will not be intimidated into leaving Mali, with President Mahamadou Issoufou vowing to continue the fight. On Friday, gunmen on motorbikes attacked a convoy of Niger's troops who were participating in a UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. The ambush was the deadliest attack on the UN force. It appears that the convoy was specifically attacked as it included a fuel tank, causing an explosion that resulted in multiple casualties. Niger's government has declared three days of mourning, beginning Sunday. While UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called the attack shocking, such ambushes are becoming increasingly common. UN troops are attempting to stabilize Mali's northern region, which fell under the control of Tuareg separatists and later to al-Qaeda-linked Islamic extremists following a 2012 coup. While a French-led operation last year effectively pushed the militants out of the region, attacks on the UN force have increased in recent weeks.
- **29 September 2014** – Judicial sources disclosed Monday that Niger has issued an arrest warrant for the parliamentary speaker, a leading opposition figure who fled the country after being sought for questioning on suspicion of being involved in a baby-trafficking ring. According to a member of the judicial police, "the gendarmerie was the first to receive the national arrest warrant issued for Hama Amadou," adding that "it distributed the order across the country, particularly to other security forces." Two other judicial sources confirmed the existence of the warrant, with a judge disclosing, "if the national search doesn't bear fruit, the judge can issue an international arrest warrant, in which case Interpol would be notified." Last month, Hama Amadou, an ally turned political rival of current President Mahamadou Issoufou, fled to Burkina Faso before travelling to France after parliamentary leaders authorized his arrest. In June, seventeen people, including the wives of several senior politicians, were arrested by police investigating allegations that they had acquired newborn babies from "baby factories" located in neighboring Nigeria. Hama's wife was amongst those initially taken into custody however Hama has denied accusations that he was involved in

the baby-trafficking ring, stating that the investigation is politically motivated. Since last year, political tensions across Niger have been on the rise after Hama, who had been part of Issoufou's coalition, fell out with the president. Issoufou's government later accused Hama and his Nigerian Democratic Movement (MODEN) party of attempting to destabilize the country.

Regional Reporting

- **5 October 2014** – Algeria's defense ministry revealed Friday that the Algerian army has killed five foreign "criminals" near the border with Niger. A statement released by the ministry disclosed, "in an ambush by elements of the People's National Army in the Tirlane area, near the Algeria-Niger border, five criminals were shot dead and four others wounded, including one of Libyan nationality." Officials from Algeria's army have disclosed that two 4x4 vehicles were destroyed in the incident, which occurred late Thursday; however no information pertaining to the illegal activity of those killed has been released. The border region between the two countries is known to be used by smugglers but also by armed Islamist groups that continue to operate in the region. Algerian officials are also currently searching the region for fifteen suspects in the kidnapping and beheading of French tourist Herve Gourdel, who was killed by Islamist militants last month. It remains unknown whether the five killed in Thursday's attack are linked to the killing French national.

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

- **6 October 2014** – Reports surfaced Monday indicating that Boko Haram militants killed seven people in the remote northeast of Nigeria, with residents and officials reporting that the victims were beheaded in an apparent revenge attack. The overnight attack occurred in the town of Ngamdu in Borno State. A Borno state official confirmed the attack, stating that the bodies had been decapitated, in what is the latest act of gruesome violence that has been blamed on Boko Haram militants. An army officer in Borno has indicated that two weeks ago, fifteen Boko Haram fighters were killed in clashes in Ngamdu, with the group vowing revenge against the town. While those killed in Monday's attack have not been identified as vigilantes, local sources have reported that it is likely they were targeted in revenge for the death of the fifteen militants.

The latest violence comes as Nigerian Muslims marked the Eid al-Adha festival. In recent months, Boko Haram has increasingly changed its tactics, opting to mirror operations carried out by Islamic State (IS) militants in Iraq and Syria. Boko Haram is currently believed to be in control of more than two dozen towns and villages in northeastern Nigeria, while the beheading of civilians echoes similar atrocious acts carried out by IS militants in Iraq and Syria.

- **3 October 2014** – On Friday, officials from Nigeria’s northeastern states of Borno and Yobe imposed a travel ban during the Muslim holiday weekend in a bid to prevent Boko Haram from carrying out deadly attacks. A message broadcast on public radio in Yobe state instructed people “to remain in their towns and villages until Monday...to forestall security breaches as we celebrate the Eid” holiday. While Yobe, along with neighboring Borno and Adamawa states, have been under a state of emergency, which was imposed in May 2013, Boko Haram has continued to carry out deadly attacks, particularly on Muslim holidays. Army authorities in Maiduguri, Borno state, have also imposed a ban on vehicular movement throughout the state from 5:00 pm (1600 GMT) on Friday until 0700 AM (0600 GMT) on Monday. A statement released by the army indicated that a security reported had indicated that Boko Haram militants were planning to launch “multiple bomb explosions” in the city and other major towns in the state during the Muslim holiday. Sources have indicated that militants were planning to use motor vehicles and tricycles, amongst other things, while their main targets were to include Muslim praying grounds, markets and other public places. The ban effectively blocks any private or public vehicles from traveling on roads throughout the states. Officials have advised members of the public to pray at mosques nearest to their residences and warned that violators of the ban “will be severely sanctioned.”
 - Nigeria’s military on Friday dismissed claims that a man beheaded by Boko Haram militants, which was depicted in the group’s latest video released earlier in the week, was an air force pilot in a fighter jet that went missing three weeks ago. In a new video released Thursday, Boko Haram’s leader Abubakar Shekau claimed that militants had shot down the Alpha Jet. The video showed images of the wreckage of an aircraft, which included the Nigerian Air Forces’ green and white roundel. A man, wearing a camouflage print t-shirt was later seen kneeling in front of an unmasked Boko Haram fighter, stating in English that he was one of the pilots. While the video is inaudible, it appears that he was giving his name, rank and date of birth. He is killed just after he finished speaking. Spokesman Air Commodore Dele Alonge has denied that the man was an air force pilot, stating “the man shown in the Boko Haram video is not our officer....The picture of a man beheaded in the video is superimposed. Our plane is still missing and we are looking for it. Boko Haram is just making unfounded claims.” Defence spokesman Major General Chris Olukolade has also denied the claims, stating “no level or amount of barbaric display of bestial atrocities will distract the Nigerian military from sustaining the tempo of ongoing operations to decimate, degrade and bring the remnants of the terrorists already in disarray to due justice,” adding “the campaign against terror is still recording the expected result in the front. Nigerians should not despair.” According to a security sources, the Alpha Jet had sent a signal indicating that it has been hit adding that the two pilots’ families had met with air force officer’s days after the incident. At the time, they had been told that the jet had crashed. Since the jet came down in the middle of the rebel-held territory, it has been impossible for security officials and the military to carry out a search and rescue operation. With a state of emergency imposed on three northeastern states for over a year, and with Boko Haram attacks increasing in recent months, Nigeria’s military has been under pressure to reverse the territorial gains that Boko Haram has achieved in recent weeks. The Nigerian military’s struggle to contain and end the insurgency has

been further affected by reports that soldiers have fled militant attacks, with many stating that they lack adequate weapons and are often not paid on time.

- Sources have reported that three suspects, reportedly linked to Boko Haram, have been tried and convicted in secret on terror charges. According to Lagos State justice commissioner Ade Ipaye, the case, which concluded Tuesday, saw each of the three men receive a 25-year prison sentence. Charges were dropped against thirteen others while a fourth defendant was acquitted on grounds of lack of evidence. According to Mr Ipaye, the hearing, which took place at the Federal High Court, began in November 2013. In total, seventeen suspects were initially arrested in the Lagos suburbs of Lekki and Ijora, with authorities reportedly finding improvised explosives, firearms and ammunition. In March 2013, they were charged with conspiracy, acts of terrorism, concealing information and possession of firearms and ammunition. The defendants pleaded not guilty. Officials at Human Rights Watch (HRW) have indicated that the secret hearing conviction and sentencing may have violated the principle of due process and a fair trial, adding that it is also against the Nigerian Constitution and a series of regional and international conventions and statutes. Mr Ipaye however has defended holding the case behind closed doors on the grounds of safeguarding national security. While Boko Haram militants have killed thousands, and displaced many more, during their five-year insurgency, which has largely been concentrated in Nigeria's far northeastern region, recently, the militants have staged deadly car bomb attacks in the central city of Jos and in the capital Abuja. In June of this year, a Boko Haram cell was suspected of detonating a home-made bomb in Lagos, an attacks that was denied by Nigerian authorities.
- **2 October 2014** - A new video released Thursday dismissed Nigerian military claims that Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau was dead. In the new 36 minute video, Shekau is depicted wearing combat fatigues and standing on the back of a pick-up truck, firing an anti-aircraft gun into the air. Shekau, who appears to be the same as those in previous clips, states that the military's claims of his death was a form of propaganda adding that Boko Haram militants have implemented strict Islamic law in all the captured towns and that they are administering strict Sharia punishments. The video contains images of extreme violence, including graphic scenes of an amputation, a stoning to death and a beheading, similar to those videos released by ISIS in recent weeks. The militant group has also claimed to have shot down a Nigerian air force jet that went missing nearly three weeks ago, showing images of a wreckage of a jet. Air force spokesman Air Commodore Dele Alonge has disclosed that while the jet has not been located, "for any group to claim they shot it down is mere propaganda and rubbish." The latest video comes just a week after Nigeria's military announced that Shekau was dead and that a man who had been posing as the group's leader in the videos had been killed after fighting with troops in the far northeast. Many officials and analysts, along with US officials, questioned the credibility of the military's latest claim pertaining to Shekau's death. There have been two previous claims put forth by Nigeria's security forces that Shekau was dead – once in 2009 during unrest in Maiduguri and again in 2013. However following each previous claim, Boko Haram has issued denials in video messages. While the Nigerian military has recently recorded some success against Boko Haram, after the army prevented the town of Konduga, which is located near Maiduguri the capital of Borno state, from falling under control of the jihadists, a number of towns and villages in the northeastern region of Nigeria remain under Boko Haram's control. Furthermore, reports that Shekau is still alive will once again only make it harder for Nigerians to believe any information that the military releases.
- **1 October 2014** – Nigeria's army has disclosed that on Thursday it will begin court martials of soldiers hesitant at taking part in the recent increased campaign against Boko Haram's insurgency. A statement

released late Tuesday indicated that a number of servicemen charged with refusing orders “in the course of ongoing military operations in the northeast” will go on trial before a military court in the capital Abuja. Army spokesman Colonel Timothy Antigha did not disclose how many soldiers would be tried on Thursday however a source has reported that sixty low-ranked soldiers were going before the court accused of mutiny for refusing to be deployed in Maiduguri for any military operations. According to the source, they have all plead not guilty to the charges. The proceedings come just two weeks after twelve soldiers received the death sentence for mutiny after shots were fired at their commanding officer in Maiduguri back in May of this year. In recent weeks, Nigeria’s army has been under increasing pressure to end Boko Haram’s insurgency as the militants have gained control of a number of strategic towns and villages around Maiduguri. However frontline troops have frequently complained of a lack of adequate weapons and equipment, noting that they are not paid in full and that they are often abandoned on the battlefield without enough ammunition or food. **Update (2 October 2014)** – On Thursday, a court martial began hearing charges against 97 soldiers, including 16 officers, who have been accused of mutiny, assault, cowardice and refusing to fight against the country’s northeastern Islamic uprising.

Domestic News

- **2 October 2014** – In a statement released Thursday, President Goodluck Jonathan assured the international community that his government will stage free and credible elections next year. A statement released by his office disclosed that the Nigerian government had “...received international commendations for the conduct of the 2011 general elections and I can assure you that the 2015 general elections will be even better.” While the president made the comments while receiving four newly appointed ambassadors, the announcement comes as Boko Haram’s leader Abubakar Shekau released a new video denying military claims that he had recently been killed. The video also depicted scenes of graphic violence, including an amputation, a stoning death and a beheading. The militant group is believed to be in control of more than two dozen towns in the three states in northeastern Nigeria, with many experts believing that if the security situation does not drastically improve in the coming months, Nigeria will likely be unable to organize voting in that region for the February 14 polling day. Excluding an entire region, especially one that is likely to vote against Jonathan and his ruling party, will likely raise questions about the credibility of the elections. Additionally, Nigeria has had a checkered history of electoral performance, with some previous elections being marred by malpractice, violence and military interference. During the 2011 elections, more than 800 people, mostly supporters of the opposition, were killed in violence. While President Jonathan has yet to confirm his bid for a second term in office, sources have indicated that he is expected to formally declare his re-election bid in the coming months, an announcement that will likely increase tensions across Nigeria.

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.

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

- **8 October 2014** – According to the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, a strike by burial teams has effectively resulted in the bodies of Ebola victims being left in the streets as workers protest over not being paid. Sidie Yahya Tunis, a Health Ministry spokesman, has confirmed the strike, adding that while the situation is “very embarrassing,” there is money available in order to pay the teams. While further comments by the Health Ministry have not been made, the spokesman did indicate that additional information would be provided in the coming days. **Update (9 October 2014)** – One day after organizing a

strike over pay, which effectively resulted in teams abandoning the dead bodies of Ebola victims throughout the capital city, burial teams have gone back to work. Sierra Leone's deputy health minister Madina Rahman indicated Thursday that the strike has been resolved, adding that the dispute had centered around a one-week backlog of hazard pay that had been deposited in the bank but which had not been given to burial teams on time. The burial teams make up a total of 600 workers who are organized into groups of twelve. This is the second time this week that Sierra Leone's government has faced criticism over its response to the Ebola outbreak. Earlier in the week, officials were criticized over a shipping container filled with medical gear and mattresses that had been held up at the port for more than a month.

- **2 October 2014** – According to officials at Save the Children charity, five people are being infected with Ebola every hour in Sierra Leone, noting that demand for treatment beds is far outstripping supply. According to officials at the London-based organization, if the current rate of infection continues, ten people every hour will be infected with the deadly virus in Sierra Leone by the end of October. Save the Children chief executive Justin Forsyth has stated “the scale of the Ebola epidemic is devastating and growing every day, with five people infected every hour in Sierra Leone last week,” adding “we need a coordinated international response that ensures treatment centers are built and staffed immediately.” The charity's appeal for additional aid comes as Britain is set to host a conference in London, which is aimed at gathering support for the fight against Ebola in Sierra Leone, its former colony. Britain has already provided 143 new treatment beds and has promised an additional 600, which are due to be delivered in the coming months.

International Developments

- **2 October 2014** – On Thursday, Britain will host an international conference in a bid to help organize aid and funding in the fight against Ebola in Sierra Leone. The aim of the London conference, which will be attended by ministers, diplomats and health officials from around twenty different countries and world organizations, is to raise awareness of the scale of the current outbreak in Sierra Leone, where Britain has taken the lead in fighting the deadly virus. Officials are also hoping to secure additional pledges of funds and support at Thursday's meetings, as well as to share best practices with those who are working in the other affected countries, Guinea and Liberia. Britain has pledged US \$190 million (£120 million) in order to help build an estimated 700 treatment beds, fund new community treatment centers, support existing public health services and support aid agencies. While the African nation's President Ernest Bai Koroma was due to attend the half-day conference, the chartered plane he was scheduled to fly on experienced significant technical difficulties prior to taking off. Other officials due to attend the conference include the Guinean and Liberian ambassadors as well as the Ghanaian deputy foreign minister and representatives from Australia, Canada, Cuba, Japan, New Zealand, the United States and several EU nations. The latest figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) have indicated that more than 3,300 people have died worldwide from Ebola and more than 7,000 have been infected since the start of this year.



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