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# THE CENTRAL AFRICA REPORT



Detailed Report Focusing on Security, Domestic News and  
Developments that Impact the Central African Region

*Angola - Cameroon - Central African Republic - Chad - Republic of Congo -  
Democratic Republic of Congo - Equatorial Guinea - Gabon - São Tomé and Príncipe*

NOVEMBER 3 - 16, 2014

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24 hr Contact Information:

Email: [operations@msrisk.com](mailto:operations@msrisk.com)

Telephone: +44 207 754 3555

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MS Risk Limited, South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ.

Tel: +44 1624 626400

Directors: S.J. Bingham, V.K. Prentice, P.O.J. Tracy.

Registered in the Isle of Man No 007435V

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**24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555**  
[www.msrisk.com](http://www.msrisk.com)

# The Central Africa Report ~ Summary

*November 3 - 16, 2014*



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## Angola

### *International Developments*

- **12 November 2014** – Amnesty International has accused Angolan security forces of extrajudicial killings and the use of excessive force in suppressing dissent against the government of President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos.

## Cameroon

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **11 November 2014** – At least three civilians have been killed after militants from neighbouring Nigeria's Boko Haram staged six "coordinated attacks" in the remote northern region of Cameroon.

- **8 November 2014** – Security sources disclosed that a Cameroonian soldier has been killed in an attack staged by Boko Haram militants near the border with Nigeria.

## Central African Republic

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **13 November 2014** – Witnesses reported Thursday that Seleka rebels have blocked two main roads through the capital city.
- **11 November 2014** – A recent rise in attacks against aid workers across the CAR is threatening the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid.
- **6 November 2014** – On Thursday, Amnesty International (AI) accused militias operating in the CAR of carrying out numerous killings, mutilating bodies and abducting civilians in a new wave of violence that has erupted in the war-torn country.

### *Domestic News*

- **10 November 2014** – International mediators meeting in Bangui this week have admitted that the initial February 2015 date fixed for presidential elections, was no longer feasible, calling for the transitional period to be extended by six months.

### *International Developments*

- **7 November 2014** – The Council of the European Union has extended the EU's military operation in the CAR (EUFOR RCA) until 15 March 2015.

## Democratic Republic of the Congo

### *On the Ground Reporting*

- **15 November 2014** – On Saturday, officials in the DRC declared the country Ebola-free after a three-month outbreak of the deadly disease, which claimed at least 49 lives.
- **11 November 2014** – One protester was killed and two others were severely wounded after angry crowds accused UN troops of shooting a man in the head in the DRC's troubled eastern region.
- **7 November 2014** – The leader of the DRC's defeated M23 rebels has warned of the possibility of renewed conflict, a statement that has highlighted the mounting frustrations amongst the group's confined-to-camp fighters.
  - A top military court in the DRC has sentenced a former rebel leader turned army general to ten years in prison for war crimes.
- **5 November 2014** – On Wednesday, the UN stabilization mission in the DRC announced that more than 200 people have been arrested in relation to a number of recent attacks against civilians in and around the town of Beni, in the eastern region of the country.
- **4 November 2014** – The DRC's army on Tuesday clashed for a second day with suspected Ugandan rebels who have been blamed for a series of massacres in the country's volatile eastern region.
  - On Monday, several hundred magistrates in the DRC began an "indefinite" strike over pay.

- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, police briefly arrested twenty opposition supporters who were staging a banned protest in a bid to demand national talks aimed at ending on-going violence in the country's volatile eastern region.

## *Domestic News*

- **5 November 2014** – The DRC's Defence Minister has called on civilians in the country's eastern region to not form militias in a bid to protect themselves after a recent wave of massacres carried out by suspected Ugandan rebels killed over 100 people.

## *Regional Reporting*

- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, the Ugandan military disclosed that it has increased security along the border with the DRC following a series of rebel attack in the eastern region of the country, which have killed over 100 people.

## *International Developments*

- **12 November 2014** – As the war crimes trial of a former Congolese vice president nears its end, prosecutors disclosed Wednesday that the International Criminal Court (ICC) could convict Jean-Pierre Bemba for his troops' "barbarity" in the Central African Republic (CAR).

## **Equatorial Guinea**

### *Domestic News*

- **9 November 2014** – On Sunday, opposition groups in Equatorial Guinea walked out of a second day of talks with President Teodoro Obiang Nguema's government, accusing it of failing to follow through on a promised amnesty for political offences.

## Central Africa Report ~ Security Summary

**Angola** – MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to certain regions of Angola. Specifically, we advise against all but essential travel to the provinces of Cabinda, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

**Cameroon** – MS Risk advises against all travel to the North and Far North Regions of Cameroon.

**Central African Republic** – MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic

**Chad** - MS Risk advises against all travel to the following areas: areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of the border with Libya, Nigeria, Niger and the Central African Republic; areas bordering Lake Chad, including the regions of Kanem and Lac to the west of the towns of Mao and Bol; areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of Cameroon from Lake Chad as far as Léré; the regions of Sila, Wadi Fira, Ennedi and Tibesti; the region of Ouaddaï except the town of Abéché; the region of Borkou except within 30km of the town of Faya Largeau. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to all remaining parts of the country, including the towns of Faya Largeau in Borkou region and Abéché in Ouaddaï region. Currently, MS Risk does not have any travel advisory for the capital city, N'Djamena.

**Republic of Congo** - MS Risk currently advises against all travel to the Likouala province. This is due to a large influx of displaced people coming in from neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The UNHCR currently estimates that there are around 110,000 refugees in Likouala province. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool region. There is currently a low level of terrorism in the Republic of the Congo.

**Democratic Republic of the Congo** - MS Risk advises against all travel to eastern and north-eastern DRC, including Goma. The only exception to this is the town of Bukavu, to which MS Risk advises against all but essential travel. MS Risk currently advises against all but essential travel to the remainder of the DRC. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

**Equatorial Guinea** - There are currently no travel advisories for Equatorial Guinea, however officials have sent up preventative measures in a bid to stop the Ebola outbreak from affecting the country.

**Gabon** - There are currently no travel advisories for Gabon.

**São Tomé and Príncipe** - There are currently no travel advisories for Sao Tome and Principe. However due to the current political situation, coupled with fears of a possible military coup, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to monitor reporting on the political situation.



# Angola

*Security Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to certain regions of Angola. Specifically, we advise against all but essential travel to the provinces of Cabinda, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. There is currently a low threat from terrorism. We advise that all international companies and organizations operating throughout Angola have strict security rules and regulations for their staff.*

## Luanda

*There is a high level of crime in Luanda. Muggings, particularly to steal mobile telephones and other valuables, as well as armed robberies can occur in any area at any time during the day and night. It is advised that you avoid wearing jewelry or watches in public places. Do not change or withdraw large sums of money in busy public areas.*

*Areas that are popular with foreigners are particularly targeted. You should avoid walking around Luanda, especially after dark.*

*Theft from slow-moving or stationary cars is common, especially in central Luanda. It is advised to keep valuables out of sight and do not use mobiles or laptops while in traffic. When driving, we wary if another car signals you to pull over. Thieves use the pretext of a minor traffic incident to get you out of your car in order to either steal the vehicle or rob you. A high proportion of the civilian population is armed.*

*If you choose to travel outside Luanda, and the provincial capitals, it is advised that you do so in the company of persons or organizations experience in local conditions as conditions can be difficult. There is a widespread of poverty, social exclusion and disease.*



## Cabinda Province

*MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to Cabinda Province. There are regular violent incidents, including rape, murder and kidnappings that involve foreigners and Angolans. Groups claiming responsibility for these attacks have declared their intention to continue attacks against foreigners.*

## Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul

*MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to the provinces of Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. Angolan authorities are sensitive to the presence of foreigners in the diamond producing areas. Consequently all travellers to the region may be subjected to movement restrictions or detention by security forces.*

*The presence of diamonds also increases the threat of crime and banditry, particularly on roads that lead to and from these areas. Armed hold-ups do occur from time to time.*

## **International Developments**

- **12 November 2014** – Amnesty International has accused Angolan security forces of extrajudicial killings and the use of excessive force in suppressing dissent against the government of President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos. In the rights group's report, released the week, Amnesty catalogued over twenty protests within a two-year period that were put down with disproportionate force. According to Amnesty, Angolan authorities' action against protesters is tantamount to an "effective ban" on all anti-government demonstrations. Most protests covered in the report were about a lack of electricity and water supplies, forced housing evictions and mysterious disappearances of demonstrators. The report cited the cases of two men – Silva Alves Kamulingue and Isaias Sebastia Cassule – who went missing after organizing demonstrations against the Luanda administration in March 2012. According to Amnesty, reports later emerged that "state agents" had killed the pair. Another political activist, Manuel de Carvalho Ganga, was shot and killed by a presidential security guard a year ago after he was caught posting flyers near Dos Santos' palace. Amnesty's findings also reported that police have carried out arbitrary arrests and that demonstrators have faced "politically-motivated charges and unfair trials." According to Amnesty officials, those protesters fortunate enough not to have been killed, were often punched, kicked and beaten. Amnesty has called on the country's president, who has been in power for 35 years, to rein in his security forces and "to immediately end the use of excessive force" on demonstrators, adding that as a member of the UN, Angola has a responsibility to implement international human rights standards relating to policing. Amnesty's report may have damaging effects on the Angolan government's current bid for a non-permanent place within the UN Security Council.



# Cameroon

**Security Summary** ~ Cameroon has closed, air, land and sea borders with countries affected by Ebola. This includes Nigeria. Flights and ships travelling from or via Ebola affected countries are banned. MS Risk advises all travellers to Cameroon to make sure your onward/return travel arrangements are flexible and to take account of these travel restrictions. These preventative measures have been taken in order to halt the further spread of Ebola.

MS Risk advises against all travel to within 40 kilometers (24 miles) of the border with Nigeria's Adamawa state and to within 40 kilometers (24 miles) of the border with Chad. MS Risk currently advises against all but essential travel to the rest of North and Adamaoua.

There have been a number of recent attacks in northern Cameroon, especially along the border with Nigeria. Officials have attributed these attacks and raids on villages to Boko Haram militants operating in Nigeria. Further such attacks are likely to occur in the coming weeks.

MS Risk advises all travellers to Cameroon to avoid the northern regions of the country, specifically the areas that border with Nigeria as further attacks cannot be ruled out.

The threat of kidnapping and hostage taking remains high at this time, with further such incidents likely to occur. While officials in Nigeria have requested Cameroon to increase security along the shared border between these two countries, the border regions continue to be porous and remain a safe haven for Boko Haram militants seeking shelter from the ongoing military operation in northern Nigeria.

The killing of a Cameroonian police officer on 19 August has prompted officials in Cameroon to close its border with the Central African Republic (CAR). The death of the officer occurred after a number of Seleka fighters



*crossed over the border into Cameroon, where they were stopped by officers patrolling the border region. Despite being escorted over the border, the fighters returned and attacked the police. It is currently not known how long the border will be closed. Consequently MS Risk advises against all travel to the border regions with the CAR as it is highly likely that militant groups and pro-Seleka fighters may be patrolling the areas and may at times attempt to cross into Cameroon. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of 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. MS RISK advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Bouba Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroula in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future, which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country. Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.*

## **On the Ground Reporting**

- **11 November 2014** – At least three civilians have been killed after militants from neighbouring Nigeria's Boko Haram staged six "coordinated attacks" in the remote northern region of Cameroon. According to a defence ministry source, "six attacks were carried out almost simultaneously on Sunday," adding that the fighters were pushed back across the border by Cameroonian troops. Officials have not disclosed whether the militant group suffered a death toll in this latest attack, which occurred around Kolofata and Fotokol. Boko Haram has often targeted these two districts, which are located close to the Nigerian border. In recent weeks, militants have increasingly crossed the border to stage deadly attacks in Cameroon's northeastern region, in what appears to be a growing sign of the militant's groups desires of expanding their control outside of Nigeria. Sunday's attacks come less than two weeks after thirty-nine Boko Haram gunmen were reported killed in clashes with soldiers after they crossed into Cameroon in a bid to mount attacks on three villages in the same region near Lake Chad. Late last month, Cameroon's army claimed that Boko Haram had also suffered severe losses when around 107 militants were killed in clashes with the Cameroonian army. In recent months, Cameroon has deployed around 1,000 soldiers to its extreme northeast region in a bid to counter the growing threat from Boko Haram. The country's porous border with Nigeria has often been utilized by Boko Haram, enabling militants to easily cross the border to seek shelter from on-going military campaigns in northeastern Nigeria.
- **8 November 2014** – Security sources disclosed that a Cameroonian soldier has been killed in an attack staged by Boko Haram militants near the border with Nigeria. According to a security

source, the militants attacked the border town of Kerawa in the early hours of Saturday. A soldier was killed when Cameroonian forces intervened to repel the militant attack. Sources have disclosed that several militants were killed in the attack, however exact numbers have not been released.

# Central African Republic

**Security Summary** ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). Despite French troops deploying into CAR in early December, the situation throughout the country has continued to deteriorate. There have been reports of rebel activity, banditry and hostage-taking across the country. The situation in the capital, Bangui, remains fragile with reports of continued isolated killings, looting and gunfire. There is also an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks can be indiscriminate, including in places that are visited by foreigners.

In recent weeks, armed groups have increasingly targeted aid workers operating across the CAR. In November, medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres reported two incidents, in which an armed group, operating on the route that links Paoua in the north and the capital city Bangui, between the towns of Yaloké and Bossembélé, targeted a



transport trucks carrying medical and humanitarian supplies. Both vehicles were later released upon the payment of a ransom. Further such incidents are likely to occur in the area as the security situation across the country remains fragile.

Despite the French military intervention, Operation Sangaris, being launched in early December, security throughout the CAR remains unstable. MS Risk strongly advises you not to travel around Bangui after dark. At other times, it is advised that you take extreme care, and travel in groups if possible. There are armed patrols at night in Bangui and you may encounter several roadblocks, both official and unofficial, that are likely to be manned by armed personnel. We advise that you take particular care when approaching these.

## Crime



*Incidents of theft and robbery occur regularly. Armed gangs are known to operate in the outlying areas of Bangui. You are advised to take personal security precautions and be vigilant in public places at all times. Avoid carrying valuables or wearing jewelry in public. Do not walk alone at night and avoid any isolated or poorer areas.*

## On the Ground Reporting

- **13 November 2014** – Witnesses reported Thursday that Seleka rebels have blocked two main roads through the capital city. According to sources, the fighters, who have been based at a military camp in Bangui since their leader ceded power to a transitional government in January, are protesting against a plan to relocate some of their ranks out of the capital in a move that is aimed at improving security across Bangui. Seleka however has rejected the plan, which is to be carried out by the International Organization for Migration, citing safety concerns. Lieutenant Dieu Beni Detemale, the Seleka commander at the camp, has reported, “the prime minister has just received our delegates to negotiate, so the government has taken into account our demands...If there is a positive outcome, we will remove the roadblocks.” Witnesses reported Thursday an exchange of gunfire between the Seleka rebels and UN peacekeepers, noting that both sides appeared to shoot into the air. It currently remains unclear whether anyone was hurt in the incident.
- **11 November 2014** – A recent rise in attacks against aid workers across the CAR is threatening the delivery of much-needed humanitarian aid. According to medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), on 7 November a transport truck carrying medical supplies, and clearly identified as operating for MSF, was stopped and held captive by an armed group on the route that links Paoua in the north and the capital city, between the towns of Yaloké and Bossembélé. According to MSF, a sum of money was demanded. Twenty-four hours later, on the same road, a second MSF truck was held up by the same armed group, with a MSF team leader being taken away and forced to negotiate a payment. Delphine Chedorge, MSF head of mission in the CAR has disclosed that in both incidents, the attackers “were highly aggressive, threatening, pointing their guns at our staff members and shooting into the air.” While no MSF team members sustained any injuries during the incidents, these recent attacks are part of a growing trend of violent incidents and attempts at extortion that are being carried out against humanitarian workers. This trend has particularly increased in recent months.
- **6 November 2014** – On Thursday, Amnesty International accused militias operating in the CAR of carrying out numerous killings, mutilating bodies and abducting civilians in a new wave of violence that has erupted in the war-torn country. The rights group has also called for more peacekeepers to be deployed across the country in order to stop the on-going violence. In a new report released this week, Amnesty indicated that the latest attacks have killed dozens of civilians and displaced thousands others, adding that due to international forces being stretched thin, this has enabled a range of armed militias to “continue to enjoy impunity.” Recent attacks include the October 8 attack on Bambari, when the mostly Christian anti-balaka militia stopped a vehicle

containing 24 people. According to a survivor, the militiamen "...let all of the Christians go...All of the Muslim men whom they caught were killed. They undressed their bodies to humiliate them, and cut them into pieces, chopping off their hands and feet." In another attack on October 10, the mostly Muslim Seleka forces surrounded a church and opened fire on the refugees inside. Nine people, including four children were killed in that attack. While Amnesty's report noted that French, European and United Nations peacekeepers have saved many lives, it did disclose that with the UN peacekeeping force "still several thousand troops short of its mandated numbers, they have not been able to prevent escalating violence in the country's central region." In October, renewed violence erupted in Bangui, leaving dozens dead and displaced more than 6,500 people. While international peacekeepers have struggled to halt the violence, they have come under attack and faced violent protests. On 9 October, one peacekeeper was killed, several others severely wounded and at least seven civilians injured after a UN convoy was attacked on the outskirts of Bangui. The past eighteen months of violence have left many towns and villages deserted and has resulted in around 400,000 internationally displaced persons, many of whom have been forced to seek shelter in camps or are living in the bush.

## Domestic News

- **10 November 2014** – International mediators meeting in Bangui this week have admitted that the initial February 2015 date fixed for presidential elections, was no longer feasible, calling for the transitional period to be extended by six months. International mediators have now called for presidential elections to be held in either June or July 2015.

## International Developments

- **7 November 2014** – The Council of the European Union has extended the EU's military operation in the CAR (EUFOR RCA) until 15 March 2015. The extension, which follows a request by the authorities of the CAR and a renewed mandate from the UN Security Council, is intended to ensure an effective transition to the UN-led peace operation, known as MINUSCA. EUFOR RCA has been tasked with ensuring a secure environment in the CAR and the operation has successfully assumed responsibility for the security of M'Poko airport and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> districts of Bangui. According to a statement recently released by the EU, during the extended mandate, the operation will continue most of these activities in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> districts however responsibility for M'Poko airport will be handed over to the MINUSCA force by the end of this year. The EU military operation will continue to focus on security, humanitarian aid, stabilization and development cooperation.



# Chad

**Security Summary** ~ Chad has cancelled all incoming flights from or via countries affected by Ebola, including Nigeria, as a prevention measure against the spread of the deadly virus to Chad. Chad has also cancelled all flights from or via Ghana. MS Risk advises all travellers to Chad to make sure your onward/return travel arrangements are flexible and to take account of these travel restrictions.

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following areas: areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of the border with Libya, Nigeria, Niger and the Central African Republic; areas bordering Lake Chad, including the regions of Kanem and Lac to the west of the towns of Mao and Bol; areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of Cameroon from Lake Chad as far as Léré; the regions of Sila, Wadi Fira, Ennedi and Tibesti; the region of Ouaddaï except the town of Abéché; the region of Borkou except within 30km of the town of Faya Largeau. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to all remaining parts of the country, including the towns of Faya Largeau in Borkou region and Abéché in Ouaddaï region. Currently, MS Risk does not have any travel advisory for the capital city, N'Djamena.

MS Risk advises that you should only undertake travel to those parts of the country to which we advise against all but essential travel if:



- *You are confident that you have in place adequate security precautions to protect you from violent crime;*
- *The correct Chadian authorities are aware of your journey;*
- *You have in place the right permits if required;*
- *And you hold comprehensive travel insurance.*

*There is currently a low threat from terrorism.*

*Armed robberies, particularly from cars, in residential areas of N'Djamena are common, with foreigners sometimes being targeted. MS Risk advises all travellers to the capital city to remain vigilant and to take care particularly in the capital. Keep doors locked and windows closed at all times. Do not carry any large sums of money, jewelry, or other valuables. Avoid isolated or less developed areas of the city and do not travel alone at night.*

*There have been a number of kidnappings in eastern Chad involving Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) workers and business people. Further such kidnappings are likely to occur. MS Risk advises all travellers to this region of Chad to be vigilant and take care at all times.*

*Nearly 350,000 Sudanese and Central African refugees and 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) are living in and around camps in eastern Chad. Although the Joint Border Force between Sudan and Chad has partially stabilized the situation, banditry and violent crime in eastern Chad continues to exist. Consequently the border between Chad and Sudan is subject to closures with minimal notice.*

*The area bordering Libya is also subject to closure and is heavily land-mined. The northern regions of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti continue to be unsafe.*

# Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

**Security Summary** ~ *The DRC has declared itself Ebola-free. An outbreak of the deadly disease, unrelated to the ongoing outbreak in West Africa, was first discovered in August near the remote town of Boende, in Equateur province.*

*The security situation in eastern DRC, including Goma, remains unstable. Ugandan rebels have killed over 100 people in and around the town of Beni. Officials have since imposed a overnight curfew on the town. Any foreigners in North Kivu, including Goma, are currently advised to keep their security situation under review. During fighting in the region in recent months, shells landed on Goma, causing a number of civilian deaths and injuries. There was also shelling around the border with Rwanda and explosions in the town of Gisenyi on the Rwandan side of the border. Further shelling may occur. You are therefore advised to avoid travelling alone and at night.*

*In the Katanga Province, there has been unrest and reports of fighting which occurred on 7 January 2014. The current situation remains tense across the province, particularly around the town of Pweto. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers to the region to exercise a high level of caution.*

*There were shooting incidents in Kinshasa on 30 December 2013. The incidents occurred around the national TV and radio station RTNC, the airport and the main army barracks and Ministry of Defence at Ngaliema. There were also reports of fighting in Lubumbashi, Katanga Province and in Kindu, Maniema Province. While*





*the situation in Kinshasa now appears to be returning to normal, the situation remains to be fragile and security forces continue to be on alert.*

## **On the Ground Reporting**

- **15 November 2014** – On Saturday, officials in the DRC declared the country Ebola-free after a three-month outbreak of the deadly disease, which claimed at least 49 lives. The DRC outbreak, which began in August, involved a different strain of Ebola from the one that has claimed more than 5,100 lives in West Africa. The all-clear in the DRC came 42 days after the last recorded case of the virus.
- **11 November 2014** – One protester was killed and two others were severely wounded after angry crowds accused UN troops of shooting a man in the head in the DRC's troubled eastern region. On Tuesday, demonstrators, some armed with arrows, spears and machetes, barricaded several roads in the town of Mbau after a UN peacekeeper allegedly shot a man on Monday in a dispute over motorbikes that were blocking the passage of a UN convoy. While local authorities were able to restore order, tensions remained high. In recent weeks, tensions between the local population and peacekeepers have been high, amidst growing anger that the UN's mission in the country has been unable to stop a series of massacres carried out by Ugandan rebels in the region. On October 21, local civilians blamed peacekeepers for the deaths of two youths who were killed in protests. The UN is investigating that incident, with MONUSCO spokesman Charles Bambara disclosing Tuesday that officials will also look into the death in Mbau. The 20,000-strong MONUSCO force has been tasked with protecting the civilian population of the troubled eastern region, which for the past two decades has been targeted by armed rebel groups. While the mission has been credited with defeating the Congolese M23 rebel movement, it has been unable to stop a series of recent massacres carried out by rebels belonging to the Allied Democratic Forces and National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU). Over the past several weeks, attacks carried out by ADF-NALU have killed over 100 civilians and have sparked fears of renewed unrest in the already security fragile region.
- **7 November 2014** – The leader of the DRC's defeated M23 rebels has warned of the possibility of renewed conflict, a statement that has highlighted the mounting frustrations amongst the group's confined-to-camp fighters. A year ago, the rebels' 18-month war was brought to an end by government troops and UN peacekeepers, with many fighters fleeing into neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda. Although in May, most of the rebels signed an amnesty deal, vowing not to fight again, M23's president Bertrand Bisimwa warned at the time that if the Kinshasa government did not fulfil its side of the agreement, he would not be able to "give guarantees for what will happen tomorrow." In a recent interview that was carried out in the Ugandan capital Kampala, Bisimwa revealed, "the main causes of this conflict should be dealt with, the causes remain. Today the security situation in the country has completely deteriorated." He further added that while M23 had been forced to sign an amnesty agreement, "negative forces continue to plunder the east,"

noting that no other rebel force “has been disarmed or stopped...they continue to kill. The number of women raped increases each day. The question of refugees has not been resolved. The issue of national reconciliation has simply been forgotten.” Bisimwa has accused the DRC’s government of reneging on its side of the amnesty agreement, including the release of M23 fighters from prisons in the DRC. While the DRC’s amnesty agreement, which was initially announced by President Joseph Kabila in February, covers “acts of insurgency, acts of war and political offences,” more serious transgressions are excluded from the agreement. This includes crimes against humanity, torture, sexual violence, child conscription and embezzlement and looting. Despite M23 being defeated, numerous other armed groups continue to operate in the region, fuelling turmoil in an area of the country that has already been affected by fighting for the past two decades. Much of the rebel activity consists of abuses against civilians and the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

- A top military court in the DRC has sentenced a former rebel leader turned army general to ten years in prison for war crimes. On Friday, the court ruled that general Jérôme Kakwavu was guilty of committing serious acts of violence, including the repeated rapes of two females, two murders and acts of torture on two other people. According to a statement released by the court, the former rebel leader also failed to take “necessary measures” to prevent and stop “war crimes by murder...committed by men under his command.” The court’s 10-year sentence was tougher than what was sought by the public prosecutor, who had demanded eight years in prison. Since the start of the first Congo war in 1996, Kakwavu is the highest-ranking national army officer to be convicted for war crimes. The crimes were committed between 2003 – 2004, when Kakwavu led the Armed forces of the Congolese People (FAPC), one of the many militias fighting in the northeastern Ituri region from 1999 to 2007 over the division of natural resources. When his rebel group was integrated into the military in December 2004, he became an army general by presidential decree, however he was arrested shortly afterwards. **Update (9 November 2014)** – The head of the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC has welcomed the sentencing of a former commander of a militia group accused of war crimes, stating that the sentencing is a step towards reinforcing the rule of law in the central African nation. In a press release, martin Kobler disclosed that he applauds “...the DRC judiciary authorities’ resolve to effectively fight impunity,” adding “MONUSCO will continue to support the DRC justice system in its efforts to implement a zero tolerance policy for the worst forms of violence committed against civilians in times of conflict.”
- **5 November 2014** – On Wednesday, the UN stabilization mission in the DRC announced that more than 200 people have been arrested in relation to a number of recent attacks against civilians in and around the town of Beni, in the eastern region of the country. According to MONUSCO spokesman Chares Bambara, operations carried out by the National Police and MONUSCO police resulted in more than 200 people being arrested, adding that UN mission forces are currently intensifying their patrols across the region. Amongst those arrested were members of the

Ugandan-based Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group, who are believed to be responsible for the recent attacks in and around Beni. Mr Bambara further disclosed that weapons, ammunition, bombs, radio sets and other military equipment were also seized. The announcement came just hours before the UN Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement that “strongly condemned the recent attacks by the ADF in the Beni territory, brutally killing over 100 civilians, mostly women and children.” The Security Council expressed concern over the lack of progress in the voluntary disarmament process of the Democratic Forces of the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), reiterating that there should be “no further delay” in the voluntary disarmament, which currently has a 2 January 2015 deadline. The Security Council has called on the DRC government, in coordination with the UN mission, MONUSCO, “to immediately undertake military action against those leaders and members of the FDLR who do not engage in the demobilization process and who continue to carry out human rights abuses.

- **4 November 2014** – The DRC’s army on Tuesday clashed for a second day with suspected Ugandan rebels who have been blamed for a series of massacres in the country’s volatile eastern region. According to UN sources, clashes initially broke out Monday when troops attacked rebels believed to be organizing another possible attack on the town of Beni in the North Kivu province. A civil society source in the region has indicated that one army officer and two rebels were killed in the clashes. Sources have disclosed that troops from the UN’s peacekeeping mission in the DRC, MONUSCO, were also involved in the fighting. In recent weeks, tensions have risen in eastern DRC after dozens of people have been killed in a series of attacks blamed on the rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces and National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU), who have been targeting the resource-rich region for nearly two decades. Despite being driven out of the of country in 1995 by President Yoweri Museveni, the rebels continue to operate in the region, and are known to hide out in the Ruwenzori mountains, which straddle the border with Uganda. Over the past years, the rebels have been blamed for numerous atrocities, including pillaging villages and forcing locals to fight for them. They have also funded their operations through the lucrative smuggling of wood. In January 2014, the DRC’s army, along with soldiers from MONUSCO, began an offensive against ADF-NALU, which is the last major insurgent group that remains active in the region. While initially believing that they were severely weakened, the rebels seem to have regained strength and have recently carried out a series of deadly attacks in the eastern region of the DRC. Over the past 5 weeks, they have killed at least 120 people, and forced thousands to flee the area over fears of continued attacks. Beni’s civil society has urged President Joseph Kabila, who paid a brief visit to the area last week where he vowed to wipe out the rebel group, to declare a state of emergency. On Sunday, officials in the region imposed an overnight curfew on the trading town of about half a million people.

- On Monday, several hundred magistrates in the DRC began an “indefinite” strike over pay. In September 2011, President Joseph Kabila claimed during an election campaign that magistrate pay had increased from “\$724 in 2008 to \$1,600,” however according to Shabani Watenda, a magistrate in the capital Kinshasa, “...up to now, we have never seen this



money,” adding that the lowest-ranked magistrates currently earn around 600,000 francs (US \$650) and lack other benefits, including health insurance. According to Shabani Watenda, magistrates across the DRC “...have declared an indefinite strike...so that the government respects its promises,” adding “no one will work until we receive this money. We will organize picket lines. No magistrate will be able to reach his office.” In September 2014, the magistrates’ union Synamac, which represents around half of the 3,500 magistrates in the DRC, went on strike for around ten days until the government promised to improve salaries. While Synamac has disclosed that it understood the frustrations of the strikers, it noted that it was unrealistic to demand pay raises without confirming whether the government budget could meet such demands. The Congolese Association for Access to Justice however has indicated that the government was deliberately keeping down magistrates across the DRC. A statement released by the Association’s president, Georges Kapiamba, disclosed “we strongly condemn the politics of pauperisation and militarisation of magistrates carried out by the Congolese government with the aim of keeping the judiciary in a state of dependence.”

- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, police briefly arrested twenty opposition supporters who were staging a banned protest in a bid to demand national talks aimed at ending on-going violence in the country’s volatile eastern region. The main opposition parties, the Union for the Congolese Nation (UNC) and the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) had called for a sit-in in front of the headquarters of the UN mission in the DRC. They are calling for a national dialogue aimed at ending two decades of violence that has plagued the eastern region of the country. Their demands are inline with a February 2013 accord, signed by the DRC and 10 other African countries in Addis Ababa, which pledged that a dialogue should be set up in order to stabilize the region. Charles Mbenga, an adviser to UNC chief Vital Kamerhe, later confirmed, “all our members have been freed,” adding, “they shouldn’t have been held in the first place.” He has called the arrests “illegal.” The arrests of the opposition supporters come just days after more than 2,000 people took to the streets of Kinshasa to protest a bid by President Joseph Kabila to amend the constitution in a bid to stay in power beyond the current two-term limit. Becoming Africa’s youngest leader, at the age of 29 shortly after the death of his father Laurent Kabila in 2001, President Kabila won elections in 2006 and 2011. The current constitution requires him to step down after his current term ends in 2016.

## Democratic News

- **5 November 2014** – The DRC’s Defence Minister has called on civilians in the country’s eastern region to not form militias in a bid to protect themselves after a recent wave of massacres carried out by suspected Ugandan rebels killed over 100 people. On Tuesday, Defence Minister Alexandre Luba Ntambo indicated that the formation of self-defence groups in the eastern region could only further complicate the already fragile situation, particularly in the town of Beni, where as many as 120 people have been killed in five weeks of night-time raids carried out by suspected ADF rebels.

His statement came as reports emerged from Beni that despite local authorities imposing overnight curfew, citizens were beginning to meet in several places to form self-defence groups. His call also came as the Congolese army, with the backing of UN peacekeepers, fought rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU) for a second day. Military sources have disclosed that they believe that the rebels were “organizing themselves” for another attack on Beni. On Monday, President Joseph Kabila chaired a special meeting of the higher defence council in the capital city in order to address the on-going crisis, promising additional army and police reinforcements for the area. He also called for additional aid for the thousands of families who have fled the area since the attacks began. The latest violence has also led to violent street protests against the UN mission. In October, protesters demanded that the UN mission in the DRC, MONUSCO, do more to prevent such attacks, accusing peacekeepers of not doing enough to keep the local populations safe.

### Regional Reporting

- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, the Ugandan military disclosed that it has increased security along the border with the DRC following a series of rebel attack in the eastern region of the country, which have killed over 100 people. According to Maj. Ronald Kakurungu, the Ugandan military is currently coordinating with the Congolese army (FARDC) in order to ensure that the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels do not cross into Uganda. Maj. Kakurungu confirmed that the Ugandan military will continue “...to monitor our border with DRC. We have intensified our networks and coordination with the FARDC as they continue to hunt these remnants.” Over the past several weeks, the ADF-NALU has carried out numerous attacks in and around the town of Beni. According to local aid agencies, at least 100 people have been killed in attacks while thousands of fled the area. According to the Ugandan military, the ADF, which is currently believed to have upwards of 1,200 fighters, has attempted to increase its troop numbers through kidnapping and recruitment in North Kivu Province and in Uganda. The rebel group was initially formed in the mid-1990’s in the Ruwenzori mountain range in western Uganda, which straddles the border with the DRC.

### International Developments

- **12 November 2014** – As the war crimes trial of a former Congolese vice president nears its end, prosecutors disclosed Wednesday that the International Criminal Court (ICC) could convict Jean-Pierre Bemba for his troops’ “barbarity” in the Central African Republic (CAR). Bemba, 52, is currently facing three war crime counts and two counts of crimes against humanity for murder, rape and pillage that was committed by some 1,5000 members of his private army in neighbouring Central African Republic between October 2002 and March 2003. His troops allegedly murdered, raped and pillaged after Bemba sent them into the country in late 2002 in a bid to help put down a coup against then-CAR president Ange-Felix Patasse. Lawyers for Bemba, who has plead not

guilty to the charges, argue that his forces were under CAR command when the atrocities were committed. Bemba has maintained that he deployed his troops when Patasse requested help in quelling a rebellion that was led by the former armed forces chief Francois Bozize, who eventually seized power in 2003. Bemba, who unsuccessfully challenged current DRC President Joseph Kabila in the 2006 presidential elections, went into exile after government forces routed his private militia in 2007. He was arrested in 2008 in Brussels.

# Republic of the Congo

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**Security Summary** ~ MS Risk currently advises against all travel to the Likouala province. This is due to a large influx of displaced people coming in from neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The UNHCR currently estimates that there are around 110,000 refugees in Likouala province. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool region. There is currently a low level of terrorism in the Republic of the Congo.

Although crime levels are low in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, MS Risk advises all travellers to take sensible precautions in order to safeguard yourself and your belongings. We advise travellers to not walk in the streets after dark or to carry large amounts of money or valuables. The chance of being targeted by criminals is higher in the rural areas of the country. On 16 December 2013, there were reports of fighting and sporadic gunfire in Brazzaville. This is believed to have been an isolated incident as a result of resistance during a military arrest.



MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the Pool Region. This is due to sporadic rebel activity and armed banditry in the area. There is a very low risk of rebel attacks in the coastal town of Pointe Noire however travellers in vehicles and trains have been robbed by armed criminal gangs around the Pool region. Road travel in the Pool region requires a permit from the Congolese army.

# Equatorial Guinea

**Security Summary** ~ There currently are no travel advisories for Equatorial Guinea. Flights to/from Sao Tome et Principe, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Republic of Congo, Benin, Togo, Nigeria and Gabon have now been resumed after being cancelled as part of preventive measures against the spread of Ebola to Equatorial Guinea. Vessels travelling to/from west, central or east Africa are not being granted permission to berth or depart from Malabo Port. Equatorial Guinea has also suspended issuing visas for those intending to travel to the country from central and West Africa. Equatorial Guinea currently has no confirmed cases of the deadly virus.

Compared with other countries in the region, the level of violent crime is low; however there are regular reports

of petty theft, which has affected both visitors and expatriates. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid walking around Malabo and Bata at night and to avoid travelling by road after dark. Although the political situation has been calm in recent years, you should be aware that political events can lead to an increased presence of police, military or security forces on the streets. Consequently you should avoid any political rallies, demonstrations or large public gatherings. There is a low threat from terrorism; however you should be aware that attacks can occur at any time and place, including those frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers.



## Domestic News

- **9 November 2014** – On Sunday, opposition groups in Equatorial Guinea walked out of a second day of talks with President Teodoro Obiang Nguema’s government, accusing it of failing to follow through on a promised amnesty for political offences. The meeting, which is aimed at discussing a number of issues, including the participation of opposition movements in the country’s political, began Friday however the Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS) party, which is the only opposition group currently represented in parliament, and its allies left the negotiating table on Saturday. Head of the opposition Popular Union party Daniel Ayecaba Dario later disclosed “we have said very clearly that it seems irresponsible to continue at the table while our comrades are in prison.” In September, President Obiang announced a “national dialogue” – only the third such meeting in the country’s history - and last month, he decreed the amnesty, which was a prerequisite set by the opposition for its participation in the national dialogue. While this amnesty allowed political exiles, some of whom have been convicted of crimes in absentia, to return to the country in order to participate in the talks, opposition groups have called on the release of prisoners whom they say were imprisoned for political reason. The government however has refused, stating that the prisoners in question were imprisoned for criminal and not political offences. At the talks, the government’s delegation also denied that the country was still holding political prisoners, instead stating that the opposition was undermining the law by calling for prisoners to be freed. Opposition groups, including political exiles, have greeted the talks with cautious optimism, indicating that they hoped the president may bow to international pressure and open up the country’s political landscape, which has long been dominated by his family members.



# Gabon

**Security Summary** ~ There is currently no travel advisory for Gabon. Gabon has closed land, air and sea borders with countries affected by Ebola. This includes Nigeria. Flights and ships travelling from or via Ebola affected countries are banned. MS Risk advises all travellers to ensure that onward/return travel arrangements are flexible. These preventative measures have been taken in order to stop the spread of Ebola to Gabon. There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

Crime is on the rise in Gabon, particularly in Libreville and Port-Gentil. There have been robberies, armed attacks and rapes. Consequently MS Risk advises you to take sensible personal security precautions and maintain a high level of vigilance in public places. Avoid isolated or poorer areas of towns and walking alone at night. There have been a number of car-jackings in Libreville. There have been armed robberies of commercial shipping in the Gulf of Guinea.



# São Tomé and Príncipe

**Security Summary** ~ There are currently no travel advisories for Sao Tome and Principe. However due to the current political situation, coupled with fears of a possible military coup, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant and to monitor reporting on the political situation.

Crime rates in Sao Tome and Principe are generally low however burglaries and armed robberies do occur. It is advised that you safeguard all valuables and cash.

Although Sao Tome and Principe is generally peaceful, economic difficulties and political rows over the handling of investments in the islands' development occasionally lead to civil unrest. MS Risk advises all travellers to avoid any demonstrations or large gatherings.

