



MS | RISK

West Africa Report

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

October 13 - 26, 2014

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

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Summary

October 13 - 26, 2014



Follow us on Twitter @ MS Risk_Security for regular updates on topical security events and issues.

Sahel Region

Regional Reporting

- **23 October 2014** – New figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday revealed that Ebola is now believed to have killed 4,877 people globally, with officials indicating that the spread of the deadly virus remains “persistent and widespread” in West Africa.
 - A top French military official disclosed Thursday that in the coming weeks, France will move its troops towards the Libyan border and, along with US intelligence agencies, it will monitor al-Qaeda arms shipments to the Sahel region.

- **21 October 2014** – On Tuesday an official from Rwanda announced that the country will start screening all travellers from the United States and Spain.
- **17 October 2014** – A statement released by the East African five-nation bloc on Friday disclosed that several East African countries will deploy over 600 healthcare workers, including 41 doctors, to West Africa to combat the spread of Ebola.
- **16 October 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) will send experts to the Ivory Coast and Mali to test their Ebola-preparedness measures as the two countries are currently at the greatest risk of being the next to be affected by the outbreak.
 - The BBC has launched an Ebola public health information service on WhatsApp.

Burkina Faso

- **23 October 2014** – On Wednesday, opposition parties in Burkina Faso called for nationwide protests against moves aimed at attempting to lift a two-term limit on the presidency, with the opposition accusing President Blaise Compaore of preparing a “constitutional coup d’état.”
- **21 October 2014** – According to Burkina Faso's Interior Minister, the country's government will submit a bill to parliament calling on a referendum to remove a two-term limit for the presidency.

Ghana

- **20 October 2014** – Ghana's finance minister Seth Terkper revealed Monday that he is confident the government will reach a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in November in order to attain a financial assistance programme that is aimed at restoring fiscal stability.
- **19 October 2014** – Ghana's main opposition party has nominated former foreign minister Nana Akufo-Addo as its candidate for the 2016 presidential elections.

Guinea

On the Ground Reporting

- **19 October 2014** – The Ebola virus has spread to two new regions in Guinea, including in an area where the AngloGold Ashanti Ltd., mine is located.

Domestic News

- **22 October 2014** – In a surprise announcement late on Tuesday, President Alpha Conde's office disclosed that he has replaced his security and energy ministers.
- **15 October 2014** - Opposition parties in Guinea have accused the government of using the ongoing Ebola outbreak as an excuse to delay municipal elections, initially scheduled to occur at the end of this year, and presidential elections in 2015.

International Developments

- **13 October 2014** – Officials in France announced Monday that they have agreed to set up new Ebola treatment centers in Guinea after the United States requested additional assistance to fight the deadly virus.

Ivory Coast

- **25 October 2014** – A former defense minister and key ally of ex-Ivory Coast president Laurent Gbagbo has been arrested.

- **24 October 2014** – The Ivory Coast, which is currently Ebola-free, has launched a manhunt for a Guinean health worker who may have fled his home country after possible catching the deadly virus.
- **14 October 2014** – The former first lady of the Ivory Coast, Simone Gbagbo, who has been accused of genocide for her role in the deadly post-election violence, including being linked to “death squads” used against supporters of current President Alassane Ouattara, will go on trial on October 22.

Liberia

- **23 October 2014** - Liberian state radio reported Thursday that dozens of people quarantined for Ebola monitoring in the western region of the country have threatened to break out of isolation over a lack of food.
- **13 October 2014** – On Monday, health workers across Liberia went on strike, demanding danger pay for taking care of the sick in the deadly ongoing Ebola outbreak.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **23 October 2014** - Just a week after the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it would deploy experts to the Ivory Coast and Mali to test their Ebola-preparedness measures, on Thursday, Mali's Health Minister confirmed the country's first Ebola case.
- **19 October 2014** – French forces operating in Mali have seized a large cache of arms and detained three men, which they believe were linked to a recent rocket attack on a UN base in northern Mali that killed a Senegalese peacekeeper.
- **16 October 2014** – At least seven people were killed Thursday in clashes that erupted between armed groups and pro-government militias, sparking tensions ahead of a new round of peace talks that are set to take place later this month.

International Developments

- **18 October 2014** – On Friday, the United Nations Security Council urged Mali's warring factions to make progress towards a lasting peace deal at upcoming talks in Algeria as a wave of deadly attacks, which targeted UN peacekeepers operating in northern Mali, has sparked fears of further unrest in the region.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **24 October 2014** – In what is the latest abduction targeting a prominent political family, police officials confirmed Friday that the sister of Nigeria's petroleum minister has been kidnapped in the oil hub of Port Harcourt.
- **23 October 2014** – Despite the government maintaining its claim of a purported ceasefire agreement with Islamist militants, a bomb blast at a bus station in northern Nigeria on Wednesday killed at least five people in an area that has previously been targeted by Boko Haram.
 - Residents and witnesses have reported that dozens of women and girls from two villages in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state have been suspected by suspected Boko Haram militants.
 - On Thursday, Nigerian officials pledged to send a contingent of 600 volunteers to help fight the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa.
- **20 October 2014** – On Monday, officials at the WHO declared Nigeria Ebola-free after six weeks of no new reported cases.
 - While on Friday, Nigerian officials disclosed that they had agreed to a ceasefire with Boko Haram militants, adding that schoolgirls kidnapped in April would soon be released, doubts emerged over the weekend as witnesses and security sources reported that government forces had engaged in fighting with the militants.
- **15 October 2014** – On Wednesday, fifty-nine Nigerian soldiers appeared before a military tribunal in the capital Abuja.

- **14 October 2014** – Protesters, calling for the release of 219 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants, were set to mark the six-month anniversary of their abduction on Tuesday with a march on the presidency.
- **13 October 2014** – A source reported Monday that a young woman, who was found wandering in northeastern Nigeria and who police initially indicated was one of more than 200 missing schoolgirls, was actually abducted four months earlier.

Domestic News

- **16 October 2014** – Nigeria's elections chief announced Thursday that the country will be able to hold elections in February 2015 even if Boko Haram violence makes voting in the northeastern region of the country impossible, arguing that the disenfranchisement of thousands of people would not undermine the entire vote.
- **15 October 2014** – On Wednesday, Nigeria's former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari declared his presidential bid.

Senegal

- **17 October 2014** - On Friday, the WHO declared Senegal, which borders with Guinea, clear of the disease. The agency made the assessment after the West African country went forty-two days, without reporting any new cases.

Sierra Leone

- **22 October 2014** – Two people have died after a riot erupted when health workers attempted to take a blood sample from an elderly woman. According to on the ground sources, a group of youths, armed with machetes, clashed with security personnel in the eastern town of Koidu.
- **21 October 2014** – Government officials disclosed Tuesday that Ebola is severely affecting the western region of the country, where the capital city is located, with dozens of people falling sick each day and reports emerging that the removal of bodies has now become a problem due to the high number of deaths.
- **18 October 2014** – Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma has announced a major revamp to the body in charge of fighting the Ebola outbreak in the country.
- **16 October 2014** – Government officials announced Thursday that the deadly Ebola virus has infected two people in what was the last unaffected district in Sierra Leone, a setback in efforts to stop the spread of the disease in one of the hardest-hit countries.
- **14 October 2014** – According to military officials, a battalion of 800 Sierra Leone soldiers, awaiting deployment as peacekeepers in Somalia, has been placed in quarantine after one of its members tested positive for the deadly Ebola virus.

Security Summaries for West African States

Sahel Region – Page 9

Benin

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant. There is currently an Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Mali 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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The Gambia

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

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

The Casamance region of south-western Senegal remains affected by incidents involving presumed separatist groups and by incidents of banditry. An outbreak of the Ebola virus has been confirmed in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While there have been no confirmed cases of the virus in The Gambia, as part of efforts to prevent the deadly virus from spreading into the country, Gambia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has set up a task force to control the border areas. MS Risk is currently advising all travellers to the country to maintain a high level of vigilance. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Travellers to the country are warned to remain vigilant as attacks can take place at anytime and anywhere.

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Guinea-Bissau

There are currently no travel restrictions for Guinea-Bissau. An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali 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.

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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

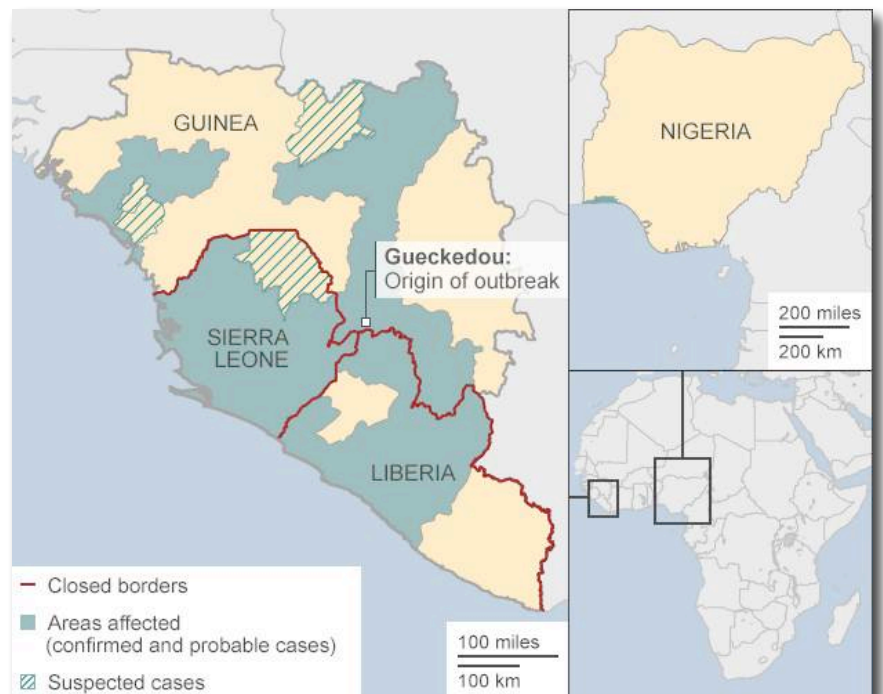


Security Summary

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

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

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



Regional Reporting

- **23 October 2014** – New figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday revealed that Ebola is now believed to have killed 4,877 people globally, with officials indicating that the spread of the deadly virus remains “persistent and widespread” in West Africa. There are currently 9,936 probable, suspected and confirmed cases of Ebola, with most of them in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Transmission of the disease remains “intense” in the capital city and underreporting of cases continues to be an issue. Over the past week, two districts in Guinea reported Ebola cases for the first time. One region is on the border with the Ivory Coast while the other is on a major trade route with Mali. In Liberia, all but one of the country’s fifteen districts have now reported at least one Ebola case. The disease has the highest transmission rate in the capital Monrovia, with 305 suspected, probable and confirmed cases reported this week. In Sierra Leone, WHO officials disclosed that two districts where Ebola had appeared to be slowing, Kenema and Kailahun, have both seen a resurgence of the virus over the past week. A top United Nations official warned this week that Ebola was winning the race as the WHO warned that within the next two months, West Africa could face up to 10,000 new Ebola cases per week if the outbreak is not contained. Speaking at a news conference in Geneva, WHO assistant director-general Dr Bruce Aylward, disclosed that the death rate in the current outbreak had risen to 70 percent, from the previously estimated mortality rate of 50 percent. Acknowledging that Ebola was “a high mortality disease,” Dr Aylward noted that the UN health agency was still focused on getting six people into isolation and providing treatment to them as early as possible, adding that if the global response to the current Ebola outbreak is not stepped up in the coming sixty days, “a lot more people will die” and health workers will be stretched even further. Experts in the field have indicated that the epidemic is doubling in size about every three weeks, with Dr Aylward indicating that over the last month, there have been about 1,000 new Ebola cases per week. This included confirmed, suspected and probable cases. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone continue to be the hardest-hit countries in the current epidemic, with WHO officials particularly concerned about the spread of Ebola in their capital cities – Conakry, Monrovia and Freetown – where people move freely across borders. While some regions in these countries have seen the number of Ebola cases either stabilize or fall, this does not mean that the regions are Ebola-free. Neighboring countries, including Guinea-Bissau, the Ivory Coast and Mali are currently at a high risk of importing the disease.
 - A top French military official disclosed Thursday that in the coming weeks, France will move its troops towards the Libyan border and, along with US intelligence agencies, it will monitor al-Qaeda arms shipments to the Sahel region. According to the source, in the coming weeks a French base will be created in a desert outpost 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the lawless Libyan border region. The area is now becoming a key focus for both the French and US militaries. Earlier this month, French troops destroyed an arms convoy in northern Niger, which was carrying three tons of weapons from Libya to Mali. According to a top defense official, a French drone had located the convoy and followed it from southeastern Libya. The defense official further disclosed that about fifty French troops will be permanently based in northern Niger in order to be “able to crisscross the zone up to the border and hamper as much as possible the traffic route.” The area is also a key strategic zone for the French military as they can quickly be reinforced by both the French and Nigerien army if required. France and the US both operate drones out of Niger’s capital Niamey. The growing need to focus on Libya has also been reflected in strategy changes announced by the US military last month. Officials confirmed that they will shift its drone flights from Niamey to a base located 800 kilometers (500 miles) further north in Niger, a move that will effectively allow Washington to better track Islamist

fighters in the region as the northern location will give them easier access to a desert route that links southern Libya and northern Mali, which is often used to move arms and Islamist fighters. Three months ago, France launched operation Barkhane, a military campaign aimed at targeting Islamist groups that operate in the region. Troops and equipment have since been sent to Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, which are all part of the operation.

- **21 October 2014** – On Tuesday an official from Rwanda announced that the country will start screening all travellers from the United States and Spain. According to a Rwandan Ministry of Health document, all passengers travelling from the US and Spain will have their temperatures taken upon arrival, adding that if any passenger has a fever he/she will be denied entry. If there is no fever, the visitors will still be obligated to report their health condition to the authorities on a daily basis. The US Embassy in Rwanda on Tuesday advised any American who may have a fever or who recently travelled to one of the Ebola-affected countries “to weigh carefully whether travel to Rwanda at this time is prudent,” adding “please note neither the Department of State’s Bureau of Consular Affairs nor the US Embassy have authority over quarantine issues and cannot prevent a US citizen from being quarantined should local health authorities require it.” Rwanda currently has no reported cases of Ebola. **Update (23 October 2014)** – On Thursday, Rwanda lifted travel restrictions on travellers from the US and Spain after the President publicly told the health minister that such measures were not necessary. Earlier this week, health minister Agnes Binagwaho had ordered all travellers who had been in the US and Spain in the past three weeks to send health updates to her ministry on a daily basis while they were in Rwanda. However in messages posted on Twitter, President Paul Kagame stated that the restrictions have been lifted, adding that the minister had “sometimes acted first and thought later,” whereas it should have been the “other way round.” Visitors who have travelled to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone within the last 21 days are barred from Rwanda, which is screening all arriving travellers for Ebola. Rwandan citizens who have travelled to the three affected West African countries will be placed under quarantine.
- **17 October 2014** – A statement released by the East African five-nation bloc on Friday disclosed that several East African countries will deploy over 600 healthcare workers, including 41 doctors, to West Africa to combat the spread of Ebola. In the statement, the East African Community disclosed that the decision was made after health minister met this week, where they raised their concern at the “rapid increase in the number of cases and deaths” from Ebola. The 619 doctors and health workers will be sent from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Kenya will deploy fifteen doctors while Uganda will send 14. Rwanda and Tanzania will each send five doctors. Burundi is sending an additional 250 healthcare workers while Kenya will deploy 300.
- **16 October 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) will send experts to the Ivory Coast and Mali to test their Ebola-preparedness measures as the two countries are currently at the greatest risk of being the next to be affected by the outbreak. A team of around ten experts will leave for Mali on Sunday while another team will deploy to the Ivory Coast within days. According to a source, the teams will check all aspects to make the WHO confident of an “adequate level of response,” adding “the team will have every single component that needs to be checked upon: how to assemble a rapid response team, laboratory component, social mobilization, infection prevention and control, checking at the border, all of the functions will be represented in the team.” While neither Mali nor the Ivory Coast currently have any confirmed Ebola cases, the deadly disease has already gradually spread to areas that border the Ivory Coast, which has a population of about 20 million, roughly equal to the total of the three countries at the center of the current outbreak. Furthermore, both countries are the priorities on the WHO’s list of fifteen African countries that need to be prepared for an Ebola case. Speaking during a news conference in Geneva, Isabell Nuttal, the

WHO's health security response chief disclosed, "as the number of cases is increasing, it wouldn't be a surprise to have a case in neighboring countries. And its for this very reason that we are working with them so that they are able to detect and take immediate action," adding "border checkpoints and health points have been implemented on the major roads that are crossing between countries, so it provides a level of reassurance in terms of travelling." A possible major outbreak in the Ivory Coast would have a major impact on the global economy as the country is located next to Ghana, which produces about 60 percent of the world's cocoa beans.

- The BBC has launched an Ebola public health information service on WhatsApp. The service will provide audio, text message alerts and images in order to help people living in West Africa get the latest public information on how to combat the spread of Ebola in the region. Content will be limited to three times a day and the service will be available in both French and English. To subscribe to this service, add +44 7702 348 651 to your contacts then send 'JOIN' to the number via WhatsApp. To unsubscribe, send 'STOP' via WhatsApp to the same number. Due to the large volume of requests, the BBC has warned that it may take a little time to be added or removed from the service.

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, Mali 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.

On 23 October 2014, opposition parties in Burkina Faso called for nationwide protests against moves aimed at attempting to lift a two-term limit on the presidency. A protest has been called for 28 October. MS Risk advises all travellers to Burkina Faso to avoid all demonstrations and protests as they may turn violent with minimal notice.



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 Boulssa, 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

- **23 October 2014** – On Wednesday, opposition parties in Burkina Faso called for nationwide protests against moves aimed at attempting to lift a two-term limit on the presidency, with the opposition accusing President Blaise Compaore of preparing a “constitutional coup d'état.” Opposition leader Zephirin Diabre urged people across the country to close market stalls and to walk out of private and public sector jobs on October 28 in order to launch a civil disobedience campaign to prevent a referendum being organized. Tensions have been high across the country over the past several days, with pockets of unrest occurring in the capital city late on Tuesday, just hours after the government announced that it would submit a bill for parliament to call a referendum on constitutional changes to allow the president to stand for re-election next year. While the streets in the capital city were calm on Wednesday, as night fell, protesters, comprising of mostly young men, set up makeshift barricades, blocking several of the city's main streets before police negotiated an end to the protests in the early hours of Thursday morning.
- **21 October 2014** – According to Burkina Faso's Interior Minister, the country's government will submit a bill to parliament calling on a referendum to remove a two-term limit for the presidency. Jereome Bougouma did not disclose when the bill would be submitted or when the government hopes the proposed referendum would take place. The president and his allies will now have to secure an outright majority of the 127-seat National Assembly in order for the bill to be adopted. While his CDP party won 70 seats in a 2012 vote, recently the party has suffered a number of defections over the proposed constitutional changes. Tuesday's announcement is just the latest in a series of moves by supporters of President Blaise Compaore who are seeking to push through changes that will allow the president to stand for re-election next year when his last term comes to an end. While President Compaore has not publicly announced his bid to stand for re-election, the proposed revision has raised political tensions across the country, which under the current president has become a key player in regional diplomacy and security issues.

Ghana

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

An outbreak of the Ebola virus disease has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Mali and Liberia. There currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in Ghana. 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.

Domestic News

- **20 October 2014** – Ghana's finance minister Seth Terkper revealed Monday that he is confident the government will reach a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in November in order to attain a financial assistance programme that is aimed at restoring fiscal stability. According to the minister, the Ghanaian government is set to begin a third round of negotiations with the IMF at the beginning of November on a possible three-year programme, with the Minister stating that he is confident the country could implement the terms of a deal as "...Ghana has done about eight or nine programmes with the IMF since 1993." Over the past year, Ghana's economy has struggled due to fiscal problems including rising inflation, which in September stood at 16.5 percent, coupled with a budget deficit and a currency that has fallen sharply.

- **19 October 2014** – Ghana's main opposition party has nominated former foreign minister Nana Akufo-Addo as its candidate for the 2016 presidential elections. On Saturday, Mr Akufo-Addo won 94.4 percent of the votes from delegates of the New Patriotic Party. Mr Akufo-Addo, who will bid for the country's top job for a third time, lost narrowly to incumbent President John Dramani Mahama in 2012. He also ran unsuccessfully in 2008 against Mahama's predecessor John Atta Mills, who died in office in 2012. Mahama had been vice president and assumed the presidency after Mills' death. Since being inaugurated in January 2013, President Mahama has presided over a worsening economy, which has been impacted by dropping gold prices and lower-than-expected oil production, which have dragged down what was once one of the continent's fastest growing markets. The government recently indicated that it will seek assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Guinea

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



Security Summary

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

The transmission of Ebola in Guinea remains tense. 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

- **19 October 2014** – The Ebola virus has spread to two new regions in Guinea, including in an area where the AngloGold Ashanti Ltd., mine is located. According to statements released by Guinea’s Ministry of Health and AngloGold, the Siguiri area, where several infections have been reported, is located 30 kilometers (19 miles) from the Johannesburg-based company’s facility. Chris Nthite, a spokesman for AngloGold, had disclosed that AngloGold continues “...to strengthen and we conduct daily monitoring checks on all employees,” adding that while “some of our employees live in Siguiri,” none have been infected and operations continue. Mr Nthite further disclosed that the company is working with local health authorities and the World Health Organization (WHO) in order to manage its response to the disease and that travel from the site to the town is “being done on a strictly controlled basis.” AngloGold’s Siguiri project is located in a remote district about 850 kilometers (528 miles) northeast of the capital city Conakry. Last year, the facility employed 3,674 people, about half of them contractors.

Domestic News

- **22 October 2014** – In a surprise announcement late on Tuesday, President Alpha Conde’s office disclosed that he has replaced his security and energy ministers. A statement released by the President’s office indicated that Mahmoudou Cisse, a judge, has been named the new Minister of Security and Civil Protection, effectively replacing Madifing Diane, who had been in this post since last year. Cheikh Talib Sylla, a former project director for the Chinese-build Kaleta dam, has been named the new Minister of Energy and Hydro-Electric Power and has been tasked with tackling Guinea’s chronic power outages. He has replaced Idrissa Thiam who will now be a presidential advisor. The statement provided no reason for the sudden changes but came hours after President Conde named former finance minister Kassory Fofana as the presidency’s minister of state who is responsible for investments and public-private partnerships. While the country has great ambitions to become a major exporter of iron ore and other minerals, it has endured years of political instability and is currently battling the worst Ebola outbreak on record. Guinea is

currently the world's leading producer of bauxite, a raw material used in aluminum production, however the country is seeking to diversify its mining sector with a goal of developing its largely untapped iron reserves.

- **15 October 2014** - Opposition parties in Guinea have accused the government of using the ongoing Ebola outbreak as an excuse to delay municipal elections, initially scheduled to occur at the end of this year, and presidential elections in 2015. Many however believe that it will be impossible to organize voting with a health emergency of this magnitude. While the ongoing Ebola outbreak has impacted every aspect of life in Guinea, including restricting personal interactions, slowing commerce and placing great strain on the healthcare system, the political opposition has indicated that this is no reason to postpone elections in the coming months. This is also despite recent World Health Organization (WHO) predictions that have indicated that the number of new Ebola cases will increase to 10,000 per week by December in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Dansa Kourouma, chairman of the Guinean Civil Society Movement, has indicated that he believes the government has no other choice but to delay voting in local elections this year, and possibly next year's presidential elections, however the opposition is contending that the government will likely use this delay in order to either rig the eventual elections or to capitalize on its fight against Ebola in a bid to gain voters.

International Developments

- **13 October 2014** – Officials in France announced Monday that they have agreed to set up new Ebola treatment centers in Guinea after the United States requested additional assistance to fight the deadly virus. A statement released by French President Francois Hollande's office indicated that the French President had recently spoken with his US counterpart about ways to tackle the ongoing outbreak adding "Francois Hollande and Barack Obama have called for an increased mobilization of the international community and the European Union, in close coordination with the United Nations, the WHO and the countries affected." France has so far given 70 million euros to the effort and is due to open, by early November, its first treatment center in the Forest Region of southeastern Guinea, which is where the outbreak was first detected in March of this year. According to President Hollande's office, France will also build additional treatment centers, besides the one that will open in Macenta in November.

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, Mali and Liberia. While there currently are no confirmed Ebola cases in the Ivory Coast, the country has taken preventative measures and is at a particularly high risk as it borders Guinea, and Liberia, two countries that have been severely affected by the current outbreak. 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

- **25 October 2014** – A former defense minister and key ally of ex-Ivory Coast president Laurent Gbagbo has been arrested. According to Moise Lida Kouassi's lawyer Felix Bobre, the official of the opposition Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) party was arrested Thursday evening. While authorities have not disclosed information about the arrest, his lawyer indicated that it was rumored that Kouassi was being held for a breach of state security. Kouassi belongs to the FPI party, which was created by former president Gbagbo, and which recently has called for his release. Gbagbo has been in detention awaiting trial at the International Criminal Court in The Hague for more than two years.
- **24 October 2014** – The Ivory Coast, which is currently Ebola-free, has launched a manhunt for a Guinean health worker who may have fled his home country after possibly catching the deadly virus. According to a senior official at the Ivory Coast's National Public Health Institute, the man apparently fled shortly after finding out that an individual, who had come to his clinic for treatment, had died, possibly of Ebola. Speaking to reporters, Daouda Coulibaly disclosed "for the moment this person is not contagious," adding that health authorities were not alarmed and that currently "there is no panic....But it would be good if he got into contact with the health services."
- **14 October 2014** – The former first lady of the Ivory Coast, Simone Gbagbo, who has been accused of genocide for her role in the deadly post-election violence, including being linked to "death squads" used against supporters of current President Alassane Ouattara, will go on trial on October 22. She has been jailed in the Ivory Coast since the end of the crisis however the government has consistently refused to hand her over to the ICC, where she is wanted for crimes against humanity, arguing that its courts will guarantee a fair trial. According to a judicial source, another ninety persons close to ex-president Laurent Gbagbo will also go before court in Abidjan for their role in the five months of violence that killed some 3,000 people. The defendants, which include former prime minister Gilbert Ake N'Gbo, are charged with genocide, threats to state security, rebellion and disturbing public order during the bloody standoff that followed the 2010 presidential elections. Violence erupted in the Ivory Coast's commercial capital Abidjan after Laurent Gbagbo refused to concede power to his rival Alassane Ouattara, who was declared the winner. Laurent Gbagbo is due to face trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC), where his former right hand man, Charles Ble Goude, took to the stand this month in order to defend himself against accusations that he murdered, raped and burned alive hundreds of people.

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.

Cases of the Ebola virus have been confirmed across 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.

On July 27, the government announced that all borders of Liberia have been closed, with the exception of major entry points including the Roberts International Airport, James Spriggs Payne Airport, Foya Crossing, Bo Waterside Crossing and Ganta Crossing. The Liberia Airport Authority has also introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. In August, British Airways announced that they were suspending flights to Liberia and Sierra Leone until the end of this year. This is due to the deteriorating public health situation. Some other airlines have also suspended flights to Liberia. MS Risk advises all to carefully assess your need to travel to Liberia. If you do decide to travel, we advise that you make sure you have adequate arrangements in place for onward travel/exit and have adequate emergency health provisions. Due to the Ebola outbreak, general medical facilities throughout the country are currently under particular strain.



Dedicated healthcare facilities for Ebola can also be under pressure and many

medical facilities expect to be paid up-front. The Liberian Airport Authority has introduced enhanced screening measures for both inbound and outbound travellers at airport facilities. MS Risk advises all travellers to maintain strict standards of hygiene, avoid contact with symptomatic and deceased patients, avoid contact with live or dead animals and avoid consumption of bush meat

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

There is a possibility that retaliatory attacks could be carried out in Liberia, this is due to the country's participation in the intervention in Mali. UNMIL peacekeepers are deployed to the main population centers around Liberia, and patrol the main roads.

On the Ground Reporting

- **23 October 2014** - Liberian state radio reported Thursday that dozens of people quarantined for Ebola monitoring in the western region of the country have threatened to break out of isolation over a lack of food. Sources have reported that forty-three people were placed in quarantine after four people died of Ebola in Jenewonda, a town located near the border with Sierra Leone. Alexis Masciarelli, a spokesman for the UN World Food Programme indicated that it was working to help those in isolation, disclosing "WFP in Liberia heard about this community being isolated only two days ago via the radio and staff immediately began organizing a mission to bring food to the quarantined people."
- **13 October 2014** – On Monday, health workers across Liberia went on strike, demanding danger pay for taking care of the sick in the deadly ongoing Ebola outbreak. According to Joseph Tamba, the chairman of the Liberian health workers' union, the strike call had been "massively" followed. Mr. Tamba further indicated that aside from the additional pay, health workers are striking as many of them have not been paid their regular wage to combat the epidemic, which has killed more than 2,300 in Liberia and which has severely overwhelmed the country's health system. Labor action began last week with a go-slow at Monrovia's Island Clinic, whose Ebola treatment unit (ETU) has been overwhelmed since it opened its doors on September 21, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO). The strike then expanded to other ETU's on Monday and Tuesday. While complete figures on how many health workers are striking have not been released, the local WHO office has indicated that one-third of Island Clinic staff were not at work. Doctors, nurses and carers in West Africa are on the frontline of the worst-ever outbreak of Ebola, which has already killed 4,000 people mostly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. So far, ninety-

five Liberian health workers have died in the epidemic, and their surviving colleagues are now requesting pay commensurate to the acute risk of dealing with Ebola. **Update (15 October 2014)** – Late on Tuesday, Liberian health workers ended a two-day strike to secure risk pay for Ebola, indicating that they put the needs of their country first following global appeals to end the protest. According to George Williams, secretary general of the National Workers Union of Liberia, “we are putting an end to the strike first for the love we have for our people, and also because we received calls from everywhere in the world from people asking us to put an end to the strike.” The end of the strike came just hours after the Liberian government threatened to fire doctors and nurses who were on strike. Speaking on state radio, Health Minister Walter Gwenigale had indicated, “those who stay home in respect of the order given by the health workers union will be replaced and will never come back to work.”

Mali

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Summary

On 23 October 2014, Mali's Health Minister confirmed the country's first Ebola case. The index case involves a two-year-old girl who recently travelled from Guinea to Bamako, where she stayed ten days before travelling to the western town of Kayes.

Government officials have indicated that the girl and all those who came in contact with her have been placed under quarantine however further Ebola cases are possible. MS Risk currently advises all travellers to Mali to take caution, maintain strict standards of hygiene and avoid eating bush meat. There has been an outbreak of the Ebola virus, which has been confirmed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.



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.

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

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

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

Local Travel

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

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

MS RISK Guidance to Organizations in Mali:

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

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

- **23 October 2014** - Just a week after the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it would deploy experts to the Ivory Coast and Mali to test their Ebola-preparedness measures, on Thursday, Mali's Health Minister confirmed the country's first Ebola case. Speaking on state television late Thursday, Malian Health Minister Ousmane Kone confirmed that a two-year-old girl has tested positive for the deadly virus, disclosing that she was currently being treated at a hospital in the western town of Kayes, which is located 600 kilometers (375 miles) from the capital city Bamako. According to the Health Minister, the girl was brought to the Fousseyni Daou hospital on Wednesday, where she was immediately tested for the virus, which came back positive. Reports have indicated that the girl had recently returned from Kissidougou, in neighboring Guinea, where the Ebola outbreak first emerged last December. Her mother died in Guinea several weeks ago, with the girl recently being brought to Bamako by relatives. She stayed in the Malian capital for ten days, in the Bagadadji neighbourhood, before leaving for Kayes. The child and 43 people who have come into contact with her have been put in quarantine, with the health minister urging anyone who may have had contact with the girl to come forward. A source within the health ministry has reported that the child's condition is said to be improving. Mali is now the sixth country in West Africa to be affected by the worst-ever Ebola outbreak, however both Senegal and Nigeria have in the past week been declared Ebola-free by WHO officials. Health officials have long viewed Mali as one of the most vulnerable to Ebola's spread as the West African country borders both Guinea, which has been one of the hardest-hit countries by the current outbreak, and Senegal. The WHO's list of fifteen African countries that need to be prepared for a possible Ebola case identified both Mali and the Ivory Coast as top priorities. Last week, WHO officials announced that they will deploy experts to both countries in order to test their Ebola-preparedness measures as both countries are currently at the greatest risk of being the next to be affected by the outbreak. Speaking during a news conference in Geneva last week, Isabella Nuttal, the WHO's health security response chief disclosed, "as the number of cases is increasing, it wouldn't be a surprise to have a case in neighboring countries. And its for this very reason that we are working with them so that they are able to detect and take immediate action," adding, "border checkpoints and health points have been implemented on the major roads that are crossing between the countries, so it provides a level of reassurance in terms of travelling." On Sunday, a team of ten experts was set to deploy to Mali, with another team set to deploy to the Ivory Coast in the coming days. An outbreak of the Ebola virus in Mali would likely severely threaten the country's already fragile security situation, as Mali is continuing to stabilize after a coup and Islamist militant takeover of its northern region. It could also result in a greater risk to healthcare workers deployed in the country. While several teams of health workers have been attacked in Guinea, with several workers killed in September by locals as they attempted to spread awareness about the deadly virus, terrorist groups operating in the northern regions could target health



workers for kidnap-for-ransom or could carry out violent attacks similar to those that targeted polio vaccination workers in Nigeria and Pakistan. New figures released by the WHO on Wednesday indicate that Ebola has now killed 4,877 people and infected 9,936 across West Africa, with most of the deaths and cases occurring in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The official number of cases and deaths however remains unknown as under-reporting continues to be a major issue in this outbreak, however the WHO indicated last week that the true death toll may be three times as high as the one currently being reported. A separate and unrelated outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in central Africa currently appears to have been contained. **Update (25 October 2014)** – A source in the prime minister's office confirmed Friday that a two-year-old girl has died of Ebola in Mali, in what is the first case of the disease in the West African nation.

- **19 October 2014** – French forces operating in Mali have seized a large cache of arms and detained three men, which they believe were linked to a recent rocket attack on a UN base in northern Mali that killed a Senegalese peacekeeper. According to officials in the French army, Friday's raid on a house in Kidal led to the seizure of a large quantity of munitions, the same kind that were used in recent attacks on UN peacekeepers, along with rocket launchers, rockets and explosives. A statement released by officials from Operation Barkhane, which is France's counter-terrorism force that is currently operating in the Sahel region, disclosed that the owner of the house is believed to have been directly linked with the October 7 attack on the UN base. Additional information uncovered at the house also reveals the mastermind behind the attack, who has since fled. Over the past several months, Islamist insurgents operating in the northern region of Mali have increased their attacks on foreign forces despite being pushed out by French troops early last year. Over the past month, ten UN peacekeepers have been killed, bringing the total number of UN peacekeepers killed in Mali since the mission was launched last year to thirty-one.
- **16 October 2014** – At least seven people were killed Thursday in clashes that erupted between armed groups and pro-government militias, sparking tensions ahead of a new round of peace talks that are set to take place later this month. An African military source from the MINUSMA UN mission deployed in Mali confirmed the incident, disclosing "there were at least seven dead on both sides and several injured," adding that the mission had sent a drone and Apache helicopters to the site to investigate. According to on the ground sources, the fighting occurred around 130 kilometers (80 miles) south of Gao, in the locality of In Tillit, and lasted more than six hours. Negotiations between the Malian government and pro-independence groups are due to resume in Algiers at the end of the month.

International Developments

- **18 October 2014** – On Friday, the United Nations Security Council urged Mali's warring factions to make progress towards a lasting peace deal at upcoming talks in Algeria as a wave of deadly attacks, which targeted UN peacekeepers operating in northern Mali, has sparked fears of further unrest in the region. In a unanimously adopted statement, the 15-nation Council urged the Bamako government and the six armed groups in northern Mali to "engage in good faith and in the spirit of compromise" during the talks, which are set to open in Algiers on Sunday. The UN's chief of peacekeeping operations, Herve Ladsous, arrived in Algiers on Friday to help with the negotiations. A peace agreement has taken on particular importance following a series of attacks that have left thirty-one peacekeepers dead since the mission was launched in July 2013. While Algerian-brokered negotiations in July resulted in a ceasefire deal and a roadmap for peace talks, subsequent rounds of discussions have failed to generate additional momentum towards a final

agreement. The Council has now urged both sides to focus on implementing a lasting peace agreement and has called for an end to attacks on peacekeepers.

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, Mali and Sierra Leone, Mauritania has closed some of its southern border crossings. MS Risk advises all travellers to the area to check with local officials. Mauritanian authorities have decided to deny entry to citizens arriving from those African countries that have been affected by the current Ebola outbreak.

MS Risk advises against all travel to the provinces of Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, Tagant, Hodh el Chargui, Dakhlet-Nouadhibou and Inchiri. We also advise against all travel to the northern and eastern regions of the country, especially the desert areas north of Oualata-Tichit-Ouadane-Zouerat line, as well as the border areas with Algeria, Mali and Morocco. MS Risk also advises against all but essential travel to the rest of the country, which includes travel along the Nouakchott-Nouadhibou corridor which comprises of the north-south arterial road that runs between these two cities and which passes through Nouamghar. This is due to extremist groups and armed smugglers that are active in these areas, which has resulted in high threats of terrorism as well as a heightened risk of banditry and kidnapping.



Since early 2012, there have been demonstrations in a number of locations across the country, including Nouakchott. In general, demonstrations have been

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

Terrorism

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

Kidnapping

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

For companies with employees remaining in Mauritania, MS Risk advises you to arrange a trustworthy escort that is familiar with the country. The use of varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one location to another is also highly advised. Exercise a high awareness of personal security at all times and monitor the local developments. On 14 May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a state of emergency in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Both Adamawa and Borno border Cameroon's far North, North and Adamaoua provinces. It is possible that military operations there might have an impact across the border in Cameroon.

Niger

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

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



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

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

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 October 2014** – The United States army confirmed Monday that a US drone crash-landed at Niger's main airport, forcing the closure of the runway for several hours. According to a statement from the US Air Forces in Europe and Africa public affairs directorate, the "hard landing" of the unarmed MQ-9 Reaper aircraft damaged the runway at Diori Hamani International airport in the Niger capital of Niamey, however no injuries were reported in the incident, adding "the US government is working closely with the government of Niger to secure the scene and mitigate inconveniences caused by the incident....The cause of the incident is currently under investigation." According to a Nigerien airport source, the incident occurred around 03:40 AM (0240 GMT) with the airport remaining closed until 12:30 PM in order to repair the damage to the runway. The US started drone surveillance flights out of Niger in early 2013 to support French forces fighting Islamist militants in northern Mali. Last month however the US military announced that it will shift its drone flights from Niamey to a base located 800 kilometers (500 miles) further north in Niger. This move will effectively allow Washington to better track Islamist fighters in the region as the northern location will give them easier access to a desert route that links southern Libya and northern Mali, which is often used to move arms and Islamist fighters. The French military also flies drones out of Niamey.
- **13 October 2014** – Niger's cabinet of ministers has approved French nuclear group Areva's uranium production renewal contract, effectively completing two years of often-difficult negotiations. While the two parties announced the signature of a new 10-year agreement for Areva's Somair and Cominak mines in May of this year, Monday's confirmation from President Mahamadou Issoufou and his ministers effectively allows the contract to be implemented. A statement released by the Nigerien government indicated that under the new contract, Areva has agreed to fewer tax breaks and higher royalty rates, adding that the French company has also agreed to spend US \$148 million to rebuild the road to its mines in Arlit, as well as to fund development projects and to build a new headquarters in the capital Niamey. The previous production agreement expired at the end of December last year, resulting in several temporary extensions.

Nigeria

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Summary

On 20 October 2014, the World Health Organization declared Nigeria Ebola-free. An Ebola outbreak has been confirmed in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Mali. While Nigeria has been declared Ebola-free, due to the intensity of the ongoing outbreak, a second outbreak of Ebola in Nigeria cannot be ruled out. MS Risk advises all travellers to the region to remain cautious.



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

- **24 October 2014** – In what is the latest abduction targeting a prominent political family, police officials confirmed Friday that the sister of Nigeria's petroleum minister has been kidnapped in the oil hub of Port Harcourt. According to Rivers State Police spokesman Ahmad Muhammad, Osio Agama was seized at gunpoint as she approached her car Tuesday night. Muhammad disclosed that police "were not aware if any ransom demand had been made" and the motive for the abduction was unknown however the southern oil-producing Niger Delta region has in recent years seen a wave of kidnap-for-ransom cases. One of the most prominent was the December 2012 kidnapping of Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's 82-year-old mother, Kamene Okonjo, who was abducted from her home in neighboring Delta state. At the time of her kidnapping, the finance minister had indicated that her mother was seized because of her ministry's crackdown on oil companies, which had abused the country's fuel subsidy scheme. While security forces and affected families typically do not confirm ransom payments, it is widely believed that kidnappers in the Niger Delta use such means to gain financially. Despite producing roughly two million barrels of oil per day, the area remains poor, with high unemployment.
- **23 October 2014** – Despite the government maintaining its claim of a purported ceasefire agreement with Islamist militants, a bomb blast at a bus station in northern Nigeria on Wednesday killed at least five people in an area that has previously been targeted by Boko Haram. Police in Bauchi state confirmed overnight reports of a large explosion at 9:45 PM (2045 GMT) at the terminal in the town of Azare, indicating that the bomb killed five people, leaving them "burnt beyond recognition," with twelve others injured. Several witnesses have reported that they believed the bomb was embedded in a parked car and that it was

detonated remotely however police officials have not released details on the nature of the explosive device. While there were no immediate claims of responsibility, Bauchi has been one of the hardest hit areas in Boko Haram's five-year insurgency, with the militant group carrying out church bombings, coordinated gun raids and a massive prison raid in 2011. The militant group has also targeted bus stations on a number of occasions. Twin bombings at a terminal located on the outskirts of the capital Abuja earlier this year killed nearly 100 people. The bus station in Azare, a town located 200 kilometers (125 miles) from Bauchi city, the state capital, is widely used as a transit point by travellers coming from Nigeria's restive northeastern region.

- Residents and witnesses have reported that dozens of women and girls from two villages in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state have been suspected by suspected Boko Haram militants. While the abductions have not been confirmed by the authorities, residents reported that they occurred a day after the military announced that it had agreed a ceasefire with the militant group. While the government is still hoping that Boko Haram will free more than 200 girls seized in April as part of the negotiations, Boko Haram has not confirmed the truce, and an attack on a bus station in northeastern Nigeria has further fueled speculations that a truce has not been agreed. Following Fridays' ceasefire announcement, the government had indicated that further talks with Boko Haram were due to be held this week in neighboring Chad however officials have not released any further details pertaining to the talks.
- On Thursday, Nigerian officials pledged to send a contingent of 600 volunteers to help fight the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa. While financial pledges have come from several countries around the world, trained doctors and nurses remain scarce in the three worst affected countries, resulting in the African Union last week appealing to member states to urgently fill the gap. Speaking to reporters Thursday, acting Health Minister Khaliru Alhassan disclosed "Nigeria has 600 health workers who have been trained in the field of Ebola containment who are ready to go to other affected African countries to help them in containment of Ebola spread," adding that "the first contingent of 250 Nigerian experts will be deployed soon."
- **20 October 2014** – On Monday, officials at the WHO declared Nigeria Ebola-free after six weeks of no new reported cases. For officials to declare the country Ebola-free, Nigeria had to make it 42 days with no new cases, effectively double the incubation period, verify that it actively sought out all possible contacts, and show negative test results for any remaining suspected cases. Nigeria had a total of twenty cases after a Liberian-American man, Patrick Sawyer, flew into Lagos international airport on July 20 and collapsed shortly afterwards. As Nigeria had no previous screening procedures in place, the deadly virus ultimately killed eight people, a low number in comparison to the thousands of cases and deaths in other countries, with the disease spreading from Lagos to Port Harcourt before it was contained. Amongst those who died was Dr Ameyo Stella Adadevo, who diagnosed Mr Sawyer and who is credited with helping to contain the outbreak at its source. The last reported case in Nigeria, which is Africa's most populous country, was discovered on 5 September. Speaking to reporters shortly after the declaration, Nigerian Minister of Health Onyebuchi Chukwu disclosed "its possible to control Ebola. Its possible to defeat Ebola. We've seen it here in Nigeria," adding "if any cases emerge in the future, it will be considered – by international standards - a separate outbreak. If that happens, Nigeria will be ready and able to confront it exactly as we have done with this outbreak." Nigeria has won praise for its swift response to the outbreak. With the epidemic raging in Western Africa since March, officials knew that there was a likelihood that a case of Ebola could surface within its borders. This prompted officials to train health care workers on how to manage the disease and to disseminate information across the country about the disease and how it spreads. Shortly

after Mr Sawyer's death, the Nigerian government declared a national public health emergency. This effectively enabled the Ministry of Health to set up its Ebola Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), which is an assembly of public health experts within Nigeria, and which includes officials from the WHO, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and medical aid groups such as Doctors Without Borders. The EOC was tasked with contact tracing, implementing strict procedures for handling and treating patients, screening all individuals arriving or departing the country by land, air and sea and communicating with the community. Some EOC workers were involved in going door-to-door to offer Ebola-related education while others worked with religious and professional leaders to spread information about the disease. While in the beginning, there had been some misinformation about available cures and rumors circulating across the country, Nigerian officials used social media in order to increase awareness efforts and publicized those patients who had been successfully treated and discharged from hospital. While other regional countries opted to close their borders with those affected countries, Nigeria chose to keep its borders open with Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, indicating that such a move would have been counterproductive. According to Dr Faisal Shuaib of the EOC, "closing borders tends to reinforce panic and the notion of helplessness....When you close the legal points of entry, then you potentially drive people to use illegal passages, thus compounding the problem," adding that if "public health strategies are implemented, outbreaks can be controlled, and that closing borders would only stifle commercial activities in the countries where economies are already struggling due to Ebola." Despite being declared Ebola-free, Nigerian authorities are preparing for any additional outbreaks as the current Ebola epidemic in West Africa is far from over and a spread to additional countries, including Nigeria and Senegal, remains possible. Nigeria has not slowed down its training and preparations for the possibility of more cases, with Dr Shuaib disclosing "outbreak response preparedness is a continuous process that requires constant review of the level of the response mechanisms in place to ensure that the health system is ready to jump into action at all levels."

- While on Friday, Nigerian officials disclosed that they had agreed to a ceasefire with Boko Haram militants, adding that schoolgirls kidnapped in April would soon be released, doubts emerged over the weekend as witnesses and security sources reported that government forces had engaged in fighting with the militants. On Friday, a senior aide to President Goodluck Jonathan, Hassan Tukur, announced that an agreement to end the hostilities had been reached following talks between Boko Haram and the Nigerian government, with Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Chris Olukolade disclosing that the fate of more than 200 missing schoolgirls, who were abducted by the insurgents six months ago, was still being negotiated. Nigeria's chief of defense staff, Air Marshal Alex Badeh, confirmed the truce during a meeting in Abuja between Nigerian and Cameroonian military officials Friday, adding that he had ordered his troops to immediately comply with the agreement. Many Nigerians however quickly expressed their doubts that the five-year insurgency, which has killed thousands and has left hundreds of thousands homeless, could end with a simple cease-fire. There has also been no immediate confirmation from Boko Haram, with some Nigerians believing that this may simply be a move by the Nigerian government to demonstrate that they are winning the war against the militant group. President Goodluck Jonathan is expected to declare his bid for re-election in the coming weeks and any positive news pertaining to the hostages and the violence would likely give him a much-needed political boost. Furthermore, previous government and military claims pertaining to the end of the deadly five-year insurgency, and the fate of the missing girls, have left many cautious. Last year, when a government minister charged with negotiations announced an agreement, Boko Haram quickly released a video with its leader, Abubakar Shekau, denying that an

agreement had been reached. Doubts about the ceasefire were further heightened after witnesses and security sources reported that troops from the 7th Division of the Nigerian Army fought dozens of suspected Boko Haram militants in the town of Damboa in Borno state on Sunday evening. The militants had earlier attacked that town of Sabon Gida, also in Borno state. Senior army and intelligence officials have also disclosed that they have not yet received any operational orders pertaining to the ceasefire despite Air Marshal Alex Badeh indicating Friday that he had already ordered his troops to comply with the agreement immediately.

- **15 October 2014** – On Wednesday, fifty-nine Nigerian soldiers appeared before a military tribunal in the capital Abuja. The soldiers, all members of the 111th Special Forces Battalion, have been charged with mutiny and conspiracy to commit mutiny over claims that they refused to fight Boko Haram militants. According to official court documents, the 59 soldiers are charged with “conspiring to commit mutiny against the authorities of 7 Division, Nigerian Army,” which is in the front line of the counter-insurgency, and are also accused of refusing to deploy in August to recapture the towns of Yelwa, Bellabulini and Dambo in Borno state from Boko Haram. They have all pleaded not guilty. The latest trial involving Nigerian soldiers comes just a month after twelve Nigerian soldiers were sentenced to death for mutiny after shots were fired at their commanding officer in the restive northeast city of Maiduguri earlier this year. A total of 97 soldiers appeared in court on October 2 on a range of charges related to the fight against Boko Haram, which has killed thousands over the past five years. Nigeria’s military has been under increasing pressure to gain back territory seized by the militants in the northeastern Nigerian states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe, which has led to fears of a loss of government control in those areas. There have however been numerous reports that Nigerian soldiers have refused to deploy for operations, with some sources reporting that soldiers have fled before and during Boko Haram attacks.
- **14 October 2014** – Protesters, calling for the release of 219 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants, were set to mark the six-month anniversary of their abduction on Tuesday with a march on the presidency. Members of the Bring Back Our Girls campaign are planning to walk to President Goodluck Jonathan’s official residence in Abuja in a bid to keep pressure on the government to bring the teenage girls back. The march will be the culmination of a number of events that have taken place over the past week, including a candlelit vigil, to keep the fate of the girls in the public eye. Some 276 girls were seized from their dormitories at the Government Girls Secondary School in the remote town of Chibok in the northeastern state of Borno on the night of 14 April. While fifty-seven managed to escape, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau later threatened to sell the remainder as slave brides and vowed that they would not be released until militant prisoners were freed from jai. Since their kidnapping, there have been a number of statements released by senior government officials indicating that officials knew the whereabouts of the girls. In late May, Nigeria’s most senior military officer, Chief of Defense Staff Alex Badeh, indicated that while the girls had been located but that officials had ruled out a rescue operation due to the danger to the girls’ lives.
- **13 October 2014** – A source reported Monday that a young woman, who was found wandering in northeastern Nigeria and who police initially indicated was one of more than 200 missing schoolgirls, was actually abducted four months earlier. Nigeria’s National police had initially indicated that they believed the woman, who was discovered near Mubi in Adamawa state on September 24, was among the 219 teenagers kidnapped by the Islamist group from the town of Chibok in neighboring Borno state in April. While the announcement raised hopes for the release of the schoolgirls, the report was immediately disputed by Chibok elders who indicated that she was not on the list of missing and did not come from the town. Now a source has confirmed that authorities have indicated that the woman was kidnapped four months earlier

than the schoolgirls. According to the source, “she is a 23-year-old woman from Mubi. She was abducted in January by Boko Haram and taken to Sambisa Forest, where they have their enclave,” adding “she was taken as a wife by a Boko Haram member called Mohammed. She was already married before she was abducted.” The young woman indicated that she became pregnant and fell sick and that on September 19, her new husband’s friends forced her into a car and left her in the bush, where she wandered for four days. She was eventually found near a village called Plefu in the Hong local government district before being taken to a police station in Mubi.

Domestic News

- **16 October 2014** – Nigeria’s elections chief announced Thursday that the country will be able to hold elections in February 2015 even if Boko Haram violence makes voting in the northeastern region of the country impossible, arguing that the disenfranchisement of thousands of people would not undermine the entire vote. Attahiru Jega, who heads the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) disclosed that he was preparing to organize polling in the three states currently under emergency rule, noting however that based on current security assessments, it was “inconceivable” that unrest could prevent voting throughout the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. He further indicated that even if the security services ruled out polling stations in areas where the crisis is most intense – including much of Borno and parts of Yobe – the overall credibility of the vote would remain intact. Human rights lawyer Festus Keyamo has agreed with the electoral chief that the de facto disenfranchisement of tens of thousands of likely opposition voters would not necessarily nullify the presidential result, particularly if the margins are wide, however he did warn that Senate and lower house results in the affected areas would be invalid. Boko Haram is currently believed to be in control of more than a dozen towns and villages in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, however the situation could change significantly before the polling day, which is scheduled for 14 February 2015. If the situation however remains the same, securing the northeastern region on the day of the election will require a massive military deployment that will effectively leave other flashpoints, such as the religiously divided central states, which have seen political violence in the past, more vulnerable. According to figures released by the United Nations, more than 600,000 people have been displaced by the conflict, and will likely face huge challenges to return to their home districts in order to vote. While President Goodluck Jonathan is expected to declare his re-election bid in the coming weeks, election analysts believe that those affected by the ongoing conflict in the northeast will likely vote overwhelmingly against him.
- **15 October 2014** – On Wednesday, Nigeria’s former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari declared his presidential bid. Addressing thousands of cheering supporters Buhari criticized President Goodluck Jonathan’s administration for corruption and failing to tackle Boko Haram’s ongoing insurgency. If his bid is accepted by the All Progressives Congress (APC) opposition party, it will be the second time that he will run against President Jonathan. President Jonathan has yet to officially declare his intentions to run in next year’s presidential elections, however sources have reported that he will likely officially announce his election bid in the coming weeks. During his time as former military ruler, from 1983 – 1985, Buhari gained a reputation for fighting against corruption, with most Nigerians agreeing that he did not use the presidency in order to enrich himself and his backers. He administration also jailed a number of politicians on graft charges. He currently faces ex-president Atiku Abubakar in the primaries, which are set to take place on 2 December. Abubakar declared his intentions to run in the presidential elections late last month.

Senegal

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



Security Summary

On 17 October 2014, the World Health Organization declared Senegal Ebola-free. An Ebola outbreak has been confirmed in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Mali. While Senegal has been declared Ebola-free, due to the intensity of the ongoing outbreak, a second outbreak of Ebola in Senegal cannot be ruled out. MS Risk advises all travellers to the region to remain cautious.

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

On the Ground Reporting

- **17 October 2014** - On Friday, the WHO declared Senegal, which borders with Guinea, clear of the disease. The agency made the assessment after the West African country went forty-two days, without reporting any new cases. The WHO has commended the Senegalese government's efforts at preventing the spread of the virus. In late August, Senegal had one confirmed case of Ebola, an imported one from Guinea, which prompted officials to monitor seventy-four contacts of the patient and increase surveillance at the country's entry points. In new figures released by the UN health Agency Friday, 4,555 people have died of confirmed, suspected or probable cases of Ebola, with almost all of the deaths occurring in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. A total of 9,216 cases have been reported. An estimated 70% of those infected with the

deadly disease have died in those countries. The situation in all three West African countries has continued to worsen, with deaths attributed to the disease on the rise in all three.

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.

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

- **22 October 2014** – Two people have died after a riot erupted when health workers attempted to take a blood sample from an elderly woman. According to on the ground sources, a group of youths, armed with machetes, clashed with security personnel in the eastern town of Koidu. The clashes erupted when a crowd prevented a medical team from testing an elderly woman for the deadly virus. When health workers called in security guards for protection, the violence grew into a riot, resulting in the deaths of two civilians and injuries to ten people, including several security personnel. Local police chief David Koroma confirmed the incident, adding that while calm had returned to the town on Wednesday, the area remained tense,

noting that officers were watching the situation and that “people should go about their normal business without fear.” **Update (23 October 2014)** – Authorities have imposed a curfew in the eastern town of Koidu after a dispute between several youths and police over a suspected Ebola case sparked rioting and gunfire. The latest clashes in Sierra Leone have highlighted the tensions across the country as the government attempts to contain the worst Ebola outbreak on record.

- **21 October 2014** – Government officials disclosed Tuesday that Ebola is severely affecting the western region of the country, where the capital city is located, with dozens of people falling sick each day and reports emerging that the removal of bodies has now become a problem due to the high number of deaths. On Monday, Sierra Leone’s National Ebola Response Center (NERC) reported that forty-nine confirmed cases of Ebola had emerged in one day in two Ebola zones in and around the capital city. Lawmaker Claude Kamanda, who represents the western region of the country, has disclosed that more than twenty deaths are being reported daily, with authorities experiencing challenges in collecting corpses from both quarantined and non-quarantined homes. Authorities have indicated that the reason for the recent increase in Ebola cases is likely due to the uncontrolled movement of people from the central regions of the country to Waterloo, which is the gateway to Freetown, adding that people are likely violating quarantines set in place in other regions of the country and are coming to Freetown through Waterloo. Figures released by the NERC indicate that there are a total of 851 confirmed Ebola cases in the two zones, which are known as the Western Area Urban and Western Area Rural. The number of cases may soon surpass the former epicenter of the outbreak, which was in the eastern districts of Kenema and Kailahun where there have been a total of 1,012 confirmed cases. On Monday, no new Ebola cases were reported in Kenema or Kailahun however World Health Organization (WHO) authorities have warned that it is too clear to declare that the epidemic has ended in the eastern region of the country.
- **18 October 2014** – Sierra Leone’s President Ernest Bai Koroma has announced a major revamp to the body in charge of fighting the Ebola outbreak in the country. According to a statement released by the President’s office, the country’s new National Ebola Response Centre will replace the previous body, the National Operations Centre, “with immediate effect.” The new center will be headed by Defense Minister Paolo Conteh, who will report directly to the President, and will have full powers to combat the disease and to ensure a more effective use of aid. The previous national response center was headed by the health minister.
- **16 October 2014** – Government officials announced Thursday that the deadly Ebola virus has infected two people in what was the last unaffected district in Sierra Leone, a setback in efforts to stop the spread of the disease in one of the hardest-hit countries. In its report, released Wednesday, the Emergency Operation Center indicated that two Ebola cases in the Koinadugu district, in Sierra Leone’s far north region, were confirmed. The confirmation comes after the Koinadugu district’s health team received information of people dying in the village of Fakonya, which is located 60 miles from the town of district center of Kabala. According to officials, some fifteen people had died before two of the six samples tested came back positive for the virus. The deaths had initially been attributed to witchcraft. The town has now been isolated with nearby communities placed under observation. As the Ebola virus spread across the rest of Sierra Leone, locals in the far northern Koinadugu district had attempted to block movement in and out of the area to prevent anyone bringing in the hemorrhagic fever. Over the past week, 425 new cases were reported in Sierra Leone, with the country’s health care system struggling to deal with the onslaught of the disease. According to figures released by the world Health Organization (WHO) there have been more than 3,000 infections in Sierra Leone with nearly 1,200 deaths.

- **14 October 2014** – According to military officials, a battalion of 800 Sierra Leone soldiers, awaiting deployment as peacekeepers in Somalia, has been placed in quarantine after one of its members tested positive for the deadly Ebola virus. The soldiers were due to relieve the West African country's contingent, which is already deployed in the Horn of Africa nation as part of Somalia's African Union peacekeeping mission, known as AMISOM. The battalion will be quarantined for a period of 21-days. Colonel Michael Samoura, spokesman for the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, confirmed that a member of the battalion had tested positive for the deadly disease, disclosing that the soldier was infected after leaving the military camp, where the force is based, without permission.



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