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West Africa Report

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

October 27 – November 9, 2014



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Summary

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Sahel Region

International Developments

- **1 November 2014** – Canada's government has announced that it will suspend visa applications from residents and passport-holders from those West African countries currently affected by the ongoing Ebola outbreak.

Benin

- **29 October 2014** – On Wednesday, nearly 30,000 people demonstrated in Benin's capital city, demanding that the government hold long-delayed local elections that have been postponed over problems with voter registration.

Burkina Faso

On the Ground Reporting

- **5 November 2014** – Security sources reported Wednesday that the head of the party of ousted president Blaise Compaore has been arrested.
- **7 November 2014** – Despite agreeing to a one-year political transition, with presidential elections to be held in November 2015, Burkina Faso's interim leader has dismissed the African Union's (AU) imposition of a two-week deadline to hand power to civilians.
- **2 November 2014** - On Sunday, thousands of protesters took to the streets of Burkina Faso's capital city, rallying against the military's take over.
- **31 October 2014** - After three days of protests, on Friday, Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore formally announced his resignation, with the country's armed forces chief General Honore Traore announcing that he has taken charge of the West African country.
- **30 October 2014** – Thousands of protesters have stormed Burkina Faso's parliament and set the building on fire in Ouagadougou, forcing police to withdraw ahead of a vote on a motion to allow the president to stand for re-election. The military has fired live bullets in an attempt to disperse the protesters.
- **29 October 2014** – Following a day of protests, that saw hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Burkina Faso's capital city, trade unions on Wednesday called on a general strike just one day ahead of a Parliamentary assembly, which will consider a constitutional amendment aimed at extending the President Blaise Compaore's 27-year rule.

Domestic News

- **8 November 2014** – Talks on forming a transition government in Burkina Faso began Saturday with the army at first declining to join.
- **5 November 2014** – On Wednesday the heads of state of three West African nations arrived in Burkina Faso's capital city in a bid to pressure the country's army to adhere to its promise of handing power over to a civilian government following the fall of president Blaise Compaore.
- **3 November 2014** - Burkina Faso's military has announced that it will install a transitional government, just days after it seized power as President Blaise Compaore resigned.
 - The African Union (AU) has given Burkina Faso's military a two-week deadline to hand power to a civilian ruler or face sanctions.

International Developments

- **5 November 2014** – International donors, whose funding is key to financing Burkina Faso's domestic budget and external trade, are watching the situation in the country with concern.
- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, France's President Francois Hollande disclosed that his country had facilitated the evacuation of Burkina Faso's president Blaise Compaore after he was forced to resign last week.
- **31 October 2014** – On Friday, France welcomed the resignation of Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore after days of protests against his bid to amend the constitution to be re-elected for a third term.

Guinea-Bissau

- **4 November 2014** – A statement issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Monday revealed that Guinea-Bissau is set to receive a US \$5.24 million emergency loan, which will enable the country's government to make urgent payments.

Ivory Coast

Domestic News

- **5 November 2014** – According to an official source, the Ivory Coast's President Alassane Ouattara has "paid a courtesy visit" to Burkina Faso's deposed leader Blaise Compaore, who is currently in the country's central town of Yamoussoukro.

International Developments

- **4 November 2014** – Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have revealed that they want to put the Ivory Coast's former president and another suspect, who is alleged to be one of the ex-president's key supporters, on trial together on charges that they were involved in deadly violence that erupted in the wake of the country's 2010 presidential elections.
- **25 October 2014** – On Wednesday, the International Criminal Court (ICC) denied a request by former Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo to attend his mother's funeral, stating that it would put himself and the West African nation at risk.

Liberia

- **29 October 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Wednesday that while new Ebola infections appeared to be slowing in Liberia, the crisis is far from over.
- **28 October 2014** – Officials from the Red Cross offered some hope Tuesday when they announced that the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa might start diminishing after officials in Liberia's capital disclosed that they had seen a dramatic drop in the number of bodies that were collected.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **8 November 2014** – French army officials disclosed Saturday that French forces have killed 24 extremists and seized arms in a large-scale operation carried out in northern Mali.
- **4 November 2014** – In what appears to be the first confrontation between rebels and soldiers since a ceasefire was signed in May of this year, Malian troops and separatist Tuareg rebels clashed this week.
- **3 November 2014** – An improvised bomb detonated in Mali's restive northern desert region has killed two Malian soldiers and wounded four others.
- **31 October 2014** – Health experts concerned that the Ebola disease will spread further in Mali, and to other previously unaffected countries, disclosed Friday that a 2-year-old girl who had brought the disease to the West African country may have had contact with as many as 141 people, 57 of whom have yet to be traced.
- **30 October 2014** – Fighting between French forces and militants continued over night in northern Mali, where soldiers are currently carrying out a large-scale operation after a French soldier was killed.
- **28 October 2014** – A spokesman for the World Health Organization (WHO) disclosed Tuesday that health workers in Mali are currently monitoring 82 people who had contact with a toddler who died of Ebola in the West African country last week, adding that so far no new cases of the deadly disease have been reported.

Mauritania

- **29 October 2014** – Five days after closing its border with neighboring Mali, following the Malian government's confirmation of the country's first Ebola case, on Wednesday, Mauritanian officials confirmed that its borders with the West African country have been reopened.

Niger

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 October 2014** – According to the Nigerien government, at least twelve people, including nine members of the country's security forces, were killed in three simultaneous attacks carried out by unidentified gunmen in the western Tillabery region near the border with Mali.

Domestic News

- **28 October 2014** – Officials in Niger reported Tuesday that the country's embassy in Libya has been surrounded by heavily armed militias, with sources reporting that this possibly may be in response to unfounded rumors that Nigerien forces had entered the Libyan embassy in Niamey.
- **27 October 2014** – One of Niger's leading opposition figures, who is currently being sought on suspicion of being involved in a baby-trafficking ring, has lost his position as speaker of Parliament.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **7 November 2014** – A bomb, concealed in a black plastic bag, detonated at a cash point in Nigeria's northern Bauchi state on Friday, near the scene of a recent bus station attack, killing at least nine people.
 - The governor of Adamawa state in northeastern Nigeria disclosed Friday that Boko Haram has taken over at least five municipalities.
- **6 November 2014** – Sixteen men, who were arrested by Nigerian soldiers in the country's northeast, were found dead just hours later with bullet wounds.
- **5 November 2014** – In an apparent raid to fund and continue their operations, suspected Boko Haram fighters have stolen dynamite and pick-up trucks from a French-owned cement works in Nigeria after robbing a bank.
 - In neighboring Adamawa state, Boko Haram has renamed the town of Mubi. According to locals, the militants have renamed it Madinatul Islam – City of Islam.
- **3 November 2014** – Boko Haram is suspected of carrying out a suicide bombing at a Shiite ceremony on Monday.
 - In Adamawa state, tens of thousands of people have fled their homes after militants seized control of the commercial hub of Mubi, the latest among more than two dozen towns and villages that have fallen under the militant group's control.
- **2 November 2014** – Late Sunday, unidentified gunmen carried out a raid on a prison in central Nigeria's Kogi state, freeing 132 inmates. According to Jacob Edi, spokesman for Kogi's Governor Idris Wada, "there were 145 prisoners at the time of the attack."
- **1 November 2014** – Despite the Nigerian government maintaining in recent weeks that a ceasefire agreement had been reached with Boko Haram, the militant group has officially denied the claims that it has agreed to a ceasefire and that it will release more than 200 abducted schoolgirls.
- **31 October 2014** – A triple bombing at a bus station in northern Nigeria Friday morning has killed at least 8 people and injured 34, with hopes of a ceasefire between the government and Boko Haram appearing to have suffered another blow.
- **29 October 2014** – The sister of Nigeria's oil minister, who was kidnapped last week in Port Harcourt, has been freed in a joint operation carried out by security forces.
 - In what will likely further undermine recent claims of a ceasefire, on Wednesday Boko Haram fighters clashed with Nigerian troops in the country's remote northeastern regions, forcing hundreds to flee the area in the wake of two other attacks blamed on the militant group.
 - Suspected Boko Haram gunmen have killed several people in a village in Nigeria's far northeastern region.

- **27 October 2014** – Nigerian police disclosed Monday that gunmen have killed one German national and abducted another after opening fire on two vehicles in southwestern Nigeria

Domestic News

- **29 October 2014** – Despite his office announcing earlier this week that he would formally declare his bid for re-election on November 11, on Wednesday, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan confirmed that he will seek a second term in office in elections set to occur in February 2015.
- **28 October 2014** – On Tuesday, Nigeria's lower house speaker, and the fourth most powerful man in the country, defected to the main opposition collation, a move that will likely give a much needed boost to the party in their bid to win the February 2015 presidential elections.
 - The governor of north Nigeria's most populous state has announced his bid to run for president on the main opposition ticket.

Senegal

- **17 October 2014** – Aid agencies reported this week that thousands of people in Sierra Leone are being forced to violate Ebola quarantines in order to find food, as aid deliveries are not reaching them.

Sierra Leone

- **17 October 2014** – Aid agencies reported this week that thousands of people in Sierra Leone are being forced to violate Ebola quarantines in order to find food, as aid deliveries are not reaching them.

Togo

- **1 November 2014** – The leader of Togo's main opposition party has been selected to stand for president in next year's elections

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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.

Ghana

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.

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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.

International Developments

- **1 November 2014** – Canada's government has announced that it will suspend visa applications from residents and passport-holders from those West African countries currently affected by the ongoing Ebola outbreak. The decision by the Canadian government follows a similar decision made recently by the Australian government, which has drawn sharp criticism from the World Health Organization (WHO). However a spokesman for the Canadian government has noted that its move is less restrictive than Australia's plan, adding that the ability to grant visas on a case-by-case basis has been retained. The ban will also not apply to Canadians travelling from the Ebola zone, a decision that will effectively allow health workers and volunteers to return home. According to the Canadian government, the ban will apply to countries with "widespread and persistent-intense transmission." While Canada currently has no confirmed cases of Ebola, the country's federal citizenship ministry indicated, "the introduction or spread of the disease would pose an imminent and severe risk to public health." There are no direct flights from the three worst affected countries to Canada and the numbers of annual visits from those states is small. The WHO opposes all travel bans that are being used as a method of containing Ebola, indicating that such bans will only worsen the situation as it cuts the three countries off from trade and aid.

Benin

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

Although there is currently no travel advisory for Benin, MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to remain vigilant, especially in areas bordering Nigeria. 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 a heightened threat of terrorist attack globally from groups or individuals motivated by the current conflict in Iraq and Syria. Attacks could be indiscriminate and can occur in places where foreigners gather. 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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 October 2014** – On Wednesday, nearly 30,000 people demonstrated in Benin's capital city, demanding that the government hold long-delayed local elections that have been postponed over problems with voter registration. Local elections, which were last held in 2008, in which President Thomas Boni Yayi suffered heavy losses, were due to have been held in Benin in March 2013, however they have been pushed back several times over issues with voter registration. The country's digitized electoral system descended into chaos during the last presidential elections in 2011 after more than 1.5 million voters were unable to locate their names on the voters list. While Benin's government has made several attempts to fix the issue, the country's main opposition party has suggested that the delay is a tactic to enable the president to cling to power. On Wednesday, many protesters displayed their anger towards the continued delays, announcing that the government has other motives for the postponement of the vote. Parliamentary elections are due to be held next year, while presidential elections are set for 2016. President Boni Yayi is currently at the center of unconfirmed claims that he is looking to change the constitution in order to secure a third term in office.

Burkina Faso

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Widespread violent protests occurred on 30 October in Ouagadougou and other cities, including in Bobo Dioulasso, which led to the resignation of President Blaise Compaore on 31 October. Media reports have suggested that several protesters were killed in the 30 October protests however the numbers could potentially be higher. During the protests, looting and acts of vandalism were widespread. While Burkina Faso's army has nominated Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida the interim leader, the army, opposition party and civil society groups have agreed that the country should return to civilian rule within the next weeks in which a transitional government will be put in place until presidential elections are held in November 2015. While relative calm has been restored across the country, the situation may change quickly and protests may erupt if the army does not hand over power to a civilian ruler. MS Risk advises all travellers to Burkina Faso to avoid all demonstrations and protests as they may turn violent with minimal notice.



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. The regional Islamist elements that could threaten Burkina Faso include: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), Ansar al Dine, Ansar al Sharia and Boko Haram.

Kidnapping Threats

There is a heightened risk that terrorist groups, including AQIM and MUJAO, may cross the northern borders from Mali into Burkina Faso in order to carry out kidnaps. MS Risk therefore advises against all travel to the areas of Burkina Faso north of the town of Boulsa, which is 25 km north of the capital of Ouagadougou. We particularly advise against all travel to the regions that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel region, and a number of these hostages continue to be held. AQIM operates directly or through criminal gangs who carry out kidnappings on their behalf or pass on their kidnap victims in return for payment.

Crime

There is a high risk of armed groups stopping vehicles, including public buses, in order 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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **5 November 2014** – Security sources reported Wednesday that the head of the party of ousted president Blaise Compaore has been arrested. According to an officer, Assimi Kouanda was called in by military police “after making statement that can disrupt public order and had called for demonstrations.” Security sources have confirmed that the politician was subsequently arrested.
- **2 November 2014** - On Sunday, thousands of protesters took to the streets of Burkina Faso’s capital city, rallying against the military’s take over. Both the United Nations and the African Union have rejected the military’s takeover, stating military leader’s now in control must hand power to a civilian transitional government or they may face sanctions. During the early morning hours on Sunday, thousands of protesters took to the streets of Ouagadougou, gathering at the Place de la Nation. While early morning demonstrations appeared calm, by afternoon, reports surfaced of violent clashes between demonstrators and soldiers. Reports have indicated that the country’s national broadcaster, RTB, has gone off air after shots were heard at its headquarters. Witnesses near the scene reported seeing soldiers firing into the air to disperse protesters before forcing journalist to flee. Unconfirmed reports have indicated that crowds had gathered at the state TV headquarters after rumours spread that a popular leader was about to announce that she was willing to lead the transition. Soldiers have since taken over the Place de la Nation, where they have removed thousands of protesters and set up barricades. Under Burkina Faso’s constitution, the speaker of parliament is supposed to step in as interim head of state following the

Location of key Ouagadougou protests



president's resignation. However on Friday, the army named second-in-command of the presidential guard, Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida, as head of the transitional authority. The opposition, and international mediators, are now calling for the army to step down and to allow a civilian transfer of power, warning that if these conditions are not met, sanctions may be imposed. Former president Blaise Compaore and his wife have taken refuge in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire.

- **31 October 2014** - After three days of protests, on Friday, Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore formally announced his resignation, with the country's armed forces chief General Honore Traore announcing that he has taken charge of the West African country. In a statement released Friday afternoon, Mr. Compaore disclosed that the presidency was now vacant, and urged that the country hold elections within 90 days. Military chief General Honore Traore has since indicated that he has taken over as head of state. The announcement by Mr. Compaore came less than twenty-four hours after the dissolution of parliament and the declaration of a state of emergency. Following days of protests in Ouagadougou, which turned violent on Thursday as protesters stormed Parliament, setting fire to it and several official and unofficial buildings, the country's army General announced early Thursday evening the creation of a transitional government after declaring the dissolution of parliament and imposing a night curfew. Mr Compaore announced late Thursday that he had agreed to not seek another term, but that he would remain in power until a transitional government had completed its work in 2015. The opposition however continued its demands that he resign, with its leader, Zephirin Diabre, calling on protesters to occupy public spaces in order to force the president to resign. On Friday, protesters occupied Ouagadougou's Place de la Nation as well as the main army headquarters. Although in the early hours of Friday, Mr. Compaore had restated his position that he would not resign, by the afternoon it was clear that the president no longer had a choice. Mr. Compaore's statement, which was read on local television, disclosed, "in order to preserve the democratic gains, as well as social peace. I declare a power vacuum to allow the establishment of a transition leading to free and fair elections within a maximum of 90 days. " Lieutenant-Colonel Issaac Zida also made the announcement to protesters at the Place de la Nation, which was greeted with cheers from the crowds. While the current whereabouts of the president remain unclear, diplomatic sources have reported that a heavily armed convoy, believed to be carrying Burkina Faso's now-former president Blaise Compaore was seen travelling towards the southern town of Po, near the border with Ghana.
- **30 October 2014** – Thousands of protesters have stormed Burkina Faso's parliament and set the building on fire in Ouagadougou, forcing police to withdraw ahead of a vote on a motion to allow the president to stand for re-election. The military has fired live bullets in an attempt to disperse the protesters. The crowd reportedly then headed towards the Prime Minister's office. One witness has reported that a government helicopter flew overhead, shooting tear gas canisters at protesters. Earlier, violent clashes broke out in Ouagadougou during a second day of protests denouncing President Blaise Compaore's plan to seek re-election for another five-year term. Students and members of the largest labor coalition marched in the Burkina Faso capital, some wielding iron bars and stones. Security forces clashed with stone-throwing demonstrators for hours, using tear gas and water cannons in an attempt to disperse the crowds, and dismantling makeshift traffic barricades outside the National Assembly and Place de la Nation. Opposition leaders have said that nearly a million people have taken to the streets to prevent the change to the constitutional article. President Compaore, who has been in power for 27 years, seeks to amend Article 37 of Burkina Faso's constitution, which sets term limits on presidential powers. In 1987, Compaore seized power following a coup in which Thomas Sankara, was ousted and assassinated. Compaore has been re-elected president four times since 1991, twice to seven-year terms, and twice to five-year terms. In 2005,

constitutional limits were introduced; Compaore nearing the end of his second five-year term. His proposal to amend Article 37 would allow him to run for a fifth term in the 2015 elections. Opposition leaders call the move a constitutional coup, fearing the new rules would enable Compaore to seek re-election three more times, allowing up to 15 more years in power. The country's parliament will vote today on whether to hold a referendum allowing the change. If the amendment passes by at least 75 percent of the parliamentarians, Compaore will be allowed to run in the 2015 elections. If support falls short of 75 percent, the bill will be put to a public referendum. Over the weekend, the nation's third largest party in parliament said it would back the amendment, setting the Compaore on course to pass the amendment without resorting to a referendum. The nation's largest opposition group asked the police to allow the public inside the National Assembly to watch the vote, and has called for a blockade of parliament as the legislature examines the proposed amendment. The government has urged protesters to show restraint following heavy clashes on Wednesday. The U.S. and United Nations have both called for restraint by the government and protesters. The European Union said the planned constitutional change should be scrapped, warning that it could "jeopardise... stability, equitable development and democratic progress". Sixty percent of Burkina's population is under 25, and have spent their entire lives under the leadership of Compaore. Frustration has erupted into outcry as the country has stagnated under his rule, ranking 183rd out of 186 countries on the UN human development index.

- **29 October 2014** – Following a day of protests, that saw hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Burkina Faso's capital city, trade unions on Wednesday called on a general strike just one day ahead of a Parliamentary assembly, which will consider a constitutional amendment aimed at extending the President Blaise Compaore's 27-year rule. Marching through the capital city, with banners reading "Blaise Get Out!" and "Don't Touch Article 37," which is in reference to the constitutional term limit that the president's allies want to alter, Tuesday's demonstration was one of the largest protests demanding that President Blaise Compaore step down when presidential elections take place next year. Since a vote on the amendment was proposed 21 October, hundreds of protesters across the capital city have assembled barricades and burned tires. On Friday, secondary school children deserted class in order to join the protests, creating major disruptions across the capital city while on Monday, schools and universities across the country announced a week closure as opposition members vowed to carry out protests to fight the proposed amendment. The rising tension comes ahead of Thursday's meeting where the country's Parliament will consider a constitutional amendment that would effectively allow the president to run for at least another five years. Tensions across the capital city were high on Tuesday as pre-dawn violence broke out in several areas of the city. Gendarmes firing tear gas dispersed dozens of youths, who barricaded the country's main highway in the early morning hours. Hundreds of thousands of people later set off from the capital's main Place de la Nation square to participate in one of the largest demonstrations against the proposed amendment, with violence erupting near the end of the march and lasting for several hours. According to on the ground sources, security forces fired tear gas in a bid to disperse the protesters, many of whom were clutching iron bars, throwing stones and burning tires. Makeshift barricades set up by protesters across the city blocked traffic and access to the city's key areas for several hours. Security forces also charged demonstrators after they apparently got too close to the country's parliamentary building. In a bid to keep up the pressure against President Compaore, trade unions and civil society groups have called a general strike for Wednesday, while the opposition has called for a blockade of Parliament in order to prevent the review from taking place. On Thursday, Burkina Faso's National Assembly will study the proposed constitutional amendment that would effectively extend the maximum term limit from two to three and allow the president to run for re-election for another five-year term. The country's opposition however has called

for a campaign of civil disobedience to force the president to quit once his term is completed next year. They have described the government's attempts at extending the terms as a constitutional coup. Civil society groups have also requested that the move be discarded, indicating that the country risked being paralyzed if the amendment went through. Fears of what such a vote may bring have also resonated across the West African region and globally, with the United States disclosing Wednesday that it was "concerned by the spirit and intent" behind the draft bill to scrap the presidential term limits. A statement released by State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki indicated that the US is urging "...all involved, including Burkina Faso's security forces, to adhere to non-violence and to debate this issue in a peaceful and inclusive manner." His bid to stay in power however has also angered the public, including many young people in a country where 60 percent of the population are under the age of 25, and effectively have only known one president. The recent demonstrations and protests indicate that a large majority of the population is no longer willing to know the rule and power of one president and are instead opting for democratic change that will see progress. In power since 1987, when he seized control in an October 1987 coup in which his former friend, Thomas Sankara, was ousted and assassinated, President Compaore has been re-elected president four time since 1991 – to two seven-year terms and two-five year terms. The opposition now fears that if the amendment to the constitution, which is not expected to take previous terms into account, is passed, then this will enable President Compaore to seek re-election three more times, effectively enabling him to stay in power for another fifteen years. Fears that the amendment would pass increased over the weekend when the country's third largest party in parliament announced that it would back the amendment, giving the ruling party the two-thirds majority it require to make the change without resorting to a referendum as was initially promised.

Domestic News

- **8 November 2014** – Talks on forming a transition government in Burkina Faso began Saturday with the army at first declining to join. The talks come as ousted leader Blaise Compaore made his first public statement, accusing his military and political opponents of jointly plotting his overthrow. On Saturday, around 60 representatives of political parties and civil society met in the capital Ouagadougou in order to complete the handover plan, after Mr Compaore fled last week following a mass uprising against his attempts to revise the constitution to extend his 27-year rule. While the army, who last week named Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida to head the West African country, initially refused to take part in the talks, it later sent a delegation led Colonel August Denise Barry. Speaking shortly after the conference, Colonel Barry disclosed that the army has no intention of holding on to power, stating that "things can no longer be like before," alluding to the country's history of military coups. Completing that hand over plan has been difficult as despite Lt Col Zida suggesting earlier that members of ousted Compaore's political party should be included in the discussion, many parties have refused to allow them to participate. Meanwhile from his exile in neighboring Ivory Coast, Mr Compaore accused the opposition of plotting a coup with the army, in his first interview that was published Saturday. Speaking to editors from Jeune Afrique magazine, Mr Compaore stated "we knew for a long time that part of the opposition was working with the army. Their aim: to prepare a coup d'état...They wanted me to leave. I left. History will tell us if they were right." Mr Compaore, his wife and several members of his entourage are currently in the Ivory Coast, where they are staying in a hotel that in the past has served as an official residence for visiting delegates.
- **7 November 2014** – Despite agreeing to a one-year political transition, with presidential elections to be held in November 2015, Burkina Faso's interim leader has dismissed the African Union's (AU) imposition of a

two-week deadline to hand power to civilians. Following crisis talks on Wednesday, Burkina Faso's army, politicians and society leaders agreed to a one-year political transition, with presidential elections to be held in November 2015. While the talks, which were mediated by three West African presidents and also attended by religious and tribal chiefs, failed to name a leader that will head the transitional government, a statement released late Wednesday indicated that all parties had agreed that an "eminent civilian personality" should take the job. Burkina Faso's interim leader however announced late Thursday that he was not concerned by the AU's two-week deadline, stating, "we are not afraid of sanctions, we care much more about stability." The talks on Wednesday had initially started off rocky, with opposition leaders storming out in protest over the possible involvement of loyalists of former president Blaise Compaore in any provisional government. The opposition's main leader Zephirin Diabre had also objected to a proposal by the three West African leaders that each group submit three candidates for a transitional government. While security guards intervened, in a bid to prevent the talks from ending in violence, both the opposition and civil society representatives were later persuaded to return to negotiations with all sides, including the current interim leader Lt Col Isaac Zida, welcoming the final agreement. Speaking shortly after the meeting, Lt Col Zida disclosed that the talks "...went very well," adding that he hoped the teams would be able to "find a solution in order to achieve a civilian transition." Despite the meeting ending without a decision on who might be the transitional leader, Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama indicated that he expected a transitional government to be installed in Burkina Faso in a matter of days. President Mahama and his Nigerian counterpart Goodluck Jonathan and Senegal's President Macky Sall, who the West African regional body ECOWAS has appointed to lead mediation efforts, travelled to Ouagadougou early Wednesday to mediate the talks and to press for a swift handover of power back to civilians. There has been mounting international pressure on Lt Col Zida and the military to return the country to civilian rule, with the AU threatening sanctions and Canada earlier this week withdrawing much-needed aid. Despite announcing Tuesday that he would restore civilian rule with two weeks, late Thursday, Lt Col Zida disclosed that he was not concerned by the AU's deadline, stating "we have waited on the African Union in moments when it should have shown its fraternity and its friendship but instead was not there." A failure to meet the AU's deadline could have significant consequences for the West African country and may result in further protests. The AU's sanctions could include suspension of Burkina Faso's AU membership and travel ban on military officials. The AU's Peace and Security Council is expected to meet later this month in order to discuss the crisis.

- **5 November 2014** – On Wednesday the heads of state of three West African nations arrived in Burkina Faso's capital city in a bid to pressure the country's army to adhere to its promise of handing power over to a civilian government following the fall of president Blaise Compaore. The leaders – Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan, Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama and President Macky Sall of Senegal – arrived in the capital Ouagadougou where they were met by Burkina Faso's interim leader Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida. According to sources, the leaders were to hold talks at a hotel located near the presidential palace and were expected to return to their home countries in the evening. Wednesday's meeting comes in the wake of Canada suspending aid to Burkina Faso. The official visit also comes a day after Lt. Col Zida told unions that he would return the country to civilian rule within two weeks after the African Union threatened to impose sanctions if the army failed to relinquish power within a set timeframe. In the wake of Compaore's resignation on Friday, after holding power for 27 years, the military has filled the power vacuum, however this sparked angry protests at home and prompted threats of sanctions from abroad. The army however has claimed, "power does not interest us" and has pledged to install a unity government with a "broad consensus." Lt. Col. Zida has repeated the promise of creating a unity

government with opposition and civil society leaders as well as foreign envoys. Under Burkina Faso's constitution, which has been suspended, the parliament speaker was supposed to take over as transitional leader however the whereabouts of current speaker Soungalo Ouattara, a close ally of the former president, remain unknown.

- **3 November 2014** - Burkina Faso's military has announced that it will install a transitional government, just days after it seized power as President Blaise Compaore resigned. The move came as protesters gathered at the Place de la Nation, in Ouagadougou, protesting the military's takeover. Thousands of protesters gathered at the Place de la Nation Sunday, the place where demonstrators have been gathering over the past week in protest of a move by the president to amend the constitution, which would effectively enable him to stand for re-election for a third time. While protests in the early morning were relatively calm, by the afternoon, soldiers had fired in the air to disperse protesters in front of the state TV station. On the ground sources have reported that the situation in front of the state broadcaster's headquarters became chaotic Sunday afternoon as both opposition leader Saran Sereme and former Defence Minister Kwame Longue had turned up to a rally. It is believed that both had gone there, separately, in order to announce that they could lead the transitional government. Soldiers later barricaded the Place de la Nation, which is the capital city's main square, in a bid to disperse the crowds. Reports have indicated that at least one demonstrator was killed in Sunday's protests. A statement released by the military late Sunday disclosed that the soldiers' moves had been necessary to disperse protesters to "restore order." Following days of anti-government protests, long-time leader Blaise Compaore officially resigned late last week, with the army naming Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Zida as leader of a transitional government on Saturday. Thousands of protesters however gathered in Ouagadougou Sunday after the opposition called on civilians to demonstrate against the army's move. Late Sunday evening, key opposition figures held talks with Col Zida. Those present included Zephirin Diabre, leader of the Union for Progress and Change, former Foreign Minister Ablassé Ouedraogo, ex-Prime Minister Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and Benewende Sankara, leader of the Union for Rebirth – Sankarist Party. Shortly after the meeting, a military spokesman indicated that the army would put in place "a transition body...with all the components to be adopted by a broad consensus." A statement released by the military further indicated, "power does not interest us, only the greater interest of the nation." Under Burkina Faso's constitution, the president of the Senate should take over in the event that the president resigns. A presidential election should then take place within 60 – 90 days. The African Union (AU), the United States and ECOWAS, the regional economic bloc, have all condemned the military takeover. The UN's West Africa envoy Mohamed Ibn Chambas has stated that the military must allow a civilian transfer of power, warning that sanctions were a possibility if this did not occur.
- The African Union (AU) has given Burkina Faso's military a two-week deadline to hand power to a civilian ruler or face sanctions. A statement released by the AU Monday indicated that the military's takeover, which occurred shortly after President Blaise Compaore was ousted, was unconstitutional. Lieutenant Colonel Issac Zida took power after mass protests ended Mr Compaore's 27-year rule on Friday. Lieutenant Colonel Zida announced that a civilian-led transitional government would be established as quickly as possible however the AU has warned that if the military fails to give power up within two weeks, then it could apply sanctions. Such sanctions could include a suspension of Burkina Faso's AU membership and a travel ban on military officials.

International Developments

- **5 November 2014** – International donors, whose funding is key to financing Burkina Faso's domestic budget and external trade, are watching the situation in the country with concern. This week alone, Canada, which provided some \$35.6 million in aid between 2012 and 2013, raised the pressure on the country's army, which is currently in charge, by suspending development assistance. A statement released by the Canadian government disclosed that funding would be restored when a "legitimate and accountable civil authority has been reestablished." Officials in Washington also disclosed this week that they were still "gathering facts" but could yet withdraw its US \$14 million annual aid package. Opposition leaders have met with international mediators from the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union, which has named Togo's former Prime Minister Edem Kodjo as a special envoy to the landlocked West African nation.
- **3 November 2014** – On Monday, France's President Francois Hollande disclosed that his country had facilitated the evacuation of Burkina Faso's president Blaise Compaore after he was forced to resign last week. Speaking on the sidelines of a visit to Canada's Quebec province, President Hollande disclosed that France had helped ensure that the former president was able to leave for the Ivory Coast "without drama" on Friday, however he denied that France had actively "participated" in his escape. Former president Compaore has taken shelter at the luxury "Villa des Hotes," in the Ivory Coast's capital city. The Ivory Coast's government uses this compound as a semi-official residence for visiting dignitaries. Compaore, his wife Chantal and their entourage were seen arriving at the complex in a 27-car convoy however since arriving, little has been heard from the former president.
- **31 October 2014** – On Friday, France welcomed the resignation of Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore after days of protests against his bid to amend the constitution to be re-elected for a third term. A statement issued by President Francois Hollande's office disclosed "France recalls its support for the constitution and thus for early, democratic elections, adding that Mr. Compaore's resignation effectively "allows a solution to be found to the crisis." Earlier in the day, Mr. Compaore announced his resignation and called for a 90-day transition period that would end with "free and transparent" elections. Burkina Faso's armed forces chief General Honore Traore has confirmed that he has taken charge.

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.

There is currently a low threat from terrorism. 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.

Guinea Bissau

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

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

Domestic News

- **4 November 2014** – A statement issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Monday revealed that Guinea-Bissau is set to receive a US \$5.24 million emergency loan, which will enable the country's government to make urgent payments. The loan agreement, which was approved by the IMF's Rapid Credit Facility, which provides quick financial help for poor countries recovering from economic shocks, natural disasters or humanitarian crises, is intended to tackle the country's current economic crisis. Specifically, the funds will help Guinea-Bissau address its budget and balance-of-payment gaps, as well as reduce poverty by resuming key government services. The full amount, which is equivalent to 25% of Guinea-Bissau's quota in the IMF, is to be immediately disbursed. In a statement, IMF officials disclosed that assistance from development partners was "crucial" in the period ahead as the newly elected government of Guinea-Bissau had "inherited a difficult situation" in terms of cash "after two years of economic disruption" characterized by a drop in state revenues, delayed salaries of civil servants, a 2% drop in its gross domestic product (GDP) and a "dramatic increase" in levels of poverty. Despite this difficult situation, the IMF has welcomed recent measures implemented by the government, which in a short time has paid several months of salary arrears and secured the approval of the State Budget for 2014.

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.



Domestic News

- **5 November 2014** – According to an official source, the Ivory Coast's President Alassane Ouattara has "paid a courtesy visit" to Burkina Faso's deposed leader Blaise Compaore, who is currently in the country's

central town of Yamoussoukro. According to the source, the president met with Mr Compaore on Tuesday, five days after the latter's arrival in the Ivory Coast where he fled following popular protests that forced him to resign Friday. Although former president Compaore attempted to stand for re-election in next year's presidential polls, with Parliament set to vote on amending the constitution late last week, protests in the capital city Ouagadougou broke out, forcing parliament to abandon the vote. Due to the pressure, the former president was forced to resign and flee to the Ivory Coast where he has been staying at a guesthouse reserved for visiting presidents in the country's political capital. His presence however has caused some disagreements within the Ivory Coast's government, especially between the opposition and ruling party. Although the opposition, which is allied to ex-president Laurent Gbagbo, denounced what it termed the dignified exile that Burkina Faso's deposed leader has been given, supporters of the president however have hailed the decision, indicating that it was a "good gesture of solidarity and brotherhood" towards a "neighbor who helped Cote d'Ivoire during its most difficult time."

International Developments

- **4 November 2014** – Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have revealed that they want to put the Ivory Coast's former president and another suspect, who is alleged to be one of the ex-president's key supporters, on trial together on charges that they were involved in deadly violence that erupted in the wake of the country's 2010 presidential elections. Trial lawyer Eric MacDonald disclosed Tuesday that prosecutors want to try former president Laurent Gbagbo and former youth leader Charles Ble Goude together however Mr Ble Goude's defense attorney, Nick Kaufman, has indicated that discussions on linking the two men's trials are premature, adding "given the strength of Mr Ble Goude's defense at confirmation, all prosecutorial talk of a joinder is wishful thinking." Although no date has been set for a trial, prosecutors have indicated that they would be ready to start a joint trial in September 2015. Both men are currently in custody at the court's detention unit in The Hague. Mr. Gbagbo surrendered to the court three years ago while Mr Ble Goude was sent there in March. Although judges have already confirmed charges against Mr Gbagbo, a decision on whether charges against Mr Ble Goude will be confirmed is expected to be announced before the end of the year. Both men insist that they are innocent of all charges, which include murder, rape and persecution that occurred in post-election violence, which killed some 3,000 people. Mr. Gbagbo faces charges of involvement in atrocities, which were carried out by his supporters shortly after the election, which saw him ousted from office. Human rights groups have accused Mr Ble Goude's youth group, the Young Patriots, of playing a decisive role in the formation of a climate of terror during the post election violence.
- **25 October 2014** – On Wednesday, the ICC denied a request by former Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo to attend his mother's funeral, stating that it would put himself and the West African nation at risk. A statement released by the Hague-based court disclosed "the Chamber cannot justify granting the relief sought when doing so runs such a risk of endangering the populace in the Ivory Coast, court staff and Mr. Gbagbo himself." The former leader's elderly mother died in a remote village in the Ivory Coast in mid-October. Last week, his lawyers had requested that the ICC allow him to travel to his home country in order to make funeral arrangements and attend the burial ceremony. At the time of the request, Mr. Gbagbo's lawyers had indicated that if he were allowed permission to attend the funeral, the ex-president would adhere to a stringent list of conditions and guarantees put forth by the ICC. They had also referred to the case of former Congolese vice president Jean-Pierre Bemba, who in 2009 was allowed to attend his father's funeral in Brussels. Prosecutors however have opposed the request, stating that his travel

destination “is the very country where Mr. Gbagbo is alleged to have committed the crimes....Mr. Gbagbo’s mere presence...would likely increase the risk of public mass gatherings, turmoil and violence in the Ivory Coast.” A statement released by the ICC further disclosed that while “the Chamber does consider Mr. Gbagbo’s request to be transferred to the Ivory Coast to organize his mother’s funeral to constitute humanitarian circumstances,” the judges are “not persuaded in the circumstances that any set of specific conditions can sufficiently mitigate the security and logistical concerns.” Mr. Gbagbo, 69, is currently facing an ICC trial on four counts of crimes against humanity, which were allegedly committed at the end of his 10-year rule in the Ivory Coast after he refused to accept defeat in the November 2010 presidential elections. His supporters clashed for five months with those of President Alassane Ouattara, who was ultimately proclaimed winner of the vote by the electoral commission. Post election violence resulted in the deaths of at least 3,000 people. Mr. Gbagbo was arrested in April 2011 by pro-Ouattara forces with the backing from former colonial power France and the United Nations. The following November, he was transferred to The Hague, effectively becoming the first ex-head of state to face prosecution at the ICC. He still has a large number of supporters in the southern and western regions of the country, including in the economic capital Abidjan.

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. There is a low threat from terrorism.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 October 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Wednesday that while new Ebola infections appeared to be slowing in Liberia, the crisis is far from over. Speaking to reporters in Geneva, WHO assistant director-general Bruce Aylward disclosed “it appears that the trend is real in Liberia and there may indeed be a slowing of the epidemic there,” however he warned that the crisis is far from over adding he was “terrified that the information will be misinterpreted and that people will begin to think Ebola is under control.” According to Mr Aylward, data from a range of different sources, including from funeral directors and from treatment centers reporting lower Ebola patient admission rates, indicated a “downward trend” across much of Liberia, adding that a number of beds at Ebola treatment centers in the country were now empty. He further noted that a rapid scaling up of information to the community about the deadly virus, coupled with contact tracing and the implementation of safe burial practices had all likely contributed to this new positive trend seen in Liberia. The announcement by the WHO came a day after Liberia’s Red Cross announced that the Ebola outbreak in the country is appearing to diminish.
- **28 October 2014** – Officials from the Red Cross offered some hope Tuesday when they announced that the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa might start diminishing after officials in Liberia’s capital disclosed that they had seen a dramatic drop in the number of bodies that were collected. According to the Liberian Red Cross, workers in Monrovia were now “picking up little over a third of the late September peak of more than 300 bodies a week” in and around the capital city, noting that this may be an indication that the deadly outbreak is beginning to retreat. In the last week, Fayah Tamba, head of the Liberian Red Cross reported that workers had collected 117 bodies from Montserrado County, which includes Monrovia, noting that this represented a steady decline from the peak of 315 bodies that were collected in the week of September 15 – 21. The announcement however is in stark contrast to a recent assessment made by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who warned Tuesday at a crisis meeting in Ethiopia that the spread of the deadly virus continued to outpace the response. The Red Cross’ statement also comes a week after the WHO concluded that transmission “remains intense” in the capitals of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Liberia has been the hardest hit by this outbreak, with WHO officials recently reporting that the West African country had recorded 4,665 cases and 2,705 deaths.

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. 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 county, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk

forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

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

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

- **8 November 2014** – French army officials disclosed Saturday that French forces have killed 24 extremists and seized arms in a large-scale operation carried out in northern Mali. A statement released Saturday disclosed that the operation began on October 28 and concluded Friday and led to the “neutralization of 24 terrorists and the capture of two others.” The statement further indicated that a number of vehicles had been destroyed while arms and bomb making materials were seized. The operation, which was primarily carried out in the Kidal region, resulted in “weakening the terrorist networks in northern Mali and loosening their grip on the population” in the area. One French Special Forces soldier was killed in the operation on October 29. That operation occurred in the Amettetai valley and the Tigharghar mountain range in Kidal.
- **4 November 2014** – In what appears to be the first confrontation between rebels and soldiers since a ceasefire was signed in May of this year, Malian troops and separatist Tuareg rebels clashed this week. A statement issued by the Malian government late Monday disclosed that an army patrol was attacked Sunday by armed men in eastern Mali, near the border with Burkina Faso. The statement further revealed that one of the attackers was killed after fighting erupted between the two groups while twenty armed men were detained. On Tuesday, Tuareg rebel spokesman Moussa Ag Assarid denied the Malian government’s claims, stating that the soldiers had attacked the rebels and that three rebels and nine soldiers were killed in the fighting. Despite the Malian government signing an agreement with separatist rebel groups in May, and with negotiations over a peace deal ongoing, tensions have been rising in recent weeks.
- **3 November 2014** – An improvised bomb detonated in Mali’s restive northern desert region has killed two Malian soldiers and wounded four others. The soldiers died Sunday morning in the town of Almoustrate, which is located 120 kilometers (75 miles) north Gao. A statement issued by the government late Sunday indicated, “one of the positions held by armed forces in Almoustrate was the target of an attack by an explosive device placed by unidentified individuals. The toll is two dead, four wounded.” The Malian government has described this latest attack as a “terrorist act...contrary to the commitments made by armed groups” in peace accords that were signed between the government and several separatist militias in May and July. The UN mission deployed in the country has also denounced the attack, stating that it was a “cowardly and indiscriminate attack on Malian armed forces working for the return of stability in Mali.” Sunday’s attack is just the latest in a string of incidents carried out by militants in the northern region of the country, which has effectively shattered a period of calm in the wake of a ceasefire agreement and talks with the Malian government in neighboring Algeria. The incident also comes just days after a French commando was killed in violent clashes between hardline Islamist militants in the Tigharghar mountain range last week. The French military is currently taking part in an operation aimed at stemming the return of jihadist militants in the north.
- **31 October 2014** – Health experts concerned that the Ebola disease will spread further in Mali, and to other previously unaffected countries, disclosed Friday that a 2-year-old girl who had brought the disease to the West African country may have had contact with as many as 141 people, 57 of whom have yet to be traced. According to World Health Organization (WHO) officials, two people known to have had contact with the girl are currently suspected of having the disease. WHO officials have broken down the journey the girl took with her grandmother, uncle and five-year-old sister. According to officials, the first leg of the journey took the patient from the border between Guinea and Mali to Bamako by bus. Six of the 10 passengers on board that bus remain unknown. She then went to and from the Bagadji neighborhood in 5-seater taxis,

with one person in each taxi ride still unknown. She then sat by the window on a bus from Bamako to Kayes, in the western region of Mali. Thirty-four contacts from that journey remain unaccounted for. The WHO has warned that if other travellers had caught the disease, their onward journeys risked spreading the deadly virus to the capital city or deeper within Mali, which borders Nigeria, Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast – none of which currently have any confirmed cases of Ebola. Contact tracing is seen as a key step in preventing new outbreaks. Nigeria and Senegal were able to be declared Ebola-free in part because of the meticulous contact-tracing and regular checks on all contacts who were identified.

- **30 October 2014** – Fighting between French forces and militants continued over night in northern Mali, where soldiers are currently carrying out a large-scale operation after a French soldier was killed. According to French military spokesman Gilles Jaron, “the French army has the situation under control...the fighting continued through the night, but we have the upper hand on the field. We are faced with some 30 heavily armed terrorists, we estimate that this morning around 20 of them were neutralized.” Jaron added that a “much larger” operation by French forces was currently taking place in northern Mali. No further details have been released and it remains unclear whether this was a separate intervention or part of the same battle. Early Wednesday, Thomas Dupuy, a 32-year-old Afghanistan veteran who belonged to a French commando parachute group, was killed in violent clashes with militants in Mali’s Tigharghar mountain range. He was the 10th French soldier killed in Mali since January 2013. In recent weeks, France has stepped up operations in the northern region of the country as jihadists groups have increasingly targeted UN peacekeepers in what appears to be their return. In January 2013, France deployed troops to Mali to push out hardline Islamists, including al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), which had seized control of the country’s northern desert cities. Several months ago, the intervention was replaced by a wider counter-terrorism operation, codenamed Barkhane, which involves five countries along the southern rim of the Sahara, including Mali. The operation is currently focusing on stemming a resurgence of jihadists in Mali and cutting their rear bases in Libya.
- **28 October 2014** – A spokesman for the World Health Organization (WHO) disclosed Tuesday that health workers in Mali are currently monitoring 82 people who had contact with a toddler who died of Ebola in the West African country last week, adding that so far no new cases of the deadly disease have been reported. According to Tarik Jasarevic, three WHO officials are currently in Mali, having travelled to the country a week ago in order to test its Ebola preparedness, while an additional five officials will arrive in the coming days. Last week, Mali became the sixth country in West Africa to report a case of the disease, with officials now hard at work to contain it before it spreads further. A two-year-old girl had travelled with her grandmother by bus from Guinea’s Kissidougou district to Mali’s capital city, where they stayed for a period of ten days before leaving for the western Malian town of Kayes on 20 October. She died four days later in a hospital in the town, with WHO officials disclosing that the girl had already started showing symptoms, including fever, vomiting and blood in her stool, and was therefore contagious before arriving in Kayes. While Mr Jasarevic has indicated that the girl’s grandmother was “doing OK so far,” the deadly disease can take up to 21 days to display symptoms. Officials are currently monitoring 82 contacts, including 11 health workers. As of 23 October, Ebola has killed 4,922 people and infected 10,141 people, with most of the cases being reported in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While Senegal and Nigeria also experienced outbreaks of the disease, WHO officials have since deemed both countries Ebola free. Both countries managed to stop the virus by tracking hundreds of people who had contact with the index case who first brought it into their country. Diplomatic sources have expressed concern about Mali’s preparedness in the event that a case should appear within its borders. These concerns were echoed by WHO officials, who

indicated earlier this month that Mali and the Ivory coast were at the top of a list of 15 African countries at the highest risk of importing the deadly disease. Mali is home to a large UN peacekeeping mission deployed to the country to stabilize it after a coup and Islamist militant take over plunged the country into chaos.

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.

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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 October 2014** – Five days after closing its border with neighboring Mali, following the Malian government's confirmation of the country's first Ebola case, on Wednesday, Mauritanian officials confirmed that its borders with the West African country have been reopened. According to a local official in the southeastern town of Nema, officials decided to open the border in order to help residents in the area to obtain supplies, which come from Mali. Last week, Mali's Health Ministry reported the country's first confirmed case of Ebola, a Malian girl who had just arrived from neighboring Guinea. The following day, the Mauritanian government announced that it had closed its border with Mali, disclosing that the decision was aimed at preventing the spread of the virus. The Mauritanian government also launched an Ebola awareness campaign in its eastern region, near the border with Mali.

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 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.



On the Ground Reporting

- **30 October 2014** – According to the Nigerien government, at least twelve people, including nine members of the country's security forces, were killed in three simultaneous attacks carried out by unidentified gunmen in the western Tillabery region near the border with Mali. A statement released by the country's defense and interior ministers disclosed, "terrorist elements carried out simultaneous attacks in Tillabery. Five policemen, two gendarmes and two national guards were killed." Niger's justice minister and government spokesman, Marou Amadou, later revealed that two assailants had been killed and four were taken prisoner. The militants attacked a prison, a refugee camp for Malians and a patrol of Niger security forces early Thursday. Earlier in the day, security sources had reported that unknown assailants also attacked a prison near the region, with dozens of inmates reportedly freed. Niger's poorly policed western region borders Mali's desert in the north, where Islamist insurgents linked to al-Qaeda have been attempting to regroup since a French-led military operation ended their nine-month occupation of the northern region of Mali last year. While France recently launched operation Barkhane, which focuses on targeting terrorist groups that operate in the Sahel region, recent attacks targeting UN peacekeepers and foreign troops in northern Mali have revealed that Islamist militants continue to operate in the region and may be gaining strength.

Domestic News

- **28 October 2014** – Officials in Niger reported Tuesday that the country's embassy in Libya has been surrounded by heavily armed militias, with sources reporting that this possibly may be in response to unfounded rumors that Nigerien forces had entered the Libyan embassy in Niamey. Speaking to reporters, the secretary general of Niger's foreign ministry, Abani Sani Ibrahim, disclosed that the militias had encircled the mission in the Libyan capital Tripoli in the early hours of Tuesday, resulting in "diplomatic personnel, including the ambassador, being confined." He noted that while the gunmen, who drove up in "military vehicles" fitted with heavy machineguns, had not attacked the embassy, the situation was "extremely serious." Nigerien officials have not identified the militias, however some have indicated that incident could be linked to "false" rumors that Nigerien armed forces had entered Libya's embassy in Niger.
- **27 October 2014** – One of Niger's leading opposition figures, who is currently being sought on suspicion of being involved in a baby-trafficking ring, has lost his position as speaker of Parliament. In August, Hama Amadou, a former political ally who turned against President Mahamadou Issoufou, fled to Burkina Faso then to France after parliamentary leaders authorized his arrest, with a warrant issued last month. During an interview, Niger's Justice Minister Marou Amadou, who is also the government's spokesman, confirmed "Hama Amadou is no longer president of the National Assembly," adding "there is an arrest warrant against him and if he returns he will be sent directly to the civilian prison...so he can not be at the president's podium." While neither Hama, nor any of his supporters, have officially commented on the Justice Minister's remarks, a lawmaker from Hama's Nigerien Democratic Movement party denied that he had been removed from his post. In June, seventeen people, including the wives of several senior Nigerien politicians, were arrested by police investigating allegations that they were acquiring newborn babies from "baby factories" located in neighboring Nigeria. Hama's wife was amongst those who were initially taken into custody. Hama however has denied these accusations, adding that the investigation is politically motivated. Since his falling out with the president last year, political tensions in Niger have increased, with President Issoufou's government now accusing Hama and his party of attempting to destabilize the country.

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.

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. 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.

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.

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.

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

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

- **7 November 2014** – A bomb, concealed in a black plastic bag, detonated at a cash point in Nigeria's northern Bauchi state on Friday, near the scene of a recent bus station attack, killing at least nine people. According to several witnesses, a bomber approached a crowd queued up at the First Bank of Nigeria ATM in the town of Azare and attempted to leave a parcel packed with explosives on a parked motorcycle but was stopped by several locals. According to one eyewitness, "it was while they were talking to him that the bomb exploded."
 - The governor of Adamawa state in northeastern Nigeria disclosed Friday that Boko Haram has taken over at least five municipalities. Speaking to journalists while on a visit to the capital city Abuja, Governor Bala Ngilari stated that the northeastern state now requires "...a lot of intervention. We need to move more troops to secure the state." Despite the Nigerian government imposing a state of emergency in Yobe, Adamawa and Borno last year, many locals living in Adamawa state indicated at the time its inclusion was as a precautionary measure as violence in Adamawa had been relatively contained compared with Borno and Yobe. However since May 2013, Boko Haram has captured significant parts of the state, underscoring the severity of the crisis that is facing the country, and demonstrating the militant's group's ability of advancing further south in Borno with little resistance. Boko Haram, which wants to create a hardline Islamic state in Nigeria's northeastern region, is now believed to be in control of at least two dozen towns in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Earlier this week, residents of Mubi, which was captured by the militant group late last month, reported that Boko Haram have renamed the town .
- **6 November 2014** – Sixteen men, who were arrested by Nigerian soldiers in the country's northeast, were found dead just hours later with bullet wounds. According to sources, Nigerian troops rounded up seventeen people, including an Imam, from the Dogo Tebo area of Potiskum in Yobe state, as they were leaving a mosque after morning prayers on Wednesday. Residents later reported that the bodies of all, except the Imam, were later found at Potiskum General Hospital's morgue, with sources indicating that the soldiers had brought in the bodies. Community leaders have called on an investigation into the deaths of the men, with some indicating that they believe the 16 men were picked up and killed as they were from the Kanuri ethnic group, which forms the bulk of Boko Haram's militants. The deaths also come days after at least fifteen people were killed Monday when a suicide bomber attacked a major Shia Muslim festival in Potiskum. While the Nigerian military has not commented on the killings, human rights groups in Nigeria and abroad have on previous occasions accused the military of carrying out extra-judicial killings in the five-year fight against Boko Haram. In March, Amnesty International (AI) revealed that there was "credible evidence" that more than 600 people were summarily executed in the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, after a Boko haram jailbreak. Concerns have also recently increased about atrocities carried out by vigilante groups who are helping the military fight Boko Haram. Last Friday, vigilantes in the Borno town of Biu indicated that they and troops had decapitated 41 Boko Haram fighters who were planning a raid in the village of Sabon Gari.

- **5 November 2014** – In an apparent raid to fund and continue their operations, suspected Boko Haram fighters have stolen dynamite and pick-up trucks from a French-owned cement works in Nigeria after robbing a bank. On Tuesday, a large convoy of suspected Boko Haram gunmen, carrying grenade launchers, conducted a midday raid on the northeastern Nigerian town of Nafada, targeting police and the military before robbing a bank and destroying a political office. According to local sources, the attack in Gombe state began with a gunfight between the militants and Nigerian troops at a military checkpoint located on the outskirts of the town. The gunmen overpowered the soldiers and police before moving into the town, with multiple witnesses reporting that the suspected militants also robbed a bank. According to locals at least ten people were killed in that attack, including five soldiers who were killed at a checkpoint and four worshippers who were shot dead at a Mosque. Nafada is located near the border with Yobe, a state that remains under emergency rule, where Boko Haram is believed to control a number of towns and villages. At about 3:00 PM (1400 GMT), the gunmen stormed the Lafarge plant in the town of Ashaka, which is located 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Nafada. According to one of the plant's workers, the militants stole high explosives and demanded to be taken where expatriate managers stay. At the time of the attack, the plant was mostly empty, with staff having run to safety when news spread that the gunmen were coming after the raid in Nafada. French diplomats in Nigeria confirmed the attack, disclosing that none of its nationals were taken during the raid. The head of the Lafarge group, Bruno Lafont, has indicated that operations have not been affected, disclosing to reporters in Paris on Wednesday that "...the situation is still calm and everything is back to normal." Both incidents have demonstrated Boko Haram's ability to carry out strikes at will and with relative ease across the northeastern region of the country. Boko Haram funds its terror operations in part by robbing banks and has on numerous occasions stolen vehicles, including armored personnel carriers, weapons and ammunition from the Nigerian military. Unlike previous attacks in recent months, the militants did not attempt to hold the town, instead leaving it shortly after carrying out the attacks.
 - In neighboring Adamawa state, Boko Haram has renamed the town of Mubi. According to locals, the militants have renamed it Madinatul Islam – City of Islam. Mubi fell to the militants in late October after clashes with government forces. It is the second largest town in the state of Adamawa and is the largest town under Boko Haram's control, which has stepped up its insurgency in recent months, and now holds several towns and city's across northeastern Nigeria. The militant group is believed to be in control of Michika, a trading center in Adamawa state located near the border with Cameroon, which has sparked fears that it may be looking to further extend its reach and may attempt to take control of towns in northern Cameroon.
- **3 November 2014** – Boko Haram is suspected of carrying out a suicide bombing at a Shiite ceremony on Monday. The attack occurred in the Tsohuwar Kasuwa area of Potiskum, which is the commercial capital of Yobe state, and targeted Shia Muslim worshippers who were marking Ashura, the anniversary of the death of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. According to police and eyewitnesses, a bomb was detonated 10 meters (32 feet) from a seminary where Shiite worshippers had gathered. At least fifteen people were killed in the attack and another fifty were injured. Reports have indicated that security forces also killed another five people after arriving at the scene and opening fire however the military has not commented these reports. While no group has claimed responsibility for this attack, suspicion has fallen on Boko Haram. In recent months, the area has seen repeated violence, including attacks that have targeted the minority Shiite community. In July, four Shiites were killed in a bomb attack at an open-air mosque in the Dogo Tebo area of the city. That attack was later blamed on Boko Haram militants.

- In Adamawa state, tens of thousands of people have fled their homes after militants seized control of the commercial hub of Mubi, the latest among more than two dozen towns and villages that have fallen under the militant group's control. Over the past week, thousands of residents from Mubi, which is Adamawa's second-largest town, have fled the area after Boko Haram took control of the city last Wednesday. Mubi which is located 200 kilometers (120 miles) from Yola and has a population of 150,000 had been a safe haven in recent months for those people fleeing Boko Haram offensives in surrounding areas. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has recorded at least 10,496 internally displaced people in the state capital, Yola, after violence erupted in Mubi.
- **2 November 2014** – Late Sunday, unidentified gunmen carried out a raid on a prison in central Nigeria's Kogi state, freeing 132 inmates. According to Jacob Edi, spokesman for Kogi's Governor Idris Wada, "there were 145 prisoners at the time of the attack. One died, eight have been recaptured and four surrendered voluntarily. The rest are at large." On the ground sources have reported that gunmen used dynamite to blast into the facility. Despite being far south of Boko Haram's main area of operations, in 2011 the militant group claimed responsibility for a prison raid at the same prison, where many of the group's fighters were believed to be in custody. The 2012 raid on the Koton Karfi prison freed more than 100 inmates. No group has claimed responsibility for Sunday's raid.
- **1 November 2014** – Despite the Nigerian government maintaining in recent weeks that a ceasefire agreement had been reached with Boko Haram, the militant group has officially denied the claims that it has agreed to a ceasefire and that it will release more than 200 abducted schoolgirls. In a video released Friday, Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau denied the ceasefire, stating "we have not made ceasefire with anyone. We did not negotiate with anyone. It's a lie." In regards to the abducted schoolgirls, Shekau claimed in the video that all the girls had converted to Islam and have been married off. The militant leader also claimed that the group is holding a German national, thought to be a teacher, who was kidnapped by gunmen in July. There was no indication of when or where the group's latest video was shot. News of the denial of a ceasefire will come as a huge embarrassment to the Nigerian government, which despite the ongoing violence in recent weeks, has maintained that an agreement had been reached and that the more than 200 schoolgirls abducted from a northeastern town in April would be freed soon. While hopes were raised earlier this month when Nigeria's chief of defense staff, Alex Badeh announced that Boko Haram had "...assured us they have the girls and they will release them," adding that he is "...cautiously optimistic," the announcement was met with skepticism in Nigeria and within the international community. Friday's announcement will likely lead to further criticism of the Nigerian government's failed efforts to release the girls.
- **31 October 2014** – A triple bombing at a bus station in northern Nigeria Friday morning has killed at least 8 people and injured 34, with hopes of a ceasefire between the government and Boko Haram appearing to have suffered another blow. While it currently remains unclear whether Boko Haram was behind the attack, which occurred in Gombe city, the capital of Gombe state, the militant group has a history of targeting commuters, especially during the morning rush hour. Gombe's police chief Abdullahi Kudu disclosed that three suspects were arrested shortly after the attack, which occurred at the Gombe Line Station at about 9:00 AM (0800 GMT). Multiple witnesses have reported that the men were seen entering the station in one vehicle and then dropping bags packed with explosives between the buses, which were filling up with travellers. Sources have reported that several were injured as a stampede broke out shortly after the explosion, with people trying to flee the scene over fears of another attacks. Gombe shares a border with three northeastern states that have been under emergency rule since May 2013. Reports have indicated

that police officials in Gombe believe that the suspected attackers had travelled together from Yobe State, where Boko Haram is believed to be in control of several towns and cities.

- **29 October 2014** – The sister of Nigeria’s oil minister, who was kidnapped last week in Port Harcourt, has been freed in a joint operation carried out by security forces. According to Rivers state police spokesman Ahmad Muhammad, “Osio Agama has been safely rescued during a joint operation by the police, military and SSS (State security Service).” According to Muhammad, two suspects have been arrested in connection to the October 21 abduction of Agama, whose sister Diezani Alison-Madueke leads the oil industry. Officials have not disclosed whether a ransom payment was made for her release.
 - In what will likely further undermine recent claims of a ceasefire, on Wednesday Boko Haram fighters clashed with Nigerian troops in the country’s remote northeastern regions, forcing hundreds to flee the area in the wake of two other attacks blamed on the militant group. Residents reported Wednesday that insurgents first overran the town of Uba, in Borno state, before moving on to Mubi, which is the commercial hub in neighboring Adamawa state. Several eyewitnesses reported that the militants used rocket-propelled grenades, with thousands of people forced to leave on foot. Fighting was reported to be the fiercest around the town’s military barracks.
 - Suspected Boko Haram gunmen have killed several people in a village in Nigeria’s far northeastern region. According to a local administrator, heavily armed fighters in all-terrain vehicles targeted the town of Kukawa on Monday, located some 180 kilometers (112 miles) from the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, and opened fire on police officials and a local market. Although police offices in Kukawa had initially intercepted the militants on the outskirts of the town, and had briefly clashed with them, they were forced to retreat because of the militant’s superior firepower. Hundreds of residents have since fled the area towards Maiduguri, where they join tens of thousands of others who have abandoned their homes as a result of ongoing attacks in the northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. News of the attack was slow to emerge as telecommunications in Borno state have been largely destroyed by five years of violence. In the past, Boko Haram has repeatedly targeted Kukawa, which is located near Lake Chad. The continued insecurity forced Nigeria’s state-run oil company to abandon prospecting and drilling in the region.
- **27 October 2014** – Nigerian police disclosed Monday that gunmen have killed one German national and abducted another after opening fire on two vehicles in southwestern Nigeria. According to police spokesman Abimbola Oyeyemi, the attack occurred Friday morning near the town of Sagamu in Ogun state, when “about four armed men emerged from the bush...and attacked.” The Julius Berger construction firm has confirmed that both German nationals were the company’s employees, adding that the man who died was a subcontractor. Two other employees sustained injuries in the attack, which occurred as the groups were moving “in separate vehicles without their escorts to their place of work,” a quarry in Ogun state. A statement released by the construction firm disclosed that the shooting was “an isolated criminal incident,” and that “it does not affect normal business operations in other parts of the nation.” Sources have indicated that the construction firm is currently closely working with local authorities in order to secure the hostages’ release. Abductions targeting foreigners have occurred in both the southern and northern regions of Nigeria however the motives behind the kidnappings greatly differ in both regions. In the south, foreigners are often targeted for ransom payments, with hostages often released following a payment, especially in the oil-producing Niger Delta region. Due to this heightened threat of kidnap, foreign companies, particularly oil majors and large construction firms, usually require their expatriate staff to travel with police escorts as they are often targeting for kidnap-and-ransom by local armed gangs. Groups travelling with their escorts often regularly change travel routes in the event that local gangs have monitored travel patterns. Boko Haram

militants operating in northeastern Nigeria have also targeted foreigners. Such kidnappings however are often carried out for ideological purposes. In July, a German national was kidnapped in northeastern Adamawa state. His current whereabouts and condition remain unknown. One of the most notorious abductions involving a German national occurred in January 2012 in the northern city of Kano. Edgar Fritz Raupach, an engineer, was kidnapped on the outskirts of the city just days after Boko Haram carried out one of their deadliest raids – a coordinated attack in Kano that killed more than 185 people. Raupach died in May 2012, apparently during a sweep by security services on a Boko Haram safe house. At the time, security sources disclosed that they had not received any intelligence that indicated that Raupach was being held in the house when they targeted it. **Update (30 October 2014)** – Nigerian gunmen have freed a German national less than a week after they kidnapped him and killed another German citizen in a raid on their vehicles. On Thursday, construction firm Julius Berger confirmed that their staff member was released, adding “the company would like to thank all those who assisted in achieving a swift and safe release, especially government authorities and security services.” While the firm did not disclose whether a ransom payment was made, it is highly likely that some form of a payment was made for his release.

Domestic News

- **29 October 2014** – Despite his office announcing earlier this week that he would formally declare his bid for re-election on November 11, on Wednesday, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan confirmed that he will seek a second term in office in elections set to occur in February 2015. According to a government spokesman, President Jonathan, who had been widely expected to run again, will collect a nomination form on Thursday to be the ruling party's official candidate in next year's presidential elections. The announcement of his candidature however will be seen as a mere formality across the country as the President has already been chosen as the sole candidate by the board of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). Over the past several months, President Jonathan's government has been severely criticized over its inability to end Boko Haram's five-year insurgency; for his response to the abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls who are still being held; and for a raft of oil corruption scandals. Despite these step backs, the President currently appears to be in a strong position, mainly because there is no clear alternative. **Update (30 October 2014)** – Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan formally began his re-election bid on Thursday by thanking his supporters and the state governors who helped raise the US \$130,000 nomination fee. The president appeared at a brief ceremony at the headquarters of his ruling PDP party, where he collected a nomination form for the PDP presidential ticket. He currently has no other opponents in the party's primaries, and therefore is virtually guaranteed to be on the ballot for the presidential elections, which are set to take place next February.
- **28 October 2014** – On Tuesday, Nigeria's lower house speaker, and the fourth most powerful man in the country, defected to the main opposition collation, a move that will likely give a much needed boost to the party in their bid to win the February 2015 presidential elections. Aminu Tambuwal, who has long made his unhappiness with President Goodluck Jonathan's ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) public, announced his decision in an address to parliament that was broadcast on local television channels.
 - The governor of north Nigeria's most populous state has announced his bid to run for president on the main opposition ticket. On Tuesday, Kano State governor Rabi'u Kwankwaso's election bid was announced at a rally held in the capital city. His election bid has effectively created a three-way battle for the presidential nomination within the All Progressives Congress (APC) party. Speaking at the

rally, Kwankwaso announced that tackling insecurity, corruption, boosting the country's economic growth and improving equality would be at the center of his campaign. Kwankwaso, a former deputy speaker of the House of Representatives and defense minister, defected from President Goodluck Jonathan's ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) last year. Under President Olusegun Obasanjo, he served as the country's envoy to the restive Darfur region of Sudan and war-torn Somalia. Nigeria's former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari and the country's ex-vice president Atiku Abubakar have already announced their bids for the 14 February 2015 polls. The APC primary is due to take place in early December. Kwankwaso, along with several other influential state governors, defected from the ruling party in protest of President Jonathan's increasing ambition of running for re-election despite allegedly pledging that he will only serve one term in office. This defection has been seen as enabling the opposition to strengthen its bid and gives them a greater chance to win an election for the first time since Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999. President Jonathan's office has announced that he will formally declare his bid for re-election on November 11. His 200-member presidential declaration committee is set to meet in Abuja on Wednesday.

Senegal

No Travel Restrictions



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

On the Ground Reporting

- **17 October 2014** – Aid agencies reported this week that thousands of people in Sierra Leone are being forced to violate Ebola quarantines in order to find food, as aid deliveries are not reaching them. Large areas of Sierra Leone have been sealed off in a bid to prevent the spread of Ebola. Within those areas, many people have been ordered to stay in their homes. While the government, with the help from the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), has been tasked with delivering food and other services, Jeanne Kamara, Christian Aid's Sierra Leone representative, disclosed Tuesday that many "nooks and crannies" in the country are currently being missed. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa, which has killed nearly 5,000 people, has forced authorities in the affected countries to go to extreme lengths in a bid to bring the

outbreak under control. Similar restrictions to those imposed in Sierra Leone, have also been used in Guinea and Liberia. While public health authorities have stated that heavy restrictions may be necessary in order to bring the Ebola outbreak under control, Disasters Emergency Committee, an umbrella organization for aid organizations, warned Monday that such restrictions are already cutting off food to thousands of people. A statement released by the committee indicated “the quarantine of Kenema, the third largest town in Sierra Leone, is having a devastating impact on trade – travel is restricted so trucks carrying food cannot freely drive around,” adding “food is becoming scarce, which has led to prices increasing beyond the reach of ordinary people.” With aid services unable to reach thousands of people, many who are being monitored for symptoms of Ebola, and who have been ordered to stay home, are now forced to venture to markets in search of food – a move that could potentially contaminate many others. The committee further noted that when houses are placed under quarantine, teams are required to go to them to identify their needs, however with the infections increasing at a rapid rate, it has been difficult for the government in Sierra Leone to keep up with the number of people that are currently being monitored for the disease. The outbreak in Sierra Leone has been shifting in recent weeks, with the number of new cases increasing in the western and northern districts of the country, far from where the outbreak initially began in the country’s eastern region.

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. MS Risk therefore advises all travellers in the country to exercise due caution when travelling by road throughout the season.

On the Ground Reporting

- **17 October 2014** – Aid agencies reported this week that thousands of people in Sierra Leone are being forced to violate Ebola quarantines in order to find food, as aid deliveries are not reaching them. Large areas of Sierra Leone have been sealed off in a bid to prevent the spread of Ebola. Within those areas, many people have been ordered to stay in their homes. While the government, with the help from the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), has been tasked with delivering food and other services, Jeanne Kamara, Christian Aid's Sierra Leone representative, disclosed Tuesday that many "nooks and crannies" in the country are currently being missed. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa, which has killed nearly 5,000 people, has forced authorities in the affected countries to go to extreme lengths in a bid to bring the outbreak under control. Similar restrictions to those imposed in Sierra Leone, have also been used in Guinea and Liberia. While public health authorities have stated that heavy restrictions may be necessary in order to bring the Ebola outbreak under control, Disasters Emergency Committee, an umbrella organization for aid organizations, warned Monday that such restrictions are already cutting off food to thousands of people. A statement released by the committee indicated "the quarantine of Kenema, the third largest town in Sierra Leone, is having a devastating impact on trade – travel is restricted so trucks carrying food cannot freely drive around," adding "food is becoming scarce, which has led to prices increasing beyond the reach of ordinary people." With aid services unable to reach thousands of people, many who are being monitored for symptoms of Ebola, and who have been ordered to stay home, are now forced to venture to markets in search of food – a move that could potentially contaminate many others. The committee further noted that when houses are placed under quarantine, teams are required to go to them to identify their needs, however with the infections increasing at a rapid rate, it has been difficult for the government in Sierra Leone to keep up with the number of people that are currently being monitored for the disease. The outbreak in Sierra Leone has been shifting in recent weeks, with the number of new cases increasing in the western and northern districts of the country, far from where the outbreak initially began in the country's eastern region.

Togo

No Travel Restrictions



Security Summary

There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. Crime is on the rise in Lomé. 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 Lomé city limits, especially after dark. There is a possibility of retaliatory attacks in Togo, due to its participation in the intervention in Mali.

Domestic News

- **1 November 2014** – The leader of Togo's main opposition party has been selected to stand for president in next year's elections. Jean-Pierre Fabre, the 62-year-old head of Togo's National Alliance for Change (ANC) party, was nominated Friday evening after a meeting of eight parties in the opposition alliance. While admitting that the path towards his nomination had been difficult, Mr Fabre disclosed that the nomination is "...a big step, a determined, positive step towards the liberation of our country in 2015." The eight opposition parties, known as the Combat for Political Alternative in 2015, effectively form part of a wider 12-party grouping, known as Let's Save Togo Collective and Rainbow Coalition, which also includes civil society bodies. Four of the parties however declined to take part in discussions that led to the Mr Fabre's nomination, who during the 2010 presidential elections lost to incumbent President Faure Gnassingbe. Two other candidates, including Alberto Olympio, have declared their intentions to run in next year's elections. While opposition parties in Togo have long demanded changes to the country's constitution, in order to limit a president to a maximum of two five-year terms of office, in late June, lawmakers rejected the reforms. Despite the rejection, calls for changes to be made to the constitution prior to next year's elections persist, and have recently come from several church groups and the European Union. While current President Gnassingbe has yet to officially announce whether he will stand for re-election, he is widely expected to bid for a third term in office, which is the current maximum allowed by Togo's constitution. The date for next year's presidential election is yet to be determined.



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