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West Africa Report

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

November 24 – December 7, 2014



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 - Planning and management
 - Due diligence and investigations.
- Project Management
 - Interim security
 - Training
 - Special assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis management
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
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Summary

November 24 – December 7, 2014



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Sahel Region

Regional Reporting

- **2 December 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Monday that more than 6,000 people had died from Ebola and not the nearly 7,000 people as was reported earlier by the UN health agency.
 - An Algerian defence ministry statement revealed Tuesday that the Algerian army has arrested more than fifty foreign smugglers not far from the borders with Niger as the North African country tightens controls on its frontiers in a bid to halt Islamist militant attacks.

Benin

- **26 November 2014** – Benin's health minister reported Wednesday that eight people have died from Lassa fever, which is a viral disease with symptoms similar to Ebola.

Burkina Faso

On the Ground Reporting

- **30 November 2014** – A French Special Forces soldier has died in a helicopter crash during a nighttime training exercise in Burkina Faso.
- **25 November 2014** – A committee assigned to review last month's protests, which forced Burkina Faso's longtime president from power, revealed Tuesday that twenty-four people were killed in the unrest.

Domestic News

- **26 November 2014** – Burkina Faso's new mines minister Colonel Boubacar Ba disclosed Wednesday that the country's transitional government will review mining contracts that were agreed under former President Blaise Compaore.
- **25 November 2014** – The Prime Minister's office revealed Tuesday that a minister in Burkina Faso's newly appointed transitional government has resigned following two days of protests over his appointment.

International Developments

- **26 November 2014** – Canadian officials confirmed Thursday that they have lifted a suspension of aid to Burkina Faso, stating that they are satisfied that civilian rule has been restored.

Guinea

- **4 December 2014** - Dozens of youths in Guinea's capital city staged an angry protest against a new Ebola treatment centre, halting the launch of the construction project.
- **28 November 2014** – French President Francois Hollande is currently visiting Guinea in what is the first trip by a Western leader to a country at the center of the ongoing Ebola outbreak.
 - A recently announced new blood and saliva test, which researchers have indicated provides a faster diagnosis and therefore increases the chance of survival and reduces transmission of the virus, will be trailed in Guinea.

Guinea-Bissau

- **25 November 2014** – On Tuesday, the United Nations Security Council extended the mandate of its integrated peace-building office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) for an additional three months until 28 February 2015.

Liberia

- **28 November 2014** – Liberia's Information Minister has confirmed that the country's Supreme Court has suspended campaigning for next month's senate election as it considers a petition warning that the election risks the further spread of the Ebola outbreak.
- **26 November 2014** – With the number of reported cases of Ebola across Liberia declining, authorities in the country have confirmed that elections will take place next month.

Mali

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 December 2014** - A group of United Nations peacekeepers, who were trapped in a clinic in Mali when it was placed under quarantine after an Ebola outbreak, have been allowed to leave.
- **4 December 2014** - Mali has received its first mobile Ebola lab, which can be deployed to remote hotspots of the country when needed.
- **27 November 2014** – On Thursday, military sources reported that dozens of Chadian troops from the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali have deserted their posts over a dispute pertaining to pay and conditions.
- **25 November 2014** – Two soldiers were killed Tuesday and four others wounded after a roadside bomb exploded under the convoy of a Malian minister as he was travelling through the northern region of the country.
- **24 November 2014** – On Monday, Mali confirmed a new case of Ebola, bringing the number of people who have fallen ill with the deadly disease to eight.

Domestic News

- **2 December 2014** – On Monday, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) lifted a block on aid to Mali, which was frozen for a period of six months after Malian officials purchased a US \$40 million presidential plane.
- **28 November 2014** – Officials for both sides confirmed Friday that negotiations between the Malian government and mostly Tuareg rebel groups, which were held in neighboring Algiers, broke up on Thursday without reaching an agreement on northern Mali.

Niger

On the Ground Reporting

- **26 November 2014** – Schools and health centers in eastern Niger have closed over fears of attacks carried out by Nigerian Islamist group Boko Haram, which in recent weeks has increasingly been staging cross-border raids, particularly in neighboring Cameroon.

Domestic News

- **24 November 2014** – Lawmakers in Niger have selected a former opposition member to become the new head of parliament, effectively replacing Hama Amadou who fled to France after being named in a baby trafficking scandal.

Nigeria

On the Ground Reporting

- **2 December 2014** – Witnesses reported Tuesday that a teenage female suicide bomber was apprehended while heading towards that Maiduguri market, which has already been hit twice by female suicide bombers in the past week.
 - Nigerian officials have imposed an indefinite 24-hour curfew on the northern town of Damaturu a day after Boko Haram militants attacked it.
- **1 December 2014** – On Monday, suspected Boko Haram militants carried out attacks in the northeastern state capitals of Damaturu and Maiduguri.
- **28 November 2014** - Reports emerged Friday that many people have been killed in three explosions that occurred during Friday prayers at one of the largest mosques in the Nigerian city of Kano.
 - A security forces spokesman reported Friday that three expatriate construction workers have been kidnapped in Nigeria's Bayelsa state in the delta region.
- **27 November 2014** – According to eyewitnesses and security personnel, at least forty people were killed Thursday after a bomb exploded at a bus station in northeastern Nigeria.
- **26 November 2014** – Suspected Boko Haram militants killed at least twenty people Monday in two villages on the outskirts of Chibok.

- **25 November 2014** – In what is the latest wave of attacks to be blamed on Boko Haram, at least forty-five people were killed Tuesday when two female suicide bombers blew themselves up in a crowded market in northeastern Nigeria.

International Developments

- **1 December 2014** – In what is the latest sign of troubled relations between the United States and Nigeria, on Monday, US Embassy officials reported that Nigerian officials have asked the US to stop training a battalion of Nigerian soldiers.

Sierra Leone

- **5 December 2014** - On Friday, officials in Sierra Leone warned that it would jail entire families if Ebola victims who appeared to have been washed after death were discovered in their homes.
- **2 December 2014** – Sierra Leone has quarantined several hundred thousand citizens after officials sealed off the country's sixth district.
- **25 November 2014** – In protest at authorities' failure to pay bonuses for handling Ebola victims, burial workers in Sierra Leone have left bodies in the street outside a hospital.

Togo

- **29 November 2014** – Several thousand people protested in the Togolese capital on Friday to call for constitutional changes that will bar President Faure Gnassingbe from seeking a third term in office in next year's presidential elections.
- **27 November 2014** – On Thursday, Togo's opposition called for a large-scale protest in a bid to demand political reforms ahead of next year's elections.

Security Summaries for West African States

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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.

The Gambian government has reopened the country's border with those nations currently affected by the Ebola outbreak. Health officials will continue to screen people entering the country from Ebola affected countries. There are currently no confirmed Ebola cases in the Gambia.

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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Ivory Coast

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. As of 21 November 2014, there is a curfew in place from 10PM to 5AM in the town of Bondoukou, which is located in the northeastern region of the country. The curfew has been put in place in response to a high number of robberies that have been occurring at night. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by foreigners.

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Senegal

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.

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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.

Regional Reporting

- **2 December 2014** – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced Monday that more than 6,000 people had died from Ebola and not the nearly 7,000 people as was reported earlier by the UN health agency. Officials have blamed the change in numbers on “an error” in the numbers out of Liberia. A statement released by the WHO Monday disclosed “an error on reporting number of deaths in Liberia was published on November 28...The cumulate total number of deaths in Liberia is 3,145” down from Friday’s figure of 4,181. No further explanation on the revision was provided. On Friday, the UN health agency indicated that the steep hike in Liberia’s fatalities was due to “a reconciliation of historical numbers” and not to new deaths in recent days. According to the revised data, the worst Ebola epidemic now on record has claimed 5,987 lives across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Guinea, there have been 2,155 cases reported and 1,312 deaths; Liberia has seen 7,635 cases and 3,145 deaths while Sierra Leone has reported 7,109 cases and 1,530 deaths. There have also been fifteen fatalities in other countries, which bring the total global death toll to 6,002.
 - An Algerian defence ministry statement revealed Tuesday that the Algerian army has arrested more than fifty foreign smugglers not far from the borders with Niger as the North African country tightens

controls on its frontiers in a bid to halt Islamist militant attacks. Sources have indicated that the captured smugglers are sub-Saharan nationals, mostly from Chad and Niger, but also from Sudan. Vehicles and satellite phones were also seized. In recent year, smuggling across the Sahara region has increased in part due Algeria's decision to close its borders with unstable neighbouring countries, including Libya, Mali and to a lesser extent Tunisia. There is an increasing concern that armed groups may attempt to cross over Algeria's borders in a bid to strike against its oil and gas facilities as they did in the attack on Algeria's Amenas gas plant.

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 confirmed outbreak of Lassa fever in the northern town of Tanguieta.

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

- **26 November 2014** – Benin's health minister reported Wednesday that eight people have died from Lassa fever, which is a viral disease with symptoms similar to Ebola. According to Health Minister Dorothee Kinde Gazard, the Lassa fever deaths occurred in Tanguieta, which is located 600 kilometres (370 miles) north of the capital city. In all, 15 cases of Lassa have been detected; with the Health Minister indicating that she believes the outbreak will be quickly contained. Authorities have indicated that they are currently monitoring 170 people for symptoms. While the Ebola outbreak is currently affecting Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, cases of the deadly disease have turned up in other countries, including in Mali, however Benin has so far not confirmed any cases of Ebola.

Burkina Faso

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Security Summary

Burkina Faso has elected a new interim president, Michel Kafando, who took office on 21 November 2014. He has named Lieutenant Col. Isaac Zida his prime minister. The president will be in power until November 2015, when presidential elections are due to take place. While an interim civilian leader has been put in power, the security situation across the country remains fragile, and violent protests may occur. 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

- **30 November 2014** – A French Special Forces soldier has died in a helicopter crash during a nighttime training exercise in Burkina Faso. France's Defense Ministry confirmed Sunday that Army Master Sergeant Samir Bajja, who had previously served in Afghanistan, Chad, the Ivory Coast, and Mali, was killed Saturday when a Caracal helicopter went down. The ministry did not specify where the helicopter crash took place. Bajja, 38, is the second French soldier to be killed in Africa's Sahel region since France launched its new counter-terrorism operation in August. France's new operation Barkhane is an extension of its operation, which ousted al-Qaeda-linked militants from northern Mali last year. Operation Barkhane spans across five countries in the Sahel region.
- **25 November 2014** – A committee assigned to review last month's protests, which forced Burkina Faso's longtime president from power, revealed Tuesday that twenty-four people were killed in the unrest. Clarisse Ouba, the committee's chairwoman, disclosed to reporters that 24 people died in the protests and the unrest that ensued, adding that another 625 people were wounded. She further disclosed that residences of several ministers and legislators were looted and set on fire. While this is the first official toll to be released in the wake of the unrest, the country's opposition had earlier indicated that around 30 people were killed in the violence. Late last month opposition protesters, angry that President Blaise Compaore was seeking another term after nearly 30 years in power, set fire to the parliament building and forced the president to resign on October 31 after days of violent protests that occurred in the capital, Ouagadougou, and in other cities across the West African country. Over the past weekend, a transitional government formally took power of the West African country, and will remain in power until presidential elections, which are due to take place next November.

Domestic News

- **26 November 2014** – Burkina Faso's new mines minister Colonel Boubacar Ba disclosed Wednesday that the country's transitional government will review mining contracts that were agreed under former President Blaise Compaore. According to a top civil servant at the country's mines ministry, the revision will focus on exploration permits and that companies that are already in production will not be affected by these new regulation. The new mines minister, who is a member of the newly formed cabinet that was appointed Sunday, also disclosed that the gold-producing country will push forward with plans to revive its mining code in a bid to make the west African country more attractive to miners.
- **25 November 2014** – The Prime Minister's office revealed Tuesday that a minister in Burkina Faso's newly appointed transitional government has resigned following two days of protests over his appointment. Protests over the appointment of Culture and Tourism Minister Adama Sagnon erupted this week as many saw the minister as having close ties to former president Blaise Compaore. The minister submitted his resignation on Tuesday, which was accepted shortly afterwards. Earlier in the day, hundreds marched in front of the ministry, with many shouting that Sagnon had not done enough in order to investigate the murder of Norbert Zongo, a prominent journalist who died in 1998. Sagnon, who was a prosecutor in 2006, when the case was dismissed, has denied any wrongdoing. With the exception of the minister's

appointment, most across the West African country have accepted the new interim government, whose members were drawn from civil society and political parties and the military.

International Developments

- **26 November 2014** – Canadian officials confirmed Thursday that they have lifted a suspension of aid to Burkina Faso, stating that they are satisfied that civilian rule has been restored. A statement released by International Development Minister Christian Paradis confirmed that the Canadian government is “...satisfied that a legitimate and accountable civil authority is leading Burkina Faso toward what we hope will be peaceful and democratic elections in 2015.” He further disclosed that direct financial aid to Burkina Faso along with development assistance to its government and its institutions will be restored. According to the latest available government figures, between 2012 and 2013, Canada provided CAN \$40.76 million in aid for agriculture, entrepreneurship, women’s rights, technical training and health.

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.

World Health Organization (WHO) officials have reported that transmission across Guinea is slightly increasing. 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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **4 December 2014** - Dozens of youths in Guinea's capital city staged an angry protest against a new Ebola treatment centre, halting the launch of the construction project. On Thursday, Prime Minister Mohamed Said Fofana was about to lay the symbolic first stone for the clinic when a crowd appeared, chanting slogans in Susu, which is the local language. While Guinean officials tried to talk down the ringleaders as the gathered dignitaries left the area, the protesters escalated their demonstration, wrecking a gazebo, and scattering chairs and sound equipment. Representatives from medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), which was slated to run the clinic, were amongst those that were evacuated. A source from the organization has disclosed that it will take advice from the government before deciding on whether to proceed with the project. The demonstration comes just days after The Red Cross and Red Crescent indicated Tuesday that suspicion amongst locals across the region remained a major hurdle in battling the outbreak, with volunteers frequently encountering hostility.
- **28 November 2014** – French President Francois Hollande is currently visiting Guinea in what is the first trip by a Western leader to a country at the center of the ongoing Ebola outbreak. Shortly after arriving in the capital Conakry, President Hollande told his hosts that France has a “duty to support you” in the fight against the virus. During his one-day visit, the French President is expected to tour several healthcare centers and will take part in round-table discussions on Ebola. France has pledged 100m euros (£79m) to help tackle the disease by opening several care centers across Guinea, which is a former French colony. After completing his tour in Guinea, President Hollande will fly to Senegal where he will take part in a summit of French-speaking leaders.
 - A recently announced new blood and saliva test, which researchers have indicated provides a faster diagnosis and therefore increases the chance of survival and reduces transmission of the virus, will be trailed in Guinea. The trial, which is led by the Pasteur Institute in Dakar, Senegal, uses “mobile suitcase laboratory” and will take place at an Ebola treatment center in Conakry, Guinea. According to officials, the “laboratory” is portable, solar-powered and can be used at room temperature. The project is being funded by the Wellcome Trust medical charity and by the UK's Department for International Development.

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.

International Developments

- **25 November 2014** – On Tuesday, the United Nations Security Council extended the mandate of its integrated peace-building office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) for an additional three months until 28 February 2015. Under a resolution that was unanimously adopted by the Council, the extension is to “support an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process to facilitate democratic governance in the country as well as enhancing the capacity of its state organs to function effectively.” A statement released by the Council further disclosed that it recognized the need for UNIOGBIS to “support national efforts to maintain constitutional order and to promote a multi-layered national dialogue towards peace.” The Council has urged officials in Guinea-Bissau to implement necessary measures in order to protect human rights and to investigate and identify the perpetrators of human rights violations and to bring them to justice. The Council also recommended that the authorities “...review, adopt and implement national legislation and mechanisms to better combat transnational organized crime, especially drug trafficking and money laundering.” UNIOGBIS’ mandate, which was established by the UN Security Council in 2010 in a bid to replace the previous peace building support office, was set to end this month.

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 lifted.

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 Sprigs 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.

Domestic News

- **28 November 2014** – Liberia's Information Minister has confirmed that the country's Supreme Court has suspended campaigning for next month's senate election as it considers a petition warning that the election risks the further spread of the Ebola outbreak. Liberia's Information Minister Lewis Brown disclosed Friday "the Justice in Chambers Philip Z Banks urged the National Elections Commission to inform all political parties to halt all activities associated with the election," adding that the Justice in Chambers would hold a hearing on the petition on 2 December, at which time he would decide whether it warranted examination by the full court or whether it should be dismissed. Earlier this week a group, which included some former government officials and political party representatives, filed a petition to delay the elections, due to take place on 16 December, until next year when the outbreak is over. Liberia, currently the hardest hit nation by the worst Ebola epidemic on record, has seen over 3,000 people killed by the disease.
- **26 November 2014** – With the number of reported cases of Ebola across Liberia declining, authorities in the country have confirmed that elections will take place next month. The election, which was initially set to occur 16 October, was postponed after hundreds of new Ebola cases were being reported on a weekly basis. With the rate of infection now having dropped to fewer than 100 cases weekly, authorities in Liberia announced Wednesday that elections will be held 16 December. Health authorities have warned that despite the decrease in the reporting of new cases, people still need to be mindful about the spread of Ebola.

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. The girl has since died of Ebola, and all contacts have been traced, with no Ebola cases reported.

A second outbreak of Ebola in Mali has occurred. On 11 November, a nurse based at the Clinique Pasteur hospital in Bamako died from Ebola, becoming the second confirmed case in Mali. The nurse had been treating a man who had travelled to Mali from Guinea, and who himself died in Bamako on 27 October. The deceased patient is also being regarded as a suspected case of Ebola. Malian authorities have closed the Clinique Pasteur in Bamako are seeking to trace all those who may have been in contact with the patient and the nurse. This includes clinic staff, family members and associates. The authorities are also seeking to

establish whether the death in Bamako of an associate of the patient was also due to Ebola. On 21 November, the World

Health Organization (WHO) reported that all 6 known cases of Ebola in Mali have died, and that 327 contacts are being monitored. 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 to the previous advice which has been given. MS RISK currently advises against all travel to Mali.

Local Travel

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

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

MS RISK Guidance to Organizations in Mali:

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

- Thinning out non-essential staff and dependents
- Restricting expat and local national internal travel

- Seeking advice from the security forces
- Ensuring journey management systems are in place and work
- Reviewing crisis management contingencies and carrying out exercises of these plans
- Registration of expatriates with relevant diplomatic missions and seeking advice on what support will be forthcoming (if any) if conditions deteriorate
- Liaison with insurers to know any exclusions or limits to existing cover

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 December 2014** - A group of United Nations peacekeepers, who were trapped in a clinic in Mali when it was placed under quarantine after an Ebola outbreak, have been allowed to leave. According to UN officials, around twenty soldiers from the MINUSMA mission had been admitted to the Pasteur Clinic in Bamako with various injuries connected to their service in the restive northern region of the country. They were quarantined along with several patients and staff members three weeks ago when a nurse was found to have died after contracting the deadly disease from a Muslim cleric who had travelled from Guinea to seek treatment. A statement released by the mission's spokesman, Olivier Salgado, indicated, "having all been placed under observation, the quarantined MINUSMA soldiers showed no symptoms of the disease so they just left the establishment." The statement further indicated that no other person quarantined at the clinic has shown symptoms.
- **4 December 2014** - Mali has received its first mobile Ebola lab, which can be deployed to remote hotspots of the country when needed. The new lab, which was donated by Germany and unveiled Thursday, could be used in test samples in remote hotspots within a few hours. Previously, samples had to be taken to the capital, Bamako, for testing and a day was lost before the results were known. Mali has recorded eight cases of Ebola however due to the fact that the country shares a border with Guinea, officials want to prepare themselves in the event that a large outbreak occurs.
- **27 November 2014** – On Thursday, military sources reported that dozens of Chadian troops from the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali have deserted their posts over a dispute pertaining to pay and conditions. According to several sources the soldiers, who are armed, left their station in the northern town of Aguelhoc on Tuesday night, with some stating that they had not been paid for up to four months. While it remains unclear where the soldiers are headed, unconfirmed reports have indicated that the group had reached the town of Anefis, which is located some 220 kilometers (135 miles) further south. A Malian defense ministry official confirmed that authorities are "aware of the situation," and that "senior Chadian military officials arrived in N'Djamena to help resolve the situation." The desertion was also confirmed by a source in the UN's MINUSMA force who placed the number of deserted soldiers at "a few dozen." In a similar case last September, around 160 troops from the Chadian contingent deserted their posts in Tessalit, which is located 100 km north of Aguelhoc. At the time, they were voicing the similar concerns. The 2,000 Chadian soldiers of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) – MINUSMA's predecessor - were at the forefront of the French-led military intervention that was launched in January 2013. In the initial battles, Chad lost around 50 troops, with the heaviest fighting occurring in the northeastern Ifoghas Mountains. Since MINUSMA was deployed in July last year, a string of attacks targeting the UN mission in

Mali has killed 31 peacekeepers, including ten from Chad who were killed by a roadside bombs in the Kidal region in September and October.

- **25 November 2014** – Two soldiers were killed Tuesday and four others wounded after a roadside bomb exploded under the convoy of a Malian minister as he was travelling through the northern region of the country. Sadou Diallo, the mayor of the nearby city of Gao, confirmed the attack, stating that the Minister of Rural Development Bokary Treta was unharmed but that an armored car from the military detachment that was escorting him struck the bomb. The incident occurred as the convoy was travelling from Gao to the town of Bourem. Earlier this month, a roadside bomb killed two soldiers in the same region. Despite a French-led force removing an al-Qaeda branch and other jihadists from power across northern Mali in 2013, remnants of militants groups continue to thrive in the region and in recent months have stepped up their attacks. Since early September the resurgence of violence has killed 21 UN peacekeepers.
- **24 November 2014** – On Monday, Mali confirmed a new case of Ebola, bringing the number of people who have fallen ill with the deadly disease to eight. A statement issued by the Malian government Monday evening revealed that a patient has been placed in a treatment center. Currently, all of Mali's Ebola cases have been traced back to a 70-year-old imam who was brought to the country from Guinea. Six of Mali's eight Ebola patients have died. Officials are currently monitoring 271 people in a bid to contain the disease. Latest figures released by the World Health organization (WHO) reveal that Ebola has killed more than 5,4000 people in West Africa, mostly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Domestic News

- **2 December 2014** – On Monday, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) lifted a block on aid to Mali, which was frozen for a period of six months after Malian officials purchased a US \$40 million presidential plane. Officials at the IMF announced the resumption of disbursements under its US \$46 million credit for Mali, which was set up in December 2013 with the aim of helping the West African country as it emerged from a security and political crisis. The IMF however stopped the payments in May after the government purchased the extravagant aircraft and issued a US \$200 million state guarantee that effectively allowed a private company to purchase supplies for the army. At the time, those deals raised questions pertaining to Malian authorities' commitment to good management of public finances. Under increasing pressure, the Malian government later agreed to carry out two independent audits, which revealed shortcomings. The government also undertook several other reforms that assured the IMF that Malian officials were ready to move ahead. While the unfreezing of the programme will allow for a new disbursement of US \$11.7 million, the IMF's deputy managing director Naoyuki Shinohara has warned that the country's economic recovery remains fragile, stating "prospects are clouded by a difficult security situation and the risk of an Ebola epidemic...in order to restore business, consumer and donor confidence, it is essential to tighten the implementation of budget and procurement rules, building on the results of recent officials audits."
- **28 November 2014** – Officials for both sides confirmed Friday that negotiations between the Malian government and mostly Tuareg rebel groups, which were held in neighboring Algiers, broke up on Thursday without reaching an agreement on northern Mali. Cherif Kanoute, spokesman for Mali's foreign ministry confirmed Friday "the negotiations are suspended without a preliminary agreement." While the spokesman did not elaborate on why the talks had failed to reach an agreement, Moussa Ag Assarid, a spokesman for the Azawad groups confirmed that while the talks had ended, another meeting was provisionally planned for January. Mali's vast northern desert region, which is called Azawad by the Tuareg rebels, has risen up four

times in the last five decades, with a number of groups fighting either for independence or to form a self-rule from the government in Bamako.

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.

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. As of 28 November, a curfew is in place in the whole of the region of Diffa. The curfew prohibits the movement of motorized vehicles from 8PM until 6AM. 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

- **26 November 2014** – Schools and health centers in eastern Niger have closed over fears of attacks carried out by Nigerian Islamist group Boko Haram, which in recent weeks has increasingly been staging cross-border raids, particularly in neighboring Cameroon. Niger’s Prime Minister Brigi Rafini reported this week that fears of possible Boko Haram attacks have intensified particularly in the country’s eastern Diffa region. He has noted that measures will be taken over the next week in order to relocate the affected students to schools that are open elsewhere. Despite establishing a state of emergency last year in three northeastern Nigerian states affected by Boko Haram’s five-year insurgency, the Nigerian military has been largely incapable of stopping the militant group, which is now believed to be in control of more than two dozens towns in Nigeria. Many believe that with Boko Haram intensifying its attacks in north Cameroon, that parts of neighboring Chad and Niger may also soon be targeted by the militant group. Some believe that the recent seizure of towns and increasing cross-border attacks is an attempt at recreating the Kanem-Borno Caliphate – a former Islamic Kingdom whose borders correspond to parts of all four modern-day nations. The increasing threat of attack has also prompted the Chadian government to increase troop patrols on Lake Chad, which forms the border with Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon.

Domestic News

- **24 November 2014** – Lawmakers in Niger have selected a former opposition member to become the new head of parliament, effectively replacing Hama Amadou who fled to France after being named in a baby trafficking scandal. On Monday, parliamentary vice-president Daouda Marthe, who has led parliament since Amadou’s departure, confirmed that Amadou Salifou “was declared elected as speaker of the National Assembly with 71 votes,” out of 113. The former speaker, who had been seen as the main challenger to President Mahamadou Issoufou in the 2016 presidential elections, left Niger on August 27 after lawmakers approved that he be questioned in the scandal. He first travelled to Burkina Faso and later to Belgium, before arriving in France. At the end of September, Niger issued an arrest warrant for Amadou. In Late June, seventeen people, 12 of whom are women, including one of Amadou’s wives, were arrested for their suspected involvement in a baby-trafficking ring between Benin, Niger and Nigeria. Amadou however has maintained that the charges against him are politically motivated.

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

In the past two weeks, Boko Haram has increased its tempo of attacks, carrying out deadly terrorist attacks across the northeastern region of Nigeria on a near daily basis. Further such attacks are likely to continue as the holiday season approaches.

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

- **4 December 2014** – On Thursday, suspected Boko Haram gunmen stormed two towns in northeastern Nigeria, raiding banks and burning government buildings as well as political party offices. According to residents, scores of gunmen dressed in military uniform arrived in Bajoga, which is located 60 kilometres (37 miles) from Gombe city, in a convoy of twenty vehicles at about 7 AM (0600 GMT). Residents reported that the militants shouted “Allahu Akbar” and fired indiscriminately before burning down a police station during the three-hour battle with Nigerian troops. Troop reinforcements were deployed from Gombe and a military jet, which bombed the militants, forced them to withdraw. The militants then drove towards the town of Ashaka, which is located five kilometres away near the border with Yobe state. Residents in Ashaka reported heavy fighting between troops and the gunmen around 11 AM. The militants also attacked a giant cement works owned by French group Lafarge. Sources at the cement works reported that while the factory's staff was evacuated before the attack, the militants managed to steal several four-wheel cars, and entered the facilities medical clinic, where they stole an ambulance and drugs. The plant was previously attacked on 4 November, during which militants stole pick-up trucks and large quantities of industrial dynamited. Since the early November attack, additional troops were deployed to the town in a bid to prevent further incidents. The two attacks on Bajoga and Ashaka fit a pattern of almost daily violence carried out by the Islamist group. Most of the attacks have involved the militants raiding banks for funds to purchase weapons, as well as burning down police stations, government political party buildings. Militant fighters involved in Thursday's raids are believed to have come from the Buni Yadi area in the southern region of Yobe, which has been under Boko Haram's control for some time. It is believed that the attack was aimed at replenishing their supplies.
- **2 December 2014** – Witnesses reported Tuesday that a teenage female suicide bomber was apprehended while heading towards that Maiduguri market, which has already been hit twice by female suicide bombers in the past week. Sources have reported that the young woman was stopped at a roadblock controlled by a civilian defense group. A search revealed that she had explosives strapped to her abdomen. It is believed that she was heading for the market in Maiduguri to carry out an attack. Over the past week, the busy market has been targeted twice by female suicide bombers, resulting in the deaths of over one hundred people. In recent months, Boko Haram has increasingly used young female suicide bombers and has accelerated its violence in northeastern Nigeria.
 - Nigerian officials have imposed an indefinite 24-hour curfew on the northern town of Damaturu a day after Boko Haram militants attacked it. The Yobe state governor's office announced the decision Tuesday and indicated that the move would allow the security forces to finish their operation in order to drive out the attackers. The new curfew means that all residents in Damaturu will have to stay at home, effectively forcing the closure of schools, businesses and government offices. It suggests that the militant group has heavily infiltrated the state capital, which has a population of several hundred thousand, and that authorities are now extremely concerned about the security situation. Sources

have reported that the militant group may be seeking to gain control of the state capital. On Monday, Boko Haram militants attacked a police base, a university and a primary school in the northern town. Officials have reported that 33 police officers and six soldiers were killed in clashes with the militants, with Boko Haram suffering 20 casualties. Boko Haram has targeted Damaturu a number of times in the past. In 2011, at least 63 people were killed in an attack that targeted churches and police officials. At the time, the attack was the deadliest in Boko Haram's ongoing insurgency. On a number of occasions since then, the militant group has engaged in gun battles with security forces across the city. Earlier this year, a suicide bomber targeted a crowd watching a televised World Cup football match, killing more than twenty people.

- **1 December 2014** – On Monday, suspected Boko Haram militants carried out attacks in the northeastern state capitals of Damaturu and Maiduguri. At least five people were killed and 32 wounded when twin blasts targeted a crowded market in Maiduguri. The latest attack in the Borno state capital comes nearly a week after two female suicide bombers attacked the same market on 25 November, killing 78 people. Several witnesses reported Monday that two female bombers were responsible for the attacks. A separate attack in Damaturu, the capital of neighboring Yobe state, began shortly after 05:00 local time (0400 GMT), with militants setting fire to a riot police base, and later attacking a primary school and the city's university. On the ground sources reported that Boko Haram fighters, who have obtained most of their weapons by seizing them from the Nigerian army, appeared to be trying to gain access to military equipment stockpiled in the city. Monday's attacks on the two state capitals appear to be a continued acceleration of extremist violence in northeastern Nigeria, which in recent weeks has seen insurgents staging attacks on an almost daily basis. Over the past two weeks, attacks linked to Boko Haram have killed at least 220 people, with some experts indicating that the number is likely closer to 300. On Friday, at least 120 people were killed after three explosions occurred during prayer hours at one of the largest mosques in the city of Kano. Security officials believe that the Grand Mosque in Kano may have been targeted after one of Nigeria's top Islamic leaders recently issued a call to arms to fight Boko Haram. On Thursday, at least forty people were killed after a bomb exploded at a bus station in Mubi, the second largest city in Adamawa state. While some of these attacks have yet to be claimed, Boko Haram is widely suspected to be responsible.
- **28 November 2014** - Reports emerged Friday that many people have been killed in three explosions that occurred during Friday prayers at one of the largest mosques in the Nigerian city of Kano. The attacks come a week after one of Nigeria's top Islamic leaders issued a call to arms to fight Boko Haram. According to on the ground sources, the Grand Mosque in Kano was targeted Friday by suspected Boko Haram militants. The blasts occurred as Friday prayers had got under way at about 2:00 PM (1300 GMT). According to one local, "two bombs exploded, one after the other, in the premises of the Grand Mosque seconds after the prayers had started," adding "a third one went off in a nearby road close to the Qadiriyya Sufi order. The blasts were followed by gunshots by the police to scare off potential attacks." Eyewitnesses have reported that at least fifty people were killed in the attack, however officials have not released any official figures. National police spokesman Emmanuel Ojukwu confirmed that an attack had occurred in Kano however he noted that he was waiting for a briefing from officers at the scene and declined to comment further. While Boko Haram has in the past targeted the city, which is the largest in northern Nigeria, several times during its five-year insurgency, most of its attacks have occurred in the eastern areas of the city. The Grand Mosque is attached to the palace of the Emir of Kano, Nigeria's second most senior Muslim cleric. The Grand Mosque is also where the influential Muslim leader usually leads prayers. The Emir, Muhammed Sanusi II, is currently in Saudi Arabia. Sources have reported that he arrived in Saudi Arabia late on Thursday night from Paris. Some have indicated that Friday's attack on the

Grand Mosque may be the result of comments made by the Emir last week in which he stated that northerners should take up arms against Boko Haram. In what are rare public comments by a cleric pertaining to political and military affairs, the Emir also cast doubts on the ability of Nigeria's army to protect civilians and to end the five-year insurgency. Friday's explosions come after civilian vigilantes in the northeastern city of Maiduguri revealed that they had foiled a bomb attack against a mosque just five days after two female suicide bombers killed over forty-five people in the city. Civilian vigilantes have disclosed that they discovered a suspected remote-controlled device that was planted in the Gamboru Market area of the city. Sources have indicated that while the bomb was successfully diffused by the police bomb squad another bomb near the area exploded. There were no casualties and the area has since been cordoned off. Locals have reported that the bombs were likely planted ahead of Friday's prayers, as there is a mosque located nearby. Many suspect Boko Haram militants to be behind this incident, which also come just days after several arrests were made. If Boko Haram confirms this incident, then it would demonstrate that it is evolving its tactics, as the use of concealed roadside bombs is not typically a method that the group has used. In the past, Boko Haram has used direct hit-and-run tactics, car bombs and suicide attacks to carry out its deadly campaign of creating an Islamic state in northeastern Nigeria. **Update (29 November)** – The governor of Kano state reported Saturday that at least 100 people were killed in Friday's coordinated attack on the central mosque in Kano, and another 135 were wounded.

- A security forces spokesman reported Friday that three expatriate construction workers have been kidnapped in Nigeria's Bayelsa state in the delta region. According to the spokesman, the men, two Pakistani nationals and one Indian national, were seized in the town of Emakalakala in the Ogbia council area, just a few miles from their construction base. Eyewitnesses have reported that they saw sporadic shooting in the air before the men were forced into a waiting speedboat. Anka Mustapha, spokesman for the state's Joint Task Force (JTF) confirmed the kidnappings, indicating, "a very intense search is on to locate and rescue them." The threat of kidnapping in Nigeria's southern region has remained high in recent years, with abductors typically netting millions of dollars in ransom payments. Analysts have predicted that kidnappings in the region are expected to increase ahead of the February 2015 presidential elections, stating that some politicians fund campaigns with money that is acquired through criminal networks.
- **27 November 2014** – According to eyewitnesses and security personnel, at least forty people were killed Thursday after a bomb exploded at a bus station in northeastern Nigeria. Sources have reported that at least five soldiers were amongst the victims of Thursday's attack, which occurred in a village just outside Mubi, the second largest city in the northeastern Adamawa state. So far no group has claimed responsibility for the attack, however security officials are blaming Boko Haram militants. Mubi, a key town for Boko Haram, was once of the largest area to be captured by the militant group and in recent weeks, it has been the scene of numerous clashes between the militants and the military, with Nigerian army officials repeatedly claiming to have successfully regained control of the city.
- **26 November 2014** – Suspected Boko Haram militants killed at least twenty people Monday in two villages on the outskirts of Chibok. According to on the ground sources, attackers struck the villages of Galtimari and Kamtahi Monday evening, burning houses and forcing dozens of residents to flee.
- **25 November 2014** – In what is the latest wave of attacks to be blamed on Boko Haram, at least forty-five people were killed Tuesday when two female suicide bombers blew themselves up in a crowded market in northeastern Nigeria. The explosions come as suspected Boko Haram militants have taken control of another town in northeastern Nigeria. The explosions occurred around 11 AM (1000GMT) on One Way road in the Borno state capital Maiduguri, near the Monday Market area where at least fifteen people were

killed in an attack carried out by suspected Boko Haram militants on 1 July. An official from Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) confirmed "many people have been killed," but that an official death toll has not been compiled. According to on the ground sources, the first bomber stood by a motorized rickshaw packed with goods in the busy market and took a call on her mobile phone. She later dropped the mobile phone and blew herself up. Officials currently believe that the bomb was likely concealed in the rickshaw. According to an eyewitness, "about 10 minutes later, another woman who looked about 19 and carrying what looked like a baby on her back...arrived at the scene that was crowded with rescuers and locals....She then detonated the bomb on her back." In recent months, northern Nigeria has increasingly been hit by a wave of suicide bomb attack carried out by women. In July, there were four such attacks that occurred within a week in Kano city. Officials believe that Boko Haram is using either willing volunteers or coercing young women and girls into carrying out suicide attacks. According to sources, three women, said to be "female recruiters" for Boko Haram were reportedly arrested in July while an alleged trainer of women bombers was detained in August in Kano with up to 16 "trainees." Tuesday's attacks also came after the militants seized control of another town in Nigeria's restive northeast. Early Monday, Boko Haram took over the town of Damasak, located less than 200 kilometers (125 miles) from Maiduguri, in the far north of Borno, near the border with neighboring Niger. According to local sources, the militants entered the town disguised as traders, carrying boxes that were packed with AK-47 rifles. They then set fire to houses and killed an unspecified number of people.

International Developments

- **1 December 2014** – In what is the latest sign of troubled relations between the United States and Nigeria, on Monday, US Embassy officials reported that Nigerian officials have asked the US to stop training a battalion of Nigerian soldiers. An embassy statement issued Monday disclosed that the US regrets "...the termination of this training" to help Nigeria's army fight an Islamic uprising. In recent weeks, tensions between the two countries have increased in the wake of Nigeria accusing the US of not doing enough in order to help it confront the threat from Boko Haram. The disagreement apparently stems from the US refusing to sell Nigeria helicopter gunships. In recent months, Nigerian soldiers have been accused of carrying out summary executions of civilians, along with other abuses that have been carried out under the state of emergency, which has been in place since May last year in the country's northeastern region. Under US law, the US is prohibited from selling certain lethal weapons to countries whose militaries are accused of consistent gross human rights violations.

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

- **5 December 2014** - On Friday, officials in Sierra Leone warned that it would jail entire families if Ebola victims who appeared to have been washed after death were discovered in their homes. A statement released by Palo Conteh, head of the government's National Ebola Response Centre, disclosed "when the family calls (the burial hotline) and it is proved that the corpse has been tampered with, we are going to quarantine the entire family, or take them to holding centres for 21 days.... if they are negative, they will be taken to prison for a certain period under the state of emergency. If they are positive, we will send them for treatment." Conteh did not specify if children would be held criminally responsible, nor did he indicate what would happen to them if their parents were jailed. Despite numerous appeals for Sierra Leoneans to refrain from the practice, the government has indicated that the tradition of cleansing the dead before burials remains a major factor in the spread of the highly contagious virus. The government has indicated that civil unrest and disobedience in parts of the country are making it impossible to beat the outbreak.
- **2 December 2014** – Sierra Leone has quarantined several hundred thousand citizens after officials sealed off the country's sixth district. Tonkolili, which is located in the center of the country some 350 kilometres (20 miles) from the capital Freetown, has been added to the growing list of districts where no one is allowed to leave or enter without special dispensation. According to Sierra Leone's health ministry spokesman, "the two-week lockdown was agreed in a key stakeholders meeting of cabinet ministers, parliamentarians and paramount chiefs of the district as part of efforts to stem the spread of the disease." Tonkolili, a district of around 400,000 people, is expected to end its quarantine on 15 December. Six of the country's fourteen districts have been sealed off in an effort to combat the Ebola outbreak, which has killed 1,400 people in Sierra Leone. In September, the northern districts of Port Loko and Bombali were closed off indefinitely along with the district of Moyama. The eastern districts of Kenema and Kailahun are also under the quarantine. More than half of the West African country's population is already under lockdown.
- **25 November 2014** – In protest at authorities' failure to pay bonuses for handling Ebola victims, burial workers in Sierra Leone have left bodies in the street outside a hospital. Residents in the eastern town of Kenema, which is the third largest city in the country and the biggest in the eastern region, have reported that up to fifteen corpses have been abandoned, with three of them left outside a hospital entrance, preventing people from entering. A spokesman for the striking workers has indicated that burial workers have not been paid their weekly hazard allowance for seven weeks. While authorities in Sierra Leone have acknowledged that the money has not been paid, they have warned that all the striking members of the Ebola Burial Team will be dismissed. According to Sidi Yahya Tunis, the spokesman for the National Ebola Response Centre, the central government had paid the money to the district health management team however "somebody somewhere needs to be investigated to find out where these monies have been going." An official has confirmed that several workers have now been fired for treating the corpses in a "very, very inhumane" way. Over the past several months, healthcare workers operating in Liberia and Sierra Leone have gone on strike over pay and dangerous working conditions. Two weeks ago, workers at a clinic in Bo, Sierra Leone, walked off the job.

Togo

No Travel Restrictions

Security Summary



There is currently no travel advisory for Togo. There have been several riots and protests that have taken place in Lome over the past several days. Protests have been organized to garner support for the opposition's call for constitutional changes that would bar the president from seeking a third term in office in next year's presidential elections. Further protests are likely to take place in the coming weeks. MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to avoid all demonstrations and large gatherings anywhere in the country as they could quickly become violent.

Crime is on the rise in Lome. Local authorities warn of a rise in violent robberies and car-jacking incidents that target both foreigners and Togolese alike. Togolese authorities have also warned motorists to only stop for individuals in uniform, particularly after dark. You should avoid travelling alone where possible even within Lome city limits, especially after dark. There is a possibility of retaliatory attacks in Togo, due to its participation in the intervention in Mali.

On the Ground Reporting

- **29 November 2014** – Several thousand people protested in the Togolese capital on Friday to call for constitutional changes that will bar President Faure Gnassingbe from seeking a third term in office in next year's presidential elections. Friday's protests came a week after police in the capital Lome used teargas on opposition supporters who defied government orders not to march on the national assembly building. The turnout for Friday's election was smaller than last week's demonstrations.
- **27 November 2014** – On Thursday, Togo's opposition called for a large-scale protest in a bid to demand political reforms ahead of next year's elections. The eight-party Combat for Political Alternative in 2015 (CAP2015) alliance made the call for "the people of Lome and nearby to come out in huge numbers" at a rally on Friday. The planned protests come a week after police in the capital city teargassed opposition supporters who defied government orders not to march on the national assembly building. Togo's opposition is pushing for a change to the country's constitution, which would limit a president to two, five-year terms in office. While the country's constitution currently doesn't outline a limit on presidential terms, earlier this week two-term President Faure Gnassingbe ruled out any changes, stating that the constitution would not be changed. Lawmakers in Togo had also previously rejected the reform bill. While the president has not formally announced his candidacy, he has indicated that he is not ruling out standing again in the upcoming presidential elections. Observers are now closely monitoring the situation in Togo after popular protests over the constitution toppled the leader of Burkina Faso late last month.



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