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THE CENTRAL AFRICA REPORT



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

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

FEBRUARY 9 - 22, 2015

About MS Risk

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- Project Management
 - Interim Security
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 - Special Assignments
- Crisis Response
 - Crisis Response
 - Business continuity management
 - Hostile operations support to commercial interests
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References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

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The Central Africa Report ~ Summary

February 9 - 22, 2015



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Cameroon

On the Ground Reporting

- **19 February 2015** – A human rights organization has accused Cameroon’s security forces of a number of abuses against civilians in their campaign to fight Boko Haram militants.
- **18 February 2015** – The United States embassy in Cameroon announced Wednesday that the US will help the African country’s army secure equipment to fight Boko Haram as Cameroon deepens its commitment to countering the militant group.
- **17 February 2015** – On Tuesday, seven villagers in the far north region of Cameroon were killed after battling Boko Haram militants who stole seventy cows and torched houses in Gaboua.
- **16 February 2015** – Officials reported Monday that more than 1,000 people suspected of being affiliated with Boko Haram are being held in a prison in the far northern Cameroonian town of Maroua, where more than 2,000 Cameroonian soldiers have been deployed since August last year.

- Representatives of ten nations met in the Cameroonian capital of Yaoundé on Monday under the aegis of the Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS), where they urged the international community to provide additional support in the fight against Boko Haram.
- An army colonel has disclosed that suspected Boko Haram militants attacked a Cameroonian military base near the border with Nigeria, killing at least five soldiers.
- **13 February 2015** – Cameroon will deploy additional troops in order to reinforce security at the border village of Mabass, which lies on Cameroon’s northern border with Nigeria, after Boko Haram militants kidnapped eleven people.
- **9 February 2015** - Suspected Boko Haram militants have hijacked a bus in northern Cameroon, abducting 20 people and executing 12 of them.
 - At least ten Boko Haram militants have been killed in clashes with a joint-Cameroonian-Chadian force in the northern Cameroonian town of Kerawa, which is located near the border with Nigeria.

Central African Republic

On the Ground Reporting

- **11 February 2015** – A CAR government minister, who was kidnapped by gunmen last month, has been freed.
- **10 February 2015** – On Tuesday, international troops clashed with ex-Seleka rebels in the CAR.
- **9 February 2015** – Allies of the mainly Muslim ex-Seleka rebel group killed at least ten people and injured another 10 during an attack in the northern village of Bolum.

Chad

On the Ground Reporting

- **18 February 2015** - In a statement that aired on Chadian television, Chad’s chief of state disclosed that 117 militants were killed in fierce clashes on Tuesday around the town of Dikwa, which is located about 80 kilometres south of Monguno in Borno state.
- **16 February 2015** - On Monday, Boko Haram threatened Chad and Niger, warning that its fighters were preparing to carry out suicide bombings in the countries that have deployed troops to help fight the militant group.
 - On Monday, Chad launched a US-backed counter-terrorism exercise, which involves 1,300 soldiers from 28 African and Western countries.
- **13 February 2015** – Officials disclosed Friday that Nigeria-based Boko Haram militants carried out an attack on Chad overnight, the first such assault to take place on Chadian soil.

Regional Reporting

- **13 February 2015** - Authorities in Senegal on Friday ordered former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre to appear before a special tribunal to stand trial for torture, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- **14 February 2015** – A United Nations official disclosed Saturday that the UN is formally pulling its support for a DRC military operation against rebels after Kinshasa missed a deadline to dismiss two generals.
- **5 February 2015** – According to a spokesman, the United Nations has temporarily withdrawn its backing for a planned offensive against rebels operating in the eastern DRC after the country's government refused to dismiss two generals.

Domestic News

- **12 February 2015** – The DRC's electoral commission has set a date for next year's presidential and legislative elections.

Gabon

On the Ground Reporting

- **11 February 2015** – Trade unions in Gabon declared an indefinite general strike this week, with state workers seeking a large pay raise as the government prepares austerity measures.

Central Africa Report ~ Security Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gabon - There are currently no travel advisories for Gabon.

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

Angola

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

Luanda

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

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

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

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



Cabinda Province

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

Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul

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

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

Cameroon

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

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

There have been a number of recent attacks in northern Cameroon, especially along the border with Nigeria. Officials have attributed these attacks and raids on villages to Boko Haram militants operating in Nigeria. Further such attacks are likely to occur in the coming weeks. MS Risk advises all travellers to Cameroon to avoid the northern regions of the country, specifically the areas that border with Nigeria as further attacks cannot be ruled out.

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

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. MS Risk



advises against all travel to the Bakassi Peninsula as well as within 20km of the border with Nigeria in the Ndian Division of the South West Province. We also advise against all travel to within 40km of the border with Chad in the North and Far North Provinces. This is due to a heightened risk of banditry and armed poachers in Bouba Ndjidda National Park in the North Province. There is currently a travel advisory north of Maroula in the Far North Province resulting from the heightened threat of armed banditry and other threats associated with the borders of Chad and Nigeria. The Government of Cameroon is expected to cut fuel subsidies in the near future, which may cause strikes and civil unrest throughout the country. Finally, there have been attacks on commercial shipping vessels in the Gulf of Guinea, including the coastline of Cameroon around the port of Douala. Vessels travelling throughout this area have been advised to exercise extreme caution.

On the Ground Reporting

- **19 February 2015** – A human rights organization has accused Cameroon’s security forces of a number of abuses against civilians in their campaign to fight Boko Haram militants. According to Maximilienne Ngo Mbe, head of Cameroonian association REDHAC, “we cannot in the name of the fight against Boko Haram, which is already tough, allow people to be petrified and terrorized by those who are supposed to protect them.” Officials from REDHAC have indicated that the Cameroonian army has used intimidation and torture in a bid to extract intelligence from locals that can be used against Boko Haram fighters. In speaking about the army’s alleged abuses, Ms Ngo Mbe highlighted one specific case where recently around fifty people suffocated while locked in a cell after being rounded up for questioning from two villages in the far north region of Cameroon, which, according to her, has become a zone of numerous rights violations as locals have become trapped between militants and the government. The victims, she said, were subsequently buried in a mass grave in the bush. A spokesman for Cameroon’s army has stated that the army has “...no comment to make. The NGO’s have their role. We have nothing to say.”
- **18 February 2015** – The United States embassy in Cameroon announced Wednesday that the US will help the African country’s army secure equipment to fight Boko Haram as Cameroon deepens its commitment to countering the militant group. In a notice published Wednesday, US ambassador to Cameroon Michael Stephen Hoza stated “my government is working on a logistic pipeline of material that will enhance Cameroon’s ability to defend itself from Boko Haram.” While the ambassador did not elaborate on what would be provided, he did note that the US would only provide “equipment necessary to defend the country.” Earlier this week, the commander of US Special Forces operations in Africa pledged to help African nations involved in fighting the militant group. Major General James Linder stated that the United States would provide technology allowing African partners to communicate between cellphones, radios and computes.
- **17 February 2015** – On Tuesday, seven villagers in the far north region of Cameroon were killed after battling Boko Haram militants who stole seventy cows and torched houses in Gaboua. On

the ground sources have reported that nine militants were killed after clashes erupted between them and locals, who were armed with clubs, machetes and bows and arrows.

- **16 February 2015** – Officials reported Monday that more than 1,000 people suspected of being affiliated with Boko Haram are being held in a prison in the far northern Cameroonian town of Maroua, where more than 2,000 Cameroonian soldiers have been deployed since August last year. Colonel Joseph Nouma, commander of a local operation to combat the militants, confirmed, “at the moment, the prison of Maroua is holding more than 1,000 Boko Haram (suspects).”
 - Representatives of ten nations met in the Cameroonian capital of Yaoundé on Monday under the aegis of the Economic Community of Central Africa States (ECCAS), where they urged the international community to provide additional support in the fight against Boko Haram. Speaking at the summit, Cameroon’s President Paul Biya stated, “we have to eradicate Boko Haram,” as attendees pledged to create a US \$86 million fund aimed at fighting the group. The president declared that the militant group’s utter disregard for human dignity meant “a total impossibility of compromise,” adding that the fight against terrorism was not a “crusade against Islam.” According to a source close to the Cameroonian government, Monday’s discussion was to come up with “an agreed solution” on the fight against the extremists. While Nigeria was absent from Monday’s talks, as it is not a member of ECCAS, the participating members have called on Nigeria to cooperate by allowing the multinational joint task force to attack Boko haram in its strongholds in Nigeria.
 - An army colonel has disclosed that suspected Boko Haram militants attacked a Cameroonian military base near the border with Nigeria, killing at least five soldiers. According to Col. Joseph Nouma, hundreds of the militants escaped back to Nigeria on Monday after they looted a number of homes near the town of Waza before setting fire to them. Eight Cameroonian soldiers were wounded in the attack.
- **13 February 2015** – Cameroon will deploy additional troops in order to reinforce security at the border village of Mabass, which lies on Cameroon’s northern border with Nigeria, after Boko Haram militants kidnapped eleven people. Over the past three weeks, suspected Boko Haram militants have killed scores of people in the town. Yerrima Bouba, a resident of Mabass, reported Friday that attackers struck the town again Thursday night, kidnapping 11 people, including seven young girls and four elderly women, before they stole cattle and burned a local church and mosque. Residents have reported that since late January, at least eighty people have been kidnapped from the village, with women and girls particularly targeted. Officials believe that the suspected Boko Haram militants come from a group of insurgents recently pushed out of the Gamboru-Ngala region in Nigeria, in the wake of a ground offensive carried out by Cameroonian and Chadian troops in early February. Colonel Jokop Korji, the commander of the troops, has indicated that in addition to the infantry, Cameroon has also mobilized the air force, particularly in the Mandara highlands on Cameroon’s border with Nigeria, where Boko Haram militants are known to hide after carrying out attacks.

- **9 February 2015** - Suspected Boko Haram militants have hijacked a bus in northern Cameroon, abducting 20 people and executing 12 of them. According to sources, the kidnapping occurred Sunday and all of the survivors have since been released. Residents reported Monday that the militants reportedly seized a bus carrying market-goers and drove it towards the border with Nigeria. The bus was seized near the border area of Koza and driven towards the Nigerian border 18 kilometres (11 miles) away.
 - At least ten Boko Haram militants have been killed in clashes with a joint-Cameroonian-Chadian force in the northern Cameroonian town of Kerawa, which is located near the border with Nigeria. According to a Cameroonian security source, “Kerawa was attacked Sunday evening by Boko Haram militants. The attackers were repelled and at least ten of them were killed,” adding “eight Cameroonian soldiers were wounded in the gunfight. However, their lives aren’t in danger.” A separate group of fighters reportedly attacked the nearby town of Kolofata, looting food and livestock. The attacks in Cameroon follow a series of assaults on the border towns of Bosso and Diffa in neighboring Niger.

Central African Republic

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

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

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

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

Crime



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

On the Ground Reporting

- **11 February 2015** – A CAR government minister, who was kidnapped by gunmen last month, has been freed. On Wednesday, family members confirmed that Armel Mingatouloum Sayo had been freed overnight, however the circumstances of his release remain unclear. While Mr Sayo's family were in contact with the kidnappers while he was being held, the government has denied that a ransom was paid to secure his release. On 25 January, Mr Sayo, who serves as minister of sports and youth, was pulled from his car in the capital Bangui by gunmen believed to be linked to the country's anti-balaka militia. His abduction was one of a number that occurred in the CAR in January - a UN employee and a French aid worker were taken hostage at about the same time. Both were later released.
- **10 February 2015** – On Tuesday, international troops clashed with ex-Seleka rebels in the CAR. According to the United Nation's peacekeeping mission in the CAR, MINUSCA, fighting broke out in the eastern mining town of Bria when UN forces, backed by French troops, evicted the rebels from government buildings and "were immediately countered by the hostile armed group." According to a source, there were several dead and injured however officials have not confirmed any casualties. A resident in the town disclosed that locals "...couldn't set foot outside. There was gunfire coming from the area around the airport to the administrative buildings... The clashes were violent." Officials from MINUSCA have disclosed "the operation, which took place after the repeated refusal of the armed group to peacefully evacuate the premises, was aimed at ending the existence of a parallel administration in Bria.
- **9 February 2015** – Allies of the mainly Muslim ex-Seleka rebel group killed at least ten people and injured another 10 during an attack in the northern village of Bolum. According to on the ground sources, several houses and plantations were also burned during the attack. Local police officials have attributed the violence to armed Peul herders. Over the past two weeks, at least eight people have been killed in other attacks in the country's northern region, some of which have been blamed on the mostly Muslim Peuls.

Chad

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

On 13 February, Boko Haram militants launched an attack on the Chadian village of Ngouboua – the first such assault to take place on Chadian soil. Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, has threatened Chad with further attacks if it continues to participate in the regional force combatting the militant group. MS Risk advises all travellers to Chad to remain vigilant at all times.

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following areas: areas within 30 kilometers (18 miles) of the border with Libya, Nigeria, Niger and the Central African Republic; areas bordering Lake

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



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

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

There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

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

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

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

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

On the Ground Reporting

- 18 February 2015** - In a statement that aired on Chadian television, Chad's chief of state disclosed that 117 militants were killed in fierce clashes on Tuesday around the town of Dikwa, which is located about 80 kilometres south of Monguno in Borno state. According to General Brahim Seid Mahamat, two Chadian soldiers were killed and nine were injured in Tuesday's fighting, adding that "four vehicles packed with explosives" had been destroyed. The presence of Chadian forces in the town of Dikwa, which is located well inside Nigerian territory, likely indicates their readiness to push further into the rebel-controlled areas in a bid to assist Nigeria's military.
- 16 February 2015** - On Monday, Boko Haram threatened Chad and Niger, warning that its fighters were preparing to carry out suicide bombings in the countries that have deployed troops to help fight the militant group. In a translation published Monday, Boko Haram sharply criticized Niger

for joining the joint offensive and said that the West African country was being dragged into a “swamp of darkness,” adding “if you insist on continuing the aggression and the coalition with the government of Chad, then we give you glad tidings that the land of Niger is easier than the land of Nigeria and moving the war to the depth of your cities will be the first reaction toward any aggression that occurs after this statement.” Over the past ten days, Boko Haram fighters have repeatedly attacked the town of Diffa, near the border with Nigeria, however they have not attacked the capital city, Niamey. A multinational force to fight Boko Haram is expected to be formally launched in the coming weeks. Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Niger have already pledged to help Nigeria, with Burundi and the Central African Republic agreeing Monday to contribute troops to fight the militant group.

- On Monday, Chad launched a US-backed counter-terrorism exercise, which involves 1,300 soldiers from 28 African and Western countries. In a speech to mark the launch of the exercises, Chadian Brigadier General Zakaria Ngonbongue stated “this exercise to a large extent can be considered a warm-up to enable our special forces to learn techniques in the fight against terrorism.” According to the US military, more than 250 US troops are taking part in the three-week training drill, where they will help to improve intelligence-sharing, patrols, desert survival techniques, airborne operations and marksmanship. Other nations taking part in Flintlock include Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Tunisia. The annual exercises were launched in 2005 aimed at improving cross-border cooperation in Africa’s Sahel belt, a region that has been targeted by al-Qaeda-linked and home-grown Islamists along with separatists insurgents and criminal trafficking gangs.
- **13 February 2015** – Officials disclosed Friday that Nigeria-based Boko Haram militants carried out an attack on Chad overnight, the first such assault to take place on Chadian soil. On the ground sources have reported that fighters crossed Lake Chad in four motorboats and attacked the village of Ngouboua. The militants killed several people but were pushed back by Chadian troops. Chadian military aircraft carried out air strikes against the militants, destroying their vessels. Colonel Azem Bermandoua Agouna of the Chadian military confirmed that the militants killed one soldier and wounded a further four. Two Boko Haram militants were killed and five injured. Mr Agouna did not disclose the civilian casualty number. Residents reported that around 30 militants attacked the village, torching two-thirds of its homes. Chad recently joined neighboring Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria in a military coalition against Boko Haram. Chad, which is seen as having the region’s most effective military, has deployed troops to Nigeria and has conducted airstrikes against the militant group in both Nigeria and Niger. Chad has also stationed its troops in the border areas around Lake Chad. The attack on Chad comes just days after Boko Haram’s leader, Abubakar Shekau, denounced the country’s president, Idriss Deby. In a newly released video, the militant leader also declared “war” on Chad.

Regional Reporting

- **13 February 2015** - Authorities in Senegal on Friday ordered former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre to appear before a special tribunal to stand trial for torture, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Extraordinary African Chamber, which was set up by Senegal and the African Union (AU) in order to deal with this case, has announced that it has made an order of “partial dismissal of proceedings, of impeachment and referral,” adding “this order refers the accused, Hissene Habre, to the Extraordinary African Assize Chamber in order to be tried for crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of torture.” The trial, which is the result of a 19-month investigation that was carried out by a four-judge panel, is expected to begin in Senegal in either May or June. Habre has been in custody in Senegal’s capital Dakar since he was arrested at his home in June 2013. Rights groups have indicated that 40,000 people were killed during the 72-year-old’s eight years in power in Chad. While the trial was initially delayed for years by Senegal, where Habre has lived since being ousted in 1990, the trial will set a historic precedent as until now, African leaders accused of atrocities have only been tried in international courts. In December 2012, Senegal and the African Union signed an agreement in order to set up the court in order to try Habre for his offences. The AU had initially mandated Senegal to try Habre in July 2006 however the country stalled the process for years under former president Abdoulaye Wade, who was defeated in the 2012 presidential elections.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

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

A draft electoral reform bill was introduced to parliament on 12 January. On 19 January, violent demonstrations erupted outside parliament and quickly spread to other areas of the capital Kinshasa, including at city's main university. Shots were fired in several neighborhoods of the capital city. Protests continued on 20 and 21 January, resulting in troops being deployed to the streets of Kinshasa in a bid to maintain order. The ongoing protests have led to several schools being closed and movement around Kinshasa being restricted. Credible reports indicate that between 5 and 30 people have been killed as a result of the violence, including two members of the police. There have also been violent demonstrations, looting and general unrest in other areas of the country, including in Bukavu, Bas-Congo, Equator, Goma, Mbandaka and South Kivu. While the airport in Kinshasa remains open, some flights were cancelled on 20 January and there may be further cancellations. In the even of escalating tensions and civil unrest, further commercial flights may be suspended and borders may be closed. MS Risk advises all travellers to check your airline before travelling. Further demonstrations are likely to occur around parliament in Kinshasa, and elsewhere. MS Risk advises all travellers to remain vigilant and to monitor the situation in your area closely. We advise you to avoid unnecessary journeys during periods of potential unrest. We advise that



you avoid the area around the parliament in Kinshasa and stay away from gathering crowds as protests may quickly turn violent without warning.

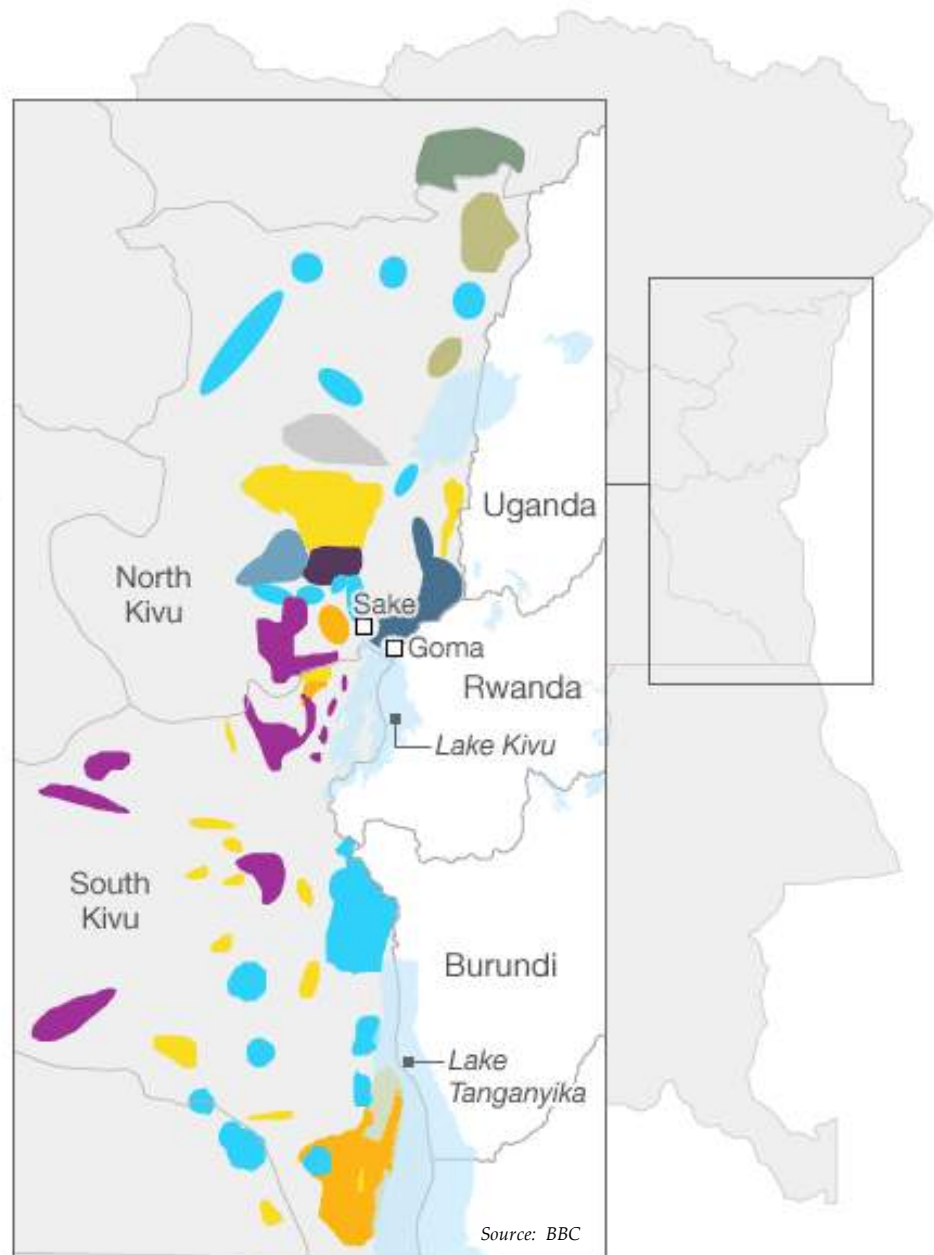
The security situation in eastern DRC, including Beni and Goma, remains unstable. Ugandan rebels have killed over 100 people in and around the town of Beni. Officials have since imposed a overnight curfew on the town. Any foreigners in North Kivu, including Goma, are currently advised to keep their security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

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

REBEL GROUPS

UN forces and the Congolese army are present in large towns

- ADF-NALU**
Ugandan-led Islamists
- APCLS**
Mai Mai group
- FDLR**
Mostly Hutu Rwandan rebels
- FRPI**
Based in gold-rich Ituri region
- M23**
Mostly Tutsi, said to be Rwandan-backed
- Rai Mutomboki**
Anti-FDLR group
- Sheka**
Mai Mai group
- UPCP**
Loose coalition of smaller nationalist groups
- Mai Mai groups**
Local forces claiming to act in self-defence
- Other armed groups**



Source: BBC

On the Ground Reporting

- **14 February 2015** – A United Nations official disclosed Saturday that the UN is formally pulling its support for a DRC military operation against rebels after Kinshasa missed a deadline to dismiss two generals. The UN's 20,000-strong MONUSCO force had been working with the DRC's army on an operation to push Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) rebels, an ethnic Hutu militia, out of the eastern region of the country. The planned joint offensive however hit an impasse when UN officials demanded that two leading generals, who have been accused of human rights violations, be replaced as a condition for supporting the military. Earlier this month, President Joseph Kabila's government rejected the UN's ultimatum to replace the two generals, who are on a UN "red list" of known human rights violators. On Saturday, a UN official confirmed, "the initial two-week period...has expired," adding, "the next step is the dispatch of formal letters to the relevant Congolese authorities concerning the cessation of support." According to the official, the correspondence will be sent out by the end of this week. The UN's decision to formally end support is limited to the planned operation against the FDLR rebels and will not affect other military campaigns against the many other rebel groups that operate in the DRC's eastern region. **Update (15 February)** – On Sunday, the DRC's president denounced the UN's support for a joint offensive against Hutu rebels operating in the country's restive east, warning against international interference in its affairs. On Sunday, government spokesman Lambert Mende stated, "the Democratic Republic of Congo is renouncing the help of MONUSCO." The government spokesman also indicated that after talks between the head of state, MONUSCO chief Martin Kobler and several diplomats, President Kabila had "...stressed the Democratic Republic of Congo was a sovereign state." In January, the DRC's military announced a unilateral offensive against the estimated 1,500 – 2,000 FDLR rebels operating in the east however ten days ago, UN officials disclosed that there since been no action on the ground.
- **5 February 2015** – According to a spokesman, the United Nations has temporarily withdrawn its backing for a planned offensive against rebels operating in the eastern DRC after the country's government refused to dismiss two generals. UN spokesman Nick Birnback has indicated that UN troops could not join the offensive because the generals were accused of human rights abuses. While the DRC's government has not commented on the UN's decision, it did previously state that it chose its best soldiers to fight the FDLR and that the government will not be taking instructions from the UN. Sources have disclosed that one of the generals chosen to lead the operation, Gen Bruno Mandevu, is on a UN "red list" over 121 alleged rights violations, which include summary executions and rapes. Last week President Joseph Kabila's government rejected the UN's ultimatum to replace the two generals. Birnback has disclosed that there is "credible evidence" against the generals and "until such time as that has been cleared, we won't work directly with them." The planned offensive was aimed at disarming FDLR rebels who are seen as a major threat to regional stability.

Domestic News

- **12 February 2015** – The DRC’s electoral commission has set a date for next year’s presidential and legislative elections. On Thursday, the commission announced that voting would take place on 27 November 2016. Despite the polls being more than a year away, discussions pertaining to the terms of the elections have already led to deadly violence. President Joseph Kabila had proposed a national census, which was to be taken place before an election could be held. However opposition leaders accused him of using the census as a mechanism to delay the polls in a bid to hold on to power. President Kabila, who has been in office since 2001, is barred from seeking another term under the current law. According to government statistics, protests over his proposal to carry out a national census have killed at least twenty-seven people.

Republic of the Congo

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

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

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



Equatorial Guinea

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

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

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



Gabon

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

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



On The Ground Reporting

- **11 February 2015** – Trade unions in Gabon declared an indefinite general strike this week, with state workers seeking a large pay raise as the government prepares austerity measures. State workers are seeking to increase their salaries to 300,000 CFA francs (US \$517) as President Ali Bongo is attempting to deal with a sharp decline in oil prices. Oil accounts for nearly half of Gabon's gross domestic product. According to local estimates compiled by local media, the new minimum wage is far above the regional average and is nearly ten times the level that is set in neighbouring Cameroon. On Tuesday, Jean Remy Yama Lendoy, a spokesman for the unions,

disclosed that in regards to the salary issues, "... the government signed agreements with unions which expired in 2014 and were never put in place." The general strike, which began Monday and which has no end date, is the first to occur in years and involves more than 50 separate unions under the umbrella group "Unitary Dynamic." On Wednesday, residents in the capital city reported that the strike was already beginning to impact schools and medical services.

São Tomé and Príncipe

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

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

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

