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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*

JANUARY 26 – FEBRUARY 8, 2015

About MS Risk

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 - Due diligence and investigations.
- Project Management
 - Interim Security
 - Training
 - 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

January 26 – February 8, 2015



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Cameroon

On the Ground Reporting

- **4 February 2015** – Officials have disclosed that Cameroon’s army has killed at least 50 Boko Haram insurgents on Wednesday, losing six of its own soldiers, in clashes that erupted in the border town of Fotokol.
- **31 January 2015** – The Chadian military announced Saturday that three soldiers and 123 Boko Haram militants were killed when the militant group attacked a Chadian army contingent in northern Cameroon.

Central African Republic

On the Ground Reporting

- **5 February 2015** – The UN Secretary General has asked for more than 1,000 additional peacekeepers for the

CAR in order to help bring violence between Christians and Muslims under control outside the capital city.

- Representatives of the CAR's two warring factions have signed an unconditional cease-fire in the Kenyan capital city of Nairobi.
- **31 January 2015** – Militia forces in the CAR appealed Friday for international support for a ceasefire agreement that was reached without the CAR government's involvement.
 - Chad's President Idriss Deby disclosed Saturday that Central African nations have rejected a ceasefire agreement that was struck by militia forces from war-torn CAR last week.
- **29 January 2015** – The CAR government announced Thursday that it has rejected a ceasefire agreement made in Kenya between two militia groups aimed at ending more than a year of fighting and attacks that have killed thousands.
- **28 January 2015** – A top mediator at the Kenyan-based peace talks disclosed Wednesday that warring forces in the CAR have agreed on an initial ceasefire agreement.
- **26 January 2015** – Rebels on Monday freed eight local officials who were kidnapped over the weekend, warning authorities from the capital city against venturing into a northern town that remains under their control.
 - The CAR's Party for Unity and Development has accused a group within the predominantly Christian anti-balaka militia of kidnapping Sports Minister Armel Ningatoloum Sayo in the capital on Sunday.

Chad

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 February 2015** – Chadian warplanes along with Nigerien troops fought off an attack on Friday on the Niger town of Bosso by Boko Haram militants.
- **4 February 2015** – Chadian state television reported Wednesday that nine Chadian soldiers were killed and 21 others wounded in a battle with Boko Haram militants in the northeastern Nigerian towns of Gambaru and Ngala.
- **3 February 2015** – Chadian troops on Tuesday clashed with Boko Haram militants in the northeastern Nigerian town of Gambaru, in a bid to break the militant group's control of the town, which borders Cameroon.
- **29 January 2015** – Troops from Chad have driving Boko Haram militants from a northern Nigerian border town that was seized by the militant group late last year.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- **5 February 2015** – The government announced Thursday that violent anti-government protests that occurred in the DRC in late January, claimed 27 lives, nearly double the death toll previously announced by the authorities.
 - At least fourteen men and seven women were killed overnight in the town of Mayangose in northeastern DRC.
- **4 February 2015** – Army officials disclosed Wednesday that twenty-three people have been hacked to death in the eastern DRC.
- **3 February 2015** – A leading rights group in the DRC has called on the government to annul a controversial

general's appointment to lead the fight against rebels operating in the country's eastern region.

- **31 January 2015** – The DRC's foreign minister announced Saturday that Congolese government troops have begun a long-awaited offensive against Rwandan Hutu rebels in the eastern region of the country.
- **29 January 2015** – The United Nations Security Council has renewed its sanctions on the DRC in a bid to prevent the supply, sale or transfer of arms, training, and financing to armed groups.

Domestic News

- **27 January 2015** – On Tuesday, the Congolese opposition demanded a clear election timetable after the adoption of a controversial law failed to ease fears that President Joseph Kabila was attempting to extend his term in office.

Regional Reporting

- **29 January 2015** - Uganda has issued a three-month ultimatum to Democratic Republic of Congo to relocate hundreds of ex-rebel fighters or they will be handed to the United Nations.

Gabon

- **4 February 2015** – Gabon has lifted its ban on the main opposition party, the Union National (UN), which was outlawed after the party's leader declared himself president in 2011.

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.

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



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

On the Ground Reporting

- **4 February 2015** – Officials have disclosed that Cameroon's army has killed at least 50 Boko Haram insurgents on Wednesday, losing six of its own soldiers, in clashes that erupted in the border town of Fotokol. According to Cameroon's Information Minister, Issa Tchiroma, the insurgents attacked the town early on Tuesday, with fierce fighting continuing for most of the morning until the militants were driven out of the town. The minister confirmed "six soldiers were killed and at least 50 Boko Haram fighters died in combat," adding that the toll was provision and that there could be more casualties.
- **31 January 2015** – The Chadian military announced Saturday that three soldiers and 123 Boko Haram militants were killed when the militant group attacked a Chadian army contingent in northern Cameroon. According to a military statement, twelve soldiers were wounded in the attacks, which occurred Thursday and Friday near the border town of Fotokol. The general staff's statement disclosed, "the enemy was repelled by our defensive forces," adding that troops had "routed" the Islamists in the second attack. According to the statement improvised explosive



devices killed the soldiers. A senior Cameroonian security source confirmed that Chadian troops were deployed to the town, which is located opposite a Nigerian town that is under Boko Haram's control and close to the border with Chad, on Wednesday. Boko Haram militants have frequently staged attacks on Fotokol from their base in the Nigerian town of Gamboru, which is located 500 metres away. Chad deployed a convoy of troops and military vehicles into neighbouring Cameroon on 17 January in order to deal with the growing threat that Boko Haram poses in the region. The country has called on neighbouring states to form a broad coalition in the fight against the militant group.

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

- **5 February 2015** – The UN Secretary General has asked for more than 1,000 additional peacekeepers for the CAR in order to help bring violence between Christians and Muslims under control outside the capital city. A letter from the Secretary General to the UN Security Council president, which was circulated on Thursday, indicated that another 1,030 peacekeepers are needed in order to help stabilize regions beyond Bangui as more troops than expected were needed to protect senior government officials and critical infrastructure. According to the Secretary General, that shift in troops limited the peacekeeper's ability to "respond flexibly and rapidly to emerging crises throughout the country." Ban indicated however that he is confident that the deployment of the newly requested troops, "if authorized soon," can be achieved by July. Ban's letter further disclosed that the security situation across the CAR remains volatile and that "pockets of vulnerable Muslim communities remain under nearly constant threat and in dire humanitarian conditions, despite the efforts of the international forces."
 - Representatives of the CAR's two warring factions have signed an unconditional cease-fire in the Kenyan capital city of Nairobi. Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Kenyan mediator Kenneth Marende disclosed that representatives of both the Seleka and anti-Balaka armed groups have pledged to stop the recruitment and use of child soldiers and to stop launching attacks on civilians. While Kenya has taken the lead in the CAR's peace talks, it remains unclear just how legitimate these talks are as there has been no participation of the CAR's government. Furthermore, previous ceasefire agreement signed by various alleged representatives of the two sides have been swiftly broken.
- **31 January 2015** – Militia forces in the CAR appealed Friday for international support for a ceasefire agreement that was reached without the CAR government's involvement. Political chief of the ex-Seleka group, Moustapha Saboune, stated Friday "we invite the international community to use the Nairobi agreement as a formula to solve the problem of Central Africa," urging it to take the agreement "seriously." The deal was signed in Kenya last week between senior representatives of the anti-balaka rebel movement and the ex-Seleka movement of former president Michel Djotodia. Under Kenyan mediation, the two sides have adopted a ceasefire, a cessation of hostilities and a DDRR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration) agreement. They have also demanded the replacement of the president's government and the establishment of a justice and reconciliation process leading to a "general amnesty." However interim President Catherine Samba Panza's government is not part of this peace agreement and many have viewed the talks with scepticism, with some questioning the

ability of the groups to enforce the deal on the ground.

- Chad's President Idriss Deby disclosed Saturday that Central African nations have rejected a ceasefire agreement that was struck by militia forces from war-torn CAR last week. The Chadian president stated that members of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC), which groups ten nations, believed the accord "will not help the Central African Republic achieve stability and peace." He further indicated that the region would instead focus on official peace efforts that involve the CAR's interim government.
- **29 January 2015** – The CAR government announced Thursday that it has rejected a ceasefire agreement made in Kenya between two militia groups aimed at ending more than a year of fighting and attacks that have killed thousands. Communications Minister Georges Adrien Poussou has indicated, "the government categorically rejects the Nairobi accord because it was not associated with the discussions in any way. It is not a read accord, rather it's a series of grievances from the two armed groups which hold the country hostage." While few details have emerged about the talks, which occurred between the mainly Muslim Seleka alliance and the anti-balaka militia who oppose them, the two sides have conducted low-level and sporadic peace negotiations over the past year. The Seleka alliance continues to occupy a large portion of the north of the CAR while an interim government continues to struggle to assert its authority.
- **28 January 2015** – A top mediator at the Kenyan-based peace talks disclosed Wednesday that warring forces in the CAR have agreed on an initial ceasefire agreement. According to sources, the agreement was signed between senior representatives of the anti-balaka rebels and the ex-Seleka movement of former president Michel Djotodia. Mediator Kenneth Marende, a former speaker of Kenya's parliament, disclosed "the parties have adopted a ceasefire, a cessation of hostilities, and a DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration) agreement," adding "they have agreed an initial agreement, but it does not take effect until a formal signing." The mediator declined to provide the exact names of those who signed the agreement in Nairobi, however he stated "rest assured, they are the genuine leadership....Such things must remain confidential at this stage of mediation." The deal was struck Friday, with diplomats stating it took place in an upmarket hotel in Nairobi. While no timeframe has been given for the next round of talks, Marende stated "it is the parties who determine the timing." Since early December, senior representatives of the anti-balaka rebels and the ex-Seleka movement have been meeting in Kenya, in talks parallel to meetings in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the two sides have signed a previous tentative ceasefire.
- **26 January 2015** – Rebels on Monday freed eight local officials who were kidnapped over the weekend, warning authorities from the capital city against venturing into a northern town that remains under their control. The captives were handed over to UN peacekeepers in the town of Kaga-Bandora, which is located some 300 kilometres (186 miles) north of the capital city Bangui. The officials were kidnapped in a botched attempt to kidnap a government minister on Sunday. They were seized as they were planning a visit by Education Minister Eloi Anguimate to the town. Earlier in the day, Armel Ningatoloum Sayo, a rebel leader turned minister for youth and sport,

was kidnapped as he left church in Bangui. These kidnappings come days after a UN staff member and French charity worker were taken hostage. According to Maouloud Moctar, the Seleka spokesman in Kaga-Bandoro, “we don’t have a problem with the local authorities but the authorities in Bangui,” adding “we have already warned the president that we will not accept the presence here of members of the government before the end of the negotiations in Nairobi,” referring to talks between various faction in the conflict that are taking place in Kenya.

- The CAR’s Party for Unity and Development has accused a group within the predominantly Christian anti-balaka militia of kidnapping Sports Minister Armel Ngingatouloum Sayo in the capital on Sunday. Party spokesman Igor Berenger Lamaka has indicated “we don’t know the kidnappers, but according to the information we have, this kidnapping was planned and carried out in collaboration with members of a self-defence group calling itself ‘Revolution and Justice.’” According to Mr Lamaka, the “Revolution and Justice” group was active in Paoua, an area located some 600 kilometres west of Bangui, adding that the sports minister had been a leader of the group prior to being appointed to his current position. Shortly after leaving the Galabadjia III Church on Sunday morning, the minister was kidnapped by gunmen. His wife and brother were both present at the time of the abduction and they have indicated that they could neither identify the kidnappers nor determine the location to which they had taken him. This is the fourth kidnapping to take place in the CAR since last Monday. A French female civil society activist was kidnapped last week, along with a clergyman and a female UN worker. All three have since been released, however authorities in the CAR believe that these kidnappings are linked to the Christian anti-balaka group’s demands that officials release Rodrigue Ngaibona, known locally as Andjilo, from prison. Andjilo was recently arrested by the UN mission operating in the CAR on suspicions that he was involved in the massacre of dozens of Muslims in the country since December 2013.

Chad

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

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

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



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

There is currently a low threat from terrorism.

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

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

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

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

On the Ground Reporting

- **6 February 2015** – Chadian warplanes along with Nigerien troops fought off an attack on Friday on the Niger town of Bosso by Boko Haram militants. According to sources, the fighting took place in the southeastern region of Diffa, which is part of the border area where Chad has deployed hundreds of troops in a bid to help Niger take on Boko Haram. A Niger military source reported Friday “the Boko Haram attack from Malam Fatori (in Nigeria) against the town of Bosso and the bridge at Douchi in the Diffa region has been repulsed. We have Chadian planes bombarding the locality.” According to a second source, “there is heavy weapons fire from both sides....We have at least five injured in our ranks.” A military source later reported that Boko Haram’s attack on the town had failed and that calm was restored, with troops in pursuit of the militants on Nigerian territory.
- **4 February 2015** – Chadian state television reported Wednesday that nine Chadian soldiers were killed and 21 others wounded in a battle with Boko Haram militants in the northeastern Nigerian towns of Gambaru and Ngala. Chad has deployed 2,500 troops as part of regional efforts to take

on the militant group, which is increasingly threatening the area. Earlier in the day, the army announced that it had killed more than 200 militants on Tuesday in clashes that occurred in the two towns, which are located near Nigeria's border with Cameroon.

- **3 February 2015** – Chadian troops on Tuesday clashed with Boko Haram militants in the northeastern Nigerian town of Gambaru, in a bid to break the militant group's control of the town, which borders Cameroon. According to military sources in Niger, the fighting in Gambaru, which is located south of Lake Chad, came as hundreds of Chadian soldiers deployed to the nearby town of Diffa, in Niger, near the Nigerian border northwest of the lake. According to the source, "our troops entered Nigeria this morning. The combat is on going. The attack followed days of intense combat between Boko Haram fighters and Chadian forces in Cameroon, during which Chad's air force carried out strikes on insurgent positions.
- **29 January 2015** – Troops from Chad have driving Boko Haram militants from a northern Nigerian border town that was seized by the militant group late last year. According to a Niger army officer deployed in the adjacent region of Diffa, "this morning the Chadians retook Malam Fatori. There were clashes with Boko Haram that lasted over 24 hours." A second officer reported that Chadian troops began deploying on the shores of Lake Chad last week before crossing into Nigeria on Wednesday in order to retake Malam Fatori.

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.

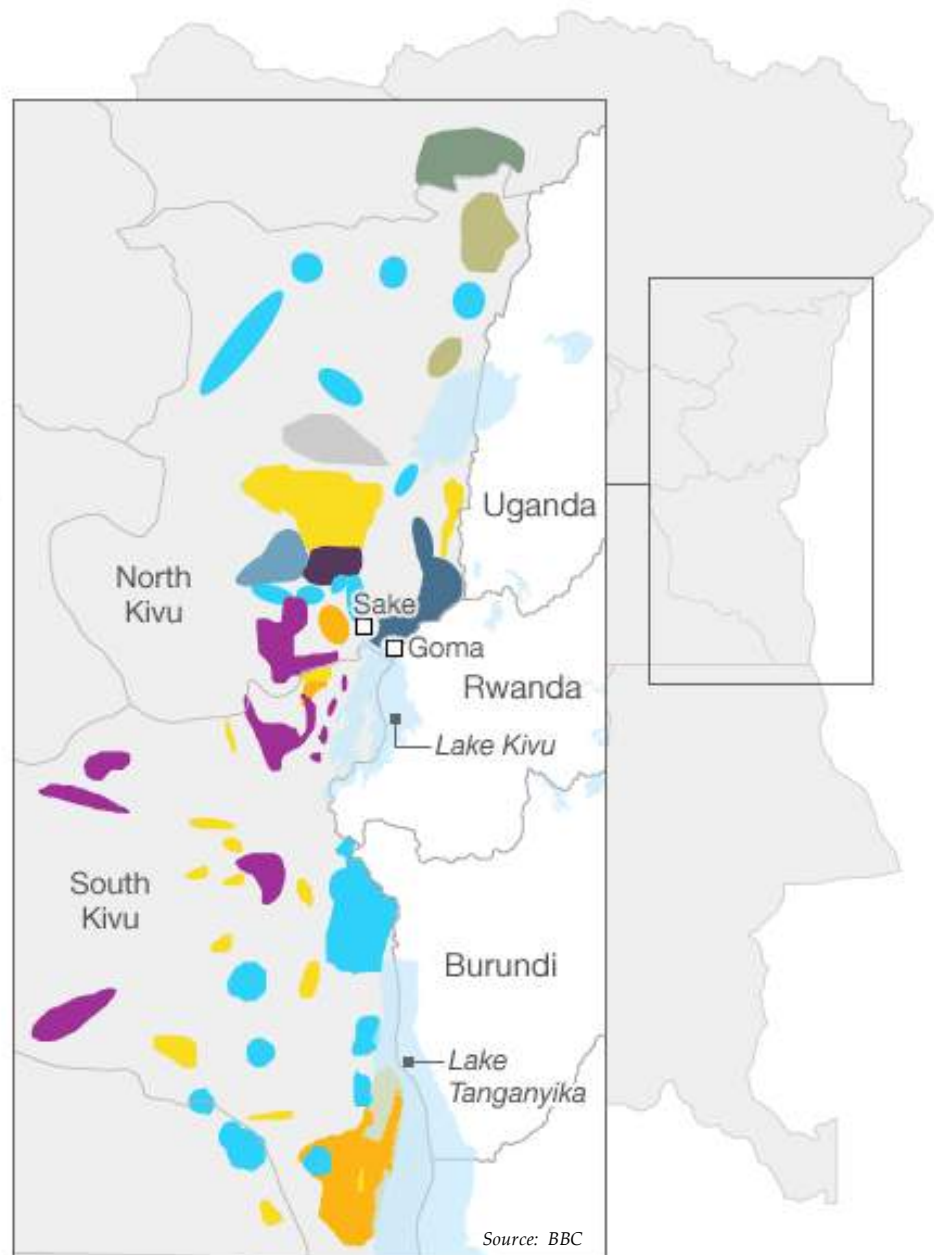
The security situation in eastern DRC, including Beni and Goma, remains unstable. Ugandan rebels have killed over 100 people in and around the town of Beni. Officials have since imposed a overnight curfew on the town. Any foreigners in North Kivu, including Goma, are currently advised to keep their security 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

- **5 February 2015** – The government announced Thursday that violent anti-government protests that occurred in the DRC in late January, claimed 27 lives, nearly double the death toll previously announced by the authorities. At a press conference, government spokesman Lambert Mende disclosed “having announced 14 deaths, including that of a policeman...the number of people who died across the national territory is today estimated at 27 killed persons, four in Goma, 23 in Kinshasa.” Mr Mende disclosed that the victims included two police officers, adding that three children were killed in Goma, a town located in the far east of the DRC with a population of about a million. Between January 19 and 22, demonstrators took to the streets to protest an electoral bill, which the opposition feared would enable President Joseph Kabila to remain in power after the end of his second term, which is due to conclude in late 2016. At the time of the protests, New York-based rights watchdog Human Rights Watch (HRW) disclosed that police had opened fire on the protesters with live ammunition, killing around 40 people and wounding dozens. The government however rejected those claims. While following a Senate amendment, both houses of parliament agreed to drop the controversial provision to the bill, the opposition remains concerned over other articles in the bill.
 - At least fourteen men and seven women were killed overnight in the town of Mayangose in northeastern DRC. A civil society leader reported Wednesday that Ugandan militants from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacked the town between 9 PM (1900 GMT) and 1 AM. According to Omar Kavota, a spokesman for the Civil Society of North Kivu in the nearby city of Beni, “they surprised the villages who were sleeping in their houses... They killed 14 men and seven women, but this time they spared the young children.”
- **4 February 2015** – Army officials disclosed Wednesday that twenty-three people have been hacked to death in the eastern DRC. According to an army officer, the attack took place Tuesday night in the city of Beni, in the restive North Kivu province, which borders Uganda. Police officials have disclosed that the victims were killed with machetes. The attack is the first to be reported in the region since the UN mission MONUSCO and the army announced in mid-December that they had launched a new offensive against the Ugandan rebels which have been blamed for the attacks. Between October and December, Beni was hit by a string of mass killings that left more than 260 people dead, with officials reporting that most of them were killed with machetes and farm tools. Congolese authorities, military experts and the UN blame the Allied Democratic Forces and National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU), which is based in eastern DRC, for the killings.
- **3 February 2015** – A leading rights group in the DRC has called on the government to annul a controversial general’s appointment to lead the fight against rebels operating in the country’s eastern region. According to the Congolese Association for Access to Justice, Gen Bruno Mandevu could not run operations against the FDLR rebel group because he has been accused of summary executions and rape. The rights group has indicated that he should be removed from the post,

pending an independent investigation into the allegations. The government however has indicated that he remains innocent until proven otherwise. The DRC government is under increasing international pressure to disarm the FDLR, which operates in the eastern Congo. On Sunday, DRC government officials announced Gen Mandevu's appointment to head the offensive. The UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC, MONUSCO, is expected to take part in the assault however several Western diplomats have revealed that this deployment is now in doubt following Gen Mandevu's appointment as he was on a MONUSCO "red list" over 121 rights violations including summary executions and rapes. The head of the UN mission in the DRC, Martin Kobler, has indicated that the UN is in contact with the DRC government over Gen Mandevu's appointment, however he disclosed that the UN supports the assault on the FDLR and believes that any risk of human rights violations could be "mitigated" by close surveillance of the operation. **Update (5 February)** – The DRC on Thursday rejected a UN ultimatum for two generals, leading an offensive against Rwandan rebels operating in the country's eastern region, to be replaced. Speaking at a press conference in Kinshasa, government spokesman Lambert Mende stated "for us, we would only replace someone in the (army high) command if that person had been convicted by our military courts. Yet, no such thing has happened." The UN had given Kinshasa until 13 February to remove the two generals or forfeit MONUSCO's support for the operation. Mende however has ignored the threat, announcing that the two generals, who had "always worked with the United Nations, will remain in charge of the offensive. He further indicated "it's a sovereign decision," declaring that the DRC was "not under anyone's supervision." The UN's 20,000-strong MONUSCO force had been working with the DRC's army on a plan to launch an attack against the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), however in a surprise move, the army unilaterally announced last week the launch of operations, without UN troops. The army also announced that Generals Bruno Mandevu and Sikabwe Fall would be leading the offensive. Both generals are on a UN "red list" of known human rights violators.

- **31 January 2015** – The DRC's foreign minister announced Saturday that Congolese government troops have begun a long-awaited offensive against Rwandan Hutu rebels in the eastern region of the country. Speaking on the side lines of an African Union (AU) summit in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, Raymond Tshibanda disclosed "the action has started and will not stop until we have neutralised these negative forces," adding "the determination of the government is such that there will be no let up until we have finished this group." The AU's commissioner for peace and security, Smail Chergui, has welcomed the announcement, stating that the FDLR has continued to recruit fighters despite their promise to disarm. The Kinshasa government along with the international community had given the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) an ultimatum to lay down their arms and surrender by 2 January or face attacks and forcible disarmament. Dealing with the FDLR is seen as a necessary step in ending decades of conflict that have affected the Great Lakes region.
- **29 January 2015** – The United Nations Security Council has renewed its sanctions on the DRC in a

bid to prevent the supply, sale or transfer of arms, training, and financing to armed groups. The 15-member Council unanimously adopted the new resolution, effectively renewing until 1 July 2016 the arms embargo and related sanctions imposed on the DRC. It also renewed the mandate of the Group of Experts monitoring the implementation of those measures, which has been extended until 1 August 2016. During the session, Council members highlighted their concerns over the passing of the 2 January deadline, set up by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), for former Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to rebels to surrender. They noted that the FDLR has “not only failed to unconditionally and fully surrender and demobilize, but has also continued to recruit new fighters in their ranks.” The Council also stressed the importance of the government of the DRC to hold accountable those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the country, including through its cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Domestic News

- **27 January 2015** – On Tuesday, the Congolese opposition demanded a clear election timetable after the adoption of a controversial law failed to ease fears that President Joseph Kabila was attempting to extend his term in office. A statement signed by fifty opposition parties and associations stated, “we are calling on the national election commission to publish without delay a comprehensive and mutually agreed upon calendar in compliance with the deadlines set out by the constitution.” Opposition leaders Samy Badibanga and Vital Kamerhe were amongst the fifty signatories to Tuesday’s statement. The DRC has been in turmoil ever since the President’s government introduced an electoral law with a provision that would make new polls contingent on the completion of a census, a process that could take at least three years. Opposition leaders indicated that this was a way for the president to remain in power beyond 2016 despite being constitutionally barred from running again. The bill sparked several days of violent protests last week between police and protesters, with rights groups reporting that as many as forty-two people were killed dozens injured. Government officials have put the death toll at twelve. While both houses of parliament eventually dropped the controversial provision, the final text has left uncertainty over the timing of a series of elections, including whether presidential elections will be held at the end of Kabila’s second term next year.

Regional Reporting

- **29 January 2015** - Uganda has issued a three-month ultimatum to Democratic Republic of Congo to relocate hundreds of ex-rebel fighters or they will be handed to the United Nations. The deadline follows clashes between the defeated M23 rebels and the Ugandan armed forces last month, when attempts to repatriate the insurgents resulted in around 1,000 fighters escaping their camp in western Uganda, over fears for their safety if they were sent back to the DRC. Ugandan army

spokesman Paddy Ankunda has indicated that some 800 ex-rebels are being held at Bihanga, a military camp in western Uganda, while around 120 former rebels were flown in December to the DRC. Ugandan officials have not made clear when the deadline will come into force.

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

- **4 February 2015** – Gabon has lifted its ban on the main opposition party, the Union National (UN), which was outlawed after the party's leader declared himself president in 2011. A statement released by Interior Minister Guy-Bertrand Mapangou confirmed that the party is "restored to favour and authorized to engage in activities across the nation." Approval from the government effectively means that the UN will now be allowed to run a candidate in the upcoming presidential elections, which are due to take place next year. Gabon banned the party when its leader, Andre Mba Obame, left the country in 2011 after declaring himself elected head of state and refusing to

recognize the election victory of President Ali Bongo Ondimba in 2009. While Mba Obame was once close to Ali Bongo's father, Omar Bongo Ondimba, he switched sides after the late president died in 2009 and formed the opposition to the late president's son. He was accused of "disturbing public order," and "threatening state authority." He was later stripped of his parliamentary immunity." While he travelled to France however he returned to Gabon fourteen months later.

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.

