

www.msrisk.com

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*

MAY 18 - 31, 2015

About MS Risk

MS Risk is a privately owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by syndicate 2525 of Lloyd's of London for special risks case management in all jurisdictions. It also acts as retained advisors to syndicates in the Lloyd's of London specialty risk insurance markets: kidnap for ransom, extortion, hijack, illegal detention, illegal war tax, malicious product tamper, terrorism, political and war risk.

MS Risk is always mindful and compliant to legislation and guidelines on the use of private security services including, but not limited to the US FCPA (1977), UK Bribery Act (2010), Canadian Bill C-48 (2007), ASX 8 Corporate Governance Principles, and the World Bank/IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Government and Private Security Forces. MS Risk is a signatory of the Swiss government's International Code of Conduct. It is transparent and compliant to market expectations on legal and ethical conduct in the performance of services.

MS Risk has a dedicated team of researchers, a 24/7 hotline service and a pool of trained and experienced consultants to support client needs.

MS Risk supports clients in a variety of business sectors with the following services:

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

References are always available.

More information is found at www.msrisk.com

24 hr Contact Information:

Email: operations@msrisk.com

Telephone: +44 207 754 3555

MS Risk Limited, South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ.

Tel: +44 1624 626400

Directors: S.J. Bingham, V.K. Prentice, P.O.J. Tracy.

Registered in the Isle of Man No 007435V

The Central Africa Report ~ Summary

May 18 - 31, 2015



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

Angola

On the Ground Reporting

- **28 May 2015** – A court in Angola has sentenced a prominent anti-corruption activist to a six-month suspended jail term for defaming army generals in a book about violence in the country's diamond mining industry.
- **25 May 2015** – Despite a deal to drop defamation charges against anti-corruption activist Rafael Marques, his lawyer indicated Monday that prosecutors in Angola have sought a suspended one-month jail sentence.
- **21 May 2015** – According to a human rights group, a prominent Angolan journalist, who was jailed for his criticism of the government, has been released.

Cameroon

On the Ground Reporting

24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555
www.msrisk.com

- **27 May 2015** – Local media reported Wednesday that a fundraising campaign to help Cameroon’s army battle Nigerian-based Boko Haram fighters has brought in more than three million euros and hundreds of tonnes of food.

Central African Republic

Domestic News

- **26 May 2015** – The CAR’s interim President Catherine Samba Panza urged wealthy donor countries on Tuesday to deliver aid that was promised to her country, including funds to pay for the upcoming elections.

International Developments

- **27 May 2015** – The French president’s office announced Wednesday that judicial authorities in France and in the CAR are cooperating to investigate allegations of child sexual abuse that was carried out by French soldiers.

Chad

On the Ground Reporting

- **20 May 2015** – On Wednesday, Chad’s parliament voted to stay engaged in a regional offensive, which it joined earlier this year against Boko Haram militants.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- **25 May 2015** – On Monday, Congolese soldiers clashed with Rwandan Hutu rebels being held in the eastern region of the country, wounding at least six, as an agreement to move the rebels from one transit camp to another fell apart.
- **21 May 2015** – The DRC’s government is bringing in outside experts in order to investigate the long-term impact of some US \$6.7 billion in contracts with Chinese companies, which critics have stated could exploit the Central African nation’s mineral riches.

Domestic News

- **29 May 2015** – On Friday, President Joseph Kabila launched “consultations” ahead of elections in the DRC, where his opponents argue that he is seeking to hold onto power illegitimately.
- **23 May 2015** – The DRC’s national electoral commission has announced that it has updated the country’s electoral list ahead of local and provincial elections, which are due to take place later this year.

Republic of Congo

On the Ground Reporting

- **18 May 2015** – According to the Catholic Church and a local charity, police in southern region of the Republic of Congo used violence and subjected illegal immigrants to degrading treatment in the second phase of a crackdown, which drove thousands from the country last year.

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.

On the Ground Reporting

- **28 May 2015** – A court in Angola has sentenced a prominent anti-corruption activist to a six-month suspended jail term for defaming army generals in a book about violence in the country's diamond mining industry. In court, judge Adriano Cerveira stated "(I have) decided, on behalf of the people, to give Rafael Marques de Morais, accused of the crime of slander...a single sentence of (a suspended) six months in prison." The court also ordered Marques to "withdraw the book from the market, including on the Internet, and not to republish or translate it." Marques' lawyer, David Mendes, has vowed to appeal against the sentence. The decision to give Marques a suspended jail term was made despite an apparent agreement that was reached between opposing lawyers last weeks to drop all defamation charges against him. The sentence is also much higher than the one-month suspended term that the prosecution had asked for earlier this week. Marques, an outspoken campaigner and journalist, has been on trial since March, accused of defaming several generals in his book, which was published in 2011.
- **25 May 2015** – Despite a deal to drop defamation charges against anti-corruption activist Rafael Marques, his lawyer indicated Monday that prosecutors in Angola have sought a suspended one-month jail sentence. According to his lawyer, prosecutors made the request during final arguments in the trial of Marques, who has been accused of defaming several general in a 201 book about violence and rights violations linked to the country's lucrative diamond mining industry. The request for a suspended sentence however comes as a surprise to his lawyers after the generals last weeks agreed to drop the charges on condition that Marques would not re-release his book, which accuses them of corruption and torture. According to Marques' lawyer, David Mendes, "despite the agreement reached between the parties, the prosecution has asked for a one-month suspended prison sentence." He has vowed to appeal against any sentence when the verdict is handed down, which is expected to occur on Thursday. Meanwhile Marques had stated that he

now feels “tricked” in the wake of the deal that he had secured with the generals, stating, “after all this, the state asks that I be sentenced, saying that I had failed to give evidence.” Following an agreement between Marques and the generals, none of the witnesses, which included Marques and a woman whose two sons were killed by security forces within a year of each other in the mining region, gave evidence during the trial. The generals, which includes of one President Jose Eduardo dos Santos’ closest allies, originally claimed US \$1.2 million in damages.

- **21 May 2015** – According to a human rights group, a prominent Angolan journalist, who was jailed for his criticism of the government, has been released. The Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Group indicated Thursday that the criminal case against Rafael Marques has been stopped, adding that while the reasons for the action remain unclear, Marques is now out on bail.

Cameroon

Security Summary ~ 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 the Ground Reporting

- **27 May 2015** – Local media reported Wednesday that a fundraising campaign to help Cameroon's army battle Nigerian-based Boko Haram fighters has brought in more than three million euros and hundreds of tonnes of food. According to the national CRTV radio and TV network, "2.1 billion CFA francs (3.2 million euros) already" collected to help troops fighting the militant group on

Cameroon's northern border with Nigeria, adding that as corruption is rife across the country, the government has set up an inter-ministerial committee in order to ensure "transparent" management of the funds that have been offered up by the citizens of Cameroon. Since fundraising began several weeks ago, hundreds of tonnes of food aid have also been donated in order to help the army.

Central African Republic

Security Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). 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.

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.

Domestic News

- **27 May 2015** – On Wednesday, interim President Catherine Samba Panza accused France of keeping her in the dark about allegations of child sex abuse carried out by French peacekeepers in

her country. Speaking to reporters after meeting with officials while on a visit to Paris, the CAR President stated, “we have simply regretted not being informed much earlier that the investigation was taking place...We insisted on being included in the process,” adding that she had made her concerns clear during a meeting with French President Francois Hollande earlier in the day. President Samba Panza’s comments however greatly differ from the statement that was released by President Hollande’s office after their meeting, in which the French president claimed that there was “perfect cooperation” between the two countries in the investigation. Fourteen French soldiers are currently under investigation after a group of children alleged that the troops sexually abused minors at a centre for displaced people in the capital city Bangui between December 2013 and June 2014.

- **26 May 2015** – The CAR’s interim President Catherine Samba Panza urged wealthy donor countries on Tuesday to deliver aid that was promised to her country, including funds to pay for the upcoming elections. Speaking to reporters shortly after a donor’s conference at the EU headquarters in Brussels, President Samba Panza stated, “I reaffirm my determination to organize democratic and credible elections...which will whatever the case take place before the end of 2015.” The CAR government is currently trying to organize presidential elections, which are seen as a key step towards moving away from a brutal conflict that was sparked after a 2013 coup. While earlier this month, a national reconciliation forum had called for presidential and legislative elections to be delayed, in order to provide transitional authorities additional time to organize the polls, the recommendation drew protests in the capital city, despite the backing of over 600 national stakeholders, including armed groups, political and religious figures and members of civil society. Despite calls in Bangui that she should step aside, President Samba Panza stated Tuesday that the “electoral process that will put a democratic power at the head of the country is a clear and absolute priority,” adding, “only logistic and budgetary constraints” are responsible for the delay. According to CAR authorities, the country still needs 17 million dollars in order to hold the elections, which are seen as a critical step in order to avoid an irreversible descent into a failed state.

International Developments

- **27 May 2015** – The French president’s office announced Wednesday that judicial authorities in France and in the CAR are cooperating to investigate allegations of child sexual abuse that was carried out by French soldiers. Following a meeting in Paris on Wednesday between French President Francois Hollande and CAR interim President Catherine Samba Panza, a French official disclosed that they are aiming at “shedding full light on this affair.” French prosecutors are investigating accusations that soldiers deployed in the CAR between 2013 – 14 had sexually abused children.

Chad

Security Summary ~ 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

- **20 May 2015** – On Wednesday, Chad's parliament voted to stay engaged in a regional offensive, which it joined earlier this year against Boko Haram militants. A resolution read on Wednesday indicated that "the National Assembly authorises the extension of Chad's military intervention in Nigeria and Cameroon," indicated that the resolution was voted for by 123 out of 140 MP's. Under the country's constitution, the government must seek parliamentary approval four months into any military intervention. In January, Chad's parliament had authorized its government to deploy troops into neighbouring Nigeria and Cameroon as part of an offensive aimed at expelling the militant group from northeastern Nigeria. Chadian military sources have indicated that 5,000 of the country's troops are engaged in the fight against the militant group in Nigeria and in northern Cameroon, which has come under repeated Boko Haram attack over the past two years.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Security Summary ~ MS Risk advises against all travel to eastern and north-eastern DRC. The only exceptions to this are the towns of Bukavu and Goma, to which MS Risk advise against all but essential travel. We currently advise against all but essential travel to the remainder of the DRC.

The security situation in eastern DRC remains unstable. Throughout this year, there has been a series of kidnappings that have occurred in North Kivu, specifically in the area around Goma. Additionally military operations against armed groups in the region are ongoing. MS Risk advises all travellers to this region to exercise a heightened level of vigilance, to consider travelling in convoy on trips outside Goma and Bukavu and to avoid making any journey that would involve travel after dark.

On the Ground Reporting

- **25 May 2015** – On Monday, Congolese soldiers clashed with Rwandan Hutu rebels being held in the eastern region of the country, wounding at least six, as an agreement to move the rebels from one transit camp to another fell apart. According to on the ground sources, Congolese troops were moving rebel officers from a camp in Kanyabayonga, a camp in North Kivu province that is jointly run by the country’s UN mission and the Congolese army, to a large camp in the northern city of Kisangani, where from there they would be returned to either Rwanda or possible to a third country. Daniel Ruiz, the head of the mission’s North Kivu office, disclosed, “there was some unrest and the...soldiers in the air,” adding “in principle, there



was an agreement. In reality, it turned out differently.” It was not immediately clear what provoked the clashes. While a local activist has indicated that the rebels had stockpiled arms in the camp, this claim has not been confirmed. Ruiz has indicated that a similar transfer, which occurred Monday from a camp in Walungu in neighbouring South Kivu province to Kisangani, occurred smoothly.

- **21 May 2015** – The DRC’s government is bringing in outside experts in order to investigate the long-term impact of some US \$6.7 billion in contracts with Chinese companies, which critics have stated could exploit the Central African nation’s mineral riches. The DRC’s government currently has a 32 percent stake while China has a 68 percent in the mining project known as Sicominex. According to Jean Nzenga Kongolo, deputy general manager of Sicominex, while the mining project was created in 2008, construction did not officially begin until three years later, adding that the project now employs about 3,000 people, of whom 70 percent are Congolese. In order to assess the project’s impact, officials from the United Nations and World Bank visited the mine earlier this week. World Bank representative Ahmadou Moustapha Ndiaye has indicated that the project “is truly in the right lines and objectives of the World Bank which is to fight against poverty,” with a UN official also praising the project. However critics have indicated that a more thorough evaluation of the contract still must be carried out. According to the agreement, China’s Railway Engineering Corporation and Sinohydro Corp., are constructing about 3,000 kilometres of roads and railways in the DRC. Universities, hospitals and health centres are also being constructed.

Domestic News

- **29 May 2015** – On Friday, President Joseph Kabila launched “consultations” ahead of elections in the DRC, where his opponents argue that he is seeking to hold onto power illegitimately. According to a senior member of the regime, “the head of state on Friday starts consultations with all the key forces in the nation...He will listen to everybody.” During a broadcast on state-run television, government spokesman Lambert Mende stated, “for more than a year, the main opposition party (the Union for Democracy and Social Progress) has stepped up demands for a dialogue. The president has responded to the initiative of the UDPS,” adding that the authorities needed “absolutely to listen to the viewpoints.” The president is scheduled to receive religious leaders and tribal chiefs before talks with opposition representatives, his own supporters and political bodies. He will then see foreign diplomats and the head of the large UN mission in the country (MONUSCO), Martin Kobler. A timetable for the series of consultations has not been released. In February, the independent national electoral commission (CENI) published a timetable for local, provincial and senatorial elections, which are due to begin in October and lead up to presidential and parliamentary elections in November 2016. President Kabila came to power in wartime in 2001. The constitution bars him from seeking a third elected five-year term at the end of his mandate late next year however he has refused to comply with opposition demands that he publicly announced that he will step down. After Burkina Faso’s president Blaise Compaore

was ousted by a popular uprising last October when he attempted to stay in power, the Congolese government dropped a plan to revise the constitution.

- **23 May 2015** – The DRC’s national electoral commission has announced that it has updated the country’s electoral list ahead of local and provincial elections, which are due to take place later this year. According to the Flavien Misoni, executive secretary of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), nearly 200,00 voters who had been omitted from the 2011 elections were integrated into the new electoral register of more than 30 million people, adding that the 18-month operation cost about US \$30 million. Commission spokesman Jean Pierre Kalamba has indicated that the operation “was intended to reassure the public about the seriousness of the local and provincial elections” before they take place in October. The commission has also indicated that experts from the international organization of French-speaking countries have been invited to externally audit the electoral role. The opposition had previously indicated that voters who have turned 18 since 2011 must be added to the list, noting that the final list is not yet complete.

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.

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.



On the Ground Reporting

- **18 May 2015** – According to the Catholic Church and a local charity, police in southern region of the Republic of Congo used violence and subjected illegal immigrants to degrading treatment in the second phase of a crackdown, which drove thousands from the country last year. The claims

come as Congolese authorities on Thursday launched the next step in operation “Mbata ya bakolo” (“The slap of the elders” in the local Lingala language) in the economic hub of Pointe-Noire. In April 2014, a similar operation forced an estimated 250,000 workers from neighbouring DRC back across the river in a few weeks. Public radio has reported that 600 foreigners have been arrested in just two days last week. The Catholic Church in Point Noire, along with local rights charity RPDH, have indicated that illegal immigrants are now the “subject of a full-blown manhunt by police,” whom the UN has accused of numerous abuses during a similar operation that occurred in the capital Brazzaville in April 2014. In a statement, the Church and RPDH officials disclosed, “many abuses or violations of human rights have been reported,” adding “these acts, contrary to the rules and principles of the rule of law, are notably characterized by intimidation and threats, violence, inhuman and degrading treatment as well as arbitrary arrests.”

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 ~ While there is currently no travel advisory for Gabon, on 12 April, violent protests erupted in the capital city Libreville. Protesters burned cars and buildings, including Benin's Embassy. The protests have been linked to the sudden death of prominent opposition figure Andre Mba Obame. Further protests in the coming weeks may occur. MS Risk advises all travellers to the country to avoid large gatherings and demonstrations, as they may turn violent with minimal notice. We advise that you monitor the local news and adhere to advice given by local security officials.



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.

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.

