

Advisory: Exercise Caution Ahead of Presidential Election

Risk Level Indicator

HIGH

Ivory Coast is set to hold its presidential election on Saturday 31 October. Due to a call for civil disobedience by opposition leaders, unrest is anticipated across the country in the lead up, during and after the election.

In recent weeks, violence has erupted across the country. Overall, the ongoing tensions, coupled with the rejection of nominations of almost forty contenders, including heavyweight opposition leaders, and with President Alassane Ouattara seeking a controversial third term in office, a negative tone has been set for the upcoming vote. Besides President Ouattara, the nominations of only three other candidates have been approved by election officials. They include Henry Konan Bedie, leader of the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast (PDCI), Pascal Affi Nguessan, telecommunications engineer heading the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), and Kouadio Konan Bertin, the only independent candidate. Opponents are against the controversial move to allow the president's bid for another term, noting that earlier this year the president himself had been opposed to this. Many voters have also showcased their disappointment at the decision to bar former President Laurent Gbagbo and former rebel leader Guillaume Soro from contesting the elections. Both were disqualified by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) for their alleged involvement in criminal cases. The IEC also rejected the nomination of opposition leader Mamadou Koulibaly of the Freedom and Democracy for the Republic (LIDER) party. While originally, 44 candidates had filed nominations to contest the presidential elections, most of them were rejected as they failed to amass signatures from at least 1% of the electorate, which has been made mandatory as per new election law.

Experts are now warning that the situation over the coming days and weeks may turn out of control, and there are growing fears that the post-election period could be reminiscent of the controversial 2010 presidential election, which resulted in the death of 3,000 people. Currently, it is highly likely that Ouattara will be re-elected. However his tactic to remain in power, coupled with the opposition's calls for civil disobedience and growing discontent amongst the population are likely to create disturbances and may even lead the country towards wider civil unrest.

CONTEXT

Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara has confirmed that he will stand for a third term in office in the 31 October 2020 presidential election. While President Ouattara had been expected to stand down at the end of his current term, the sudden death of his expected successor, Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibay, on 8 July 2020 effectively left the ruling RHDP party with no clear candidate going into the election period. The president's decision to stand for a controversial third term in office has been opposed by the opposition and civil society groups, with many feeling that Ouattara should have simply nominated another member of his party to contest. The president however argues that his first term should not be counted, as constitutional amendments that limit an elected president to two terms in office were introduced during his second term. In recent weeks, unrest linked to the issue has resulted in a number of fatalities and dozens of arrests.

TRAVEL ADVISORY

Road blockages, traffic disruptions and potentially violent and unruly protests are to be anticipated in urban centres on election day, as well as in the lead up and after the election results have been announced. Previous protests have occurred Bongouanou, Bonoua, Dabou and Daoukro and have resulted in clashes between rival supporters, with at least twenty people reportedly killed. Heightened security measures should be anticipated in the vicinity of any demonstrations, particularly as a ban on gatherings remains in place amidst the COVID-19 restrictions. Anyone currently in Ivory Coast is advised to monitor developments and to remain informed of the political situation. Travellers should avoid all public demonstrations, protests and political gatherings as a precaution, as they may turn violent with little warning. You should avoid discussing sensitive political topics in public or on social media and you should follow all instructions issued by the local authorities.

ABOUT MS RISK

MS Risk is a privately-owned company domiciled in the Isle of Man. It is underwritten by a syndicate 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 management
- 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:

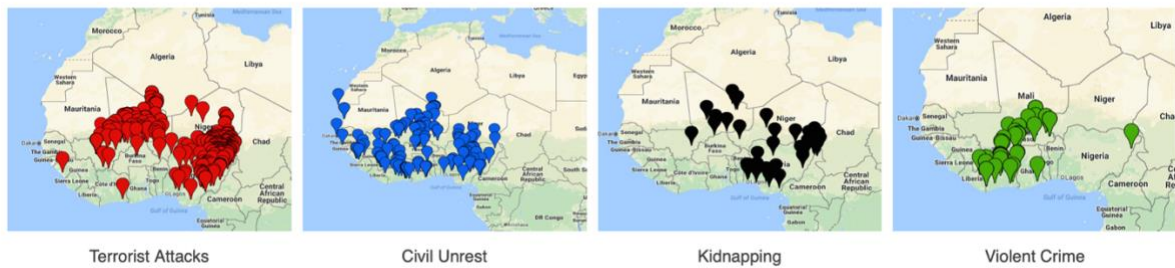
Email: operations@msrisk.com

ABOUT D-RISK LIVE SECURITY ALERTS

The D-Risk Live Security Alert is an African-focused security intelligence service that provides live alerts to your smartphone and computer as they occur.

Alerts are accurately located on an interactive map and are classified as either Terrorist Attacks, Civil Unrest, Kidnappings or Violent Crime.

D-Risk covers...



Intelligence data comes from D-Risk extensive partners including high-level intelligence combined with on the ground information. This database is the most expansive and detailed network available in West Africa and is expanding across Africa daily.

D-risk enables companies and travellers to accurately assess the risks and dangers associated with their businesses, investments and travel plans.

Current Countries of Operation



CONTACT INFORMATION:

For more information about D-Risk as well as monthly subscription packages

Contact: sales@d-riskalert.com

Website: <https://www.d-riskalert.com>



South Suite, Ragnall House, 18 Peel Road
Douglas, Isle of Man, IM1 4LZ

24 hr Global Contact: +44 207 754 3555

www.msrisk.com

Directors

S.J. Bingham, P.A. Crompton, P.O.J. Tracy

Registered in the Isle of Man No. 007435V