



# The West Africa Report

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

## The West Africa Report ~ SUMMARY

April 1 – 14, 2013



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### Benin

- **6 April 2013** - Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is scheduled to visit three African countries later this month: Benin, Ghana and Niger.
- **4 April 2013** - Benin's Foreign Minister Nassirou Bako-Arifari has announced that Benin is willing to grant asylum to ousted President Francois Bozize of the Central African republic.

### Burkina Faso

- Travel Summary
- **4 April 2013** - The US Ambassador to Mali has confirmed that the United States will give US \$51 million in humanitarian aid to countries in West Africa's Sahel region, including Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

### Central African Republic

- Travel Summary
- **13 April 2013** - The national transitional council in the CAR has elected the rebel leader who seized power last month, Michel Djotodia, as interim president.
- **4 April 2013** - The Chadian government has strongly denied accusations made by ousted Central African leader Francois Bozize that it had aided the Seleka rebels who overthrew his government ten days ago.
  - Meanwhile South Africa's President Jacob Zuma has decided to pull its troops out of the Central African Republic because the deal under which they were deployed has become void with the fall of the government there.

- **3 April 2013** - The Central African Republic's recently toppled President Francois Bozize has accused neighbouring Chad of aiding the Seleka rebel coalition which is responsible for ousting him.
  - Meanwhile during a regional summit in Chad, African leaders have stated that they will not recognize the Central African Republic's new self-proclaimed leader.
- **2 April 2013** - The African Union (AU) has rejected Michel Djotodia as leader of the CAR after his Seleka rebel group seized power and forced President Francois Bozize to flee.
- **1 April 2013** - Central African Republic rebel leader his post-coup government.

## Guinea

- **7 April 2013** - Guinea's opposition has indicated on Sunday that it will reopen talks with the government on preparations for legislative elections after the ruling party agreed to its conditions.
- **2 April 2013** - Guinea's Foreign Minister Lonseny Fall has indicated that the government is currently looking for a mediator in order to resolve a dispute over arrangements for a delayed parliamentary election that has resulted in deadly unrest across the country.

## Guinea-Bissau

- **6 April 2013** - The former navy chief of Guinea-Bissau, along with four others, were ordered detained in New York after being arrested for an alleged trans-Atlantic cocaine trafficking plot.
- **3 April 2013** - The Special Representative of the African Union (AU) in Guinea-Bissau, Ovido Pequeno, has appealed for international assistance for the country in order to help fight drug trafficking, noting that Guinea-Bissau does not have the human, financial and technical means to oversee its territory.

## Ivory Coast

- **9 April 2013** - Parties from Liberia and the Ivory Coast, as well as the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) have condemned the recurrent sporadic attacks on the Ivorian side of the border, calling on those militants engaged in the attacks to desist in the interest of peace, security, growth and development of the two countries and of the region.
- **4 April 2013** - The Ivory Coast on Thursday launched a massive operation to exhume the bodies of those killed during a violent post-election conflict which left some 3,000 dead by the time it ended in 2011.
- **2 April 2013** - Authorities in the Ivory Coast have vowed to adopt security measures that will help to pacify the western region of the country which has experienced a recurrence of violence.

## Mali

- Travel Summary
- MS RISK guidance to organizations in Mali
- Breakdown of the Mali Intervention

### *On the Ground Analysis*

- **11 April 2013** - A Rights Group has indicated that two people have died in detention in Mali after being tortured by the military and denied ventilation in a cell.
- **2 April 2013** - A radical Islamic group operating in northern Mali has released a report enumerating their attacks since the start of a three-month-old French led military offensive.
  - Meanwhile the leader of the al-Qaeda-linked Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) has contradicted reports that have indicated that jihadist military commander Mokhtar Belmokhtar was killed in Mali in early March.
- **1 April 2013** - A number of experts have indicated that the recent attacks in Timbuktu are yet another sign that demonstrate the continued challenges in Mali.

### *Domestic News:*

- **11 April 2013** - The Malian government has announced its extension of the state of emergency which had been initially declared on 12 January 2013.
- **10 April 2013** - Mali's largest political party, Adema-PASJ, has chosen Dramade Dembele as its leading candidate in the upcoming July presidential elections which are aimed at ending a tumultuous political transition.

## Mauritania

- **12 April 2013** - A medical charity has warned that thousands of refugees fleeing conflict in Mali are enduring “appalling” conditions in a UN-run camp located in Mauritania.
- **5 April 2013** - Officials in Mauritania have stated that the country has detained a Canadian citizen who has been linked to two other Canadians who died while fighting with militants during an attack on a natural gas plant in Algeria in January of this year.
- **4 April 2013** - The Democratic Opposition Coordination (COD), an umbrella body of Mauritanian opposition political parties, has demanded an assurance of transparent and credible polls before deciding whether or not it will participate in the legislative and local elections which are set to occur in October 2013.

## Niger

- Travel Summary
- **13 April 2013** - On Sunday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is set to leave Iran for an official visit to Benin, Ghana, and Niger, which is the world’s fourth-largest uranium producer.
- **5 April 2013** - According the United Nations refugee agency, thousands of refugees from Mali have crossed into neighbouring Niger amidst growing fears of reprisal attacks by the country’s military who are battling Islamist fighters.

## Nigeria

- Travel Summary

### *On Land*

- **11 April 2013** - In a Hausa-language audio recording, the leader of Boko Haram has rejected the idea of a potential amnesty deal just days after the country’s Presidency announced that it would take an amnesty deal into possibility in order to curb an insurgency that has resulted in the deaths of a large number of civilians.
- **9 April 2013** - Clashes between rival ethnic groups in central Nigeria have killed at least seven people over the weekend.
- **6 April 2013** - Attackers have stormed the home of a Nigerian deputy governor, slitting the throats of two of his guards and killing nine others in a village in northeastern Nigeria.
- **5 April 2013** - An ambush on a police boat in the oil-producing region of southern Nigeria has left at twelve police officers missing.
- **4 April 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has formed a panel that will examine the possibility of offering an amnesty deal to Islamist insurgents who have killed hundreds across the country.
- **2 April 2013** - Shell has announced its plans to temporarily shut down a key oil pipeline in southern Nigeria later this month in order to repair damage which was caused by oil thieves, leading to a loss of 150,000 barrels per day.
- **1 April 2013** - Witnesses in Kaduna State have reported that at least nineteen people have been killed after gunmen raided a village in central Nigeria.

## Togo

- **6 April 2013** - Thousands of Togolese opposition supporters held a protest on Thursday, demanding the release of members of their coalition who were arrested over two fires in the West African nation in January.

## About MS RISK



No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice

*Although there are currently no travel warning which have been issued for Benin, France has issued a warning indicating a possible threat of attacks and kidnappings occurring near the border with Niger and Nigeria. As such, MS Risk advises against any travel to the border regions with these two countries. There is currently a low threat from terrorism in Benin however terrorist attacks may occur at any place and at any time.*

#### Domestic News:

- **6 April 2013** - Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is scheduled to visit three African countries later this month: Benin, Ghana and Niger. The Iranian President will be leaving Tehran for Niger on the first leg of his tour on 14 April. On the second leg of his three day tour, the Iranian president will travel to Ghana, with Benin being the last stop on this tour. The visit comes as Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi formally invited the new Ghanaian President John Mahama to pay an official visit to the Islamic Republic during a visit to Accra on 8 January 2013. For his part, President Mahama welcomed Iran's invitation and promised to visit Iran as soon as possible. He also invited the Iranian President to visit Ghana, expressing hope that the two countries would upgrade their cooperation when their business councils meet in mid-2013.
- **4 April 2013** - Benin's Foreign Minister Nassirou Bako-Arifari has announced that Benin is willing to grant asylum to ousted President Francois Bozize of the Central African republic. A number of African leaders have since called on Benin to grant asylum to the ousted Central African president.

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country



**Travel Summary:**

There remains a general threat from terrorism in the Sahel region, along with a heightened risk that kidnap activity may cross the northern borders from Mali and Niger into Burkina Faso. As such MS RISK advises against all travel to the northern region of Burkina Faso, specifically north of the town of Boulsa, which is located 25km north of the capital city of Ouagadougou, as well as to those areas that border Mali and Niger. Since 2008, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has captured over 25 hostages of a variety of nationalities, primarily European, in which a number of these hostages are still being held.

Demonstrations involving young Burkinabes and junior soldiers have taken place in towns and cities throughout the country and at times they have turned violent. As such, citizens should avoid large crowds and demonstrations.

There is also a high risk of crime involving armed groups stopping vehicles (including public buses) in order to rob them. Such incidents have occurred in various parts of the country, particularly at night. As such all travel between towns by road at night is to be avoided, especially from Ouagadougou to Po where there is a heightened risk posed by bandits. This is especially severe on market days when highwaymen often operate in the hopes of catching merchants with stock or cash en route to and from the urban areas.



**MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Burkina Faso:**

The biggest concern at this time is the northern areas of the country along the porous Mali border and at the junction of the Niger border. Burkina Faso has played a leading role in establishing the terms of reference for the ECOWAS force to strike back at the insurgents in Mali while concurrently brokering peace negotiations. There is an increased Burkinabe military presence in the north of the country and companies should review their respective security situations and consider the following:

- Location and safety of personnel
- Security controls, communications and contingency plans at static locations
- Work tempo implications
- Journey management systems in place and working
- Liaison with the military - use of military escorts, coordination between multiple assets, confirmation that military escorts are coordinated and competent for the task.
- Reviewing all crisis management contingencies including but not limited to the following:
  - Kidnap (for ransom or ideological purposes)
  - Medical emergency and evacuation cycle for northern area
  - Interdiction of road moves for personnel and any convoys
  - Loss of communications with remote locations - enhanced comms options, access to stores if replenishment is restricted or cut off.
  - Media and public affairs contingency
- Liaising with insurers to ensure appropriate cover is in place to meet speciality risks where needed.

National Assembly and municipal elections are set to take place on the 2 December of this year. Although there are currently no known reports that indicate the possibility of violence disrupting these elections, all organisations in the country should conduct their own reviews in advance.

Companies that rely on police escorts in the northern region of the country should ensure that travel patterns do not become predictable. Varying routes are difficult due to the limited road networks, as such, it is even more important to vary the types of vehicles that are used as well as to time the journeys and to avoid travel patterns becoming widely known. This is especially critical given the current tensions that are occurring along the Mali border and the impending ECOWAS operations.

All companies that are linked to the World Bank/International Finance Cooperation should familiarise themselves with the IFC Voluntary Principles on the Use of Security Forces. This applies to military, police or private security services.

Finally, unconfirmed reports have suggested that there is an elevated banditry threat that exists on the main routes south and east of the town of Fada N’Gourma en route to Pama and Diapala respectively. Road moves to these areas should be risk assessed and liaison with police should occur until the nature of the threats have been clarified. Companies with operations in the region are invited to report incidents to MS Risk in order to aid in assessing the local atmospherics.

## On Land:

- **4 April 2013** - The US Ambassador to Mali has confirmed that the United States will give US \$51 million in humanitarian aid to countries in West Africa’s Sahel region, including Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. Mary Beth Leonard has indicated to that press that more than US \$17 million of the aid package has already been made available to the World Food Programme.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

Travel Summary:

MS Risk advises against all travel to the Central African Republic (CAR). The armed rebel coalition Seleka has renewed their offensive against President Francois Bozize’s government and have they have taken control of the capital city of Bangui. The security situation throughout the country continues to rapidly deteriorate. There has also been gunfire, violence and widespread looting throughout the capital city, which may occur again.



Armed rebels took control of a number of towns in the northern and central areas of the country in December 2012 and January 2013, stopping 75 km from the capital of Bangui. While a ceasefire agreement was made in Libreville, Gabon on 11 January 2013, the situation remains to be fragile and unpredictable. The rebels restarted their offensive in mid-March and took control of Bangui on 24 March.

There are repots of rebel activity, banditry and hostage-taking across the country. Currently the government has very limited control over much of the country. In the capital city of Bangui, there has been looting, clashes and gun fire. Reports have also surfaced that hospitals throughout the

capital city are running dangerously low on supplies.

Any individuals in the country are advised to leave now. Those who remain should take all the necessary precautions in order to stay in a safe place with sufficient stocks of food and water. If the situation deteriorates further, leaving the country by commercial means will likely become increasingly difficult. Currently regional country flights have been suspended. We advise those remaining in the country to keep up to date with local political developments and to avoid all political rallies, demonstrations or large public gatherings.

**Domestic News:**

- **13 April 2013** - The national transitional council in the CAR has elected the rebel leader who seized power last month, Michel Djotodia, as interim president. Djotodia, who proclaimed himself head of state after his Seleka rebels took control of the capital city of Bangui was the only candidate in the vote. Although originally stating that there would be a three-year wait before polls were set to take place in 2016, he has now agreed to hold elections within eighteen months.
- **4 April 2013** - The Chadian government has strongly denied accusations made by ousted Central African leader Francois Bozize that it had aided the Seleka rebels who overthrew his government ten days ago. A statement released by the government indicated that “the former president (Bozize) has engaged in a series of very serious accusations which the Chadian government categorically denies.” The denial of these accusations by the Chadian government comes just one day after the country hosted a ECCAS regional summit on the issue of the coup that occurred in the Central African Republic.
  - Meanwhile South Africa’s President Jacob Zuma has decided to pull its troops out of the Central African Republic because the deal under which they were deployed has become void with the fall of the government there. At the end of a summit of African regional leaders, President Zuma stated that “we have taken a decision to withdraw our soldiers.” President Zuma, who had faced questions over the presence of his troops following the gunning down by rebels of thirteen South African paratroopers during a battle which occurred in the capital city of Bangui, has stated that “we were in CAR on the basis of the agreement between the two countries. Our mission was to help train the soldiers...since the coup and the self-appointment of rebels, it was clear that the government is no longer there.” The decision to withdraw was first announced by summit host Chadian leader Idriss Deby late on Wednesday who added that President Zuma was ready to provide troops in the future if that was necessary.
  - The Central African Republic’s rebel strongman has agreed to a regional plan to hold elections within eighteen months and to appoint another interim leader. Michel Djotodia, who proclaimed himself president after seizing Bangui in a coup last month, had initially planned a three-year transition to democratic rule. However regional leaders rejected the presidency at a meeting of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) on Wednesday. Instead, the leaders of the six-nation bloc have called on for a freshly elected council to take charge of a political transition and to elect an interim president for no more than eighteen months. On Thursday morning, Djotodia met a delegation of foreign ministers from the ECCAS as well as representatives of the African Union of the International Francophone Organization. After talks, Seleka spokesman and Communications Minister Christophe Gazam Betty confirmed that Djotodia “has accepted all the recommendations made in N’Djamena. He agreed to all the plans that were drawn up by head of state...without wasting time.”
- **3 April 2013** - The Central African Republic’s recently toppled President Francois Bozize has accused neighbouring Chad of aiding the Seleka rebel coalition which is responsible for ousting him. In an interview, President Bozize stated that “on Saturday March 23 we had destroyed Seleka forces, but overnight into Sunday 24, we knew that there had been support from an African country, which I inevitably believe was Chad.” He further indicated that “it was Chadian special forces that led the operation on the Sunday morning and attacked the base of the South African soldiers,” referring to the troops that were stationed in Bangui, in which thirteen of them died in clashes with rebels. President Bozize also stated that his country had “solid brotherly relations” with Chad and was “surprised at their behavior.” In the past, Chad has proven to be a powerful ally to Bozize during his decade in power, aiding him in mounting a coup in 2003 and fighting against rebellions in the northern regions of the country seven years later. A recent report released by the International Crisis Group has also cast doubt on the nature of Chad’s relationship with the rebels, stating that “Chad’s position in the conflict is at the very least ambiguous and the Chadian administration is

suspected of having dubious relations with the Seleka.” President Bozize has indicated that he had requested, and been refused, a seat at a summit of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which is holding an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in the Central African Republic in the Chadian capital of N’Djamena on Wednesday. The Central African Republic’s new leader, Seleka head Michel Djotodia, and his Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, are set to participate in the summit.

- Meanwhile during a regional summit in Chad, African leaders have stated that they will not recognize the Central African Republic’s new self-proclaimed leader. Chadian President Idriss Deby indicated to the media at a meeting of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) that a transitional president should be elected in place of Seleka rebel leader Michel Djotodia. He stated that “as things stand now, it is impossible to recognise a self-proclaimed president. A committee selected by national figures must lead the transition. This body will have the executive role and must vote for a transitional president” who would serve for no more than eighteen months. Djotodia attained power on March 24 of this year after a rapid assault on the capital of Bangui, stating that the coup was in revenge for the unfulfilled promises that were made in a January peace deal that had been reached with the government. He has since retained Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye in his post, and has indicated that he will hold elections by 2016. Chadian President Deby has indicated that a legislative body would be created in order to take on the role of a parliament and a mission of ministers from ECCAS, the African Union and the European Union, among others, would be dispatched to the Central African capital of Bangui on Thursday in order to “take the message to Central African’s.” According to diplomatic sources, Chad, a regional military power, hosted the ECCAS meeting as a way to give the rebel Seleka coalition region in Central Africa a semblance of legitimacy. While ousted President Francois Bozize was not present at the summit, African leaders nevertheless called on Benin’s President Thomas Boni Yayi to grant an asylum request from Bozize if he requests one.
- **2 April 2013** - The African Union (AU) has rejected Michel Djotodia as leader of the CAR after his Seleka rebel group seized power and forced President Francois Bozize to flee. E-Ghassim Wane, a spokesman for the AU Peace and Security Commission has indicated that the AU is currently working with its international partners in order to help resolve the current situation in the CAR. During a press conference, Mr. Wane indicated that “we totally reject the act that has been taken by Seleka, that of course, includes the illegal decision by the head of Seleka to proclaim himself as president of the republic, to remain in power and to usher in a so-called transitional period.” he further noted that “we are calling for the immediate restoration of constitutional order, but also for the respect and strict implementation of the Libreville agreement, which provides an avenue and a framework for peacefully dealing with the challenges at hand.” In response to Djotodia’s suspension of the constitution, and formation of a new government, the AU has suspended the CAR from the organization and has begun targeted sanctions against seven senior leaders of the Seleka rebel group, including Djotodia.
- **1 April 2013** - Central African Republic rebel leader his post-coup government. The self-proclaimed president of the CAR has announced a caretaker government at a time when allegations are emerging that he sent child soldiers to their deaths during the coup which happened last month. Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye named a 34-member cabinet which includes nine ministers from the Seleka rebel coalition which seized Bangui in a rapid-fire assault last month. The newly formed government also includes eight ministers from the former opposition and one close to ousted president Francois Bozize. Michel Djotodia will also act as defence minister. Civilian opposition representative Nicolas Tiangaye will remain as prime minister. Djotodia, who drew several hundred residents in a March of support on Saturday, has also vowed to run the former French colony until elections are held in 2016. The new post-coup government was due to hold its first meeting as soon as Tuesday.

No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice



Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Guinea, MS Risk advises against all travel to the country due to the fact that the current political situation remains unpredictable. Although Guinea has been relatively calm since the democratically elected President Alpha Conde took office in December 2010, legislative elections, which should have taken place shortly after the presidential elects were held, have been delayed. On several occasions, large crowds of demonstrators representing members of various political parties have gathered to stage protests. Most recently, protests, which were staged in the capital city on 27 February 2013, have turned violent and have resulted in at least nine people killed and hundreds injured. Since then, protests have occurred throughout the country despite calls for peace. Opposition groups have called on a protest and strike which is set to occur on 8 April 2013. MS Risk advises anyone in the capital city and in the major towns throughout the country to avoid any protests or large groups of demonstrators as it is highly likely that such protests may turn violent as they have in recent weeks. A number of reports have also surfaced that the country's security forces have been using violence as a means of resolving the protests. Although the Government and Opposition leaders are scheduled to meet and discuss the situation over the coming week, the political situation throughout the country remains vulnerable and continued protests and violence may occur at any time. MS Risk therefore advises any citizens in the country to remain vigilant over the coming days as protests may turn violent. We advise you to monitor the local media reports and to keep away from any large gatherings and military barracks. There is currently a low threat from terrorism, however with the on-going French military intervention in Mali, there is a heightened risk of retaliatory attacks targeting Western interests in the region. Guinean authorities maintain police and local militia checkpoints throughout the entire country as such you are advised to carry the appropriate form of identification (such as a passport or residence card) with you at all times.

## Domestic News:

- 7 April 2013** - Guinea's opposition indicated on Sunday that it will reopen talks with the government on preparations for legislative elections after the ruling party agreed to its conditions. Aboubacar Sylla, a spokesman for the opposition coalition indicated that "the government has accepted all of our conditions. So we will return to the negotiating table." He indicated that the government had agreed to suspend the work of the electoral commission during the negotiations and to release some opposition supporters detained in a recent rash of deadly street protests against the polls. He further added that an opposition protest which had been planned for Monday has now been cancelled. A government spokesman has also confirmed that talks between the two parties were slated to resume however no further details were provide. These parliamentary polls are the final step in Guinea's transition to civilian rule after a 2008 military putsch, however they have been

repeatedly delayed due to opposition complaints about how they are to be organized. Guinea's opposition party has repeatedly accused the government of seeking to pre-rig the legislative elections, which are currently scheduled for May. They have repeatedly called for the cancellation of South African firm Waymark's contract to revise the electoral list. A series of opposition street protests over the election has triggered violent street clashes, resulting in a number of citizens injured or killed. On 26 March 2013, Guinea's opposition leaders had indicated that they had abandoned talks with the government and threatened to resume street protests, accusing the President's camp of disrespecting the terms of a planned dialogue over election preparations. The legislative election is meant to be the last step in a drawn-out transition to civilian rule after a coup in late 2008 was followed by two years of fighting, in which the army was in charge. The political uncertainty has led to billions of dollars in mining investments being put on ice and has hit Guinea's economy last year.

- **2 April 2013** - Guinea's Foreign Minister Lonseny Fall has indicated that the government is currently looking for a mediator in order to resolve a dispute over arrangements for a delayed parliamentary election that has resulted in deadly unrest across the country. During an interview while on a visit in Algiers, Mr. Fall indicated that "we are determined to bring the transition to an end and put in place all the institutions...I believe that very soon we will reach a consensus that enables this election to finally take place." He further indicated that a "facilitator" would play a key role in addressing opposition concerns so that the election can go ahead as planned on 12 May 2013. According to the foreign minister, "many stages have already been completed" in the reform of the independent national election commission, including changing its president and giving the opposition an equal number of members. Discontent is continuing across Guinea, where violence erupted in late February during an opposition protest which called for transparency during the up coming elections. At least eight people were killed in the fighting that ensued. Amongst the protesters' grievances was the selection of the South African company Waymark to revise the electoral roll, which opponents of President Alpha Conde suspect of supporting him.



No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice

*There are currently no travel restrictions in place for Guinea-Bissau. In April 2012, the country's armed forces staged a coup in the capital city of Bissau. Although the current security situation remains calm, the political situation can change unexpectedly. There remains an underlying threat from terrorism.*

#### Domestic News:

- **6 April 2013** - The former navy chief of Guinea-Bissau, along with four others, were ordered detained in New York after being arrested for an alleged trans-Atlantic cocaine trafficking plot. The highest-profile member of the alleged gang was Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, a US-designated drug "kingpin" who is alleged to have exploited political chaos in his West African homeland in order to establish himself as a major middleman in the international narcotics trade. A statement released by the US prosecutor's office has indicated that the five men were presented before a Manhattan federal judge and ordered detained without bail. They have not entered any pleas.
- **3 April 2013** - The Special Representative of the African Union (AU) in Guinea-Bissau, Ovido Pequeno, has appealed for international assistance for the country in order to help fight drug trafficking, noting that Guinea-Bissau does not have the human, financial and technical means to oversee its territory. In an interview in Paris, the Special Representative indicated that "it is a country that the Central government does not have the means to control. It is therefore quite normal that traffickers have taken advantage of this weakness of the state to carry out their activities. If you really want to fight drug trafficking, you need to act on the demand for it and its origin." He further indicated that it was not fair to describe the country as the main entry point of drugs into West Africa, noting that "Guinea-Bissau is obviously a transit point, but it is itself a victim of the international network. This scourge cannot be fought efficiently by accusing a country that is itself a victim of that scourge." According to a recent study completed by the Sahelo-Saharan Observatory on Geopolitics and Strategy (OSGS), about fifty tonnes of cocaine, worth US \$1.8 billion, are circulating illegally in Africa. According to the Bamako-based OSGS, the drugs, which are transported by different means in West Africa, pass through northern Mali, southern Algeria, northern Niger, southern Libya and Egypt to Europe. Several West African countries, including Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Guinea and Senegal are also fighting drug trafficking. According to the United Nations Programme for Drug Control, the drug scourge is seriously threatening peace and stability in West Africa, particularly in Guinea-Bissau.

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



*MS Risk advises against all but essential travel to parts of the country, including the western regions of Dix-Huit Montagnes, Haut-Sassandra, Moyen-Cavally and Bas-Sassa. Since August 2012, there has been a rise in the number of shootings occurring in Abidjan. These attacks have mainly occurred at night and have typically targeted police and military personnel. It is likely that such further incidents may occur. Following the French military intervention in Mali, there is a heightened risk of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. MS Risk advises companies and individuals in the Ivory Coast to remain vigilant. There has been a rise in attacks in the western region of the country, specifically near the border with Liberia. MS Risk advises against all travel to these border regions as armed groups may still be operating in these areas.*

### Domestic News:

- 9 April 2013** - Parties from Liberia and the Ivory Coast, as well as the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), have condemned the recurrent sporadic attacks on the Ivorian side of the border, calling on those militants engaged in the attacks to desist in the interest of peace, security, growth and development of the two countries and of the region. The parties' condemnation was contained in a communique that was signed at the end of a Four-Party Meeting between Representatives of the Government of Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), and the UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) which was held in Monrovia on 5 April 2013 at the Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Four-Party Meeting was held as a continuation of talks following meetings that were held in May 2012 and June 2012 which focussed on issues relative to border security, justice, humanitarian and bilateral cooperation between Liberia and the Ivory Coast. During this most recent meeting, delegates underscored that these recurrent armed attacks call for coordinated and consolidated cooperation between the two neighboring countries. The Governments of Liberia and the Ivory Coast also reiterated their commitments towards working closely in order to stabilize the border area with an aim to render it peaceful and stable for sustainable development. In turn, the two Governments, along with the two United Nations Missions, discussed the respective measures to be taken in order to intensify their patrols in the border areas. With this, the parties acknowledged that Liberia has taken steps to secure its territories by the temporary closure of its borders in the regions of the Grand Gedeh, Nimba and River Gee, and the reopening of the border in Maryland.
- 4 April 2013** - The Ivory Coast on Thursday launched a massive operation to exhume the bodies of those killed during a violent post-election conflict which left some 3,000 dead by the time it ended in 2011. In a ceremony prior to the exhumation, Justice Minister Gnenema Coulibaly stated that "to

this day, two years after this tragedy, a number of bodies and human remains still lie in public places, burial plots, places of worship, to name a few. The security situation at the time did not allow...for decent burials of the deceased.” Violence broke out in the country when former President Laurent Gbagbo refused to quit after his defeat in a November 2010 election to now-President Alassane Ouattara. The crisis culminated in two weeks of war in Abidjan between fighters supporting the rival presidents which ended on April 11 when Gbagbo was arrested in his bunker, with military assistance from the United Nations and French forces. Several massacres were reported to have taken place in the restive western regions of the country. The exhumation operation that was launched on Thursday will take place in the vast Abidjan district of Yopougon, which was the last pro-Gbagbo militia stronghold. The operation is expected to last for about one year. According to Justice Minister Coulibaly, out of the fifty-seven burial sites that have been so far discovered throughout the country, thirty-six were located in Yopougon. An investigation that was ordered by President Ouattara, and presented last year, indicated that his forces had killed more than 700 people during the crisis but that those of former president Gbagbo had killed twice as many. Gbagbo is the first former head of state to be brought before the International Criminal Court where he currently faces four counts of crimes against humanity for allegedly fomenting the wave of violence that ensued after the elections. He however has denied all the charges.

- **2 April 2013** - Authorities in the Ivory Coast have vowed to adopt security measures that will help to pacify the western region of the country which has experienced a recurrence of violence. During a visit last weekend to the western town of Bolequin, where ten soldiers were killed within a period of ten days, Ivory Coast's Interior Minister Hamed Bakayoko reassured the population that the government had taken the adequate measures in order to ensure their protection. During his visit, the Interior Minister announced that a police station would be set up in the area and that border posts will be rehabilitated in the coming months. Speaking to local media, Mr. Bakayoko indicated that “we shall present to the government a security plan for the region...these problems will be discussed during a national security council meeting that will be held on Tuesday.” He also urged local administrators to get involved in the resolution of local problems such as land disputes.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

**Travel Summary:**

MS Risk advises against all travel to Mali. If however you remain in the country, we advise you to closely monitor the daily developments which are available in English through the BBC World Service (88.9 FM in Bamako). The Government of Mali declared a State of Emergency across the whole country which became effective from midnight on 12 January 2013. This effectively enables the government to take extraordinary measures to deal with the crisis in the North and elsewhere. Although currently no curfew has been established, changes could be announced at any time. On the ground and air assaults by French forces are ongoing in the northern regions, especially in the mountainous region near Kidal and Tessalit. You are therefore advised to avoid the regions north of Timbuktu. The Malian government has also placed severe restrictions on travel north of Segou towards the town of Mopti. Consequently, we advise everyone to monitor the local media for reports of any new measures. In view of the deteriorating security situation in Mali, MS Risk recommends that unless you have pressing reasons to remain, you should now leave the country by commercial means. Bamako International Airport remains open.

The recent death of a senior AQIM leader will likely result in militant rebels in Mali, and possibly in other West African countries, to carry out retaliatory hit-and-run attacks in an attempt to place increased pressure on France to withdraw its military intervention. Any citizens remaining in the country are advised to relocate to Bamako and avoid the main former strongholds, including Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal.

Currently there is a high threat from terrorism in Mali. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. With the first suicide bombing occurring this week in Gao, it is highly probable that such attacks will continue to be staged in the major cities and former strongholds of the al-Qaeda-linked groups.



There is also a high threat of kidnapping in Mali by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and by the splinter group, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). Although AQIM uses the northern region of Mali as an operating base, it has proven its capability of travelling long distances in order to carry out attacks, some of which have occurred in neighbouring countries. As such the kidnap threat cannot be isolated within the northern regional stronghold. In turn, criminal gangs have previously been engaged to carry out kidnappings for terrorist groups in return for financial rewards. Subsequently attacks can take place throughout Mali. In the past, a number of Westerners have been kidnapped by terrorists in Mali and in the Sahel region. Since 2008, over 25 Westerners have been kidnapped in the Sahel. Victims have included tourists, NGO workers and diplomats of a variety of nationalities, primarily European. These attacks have on occasion resulted in the murder of the hostages. The recent kidnapping of a French citizen in the western region of the country has come as a shock as the area where he was taken has been perceived as being stable and under governmental control. In the past, kidnap threats have typically emanated from the Azawad region in the north and east part of the county, as such this incident in the west has caused great concern. MS Risk forecasts that there will be an increased and sustained kidnap threat across Mali and in certain border-regions for some time to come. Incidents of kidnap are likely to occur for three primary reasons:

- For Ransom - insurgents will raise finances for future operations. With the ECOWAS operation, this is accelerating as a concern.
- Human Shields - Insurgents will kidnap persons in order to deter/reduce the risk of direct action by governmental forces against them.
- Ideological - Kidnappings will occur for political purposes.

Since the coup in March 2012, and due to the ongoing political unrest, MS RISK judges that there is a continued heightened threat of kidnap for ransom in Mali and as such further attacks and kidnappings are highly likely to occur. Furthermore, although it is difficult to forecast how severe this threat will emerge, all affected organisations are recommended to review their current operations and contingencies which is in line with the previous advice which has been given. MS RISK currently advises against all travel to Mali.

### ***MS RISK Guidance to Organisations in Mali:***

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

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

The most extreme risks will be in the Azawad region. There is expected to be military clashes there between the various insurgent groupings against the ECOWAS-bolstered Mali army force in line with the UN Security Council authorization to use force. Despite the obvious threats in the Azawad, organisations in Mali should be braced for nuisance attacks and isolated terrorist attacks in the capital of Bamako. When al-Shabaab was weakened in Somalia, these types of attacks were experienced in Uganda and Kenya. Although the two conflicts are not connected, it is logical to predict that similar tactics may evolve and be witnessed in Mali and inside contributing nations.

**Breakdown of the Mali Intervention:**

- **1 April** - Al-Qaeda has taken responsibility for an attack that occurred in Timbuktu over the weekend. The announcement came as French and Malian forces on Monday continued to hunt down militants in the northern regions of the country. The claim of responsibility, coupled with the boldness of the attack, has renewed fears that al-Qaeda's local fighters in Mali are regrouping and that they have not been uprooted despite the three-month-old French-led operation. A spokesman for AQIM has indicated that the attack was led by an Algerian suicide bomber, belonging to the Yusuf bin Tashfin brigade, a platoon that was under the command of Abou Zeid who was killed by French forces last month. The attack over the weekend began when an explosive-loaded car was detonated at a checkpoint located on the outskirts of the city. However the suicide explosion appeared to have been a ruse, allowing fighters to infiltrate the city while local security forces rushed to reinforce the checkpoint. Fighters from the al-Qaeda cell infiltrated the town, arriving by foot and on scooters, and taking positions at the swimming pool inside the centrally-located Hotel Colombe, a hotel that is regularly used by journalists and aid workers. By Monday, fighting had continued into the late morning hours. However French and Malian troops are currently scouring the town center. At least eleven militants have been killed in the attack which started late Saturday night.
- **2 April** - The European Union has begun a top-to-toe overhaul of Mali's army in order to help its soldiers take the place of foreign troops defending the West African nation against an Islamist insurgency. The first of four battalions has arrived in Koulikoro, which is located 60 kilometers (37 miles) from the capital of Bamako. They will train under the European instructors as part of a wider effort bring the army up to par as quickly as possible. According to Lieutenant-Colonel Philippe de Cussac, spokesman for the European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM), "initially, the training will be very general. Afterwards, there will be a specialized training in telecommunications, artillery and engineering. We will also train special forces elite snipers." Around 200 trainers are expected to arrive in Mali from France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Ireland. Around half of the estimated 6,000 remaining Malian troops will train over the next year with the EUTM, which will run on a budget of 12.3 million euros (US \$15.8 million), with the first batch expected to be ready for combat in the north by early July. Once trained, each of the four Mali battalions will have a unified command with an infantry-mobile core, backed by artillery and engineering, and a logistics component. United States Sens. John McCain and Sheldon Whitehouse arrive in Mali's capital city of Bamako for a two-day visit in order to assess the country's battle against Islamic extremist rebels in the north. The two senators met with Mali's acting President Dioncounda Traore and interim Prime Minister Diango Cissoko. According to a statement issued by the United States embassy in Bamako, the senators "arrived in Bamako to take in the situation on the ground to better understand the present challenges so that they can foster the most appropriate contribution from America." Sen. McCain indicated that the US will continue to provide humanitarian aid and military assistance, including equipment, training and technology, to the French-led campaign. The two senators also discussed the problem of drug trafficking with President Traore.
- **3 April** - The United Nations has expressed its concerns over the continued violence that is occurring against ethnic Tuaregs and Arabs in Mali, citing evidence of new rights abuses against the two communities. UN Under Secretary for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman has indicated that while "arbitrary acts of violence" against Tuaregs and Arabs had recently slowed, "there is still a risk of reprisal against members of these communities." He further added that "worryingly, it appears from reports that new patterns of human rights violations have emerged, including retaliatory attacks based on ethnicity." The UN has estimated that about 470,000 people have fled the fighting and sought refuge either in Malian host communities or in neighbouring countries. In turn, more than 290,000 people are internally displaced and about 177,000 are refugees in Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso. Feltman further noted that there will be another 750,000 people in need of immediate

food assistance and 660,000 children at risk of malnutrition this year, including 210,000 at risk of severe acute malnutrition. Although according to Feltman the “humanitarian access has improved in some parts of the country,” in some regions, particularly in Timbuktu and Gao, “the situation remains highly volatile.”

- **5 April** - France’s Foreign Minister has reassured Mali that his country was not planning an ‘overnight’ withdrawal of troops. Laurent Fabius, who is currently in Bamako in order to discuss the French pullout which is scheduled for the end of April, has indicated that France would provide a permanent “support force” of 1,000 French soldiers after elections that the deeply divided country has indicated will occur in July. He also urged Mali’s interim authorities to hold general elections by the end of July in order to help build a government legitimate enough to make peace with the country’s manifold rebels. Paris is currently preparing to hand over its mission to a UN-mandated African force of 6,300 in the coming weeks, a move which will place a spotlight on Mali’s poorly-paid, ill-equipped and badly-organized armed forces.
- **6 April** - A surprise operation on Saturday in Bamako, which focused on disarming police thought to be close to those who staged Mali’s 2012 coup, sparked a clash that has left at least one soldier dead and another police officer wounded. Military sources confirmed that the incident occurred during a raid on a police camp stationed in the Malian capital. According to sources, “it was a policeman who refused to disarm that fired on the soldier who died...the same policeman let off another shot by mistake that wounded one of his comrades.” During the raid, soldiers and gendarmes had surrounded the camp before seizing several automatic weapons. Around ten police were arrested, including three women, however five escaped over the camp’s perimeter wall. The government has also indicated that an investigation into the incident has also been opened. Saturday’s raid follows a reported shootout that occurred between police and trade unionists overnight on Thursday, in which four people were allegedly wounded.
- **7 April** - A French force of 1,000 soldiers launched a major offensive on Sunday as sweeping a valley thought to be a logistics base for al-Qaeda-linked Islamists near the city of Gao. Operation Gustav, one of France’s largest actions since its intervention, involved dozens of tanks, helicopters and aircraft. According to General Bernard Barrera, the commander of the French land forces in Mali, “we surrounded the valley north of Gao, which we believe serves as a logistics base for jihadist groups, and we began to search methodically.” While no Islamist fighters were encountered on the first day, troops did neutralize around 340 artillery shells and high-calibre rockets and destroyed a Toyota pick-up truck. All access points to the valley were shut off and its ridges secured at 6:00am (local time). France’s 3rd Mechanised Brigade later began the excavation of a thick forest where military intelligence suspects that a jihadist base may be hidden. French soldiers will spend the next few days combing the 20-kilometre (12 mile) valley with the help of Malian soldiers and police officers going into the nomad camps and mud houses which line the dry river basin. The city of Gao, which is located 1,200 kilometers (750 miles) from the capital of Bamako, was a stronghold of the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). It suffered the first suicide bombings in Mali’s history in February of this year. Over the past two weeks, the city has been the scene of a number of deadly clashes between French-Malian forces and jihadist militants. Meanwhile al-Qaeda’s leader has urged Muslims in Arab Spring countries to unite in order to institute an Islamic state and has warned France that its intervention in Mali will be bogged down. In a 103-minute audio message that was posted on a number of militant websites late Saturday, Ayman al-Zawahri stated that “I warn France that it will meet in Mali, with God’s permission, the same fate America met in Iraq and Afghanistan.”
- **9 April** - France has withdrawn its first batch of soldiers from Mali. The military’s chief of staff confirmed that around 100 soldiers had been withdrawn and sent to Paphos, Cyprus where they will spend three days prior to heading back to France. The soldiers belonged to the parachute units of the army which had been deployed in the Tessalit region of northeastern Mali.
- **11 April** - Mali’s Prime Minister urged France to maintain a military presence in its former colony. Diango Cissoko made the plea while on a tour of Gao, the first visit to the northern city by a head of

government since it was overrun by al-Qaeda-linked militants more than a year ago. The plea also comes at a time when France begins to withdraw its troops three months after ousting armed Islamists from the country's northern region. Prime Minister Cissoko also promised that elections will go ahead in July despite fears that his government is failing to reassert its control in the northern regions of the country. Speaking to reporters in Gao, the Prime Minister stated that "there is no question over the holding of elections in July. All the necessary steps are being and will be taken."

- 12 April** - A suicide bomber has killed at least three Chadian soldiers in an attack in the northern city of Kidal. According to residents in the town, a bomber blew himself up next to a group of soldiers in a market. The centre of the city is currently sealed off, with security operations occurring in order to sweep out any remaining militants. The city's deputy mayor, Abda Ag Kazina, has blamed the attack on members of al-Qaeda's North African branch. A Chadian military official has also confirmed that four a side from the three soldiers being killed, four other soldiers were wounded in the attack. This is the third suicide bombing in Kidal this years, there have also been a number of other such attacks that have occurred in Gao and Timbuktu. Meanwhile officials have indicated that at five Malian soldiers, including a senior officer, are dead after a combat helicopter crash that occurred in central Mali. Lt. Col Souleymane Maiga confirmed that the crash took place Friday morning near the village of Ouro-Modi, which is located 56 kilometers (35 miles) southeast of Sevare. All passengers on board, including an army colonel, were killed. The helicopter had come from Sevare several days earlier for maintenance. An investigation into the cause of the crash is currently ongoing however an initial assessment has indicated that the incident was due to a mechanical failure.



## On the Ground Analysis:

- **11 April 2013** - A Rights Group has indicated that two people have died in detention in Mali after being tortured by the military and denied ventilation in a cell. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), the two men were ethnic Tuaregs who had been accused of supporting Islamist militants in northern Mali. Officials in Mali have not yet commented on these allegations. This most recent allegation comes just months after the International Federation of Human Rights indicated in January of this year that there was “credible information” that at least twenty Tuaregs and people of Arab origin who had been summarily executed by Malian soldiers. In response at the time, the Malian army stated that it was investigating the allegation. In this most recent allegation, the HRW has stated that the detainees who died were part of a group of seven Tuaregs who were seized by soldiers on 15 February in the northern town of Lere. They later stated to a HRW researcher that they had been beaten, burned, injected with a caustic substance and threatened with death while in army custody. They were later transferred to the central prison in Bamako. According to a report released by HRW, “people who knew the two men told Human Rights Watch that they died during the night of 6 and 7 April as a result of excessive heat, possibly combined with the injuries from their earlier mistreatment. The torture may have left them vulnerable to rapid deterioration.” The report further indicated that the men had been detained in a room with no ventilation, even though the average temperature in the city at this time of the year is higher than 38C. Furthermore, “temperatures within an enclosed room without ventilation would drive this temperature considerably higher. The witness (who spoke to HRW) quoted one of the detainees who later died as saying: ‘if we are not moved from that room, all of us are going to die from the heat.’” HRW has since called on the government to investigate the deaths and to improve both the treatment and conditions of all its detainees.
- **2 April 2013** - A radical Islamic group operating in northern Mali has released a report enumerating their attacks since the start of a three-month-old French led military offensive. According to reports, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) claims credit for nine operations, including suicide bombings, that were carried out around the northern Malian city of Gao. For nearly ten months, Gao was controlled by MUJAO, which is an offshoot of al-Qaeda’s Africa chapter. Although since the French military operation, MUJAO fighters have been flushed out of the city however they have been able to regroup and have since launched a number of suicide attacks. The statement also identifies that one of the suicide bombers was an Egyptian, signifying that the group’s foreign recruits are still actively waging war in Mali.
  - Meanwhile the leader of the al-Qaeda-linked Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) has contradicted reports that have indicated that jihadist military commander Mokhtar Belmokhtar was killed in Mali in early March. In turn, a spokesman for Belmokhtar’s unit has also denied that he was killed. Last month, officials in Chad had announced that Belmokhtar, who is said to have direct communications with al-Qaeda emir Ayman al-Zawahiri, was reported to have been killed during a joint French and Chadian military operation in the mountainous regions of northern Mali. Hamad el Khairy, the head of MUJAO’s sharia, or Islamic Law, committee, stated that the reports of Belmokhtar’s death and the deaths of several other top jihadist commanders are “merely unfounded lies” and have “no basis of truth.” Khairy also denied media reports that hundreds of jihadists have been killed since France invaded Mali in order to halt the takeover of the country, stating that “what they said about the killing of 600 mujahideen is an unfounded lie.” The spokesman for Those who Sign with Blood brigade, which is commanded by Belmokhtar, also denied that the group’s emir had been killed. Al Hasan Ould Akhlil has also contradicted reports that large numbers of the group’s fighters were killed. The Chadian President and the military have insisted that Belmokhtar was killed in a counterterrorism operation in the Ifoghas mountains in northern Mali on 2 March 2013. Pictures were shown that were said to have been the corpse of Belmokhtar. Although France has

confirmed the death of Abou Zeid, who was killed in a raid in the Ifoghas mountain in late February, French officials have refused to confirm the death of Belmokhtar. Mokhtar Belmokhtar has been tied to jihadists in both Northern Africa and in Central Asia. He waged jihad against the Soviets in the 1980's and fought in Algeria's civil war in the 1990's with the al-Qaeda-linked Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and its successor, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, which renamed itself al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2007. AQIM's is al-Qaeda's affiliate in North Africa. In 2003, the United Nations designated Belmokhtar as a global terrorist due to his activities on behalf of AQIM. He was also convicted in absentia by Algerian courts for criminal acts including terrorism in 2004, 2007 and 2008. Although Belmokhtar split with AQIM in December 2012, he continued to conduct joint operations with the group. Belmokhtar later formed the al-Muajjidiyun, which led the bloody terrorist assault against the In Amenas gas facility in southeastern Algeria in mid-January of this year.

- **1 April 2013** - A number of experts have indicated that the recent attacks in Timbuktu are yet another sign that demonstrate the continued challenges in Mali. Fresh attacks in Timbuktu are a sign of the continued uneasiness in the African state and have occurred months after French and Malian forces pushed back militants who were attempting to extend their reach southward. On Monday, an al-Qaeda affiliate claimed responsibility for the assault on Timbuktu, which started with a weekend suicide bombing on the outskirts of the city before rebel fighters moved in closer on scooters and foot in order to take over parts of the city. In March, a suicide bomber had killed a Malian soldier near the Timbuktu airport. These new attacks come just two months after Timbuktu was retaken from the militants who had imposed a harsh form of religious law throughout the city, banning music, lashing accused adulterers and chopping off hands. This new renewed violence depicts the militants' continued persistence after French and Malian forces routed them out from the northern cities. The Islamist rebels have long said that they want to draw the French into a lengthy war in the Sahara. In turn, the past weekend's violence underscores the uneasiness that still plagues Mali. Despite French announcements of success, many Malians have not been able to return to areas they fled during the conflict, a number of Europeans continue to remain hostage, and the Islamist rebels may have already recruited as many fighters as have been killed. Besides averting the fall of Ségou, which is a strategic town that had been threatened by the rebel advances, it is difficult to attain a clear measure that will indicate that the intervention is a success. Mali still faces a number of obstacles while on its way towards stability. The frustrations of the Tuareg separatists who repelled last year coupled with the imbalance in power and resources between the northern and southern regions of the country have yet to be addressed. In turn, the government is still shaky in the wake of last year's military coup while Human Rights Watch has repeatedly reported continued allegations of torture and other abuses by Malian soldiers.

### Domestic News:

- **11 April 2013** - The Malian government has announced its extension of the state of emergency which had been initially declared on 12 January 2013. The decision was taken on Wednesday during a Cabinet meeting that was chaired by the interim President Dioncounda Traore. While no information on when the second extension will end has been provided, sources have indicated that the state of emergency may end in June, just before the beginning of the electoral campaigns for the first round of presidential elections which are set to occur in July. According to Malian electoral law, the campaigns begin three weeks before the first round of the presidential elections.
- **10 April 2013** - Mali's largest political party, Adema-PASJ, has chosen Dramade Dembele as its leading candidate in the upcoming July presidential elections which are aimed at ending a tumultuous political transition. A senior party official has confirmed that Mr. Dembele was chosen on Wednesday following a meeting of the party's executive committee. The party's current leader, and Mali's interim President Dioncounda Traore, is prevented from contesting the poll following a deal that was reached with coup leaders that allows him to lead the country during the transitional



period. Although Mr. Dembele will be up against about a dozen other candidates including former prime minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and ex-finance minister Soumalia Cisse, he will be able to count on Adema-PASJ's popularity. Following the last elections, which occurred in 2007, the party controls fifty-four seats in the country's 160-seat national assembly

Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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



Travel Summary:

Summary

MS Risk advises against all travel to the northern and eastern regions of the country - especially the desert areas north of the Oualata-Tichit-Ouadane-Zouerat line, as well as the border areas with Algeria, Mali and Morocco. We also advise you to avoid Tiris Zemmour, Adrar, Tagant and Hodh el Chargui. This is due to extremist groups and armed smugglers that are active in these areas which has resulted in high threats of terrorism as well as a heightened risk of banditry and kidnapping. We also advise against all travel to the western provinces of Dakhlet - Nouadhibou and Inchiri. This includes the road from the port of Nouadhibou to Nouakchott. We advise against all but essential travel to the rest of the country.



Terrorism

Following the French military intervention in Mali there has been a heightened possibility of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. Consequently we advise vigilance.

Kidnapping

There is a high risk of kidnapping throughout Mauritania and Westerners are the favoured target. In the past, hostages have been held captive for several months before being released. MS Risk advises anyone traveling to Mauritania to take particular caution in the region of Inchire (Akjoujt is the capita) as well as in the areas that border Mali and Morocco.

For companies with employees remaining in Mauritania, MS Risk advises you to arrange a trustworthy escort that is familiar with the country. The use of varied and unpredictable routes and schedules when moving from one location to

another is also highly advised. Exercise a high awareness of personal security at all times and monitor the local developments.

## On The Ground Events:

- **12 April 2013** - A medical charity has warned that thousands of refugees fleeing conflict in Mali are enduring “appalling” conditions in a UN-run camp located in Mauritania. According to a report issued by Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), conditions are extremely poor in the Mbera camp, causing a number of healthy refugees becoming ill shortly after their arrival. The report, which is based on testimony given by more than 100 residents of the camp, further indicated that there is only one toilet for every 3,000 residents and that new arrivals are forced to build their own shelters. Furthermore, refugees are receiving only eleven litres (1.9 gallons) of water a day in 50C (122F) heat. An MSF study conducted last November at the camp, revealed a critical nutrition situation, with mortality rates above the emergency threshold for children under the age of two. Conditions have also worsened since the French intervention in Mali, which prompted a further 15,000 refugees to seek shelter at the camp. Since then, new arrivals have been waiting more than a month in order to receive housing materials. As such, they have been forced to build makeshift shelters from sticks and scraps of cloth. In response, the UN has taken the allegations seriously however officials have indicated that they question some of the findings in the report. The UN refugee agency UNHCR, which is responsible for overseeing the camp, has indicated that some of the facts “seem to be out of date and do not reflect current realities.” While MSF has indicated that the situation has improved in recent weeks, urgently called on the UNHCR and other aid organizations operating inside the camp, to redouble their efforts to provide shelter, clean water, latrines and food at minimum humanitarian standards. The fear is that unless conditions improve significantly, the refugees will abandon the camp but will still be in a position where they are unable to return home due to the ongoing conflict. In response, the UNHCR pointed out that there are now more than 2,500 latrines, approximately one for every thirty refugees. In turn, there are also more than 570 water points and more than 1,500 showers. Dan McNorton, a UNHCR spokesman further indicated that the agencies operating in the camp have “already taken measures to improve the overall hygiene” and “additional efforts have been in place since the beginning of the year to treat malnutrition issues responding to this critical situation.” According to the MSF, some 70,000 now live at the camp which is located in a remote region of Mauritania.
- **5 April 2013** - Officials in Mauritania have stated that the country has detained a Canadian citizen who has been linked to two other Canadians who died while fighting with militants during an attack on a natural gas plant in Algeria in January of this year. The confirmation that Mauritania is holding the man, Aaron Yoon, follows reports that indicated that before his arrest, Mr. Yoon had studied the Koran in Mauritania with a number of unidentified Americans and Europeans. Bernard Colas, Mauritania’s consul in Montreal has stated that Mr. Yoon, who is from London, Ontario, was arrested months ago, before the attack in Algeria occurred, and is being held in connection with an investigation into “serious” matters. He further indicated that Mr. Yoon was in good health and was being treated well and that he had been visited by Canadian diplomats based in Morocco and that a lawyer was soon expected to be appointed to help Mr. Yoon prepare his defence. While it is known as one of the countries where AQIM has operated, Mauritania also is the home of well-regarded Islamic seminaries where students can acquire a serious religious education. Such schools are not generically regarded by Western security agencies as training grounds for militants. The



confirmation of Mr. Yoon's detention in Mauritania comes just one day after officials in Canada confirmed that identities of two other English-speaking Canadians from London, Ontario, who took part in the January attack on a remote natural gas facility in Algeria. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police has identified them as Xristos Katsiroubas and Ali Medlej. A number of people, including two Canadians, were killed when Algerian troops stormed the desert gas plant. Reports from Canada have indicated that Mr. Yoon went to school with the two dead men, and that he was raised a Catholic but converted to Islam before graduating from high school. Further reports have indicated that Mr. Katsiroubas converted from the Greek Orthodox faith to Islam. Update (9 April) - A 24-year-old Canadian man held in Mauritania has been sentenced to two years in prison for terrorist conspiracy in the West African state. According to court documents that have been released, Aaron Yoon was sentenced last July by a criminal court in Nouakchott to two years in prison. He was also ordered to pay a fine of 5 million ouguiyas (£11,750). The court documents also indicated that Yoon had declared he was recruited by an Islamist named Mohammed El-Hafed, who made him listen to jihadi tapes and then asked him to join the camps. Although he was arrested in late December 2011, as he prepared to join Islamist fighters in northern Mali, his trial was not made public and his detention only recently came to light. However the issue does highlight how a number of people with Western nationalities has passed through the desert nation in order to join al-Qaeda--linked fighters in neighbouring Mali.

- **4 April 2013** - The Democratic Opposition Coordination (COD), an umbrella body of Mauritanian opposition political parties, has demanded an assurance of transparent and credible polls before deciding whether or not it will participate in the legislative and local elections which are set to occur in October 2013. COD Chairman Mohamed Ould Jemil Ould Mansour indicated at a political rally that the opposition would not participate in "an election which outcome would be known in advance." COD has been organising mass rallies across the country, demanding President Ould Abdel Aziz's departure in order to pave the way for "real change" in Mauritania. The Mauritanian opposition has also been demanding that soldiers leave the political scene and return to the barracks.



Avoid ALL travel to part(s) of country

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

**Travel Summary:**

MS Risk advises against all travel to the following parts of Niger: all areas of the country north of the city of Abalak, including the Air Massif region; the province of Agadez (including the road that links Assamakato Agadez and the city of Agadez); areas of Tahoua province north of the city of Tahoua, including the city itself; the area of Tillaberi province north of Niamey, including the road from Niamey to Gao and the road from Niamey to Menaka. We currently advise against all but essential travel to the remainder of the country, including the capital city Niamey.



Due to the French military intervention in Mali, there is a possibility of retaliatory attacks that may target Western interests in the region. We advise vigilance. There is a high threat of terrorism occurring throughout the country. Attacks could be indiscriminate and can occur in places that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. There is a high threat of kidnapping from terrorist groups such as AQIM and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA). These terrorist groups have already kidnapped a number of Westerners in Niger and throughout the wider Sahel region, including in Niamey, and the northern and western regions of Niger. It is highly likely that further kidnap attacks will occur.

There is a high level of crime that exists throughout the country, especially in the capital city of Niamey. Thefts, robberies and residential break-ins can occur at any time. The areas located around the Gaweye Hotel, National Museum and Petit Marche in Niamey are particularly prone to muggings. It is advised that you not walk alone there, or cross the Kennedy Bridge on foot at any time. Bandits are thought to be operating in the border area with Nigeria, south of Zinder. MS Risk advises you to take special care and to avoid crossing the border with Nigeria during the night.

All companies that are currently operating in the north and north-west regions of the country should be aware of the increased security threats. Companies attempting road moves should coordinate them with local authorities. MS Risk does not recommend unescorted road moves east of Tahoua. There have been several military escorts operating from Tahoua to the north and north-eastern regions of the country which companies should liaise with for increased protection.

## Domestic News:

- **13 April 2013** - On Sunday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is set to leave Iran for an official visit to Benin, Ghana, and Niger, which is the world's fourth-largest uranium producer. He is scheduled to meet with the presidents of the three countries and is expected to sign a number of agreements relating to the development of economic and political relations. President Ahmadinejad is set to arrive in Benin on Sunday afternoon for an official visit in his capacity as chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement of countries. His ministry has indicated that "education, agriculture and above all, energy," will be on the agenda. The Iranian president will then head on Monday to Niger for a two-day visit. Following a meeting with Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou, Iran's ambassador told reporters that the Iranian president "will lead a large delegation and both our nations will discuss cooperation and means of strengthening it." Although Iran's ambassador did not elaborate on the meeting, Niger is one of the world's top producers of uranium, which Iran has long been seeking to acquire for its controversial nuclear programme. In turn, Niger's government has recently criticized its historical agreement with France, which gets most of its uranium from the former colony, and has demanded a fairer share of the profits generated by uranium ore mining. These talks with the Iranian president may signal a change in the government's willingness to look towards other countries in order to gain more profit for their resources.
- **5 April 2013** - According to the United Nations refugee agency, thousands of refugees from Mali have crossed into neighbouring Niger amidst growing fears of reprisal attacks by the country's military who are battling Islamist fighters. According to Adrian Edwards, spokesman for the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, almost 6,000 people, mainly women and children, arrived on foot or on donkeys, indicating that "they say they fled because of the ongoing war in northern Mali, and for fear of possible reprisals by the Malian army. They also said that more people are on their way to Niger." According to reports, the refugees began arriving on March 28 near the towns of Mentés and Midal which are located in a remote desert area in the northern region of the country. According to Mr. Edwards, "we haven't had refugees coming across at this point before... Reception conditions are very precarious. The only available water, which contains clay, is drawn from pools. No health facilities are available. We are planning to relocate these refugees to Midal where we can better assist them and where there is a functioning well." Although the Islamist militants have now largely been driven out of a number of the main Malian cities in the northern regions of the country, they have begun waging a guerrilla war against French, Malian and other troops who are seeking to help the government assert its control over the entire territory. In turn, there have been rising reports of retaliatory attacks against ethnic groups who have been suspected of sympathizing with the rebels. According to figures provided by the UN, there are an estimated 175,076 Malian refugees in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger, including 37,530 people who have fled since January.

Avoid ALL  
travel to part(s)  
of country

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



## Travel Summary:

### Summary

In light of the recent kidnapping and execution of several foreigners, coupled with an increase of attacks in the northern region of the country which have been blamed on Islamist militants, MS Risk advises against travelling to several regions in northern Nigeria. MS Risk advises against all travel to: the Riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Cross River States; Warri city, Kano city, Okene City. We advise against all travel to Borno State, Yobe State, Bombe State and Bauchi State. This is due to the frequent violent attacks which have been occurring over the past months. More recent attacks have increasingly focussed on public places, including bars and restaurants. These attacks have resulted in a large number of deaths and injuries. We also advise against all travel to Kano City and Okene City, which has also seen a frequent number of high levels of violence.

We advise against all but essential travel to Kano state, Kaduna State, Jigwa State, Katsina State, Sokoto State, Kebbi State, Jos City, Riyom and Barkin Ladi Local Government Areas in Plateau State; Okene Region of Kogi State. These areas have witnessed an increase in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to Mubi Town in Adamawa State and the area north of Mubi Town that borders Borno State where there has also been a rise in violent attacks. We also advise against all but essential travel to the non-riverine areas of Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, Abia State, Kaduna City, Zaria City.

Companies with workers in northern Nigeria, even in areas which are not subject to specific advise against travel, will require a high level of security. In light of the recent kidnappings of Westerners, employers are advised to review their security arrangements and to ensure that compounds are protected.

There is a high threat of terrorism occurring in Nigeria. A bomb attack that occurred at a bus station in Kano city on 18 March 2013 resulted in multiple casualties. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including government, security and educational institutions, international organisations as well as public venues and areas such as restaurants, bars, markets, hotels, shopping centers, places of worship and other areas that are frequented by expatriates, foreign tourists and business travelers. Terrorist attacks have been known to occur on religious and public holidays. There have been regular attacks on churches in northern Nigeria at times of worship. The US government has published an Emergency Message for US citizens, detailing information that Boko Haram may be planning attacks in Abuja. This information has been assessed as being credible and attacks could occur at any time, including against international hotels that are frequently visited by Westerners. There is also an

increased level of kidnap threat in Nigeria in which foreign nationals have typically been the targets of such kidnaps.

## *Kidnapping*

Although recent incidents of kidnapping have mostly occurred in northern Nigeria, MS Risk advises that such kidnappings can take place anywhere in the country.

- On 16 February 2013, after storming the compound of Lebanese-owned construction firm Setraco in Bauchi state, gunmen killed a security guard and abducted a Briton, an Italian, a Greek, two Lebanese and two Syrian workers. The British construction worker is believed to have been killed along with the six other foreign nationals. This was the worst case of foreigners being kidnapped in the mostly Muslim north of Africa's most populous country since an insurgency by Islamist militants intensified two years ago.
- In December 2012, a French national was kidnapped by armed men in Katsina State in northern Nigeria, reportedly from a residential compound.
- In 2012, a Lebanese national was kidnapped in Kaduna State. His Lebanese colleague was killed during the abduction
- In January 2012, a German national was killed in Kano city. He was killed on 31 May 2012.
- In May 2011, a British national and an Italian national were kidnapped together in Kebbi State. Both hostages were killed in Sokoto on 8 March 2012.

## *Threats and Terrorism*

Attacks by Islamist groups in northern Nigeria have become the biggest threat to stability in Africa's top oil producing country. This has been exacerbated by the fact that Western governments are currently concerned that militants may link up with groups elsewhere in the region, including al-Qaeda's North African wing, AQIM. These concerns have been further intensified by the conflict and military intervention in nearby Mali.

## **On the Ground Events:**

- **11 April 2013** - In a Hausa-language audio recording, the leader of Boko Haram has rejected the idea of a potential amnesty deal just days after the country's Presidency announced that it would take an amnesty deal into possibility in order to curb an insurgency that has resulted in the deaths of a large number of civilians. Abubakar Shekau, the purported head of Boko Haram has claimed that the group had "not committed any wrong to deserve amnesty." The recording further states that "surprisingly, the Nigerian government is talking about granting us amnesty. What wrong have we done? On the contrary, it is we that should grant you pardon," after which he lists what he describes as the state's "atrocities" against Muslims. The audi was distributed by email in a manner that has been consistent with previous Boko Haram messages. The voice is also similar to that of previous statements made by Shekau. The release of the audio comes a week after President Goodluck Jonathan formed a panel to examine the possibility of offering an amnesty deal to the Islamist militants whose insurgency has left more than 3,000 people dead since 2009. It also comes in light of increasing pressure over the issue, as politicians from the country's northern region as well as Nigeria's highest Muslim spiritual figure, the Sultan of Sokoto, have all called for an amnesty agreement to be reached in order to curb the violence. The panel, which will reportedly be composed of national security officials, northern leaders, and others, is due to report on the issue later this month.
- **9 April 2013** - Clashes between rival ethnic groups in central Nigeria have killed at least seven people over the weekend. This is the latest flare up in a conflict that has left at least sixty-six people dead in the past three weeks. The attacks occurred in Plateau state, which falls on the dividing line between Nigeria's mostly Muslim north and predominantly Christian south. The region has witnessed more than a decade's worth of ethnic violence which has been fueled by land and

political disputes. According to Plateau state military spokesman Captain Salisu Mustapha, “seven people were killed in the attack at the central Langtang area of the state over the weekend.” He further indicated that the suspected gunmen were members of the mostly Muslim Fulani ethnic group which was composed largely of nomadic herdsman. The violence continued in the northern area on Monday when purported Fulani attackers razed several homes and fired weapons, however no one was hurt in that attack. The Fulani have been blamed for a number of attacks on Christians throughout the state. Plateau State’s Christian ethnic groups see themselves as the state’s indigenous people and hold greater land ownership and political rights. They have accused the Fulani of trying to steal wide swathes of land. In turn, Fulani leaders have indicated that their tribesmen have been the victims of unequal treatment from the state’s mostly Christian political leaders. According to the International Crisis Group, the conflict is estimated to have killed at least 4,000 people since 2001. At least twenty-three people, including both Fulani and Christian settlers, were killed in clashes on March 20 and 21, while thirty-six others died in violence over the last weekend of March. Dozens of houses were also burnt in the violence last month.

- **6 April 2013** - Attackers have stormed the home of a Nigerian deputy governor, slitting the throats of two of his guards and killing nine others in a village in northeastern Nigeria. Adamawa Deputy Governor Bala James Ngilari was not at home at the time of the attack. Police spokesman Mohammed Ibrahim has indicated that currently it is unclear who is behind the attack which occurred in the Midlu village of Adamawa state during the early hours of Saturday however the attacks appeared to have specifically targeted the region’s governor. In turn, initial information has indicated that some of the victims that were killed in the village were called out by name. Mr. Ibrahim could not provide any further identification of the victims or why they may have been targeted however he did confirm that the investigation was ongoing. So far, no arrests have been made however joint military and police teams have been deployed to the village in order to track down the attackers who are on the run.
- **5 April 2013** - An ambush on a police boat in the oil-producing region of southern Nigeria has left twelve police officers missing. According to local police officials, one of the police boats had broken and had become a “soft target.” Two speedboats later arrive and there was an exchange of gunfire between the attackers and the police officers. The attack on Friday came shortly after the release of a purported statement from the main militant group in the Niger Delta region, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which threatened to resume attacks over the conviction of their alleged leader Henry Okah in South Africa. Police however have indicated that there is no link and that the ambush appears to be related to a dispute between an ex-militant and his gang. Authorities have further indicated that the attack in the swamps of Bayelsa state came while officers were escorting the ex-militant for his mother’s burial. Bayelsa police commissioner Kingley Omire has stated that it is too early to say whether the officers are dead. Divers and other search teams have been coming to the area of the state which is known as Lobia 2. The police commissioner has stated that the ex-militant, who accepted the government’s 2009 amnesty deal, had requested a police escort for the burial of his mother and authorities had obliged. It is believed that the attackers were members of the gang linked to the ex-militant and who have alleged that he had not properly distributed amnesty payments. Such disputes have occasionally broken out amongst gangs and former militant leaders in the region. A South African court jailed Mr. Okah on 26 March 2013 for a period of 24 years following his conviction over twin car bomb attacks on Independence Day in Abuja in 2010. Mr. Okah, who has permanent residency in South Africa, was an alleged leader of MEND, an umbrella group which claimed to be fighting for a fairer distribution of oil revenue. A statement purportedly released by MEND on Wednesday threatened a return of attacks however a number of officials in the country believe that these threats will not occur as the group has largely broken down in the years since the 2009 amnesty, in which a majority of the military leaders had embraced the deal. So far, officials have indicated that it is not clear who is behind the purported MEND statement, and whether or not it is authentic. Update (10 April) - Nigeria’s security forces have recovered the bodies of eleven of the twelve policemen who were killed in the oil-rich Niger

Delta on Friday. According to police reports, some of the bodies had been mutilated and burnt beyond recognition.

- **4 April 2013** - Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan has formed a panel that will examine the possibility of offering an amnesty deal to Islamist insurgents who have killed hundreds across the country. According to reports, the possible amnesty deal comes at a time when President Jonathan has come under an intense amount of pressure over the issue, with politicians from the country's violence-torn north, as well as Nigeria's highest Muslim spiritual leader, the Sultan of Sokoto, calling for an amnesty deal. However while it is apparent that something must be done in order to curb the violence that has been occurring, such government panels have in the past led to minimal or no action in Nigeria, as their reports and findings have often quickly been cast aside. According to sources, the upcoming panel will "consider the feasibility or otherwise of granting pardon to the Boko Haram adherents." Furthermore, the panel will draw its membership from the country's National Security Council, which includes the president, vice president, security officials and others. It will be expected to "recommend modalities for the granting of the pardon should such a step become the logical one to take under the prevailing circumstance." The committee is expected to submit its report to the President within the next two weeks. Although Boko Haram has claimed to be fighting for the formation of an Islamic state in Nigeria, its demands have however repeatedly shifted and it is believed to include a number of various factions in addition to a number of imitators. Nigeria offered an amnesty to militants in the oil-producing Niger Delta region in the south in 2009 which has been credited with greatly reducing unrest there, however oil theft has since flourished. Furthermore, underlying issues of poverty and unemployment continue to remain, resulting in many experts predicting the possible return of unrest in the region in the future.
- **2 April 2013** - Shell has announced its plans to temporarily shut down a key oil pipeline in southern Nigeria later this month in order to repair damage which was caused by oil thieves, leading to a loss of 150,000 barrels per day. The Nembe Creek Trunkline in Nigeria, which is Africa's biggest oil producer with an output of around two million barrels per day, will be closed for a period of nine-days however Shell has declined to provide the exact days of the shutdown. The pipeline has been repeatedly hit by sabotage and theft. It was shut for ten days last month following a major leak of Bonny Light crude, one of the main grades of crude oil that is produced in Nigeria. The company had then declared force majeure, a legal term releasing it from contractual obligations due to circumstances beyond its control. Oil theft has been estimated as costing Nigeria US \$6 billion (4.7 billion euros) per year.
- **1 April 2013** - Witnesses in Kaduna State have reported that at least nineteen people have been killed after gunmen raided a village in central Nigeria. Gunmen, believed to be nomadic Muslim cattle herders, raided the village of Ataka in Kaduna state. According to witnesses, the dead included women and children. Kaduna Police Spokesman Aminu Lawan had confirmed that police are aware of the attack however no further information was provided. Ataka is located near Plateau State where authorities have indicated that recent fighting between cattle herders and Christian villagers has killed more than fifty people. The area sits on the dividing line between Nigeria's predominantly Muslim north and largely Christian south. A region of the country which in the past has seen a number of attacks and incidents between the two groups.



No restrictions  
in this travel  
advice

Although there are currently no travel restrictions for Togo, MS Risk advises to all travellers to the country to remain vigilant as there is a low threat from terrorism. Subsequently, indiscriminate acts could take place in public areas, including those that are frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers.

#### Domestic News:

- **6 April 2013** - Thousands of Togolese opposition supporters held a protest on Thursday, demanding the release of members of their coalition who were arrested over two fires in the West African nation in January. In January, two key markets were ravaged by fire, causing millions of dollars in damage and leading to the arrest of a prominent opponent of President Faure Gnassingbe. Although Jean-Pierre Fabre and another opposition official, Abass Kaboua, were released from jail after being charged for conspiring to start the fires, however twenty-four other suspects remain to be in custody. Fabre and ex-Prime Minister Agbeyome Kodjo took part in Thursday's peaceful protest during which participants chanted anti-government slogans. The coalition has held a string of protests in recent months seeking sweeping electoral reform and demanding Gnassingbe's departure. Many have been dispersed with tear gas. Gnassingbe was installed by the military in 2005 after the death of his father Ganssingbe Eyadema who ruled Togo for 38 years. He went on to win elections in 2005 and 2010 which are disputed by the opposition. Togo was due to hold parliamentary elections before the end of last month however the polls have been delayed and a new date has not yet been announced.



## 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 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](http://www.msrisk.com)

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