

SAR Consultancy

(Security Analysis & Research)

SECURITY INFORMATION BULLETIN NIGERIA

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Summary of Security Situation in Nigeria

The Security Situation in Nigeria is multi-dimensional and complex. It is influenced, for the most part, by perceived political, economic and social injustice, which results in a high level of violence throughout the country. This violence is exhibited in differing dimensions and to differing degrees from state to state and region to region. This level of unrest and complexity provides the environment for more opportunistic types of criminal and militant activities to take place. Deconstructing the relationships between all these factors and influencers is very difficult and contributes to the complexity that surrounds the security situation in Nigeria. Another dimension which adds to this complexity is the diversity with regard to the actors at play throughout the country. Violence is perpetrated by a wide range of groups, such as insurgents, militants, nomadic herdsman, cultists, and ordinary criminals, notwithstanding the allegations of security force involvement and alleged political interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases.

Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. It is a country with a potential for great growth in a wide number of commercial areas; as a result it is an attractive country to commercial organisations. These access requirements, coupled with the security environment, results in a need for up to date and thorough analysis of the security situation across the country on a regular basis. Forecasting the likely evolution of the security situation for the short and medium term can be difficult, due in part to the influence of underlying elements of a political, economic and social nature, which impact differently throughout the country. Nonetheless, the presence of existing trends and patterns can assist greatly in strengthening the credibility of forecasts.

December 2016 – saw increased reports from the government that they were progressively reducing the territory controlled by Boko Haram. Near the end of the month they declared that they had cleared the group from their last remaining strong hold. Despite these claims coming from the highest levels within the government, many analysts questioned their credibility. With an alleged video from Shekau refuting the claims coupled with continued attacks by the group and with previous premature claims in the past, it appears difficult to reconcile the governments statements with the reality on the ground. Furthermore, given that the UN and other humanitarian agencies are still reporting that significant areas remain inaccessible due to the presence of Boko Haram, such military claims would appear, once again, to lack sufficient evidence to support such assertions. That said, it is acknowledged that the group has been weakened but SAR assesses that they still maintain capacity, determination and commitment to their cause and as a result, attacks are likely to continue in the short and medium term. Throughout the rest of the country, the risk of abduction, violence and criminality are likely to continue, with certain areas posing greater risk. As a result, SAR advises all those living in or traveling to and through Nigeria to review their journey management plans frequently due to the nature and fluidity of risk associated with Nigeria.



North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

Nigerian military continued their advances and operations in the North East of the country throughout December, reporting a number of major successes during the



month, reportedly foiling a number of potential suicide attacks, with one reported in Gwoza, Mafa and in Maiduguri. Many of the operations reported high casualty rates on behalf of Boko Haram but only single digit fatalities for the military. Reports also claimed a high rate of arrests of suspected Boko Haram members. In fact, the DSS were reported to have arrested Al-Barnawi, an alleged key figure within the group. However, this remains unconfirmed. During 2016, reports claimed that Al-Barnawi had taken over the leadership of the group but that was later disputed by Shekau. The most high profile of military successes was reported near the end of the month, with the government claiming that the Sambisa forest was re-taken from Boko Haram. This was echoed in the statements of President Buhari, who reiterated the success in his Christmas message, noting he had received the 'most gratifying news of the final crushing of Boko Haram terrorists in their last enclave in Sambisa forest'. This proclamation was not let go unchallenged for long, with Shekau refuting the claims post haste, as he has done in the past on numerous occasions

Furthermore, the level of consistency of incidents by (suspected) Boko Haram make it difficult to believe government statements that allege defeat of the group, notwithstanding that such claims have been proven to be wrong in the past. For example, two suicide bombers reportedly detonated explosives in Madagali, Adamawa State, killing themselves and over 50 others, while a few days later, two other suicide bombers killed themselves and seven others in Maiduguri, Borno State injuring many more. In a separate attack, also in Maiduguri, two suicide bombers were killed. Then on New Year's Eve, a female youth allegedly killed herself and injured another when she detonated her explosive in Maiduguri. It is believed that the explosives were detonated before she reached her target hence the lack of casualties. In other incidents, suspected Boko Haram members reportedly killed a military officer and another person in Guzamala, Borno. Additionally, they were accused of killing a fisherman and for attempting to kidnap sixteen others in Ngadiya, Borno. Fortunately, the incident was reportedly foiled by the military, resulting in only one person being kidnapped.

The continued attacks by suspected Boko Haram and the statement by Shekau make it difficult to reconcile reports from the military about the alleged defeat of the group. Additionally, the historical pattern of reports of success by the government/military later to be proven false or misleading does little to strengthen the credibility of recent claims. That said, it is only fair to at least present the possibility that while the

wording may be over zealous, the claims of the government and Shekau may not be mutually exclusive. The military have had successes over the last year, which has significantly impacted the capability and capacity of Boko Haram, however, their track record has shown that although weakened they have not been defeated, nor are they likely to be in the short to medium term.

Forecast: *As SAR as noted in the past, it is highly unlikely, if at all possible, that the insurgency in the North of Nigeria will be defeated by military tactics alone, especially now given the humanitarian crisis in the region. Despite advances by the military, deep divides still remain between the people of Northern Nigeria and government forces. Coupled with that there is a lack of opportunity for those wanting to return to their homes, irrespective of whether it is safe to do this? As a result, the incidents continue to illustrate that Boko Haram, despite being weakened have not been defeated and continue to use the fluidity of the security situation to take advantage of increasing opportunities provided by increased access to the region. They have also shown they can circumvent the security infrastructure despite increased capacity by the security forces, thereby posing a continued and serious threat to those in the city. SAR continues to assess that going into 2017, the strongholds of the group will be less important and significant, and the group will re-group in other locations in smaller cells, possibly resulting in a widening in their area of operations, which may include, Bauchi, Gombe and Yobe.*

Communal Clashes

Media reports early in the month stated that the Kaduna State Governor claimed that a number of aggrieved Fulani had been identified and paid to stop the killings and destruction in the south of the State. Communal clashes continued despite this, with suspected herdsmen reportedly killing fifteen in Chikun, Kaduna State, while reports suggest that over ten were also killed in Jem'a. Herdsmen were also implicated for their involvement in two clashes in Gassol, Taraba State, in which approximately over 25 people were killed. The clashes reportedly occurred between Fulani herdsmen and Tivs, due to ongoing grievances.

Forecast: *The reported payment to aggrieved herdsmen was said to have been undertaken to reduce the likelihood of continued violence, however, the reality on the ground has shown that it has had little short term impact. That said and given that much of the intense violence is seasonal, the payment may be shown to have some influence over the medium or long term. However, there are huge risks with an approach such as this. The Niger Delta region and related amnesty programme has shown that payment alone will not necessarily bring about peace. Given the depth of grievance and animosity between farmers and Fulani herdsmen, who in part clash over limited resources, payment to one group over the other may only serve to exacerbate things further. As a result, SAR assesses that such violent clashes are likely to continue and intensify in line with their season pattern in the medium term.*

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Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

In the latter part of the month, reports emerged of a bomb plot in Lagos. The police reported that they arrested a leader of one of the militant groups in the city from the Niger Delta region, who had explosives and detonators in his possession. It was reported that he was planning to use the explosives to blow up a bridge in Lagos. It was also reported that there are other militants at large that are intent on attacking government infrastructures and facilities in the state. A bomb scare was also reported in the Airport in Lagos, at the end of the year, when an unattended bag was suspected of containing an explosive device. This later turned out to be a false alarm.



Unknown gunmen reportedly killed ten in Ohaji/Egbema, Imo State. The gunmen raided two communities during the hours of darkness. No group claimed the attack, but locals have been reported in the media stating that the attackers were most likely ex-militants who see members of their village as beneficiaries of the government's amnesty programme, to which they were excluded, and therefore are jealous of their situation, breeding resentment.

In Ebonyi State, one person was reportedly killed and one injured in a communal clash between two communities, which have been feuding with each other for a long time over boundary issues, while a clash between two cults resulted in the deaths five in Osogbo, Osun State during the middle of the month. A further eight people were reportedly killed in Rivers State, by suspected suspects. While gunmen reportedly killed five people in Delta State.

Plateau State, armed robbers reportedly abducted a council chairman and killed a commissioner in Langtang South, Plateau.

Forecast: *If such an attack was to occur in Lagos this would indicate that the Niger Delta militants are intent on taking their activities out of the Delta region, where they have been contained more recently. If this was to occur, this is likely to have a further impact on the economy given Lagos position as the business hub of the country. Those working or travelling in Lagos should be mindful of a potential rise in the level of threat and take an appropriate response. While much of this violence is targeted, innocent by-standers can fall victim if in the wrong place at the wrong time. This risk is largely present throughout the whole of Nigeria, to differing degrees. As a result, SAR advises all those travelling to or living in Nigeria to regularly review your security arrangements to ensure a level of preparedness at all times. Vigilance and preparedness are important factors in keeping safe.*

Proposed Temporary Closure of Abuja Airport

The Nigerian Government announced the proposed temporary closure of Abuja's International Airport on 8th March 2017, for a period of 6 weeks. It has been stated that flights will be diverted to Kaduna International Airport. It is proposed that passengers will be transported via buses provided by the government between Kaduna and Abuja. Robust security arrangements will allegedly be put in place to escort passengers along the route. The closure has been announced to ensure the repairs and an upgrade can be made to the runway. It has been reported that a number of airlines threatened to stop flying to Abuja because of safety concerns with the runway. The Nigerian Aviation minister, Hadi Sirika is reported to have said that Kaduna airport is well-equipped to deal with the extra volume of flights, and that it has a very robust, functional, effective runway. The media in the last few days has indicated that discussions with relevant stakeholders will occur over the next few days and weeks. Since the report hit the media other airports have also been suggested as possible alternatives, such as Minna.

Potential Risks and Issues for Consideration:

- In early 2016, a number of media reports noted that many of Nigeria's airports, including Kaduna, also experience poorly maintained runway which, was noted, may contribute to increased risk of accidents.
- Kaduna airport largely deals with domestic flights, and in small amounts in comparison with Abuja Airport.
- The road route between Abuja and Kaduna is known as a hotspot for banditry and kidnapping. The most recent high profile cases was the abduction of Sierra Leone's deputy high commissioner to Nigeria in July 2016
- Despite a reported reduction in traffic accidents along the Abuja - Kaduna route in the last few months, due to the introduction of the light rail system in July, a risk of serious accidents still remains. Many of the roads in Nigeria are in a poor state, attributed to lack of repairs and maintenance by the government, which can be a significant contributory factor to road traffic accidents along the highway.
- Recent riots in Kaduna between IMN Shi'ite Muslim sect and the security forces, has the potential to spill over and block routes.
- There is a potential risk from Boko Haram along this route, given their previous activities in this area.
- Many organisations working in Abuja restrict travel to within the ring road, with increased security measures required if travel outside the city. It may be necessary for these to be invoked, as the security measures provided by the government may not be sufficient to meet all organisations requirements.
- Buses moving travellers with luggage will provide a highly desirable and also predictable target for criminals and Insurgents alike.
- Work may run over the 6 week timeframe, like many other infrastructural projects of this nature.

Review Travel Security Measures by

Re-assessing the applicability of current travel management plans, and review as necessary

Reviewing contingency plans, as this is likely to require planning in regard to medical assistance, overnight accommodation, secure parking, etc.

Briefing staff on amended measures

Double checking insurance implications

Remaining in regular contact with your Airline.

Political Violence

A number of incidents of political violence were reported in Rivers State this month during the re-run of Rivers elections. Two deaths were reported in Gokana, two in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni and an All Progressives Congress youth was killed in Emohua. While in Obi Ngwa, Abia State, clashes broke out between PDP and APC supporters, leading to a number of injuries. Gunmen were also reported to have killed a member on the APC in Ibi, Taraba State. Political violence is nothing new in Nigeria.

Forecast: *Political violence has been a significant part of Nigeria's elections for years. However, despite a reduction in incidents in the Presidential elections, local and state elections seem to remain turbulent. While much of this violence is targeted, innocent by-standers can fall victim if in the wrong place at the wrong time. This risk is largely present throughout the whole of Nigeria, to differing degrees. As a result, SAR advises avoiding political gatherings, rallies and election halls where possible, especially in Rivers State, where violence is common.*

Abduction & Kidnap

Kidnaps continued throughout the country during December, largely involving Nigerian nationals. The most high profile incident of the month was probably the reported abduction of at least 35 females from a farm in Matankari village in Maru LGA Zamfara State. Fortunately, 30 were later reportedly rescued. Some of the other incidents reported related to the arrest of suspected kidnappers. For example three

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SAR Consultancy

Providing peace of mind in changing security environments

SECURITY AUDIT & REVIEW

Security Management is critical in today's challenging environment, regardless of industry or scale of organisation. But is having a security management plan in place enough?

We, at SAR, think the presence of a security management plan is not enough. All organisations, regardless of industry or scale require a regular systematic assessment of existing security infrastructure.

Contact us at SAR to discuss your 2017 audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.

Don't wait for an incident to influence a review.

were reportedly arrested in Delta State for allegedly kidnapping a 14 year girl and raping her. In a separate incident, two more were arrested after having collected a significant ransom. Two kidnappers and one other individual was also reportedly killed in Ganjuwa, Bauchi State, when a police response team stormed an alleged kidnapper's den. Two female abductees were released on foot of the raid.

Forecast: *These incidents serve to illustrate the continued risk of abduction in Nigeria. There would appear to be increasing sentiment that the problem is getting more prolific, despite being relatively common in Nigeria. This rise may be due in part to the deteriorating economic situation, and also due to the redirection of security resources to other issues throughout the country. This threat is likely to remain in place in the short and medium term as either factor mentioned above are unlikely to change within this timeframe. As a result, all organisations and individuals are advised to assess whether their anti-abduction measures are sufficient and take necessary precautions if not.*

Factors worth monitoring

The humanitarian situation in the North East is becoming more serious by the day. Increased international media attention this month was used to increase awareness of the situation. The continued insecurity is making the delivery of aid increasingly problematic. According to the UN over two million people are still within Boko Haram controlled areas which is still inaccessible to humanitarian aid.

SAR Consultancy would like to thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin. We hope you found it interesting and informative. Please do not hesitate to contact us at info@sarconint.com to discuss any part in greater detail or to discuss how we may be able to help reduce your exposure to any of the risks mentioned within. Furthermore we are very happy to receive feedback on your thoughts regarding the bulletin. Hope to see you again next month.
