

SAR Consultancy

(Security Analysis & Research)

SECURITY INFORMATION BULLETIN

NIGERIA

May 2017



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 herdsmen, 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.

May 2017 – Despite reports to the contrary, incidents reportedly associated with Boko Haram this month clearly indicate that the group continue to be able to mobilise and attack both soft and hard targets in the North East. Furthermore, the group appears willing to use a number of different methods and approaches to conduct their attacks depending on whom and what they are targeting. This is indicative in their use of suicide bombers, small group attacks, large group attacks, and through the use of person borne explosives, guns and more general explosives. The continued high rate of suicide attacks in Borno State is worrying, but unlike before there would be appear to be a growing success on the side of the security forces in preventing would be attackers from circumventing security check points and gaining access. Nonetheless, SAR continues to assess that this insurgency is likely to continue in the short and medium term. While it is acknowledged that peaks and troughs in attack frequency may occur, something the military may use as indications of success, the group is unlikely to be neutralised under the current defence strategy alone. A more holistic approach is required and quickly, given reports of a worsening humanitarian situation in the region. Incidents during the month have also shown that the security situation in other parts of the country is also precarious. The associated risk is likely to continue, with certain areas posing greater risk. As a result, SAR advises all those living in or travelling to Nigeria review their security management plans frequently due to the nature and fluidity of risk in Nigeria.



North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

The month of May continued with a large number of suicide attacks in Maiduguri, which seems to be a favoured modus operandi of Boko Haram at present. Furthermore, there would appear to have been a concerted effort to attack some specific locations. The first appears to be the University of Maiduguri, which witnessed at least 3 attempted attacks this month. The first incident saw three suspected suicide bombers who were said to have detonated their devices at the University. The three were reportedly killed alongside one security officer, but did not gain access. A number of days later, a second incident occurred which witnessed three other suicide bombers reportedly attack a female hostel at the University, but they were also stopped by security. However, three security officers were injured in the process. All three suspects died when they detonated their devices. A third attack was attempted against the University near the end of the month. On this occasion, the bomber reportedly exploded the device prematurely.

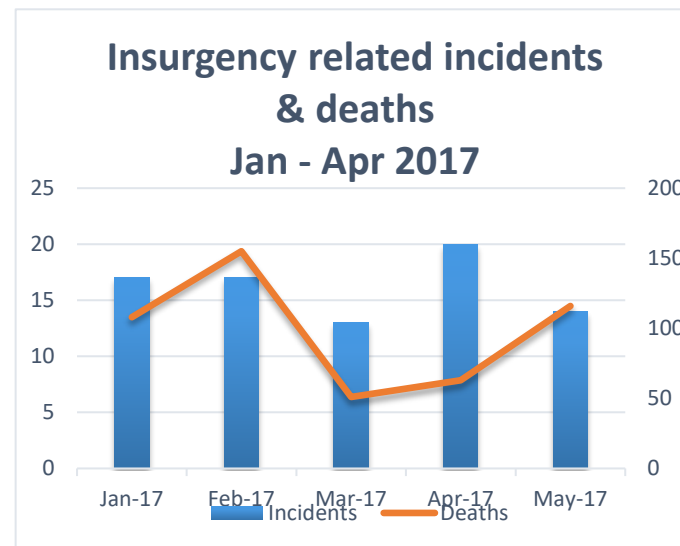
A second hotspot this month would appear to be Konduga LGA, also in Borno State. Three female suicide bombers reportedly detonated their devices in the area killing two people and injuring others, whilst another female suicide bomber reportedly attacked a military checkpoint near the Moshamari IDP Camp. Four soldiers were said to have been injured in this attack. The group were also blamed for allegedly attacking a village and for killing at least five people in Nguru village also in Konduga LGA.

A number of other attacks or attempted attacks on military installations were also attributed to Boko Haram this month. For example, a small group of suspected Boko Haram militants reportedly attempted to attack a military installation in Maiduguri but were stopped and killed by security forces. It was claimed that the three suspects were suicide bombers. Militants were also suspected of attacking a military base in Chad, very near the Nigerian Border. Nine Chadian soldiers were said to have been killed during the attack, alongside about 40 militants who were also said to have been killed in the attack.

On a positive note, many of these incidents have been contained by early intervention of security forces, possibly reducing further loss of life. Security forces were also said to have stopped three suspected suicide bombers from entering Maiduguri on a different occasion. This resulted in the three reportedly detonating their explosive devices on the outskirts of Maiduguri. The military were also said to have killed at least 13 suspected Boko Haram militants in Kukawa LGA.

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Reports emerged again this month that Abubakar Shekau, the alleged leader of Boko Haram was injured in air strikes in Borno State. As in the aftermath of similar previous reports in which some even claimed his death, Shekau responded by denying the claims.



Forecast: Similar to last month, the suicide attacks appear to be the favoured MO at present, but like last month, the security forces appears to have been relatively successful in containing these attacks. Two other interesting factors emerged this month. The first relates to the location of many of these attacks. Konduga LGA appears to have been significantly impacted this month. This may be due to the heightened security measures that have been put in place in Maiduguri forcing militants to look for less secure locations. However, there is an IDP camp in Konduga, which makes already vulnerable people further vulnerable. The University of Maiduguri also appears to have been a significant target, with at least three attempts made on it. These incidents, alongside the many more, continue to illustrate that there appears to be a consistent supply of explosives and willing or forced individuals to undertake such attacks. Furthermore, significant evidence remains that the group have not been neutralised and are capable of attacking in large numbers. The incident in Chad would appear to reiterate this point. For one it illustrates that Boko Haram are still not deterred from attacking military bases, and if the figures of casualties are correct, this illustrates that the group can still mobilise in high numbers and get close enough to kill military targets in significant numbers. As a result, it continues to be SAR's assessment that such patterns and trends are likely to continue for the short and medium term, as there would appear to be nothing significant in the security response, or more general response for that matter, to effect a different outcome within this timeframe.

Chibok Girls - Positive News

This month saw the release of another 82 of the Chibok girls, after three years. This leaves over 100 girls still in the custody of Boko Haram. It was reported that the girls release was negotiated in conjunction with the release of a number of imprisoned Boko Haram leaders. Some suggest three leaders were released, others report five. These negotiations were reportedly facilitated by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss Government. It should be noted that Boko Haram have been suspected of abducting many others throughout the North East, resulting in the potential of many other abductees in their custody.

Communal Clashes

May witnessed a wide spread of communal clashes, sectarian violence and village attacks. Unlike other months, it was not confined to the middle belt. Clashes were reported in Taraba State reportedly resulting in the deaths of ten people from two feuding villages, namely Tati and Kwesati. The motivation behind the clash is unknown at this time. A second incident in Taraba State was also reported a week later, which allegedly claimed the lives of 12 people. This incident was said to have resulted after a clash between herdsmen and villagers in Bali LGA. It is unclear at this stage if these two incidents were related.

Benue State continued to witness clashes between villagers and herdsmen this month. On this occasion Buruku LGA was reportedly affected, with at least 8 people killed and many others injured in the clash.

Later in the month, a further incident was reported in Makurdi, Benue State, which was said to have claimed three lives. Neither LGA is unfamiliar with such attacks.

Niger State also saw a number of incidents this month. For example, a village was reportedly attacked by herdsmen killing approximately 20 people, and injuring others. This reportedly occurred in Mokwa LGA. A number of days later another clash was reported in a village in Paiko LGA, in which five people were reportedly killed. Like the incidents above, it is unclear if these are related.

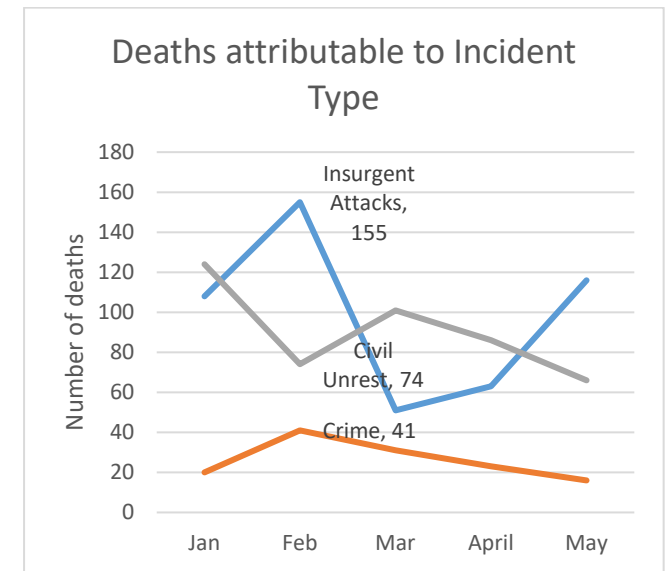
Further incidents were reported in Rivers and Ebonyi State. A communal clash was reported in Ikwere LGA, Rivers State in which three people were killed and others injured when gunmen suspected to be cultists attacked a community in Ubima, while sectarian violence reportedly led to three deaths in Abakaliki, Ebonyi.

***Forecast:** Benue State continued to experience communal clashes this month, but other states such as Taraba and Niger also appear to have been significantly targeted. Once again it is clear to see that single incidents are quite rare, as retaliation is often evident when one looks at the lifecycle of many of these incidents. The reprisal nature of many these attacks makes it highly likely that future attacks against herdsmen will occur. As said before, unless something new occurs to try to console farmers and herdsmen violence is a likely outcome, resulting in a further loss of life, on all sides. While much of this violence is community based and very target specific, those travelling to or through villages in the middle*

belt may inadvertently come in contact with such incidents. Therefore, it is advised to monitor such incidents closely, to ensure a high level of awareness of the environment into which one is entering.

Loss of Life

While it is once again acknowledged that exact death rates in the aftermath of incidents in Nigeria are hard to assess, the table below provides an indication of the trend of deaths associated with each incident type. Unlike the last two months, more people would appear to have been killed in insurgent related incidents attributed to Boko Haram than in communal clashes this month. For a second month, the deaths associated with Boko Haram appears to be increasing. However, the number of incidents being reported has reduced.



Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Crime continued this month, with a number of clashes reported between security forces and criminal groups. For example, four police officers were reportedly killed in Ethiope East LGA, Delta State when allegedly attacked by herdsmen in the area. The herdsmen were said to have tried to take possession of the land, forcibly. Militants also reported killed a soldier in Ogun State this month. It is unclear what may have motivated this incident. A further clash was reported between the security forces and a civilian group in Kaduna South LGA after a mob reportedly took the life of a suspected burglar. While the JTF reportedly killed four suspected robbers in Tai, Rivers State. A number of incidents did not involve the military. Two people were killed by gunmen in Obio/Akpor, Rivers State, while unknown gunman killed seven in Okene and Ofu LGAs, Kogi State.

Forecast: *This month clearly illustrates the link between crime and violence, and also that there appears to be little deterrent amongst some against challenging the police and security services, nor is it rare that lethal force is used by security forces. While it should be reiterated that much of this violence is targeted, innocent by-standers can fall victim if in the wrong place at the wrong time. 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.*



SAR Consultancy

Providing peace of mind in changing security environments

Assessing your level of preparedness

Most professional organisations working in Nigeria take security very seriously, either by providing an in-house security service or by contracting security services from a third party.

However, how many of you have tested your level of preparedness and your security architecture in place.

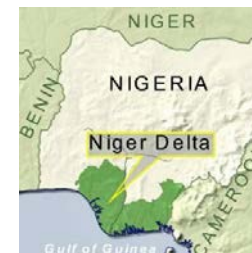
- How confident are you that it would withstand an attack?
- How confident are your staff that they know how to respond?

We, at SAR, can conduct this assessment for you, and can test in a controlled manner exactly how prepared you are. SAR provides an objective independent assessment service. Don't wait for an incident to realise things don't work as planned.

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.

Niger Delta Region

After two relatively quiet months in the Niger Delta region, one incident was reported this month. Militants were said to have attacked a pipeline in Warri South, Delta State.



Forecast: *There is nothing to say that there has been a breakdown in ongoing discussions and negotiations but it does serve to illustrate that caution should still be advised in the area. It is not a time for complacency if working or visiting these areas. This incident may illustrate that people are finding it difficult to make money and as a result turn to oil theft. If this is the case, the risk of kidnapping may also increase. Therefore, SAR recommends that anyone travelling to the region take all necessary security measures to remain safe.*

Abduction & Kidnap

May witnessed continued cases of abduction throughout the country. In Nasarawa State, two individuals were reportedly abducted. Two people allegedly related to a member of the Akwanga South constituency in the Nasarawa State House of Assembly were abducted by gunmen from their home. They have subsequently been released. It is unclear if a ransom was paid. Near the end of the month, six students were reportedly abducted in Igbonla Epe LGA by unknown gunmen when the Lagos Model College LGA. This was not the first

abduction from this school. Similarly the route along the Abuja-Kaduna Highway, a known hotspot for abduction, was also targeted. A federal lawmaker from Kano State was said to have abducted by gunmen at the Bwari-Jere Axis. He too was later released. The police continued their activities, killing five suspected kidnapers in Ughelli South, Delta State.

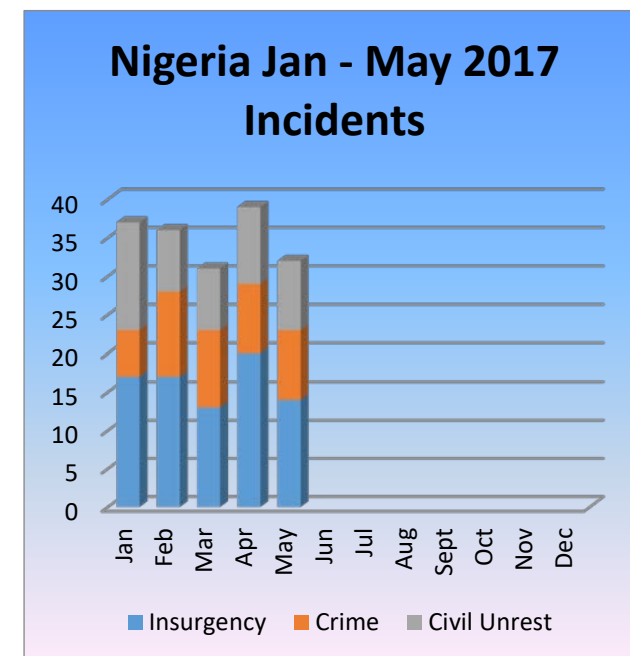
Forecast: *These incidents continue to illustrate the risk of abduction throughout the country. Secondly it shows that there would appear to be some hotspots that should be carefully considered when producing travel plans. This is paramount of moving by road between Abuja and Kano. The threat of abduction is likely to remain in the short and medium term, especially as the economy continues to suffer, which is also unlikely to change within the short or medium term. Therefore, SAR recommends that all organisations and individuals are advised to assess whether their anti-abduction measures are sufficient and take necessary precautions if not.*

Piracy

The month saw reports that the Nigerian government have approved a \$186 million emergency budget to fund the purchase of new military aircraft, patrol boats and armoured personnel carriers, which will be deployed to help in anti-piracy operations. This is significant given that Nigeria and the Gulf of Guinea has become one of the global hotspots for piracy in the world.

Factors worth monitoring

- Meningitis continues to claim lives in Nigeria. The death toll at the end of May was reported to be 1114. This people were said to have died since the outbreak began in November 2016. Therefore, SAR continues to remind that all those travelling to and/or living in Nigeria to ensure they remain aware of potential risks that go beyond security but that can easily impact their safety.
- Reports continue that there is a famine in the Lake Chad Basin. According to the UN, more than 4.8 million people are experiencing severe food shortages in the North East. There are also predicting that this may rise to 5.1. Concerns have been raised that aid agencies are not in a position financially to deliver on the needs of the communities in the region. The security situation is also impacting their ability to implement on the ground. It is unlikely that INGOs and NGOs will be immune to these risks going forward. That said, through the support of local agencies, a high awareness of the dynamics in certain environments and flexibility, much can achieved within acceptable safety limits.



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.
