



SAR Consultancy



Security Information Bulletin: Nigeria

IN THIS ISSUE

Summary of Security Situation

by our Senior Analyst

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.

September 2017 – Incidents of this month illustrate the myriad of security related challenges the Nigerian Government are facing at present, the insurgency in the North East, communal clashes in the middle belt, unrest over IPOB activities in the South East, a fragile peace in the Niger Delta region and criminality rift throughout the country. This must be placing significant pressure on the security forces and available resources. Despite statements that each of these challenges are under control, issues like the secessionist movement in the South, the tentative peace in the Niger Delta region and criminality at large have the potential to escalate very quickly. As a result, SAR recommends that these issues be closely monitored as none of these issues are likely to disappear in the short to medium term. On a positive note, the country has emerged from recession due to a slight increase in oil revenue plus 3% growth in the agricultural sector.

North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

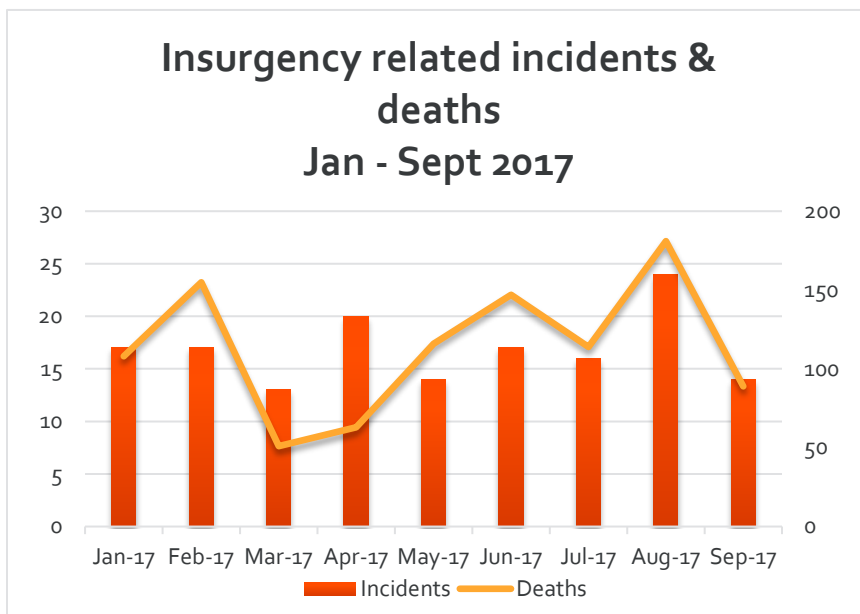
Boko Haram continued to display their ability to conduct numerous methods of attack this month, but as in previous months their activities have been largely contained within Borno State. Incidents continue to illustrate that the group still maintain their desire, capacity and ability to conduct attacks and circumvent, in many cases, the security infrastructure in place throughout the state. However, the death rate appears to have reduced considerably. As noted before, this may be due to military successes in reducing the impact of suicide attacks.

The month had barely started when a group, suspected of being members of Boko Haram attacked a village in Banki, killing over fifteen people. Such attacks continued throughout the month and within the first ten days of the month, the group were suspected of killing over ten farmers throughout the state. They were also blamed for kidnapping at least eight farmers from one area. They did not desist in the second part of the month either and were blamed for the deaths of a further twenty people.

Albeit less in number, the group continued to conduct suicide attacks, which has become their signature method of attack over the last year or so. Furthermore, as in recent months, a number of attacks did not result in civilian casualties. For example, two suicide bombers reportedly killed themselves when they detonated devices in Maiduguri, Borno State, but no one else was reportedly killed or injured in this incident. However, some were more serious. In Konduga, Borno State three suicide bombers reportedly killed themselves and at least fifteen others whilst detonating their devices, while five others were killed in Dikwa when two suicide bombers detonated devices.

The group were also blamed for attacking and killing a number of IDPs this month. For example, one IDP was killed, alongside a soldier in one incident in which suspected Boko Haram engaged in gunfire with members of the Nigerian military. While later in the month, it was reported that nine IDPs were killed when suspected Boko Haram members attacked them in Kala/Balge.

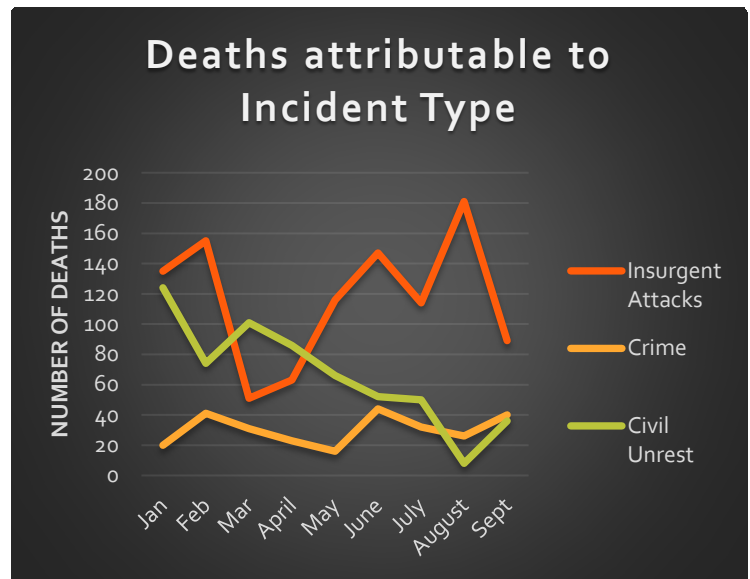
As in similar months, a number of people were reportedly killed by landmines in Mafa LGA, which would appear to be becoming more frequent. All that said, the military and security forces continue to maintain their presence in the state, conducting targeted operations. A number of these operations resulted in reports of Boko Haram deaths and arrests.



Assessment & Forecast: Once again, the incidents of the month indicate that Boko Haram still retain capacity, determination and commitment to conduct their attacks, with both strategic and logistical capacity to do so. Notwithstanding that they have been hit hard by the military over the past twelve months or so, they seem to be able to maintain a good level of resilience. Furthermore, the group's activities still illustrate through their attacks that they continue to be able to navigate and circumvent the security infrastructure in place in these areas. An interesting factor that emerged last month was that the incidents during August had influenced the creation of a number of hotspots of activity, namely Madagali and Konduga LGAs. While Madagali LGA reported significantly less activity this month, Konduga LGA continued to be targeted, a trend evident since May. This continues to illustrate how resilient the group are in certain areas. That said, in other areas the group seem less embedded and incidents reflect more of a hit and run type approach. This makes the role of the military more difficult, as it can be difficult to determine where the group may hit. Another aspect of this conflict should not be forgotten and that is the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the region. This is made more difficult to manage because of the ongoing security situation. As in similar months, the group have identified many of these victims as viable targets, making the already vulnerable further at risk. Given the need for a range of humanitarian interventions, such attacks also put those providing humanitarian help and support at risk. Therefore, SAR continue to assess that the threat level remains high throughout Borno State and is likely to do so in the short and medium term. Therefore anyone travelling to or through the area should ensure they maintain excellent contact with people on the ground as the situation is very volatile and dynamic.

Loss of Life*

Unlike last month, in which there was spike of deaths, this month saw a reduction in insurgency related deaths. This may illustrate that the group, despite retained capacity, are being impacted by the military operations. However, it may also just indicate that the group have taken a step back to regroup. It is difficult to determine exactly how this will play out given that it is evident from the graph that the death rate associated with this insurgency appear to have a significant number of peaks, so this reduction could mean very little. Conversely, the deaths associated with crime and communal violence appear to be more linear, and in relation to crime more stable. *As with incident numbers, it is acknowledged that exact death rates in the aftermath of incidents in Nigeria are hard to assess, the graphs included provide an indication of the trends associated with each incident type.



Communal Clashes

After a quiet month, September started with reports of a significant clash in Plateau State between villagers and suspected Fulani herdsmen. As many as fifteen people were reportedly killed when gunmen, suspected to be Fulani herdsmen, attacked villagers in Ancha Village, Bassa LGA. Some reports claimed that the incident was a reprisal attack for the alleged killing of a Fulani boy by villagers from Ancha village days earlier. In the aftermath, Nigeria troops reportedly killed five suspects who had been suspected of being involved in the earlier incident. During this operation, one soldier was said to have been killed. Later in the month, in an unrelated incident, gunmen killed a traditional ruler in Kanam, Plateau State.

Benue State also fell victim to clashes this month. Three people were reportedly killed in a clash in Oturkpo. Reprisal attacks were reported the next day, with a further three people killed. Media reports claim that these incidents may have been influenced by feuding political parties, possibly even a rift between two brothers.

Forecast: As noted last month, the reduction in communal clashes should not be viewed as a significant success story. This became evident very early in the

month of September as peace was short lived, with attacks both in Plateau and Benue states. These two states frequently experience such incidents, with a seasonal pattern to much of these attacks. Attacks this month also clearly show the reprisal nature of incidents in the middle belt region. As a result, this pattern is nothing new and is in fact a key influencing factor of the cycle of violence experienced in the region. While much of this violence is contained within feuding communities, being in the wrong place at the wrong time can put one at risk. Therefore, SAR recommends that anyone travelling to this region establish and maintain close contact with locals based in the region.

Niger Delta Region

September saw media reports that many of the militant groups from the Niger Delta region had announced that they would temporarily suspend attacks on oil and gas facilities in region. The reason behind the announced suspension was said that the group was willing to give the government



some more time to deliver on the promises made during negotiations. Only time will tell, if their demands are delivered.

Forecast: This announced suspension is likely to be perceived as significant and was probably well received by the government for at least two key reasons. For one, the group had threatened to re-initiate attacks if their demands had not been met by the 1st of October. This suspension now further extends the recent peace. Secondly, the re-established peace in the region has come at the same time that foreign companies have started reinvesting, which has been greatly received. This has helped the country out of recession, and as a result, the government are likely to do as much as possible to maintain this. While this is all likely to positively impact stability in the region, as noted by SAR, peace in this region is fragile and therefore, recommends that anyone travelling to the region take all necessary security measures to remain safe and to keep proactive interest in the changing nature of events at this time.



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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.

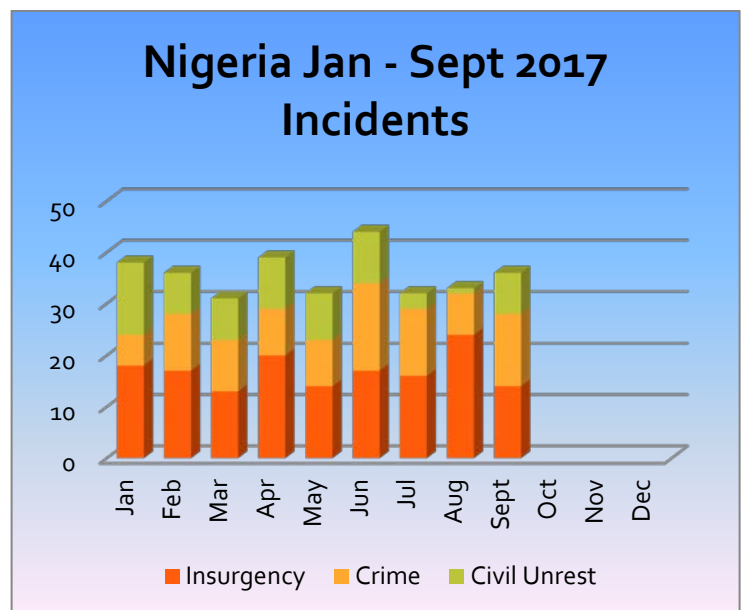
Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

The pattern and trend of violence in the South of Nigeria remained consistent with previous months. For example, a gang of heavily armed militants reportedly attacked a police checkpoint and police station in Kolo community, Ogbia LGA, Bayelsa State. One police officer was said to have been killed, while others were injured in the incidents. Elsewhere in Port Harcourt, two soldiers were reportedly injured when a gun fight broke out between them and suspected oil militants. It is unclear what sparked this event.

As in previous months, media reports continued to record deaths associated with cultist activities. One incident reportedly claimed the lives of three people in Ikwerre, Rivers state, while cult clashes reportedly resulted in six deaths in Lagos. Further north, gunmen reportedly killed three people in Lokoja, Kogi, while a gunman and a soldier were killed in a clash in Chafe, Zamfara.

Forecast: *As noted in previous months, violence associated with crime is not uncommon in Nigeria and no place seems to be immune from attack. However, when looking at patterns month on month, it is easy to see that some areas seem a little more volatile than others. Nonetheless, those travelling to any part of Nigeria, should ensure they are*

mindful of the level of violence throughout the country. Therefore, SAR recommends that all those travelling should be on high alert at all times and regularly review security arrangements to ensure a level of preparedness at all times. Vigilance and preparedness are important factors in keeping safe.



Abduction & Kidnap

Kidnappers continue to plague Nigeria. Two incidents took place in Ondo State. Firstly, gunmen abducted seven in Akoko North-East, Ondo, while in a second incident five people were reportedly abducted. There is limited information about these two incidents. Near the end of the month, gunmen killed three policemen and kidnapped the Ogba Zoo's director in Oredo, Edo. Further north, kidnappers abducted seven, including an assistant police commissioner, in Birnin Gwari, Kaduna. This incident continues to illustrate the risk of abduction in Kaduna.

Piracy

Piracy related incidents continued in September, with reports that pirates kidnapped five people in Calabar, Cross River. It is not clear if these individuals have been released. Two other incidents were reported in Bayelsa State. One involved the deaths of three people in Southern Ijaw, while two were killed in Brass.

Forecast: *These incidents continue to illustrate that the risk of abduction is dispersed throughout the country, but show that some locations are more risky than others, such as Kaduna State. Incidents this month also illustrate the risk of abduction in relation to piracy incidents. While these are largely conducted for ransom, they can turn bad very quickly. Furthermore, as can be seen, while the intended target is often well treated during the abduction, their security personnel and associated staff are often viewed as collateral damage and are killed or injured during the initial attack. As a result, SAR continues to recommend that any travel to or through Nigeria by road should incorporate a detailed travel and emergency plan to ensure route risks are assessed in advance and mitigation measures can be put in place. Furthermore, for movement in high risk areas, SAR recommends that all organisations and individuals are advised to assess whether their anti-kidnap measures are sufficient and take necessary precautions if not.*

Biafra Secessionist Movement

Tensions rose in Nigeria during the month with increased rhetoric about secessionist claims from the South East of the country, formally known as Biafra. Additionally, Nigeria troops in this area were accused of human rights abuses. Such tensions were then exacerbated with claims that the declaration of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist organisation. This was justified by saying that the IPOB have been gathering a cache of weapons and uniforms, while preparing to start an unofficial army. The declaration resulted in the IPOB's leader, Nnamdi Kanu, and others going into hiding. The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) have supported the IPOB saying that the government have no right to declare the IPOB a terrorist group. It is unclear how much support the IPOB have throughout the country and while the movement is largely contained to the South East of the country, related incidents have been reported throughout the county.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

*Media reports claimed that a group of criminals were operating a fake military base in Okpokwu, Benue State. They were said to have been using this cover to conduct their criminal endeavours. Such an elaborate plan illustrates the lengths people will go to commit crime.

*Nigeria issued flood warnings to a number of states throughout September. Unfortunately, those and many more experienced severe flooding, causing many to be homeless.

*Despite claims last month that a faction of Boko Haram were in the very early, preparatory stage of negotiating with the Nigerian Government, this month saw little progress or update on the matter.

*The Nigerian Chief of Police has ordered the removal of all checkpoints.

For example, media reports claim that a clash between soldiers and IPOB members led to two deaths in Jos South, Plateau. While back in the south, in Abia State, soldiers reportedly clashed with supporters of the leader of the IPOB who had gathered around Kanu's house. A number of days later, soldiers reportedly killed over fifteen at the same house. In a separate incident, soldiers are said to have killed a further seven IPOB members in Isiala Ngwa South, also in Abia and in Rivers State, a clash was reported between IPOB and soldiers. In a separate and potentially unrelated incident, soldiers were said to have attacked the Nigeria Union of Journalists in Umuahia, Abia, resulting in a significant number of injuries. That said, this too could be related.

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We would like to thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin. We hope you found it interesting & 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.

info@sarconint.com

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