



SAR Consultancy



Security Information Bulletin: Nigeria

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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.

July 2018 – Incidents during July in Nigeria clearly illustrate the risk of violent death in the country. The patterns and trends of April and May were thrown off course in the North East. Despite the number of incidents remaining relatively stable, there was a significant rise in the number of deaths. This calls into question assertions that it is safe for IDPs to move home. It also illustrates the cyclical nature of militant attacks in the North East, where the group seem to be on the back foot and then re-group. Violence continued in the middle belt, with significant loss of life. The death rate is still higher than that caused by Boko Haram and related militancy. One other interesting element that emerged this month was an apparent increase in deaths of police officers, throughout the country. This is a worrying development, as it may illustrate a growing militancy against the state. Such a development would be worrying, especially given the forthcoming elections. This should be closely monitored.

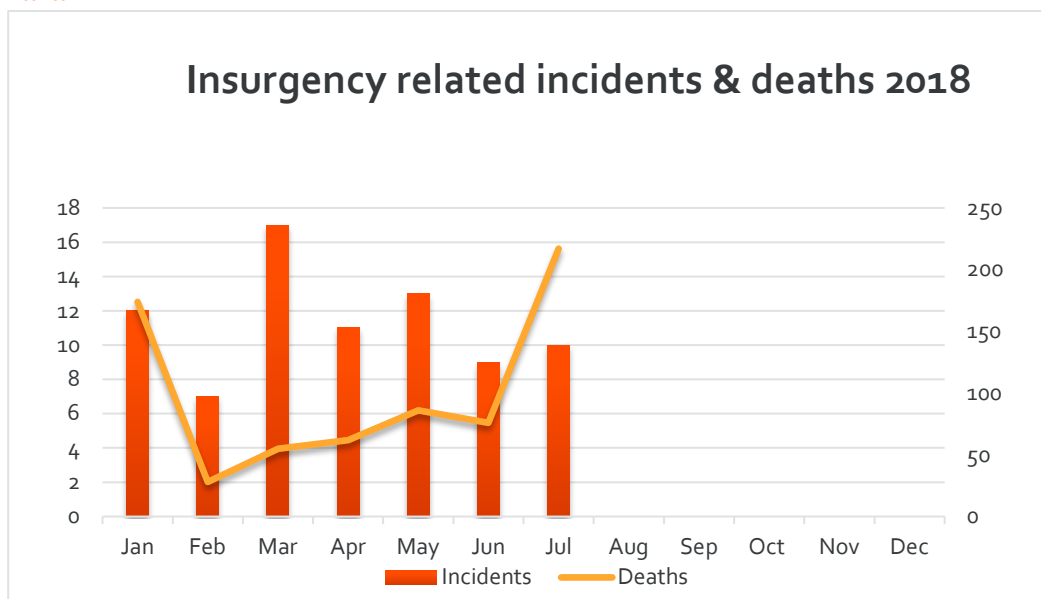
North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

Last month, we wrote about the return of IDPs to their homes, highlighting the risk of future attacks. Incidents this month illustrate this risk clearly. The month started with reports of military successes, with troops claiming to have killed fifteen suspected Boko Haram militants in Abadam LGA, Borno State.

However, only days later, the group reportedly attacked troops in Bama. Over twenty soldiers were said to be missing after the incident, however, the Nigerian army dispute such claims. That said, others believe that these

soldiers are dead. Days later a second attack occurred, also in Bama LGA. A further ten soldiers were reportedly killed in this attack, with over twenty suspected Boko Haram members also killed. Only a few days after, over sixty soldiers were killed at a base in Geidam, Yobe State. Reports still claim that many more soldiers are also still unaccounted for. Later in the month, troops reportedly killed over thirty suspected militants in Tarmuwa, Yobe State, losing nearly ten soldiers in the battles. These incidents clearly show the capacity of the group has not been significantly diminished, given their ability to attack troops in such large numbers.

Boko Haram were also blamed for the deaths of seven soldiers in Damboa, Borno, plus two in Kaga LGA. Two police officers were also said to have been killed in this incident in Kaga. Boko Haram were also alleged to have been responsible for the deaths of over ten soldiers and three civilians in Monguno LGA. While over twenty suspected militants were said to have been killed in these attacks. Coupled with these attacks, the group continued to conduct lower level attacks. Despite a reduction in suicide attacks, one bomber killed himself and eight others when he detonated his device at a mosque in Konduga, Borno. The group were also blamed for attacking and killing five in Girei, Adamawa and nearly thirty in Ngala, Borno State. The group continued to conduct attacks outside Nigeria. They were blamed for the deaths of ten soldiers in Niger, eighteen in Chad and over six in Cameroon.



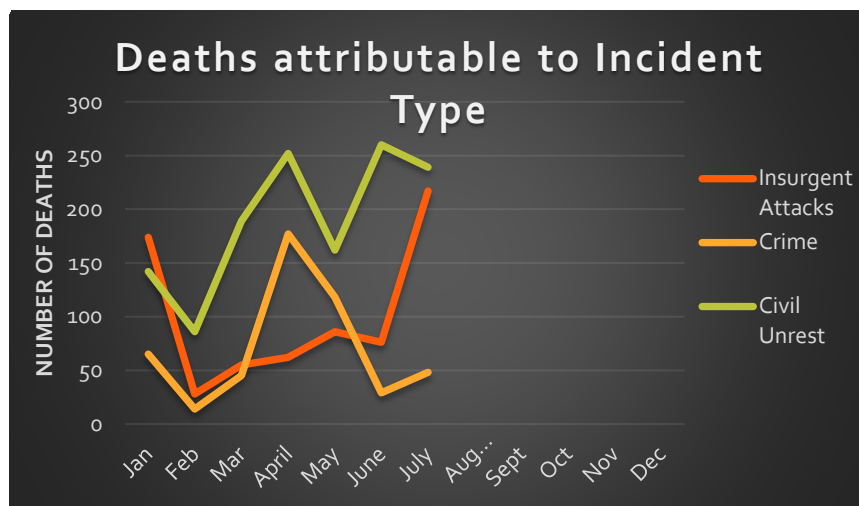
Assessment & Forecast: The incidents this month clearly illustrate that calls for IDPs to return home in Borno State are still somewhat premature. Furthermore, they question suggestions that Boko Haram have been defeated and on the back foot. That said, it should be acknowledged that despite the significant rise in deaths, the number of serious incidents has not increased considerably. None the less, this increased violence is worrying. For one, the fact that many of those killed were soldiers, illustrates that the group still have the capacity to actively challenge a national army with relative success (although, it is understood that such a claim will receive objection by many in the Nigerian military). Secondly, once again the group have illustrated that they can still gather in large numbers and strategically attack military targets, both in Borno and Yobe State. This retained geographical reach is still indicative of their capacity. In fact, Geidam, Yobe State is an interesting target, one that has been targeted before. It would be interesting to see if the group that attacked were a dormant group from the area, or did they travel from Borno State. If it was a dormant group, one would have to question whether such an attack may inspire other dormant groups that may exist in places like Kano and Kaduna to re-emerge. If it is not a dormant group and it illustrates the movement of militants, it would be prudent to prepare for other incidents outside of what has become their main theatre, Borno State. Therefore, people going through or working in states around Borno, Yobe and Adamawa should review their security management plans, just in case. Given that the security forces are likely to be under significant pressure from the insurgency and the violence in the middle belt it is not wise to depend on them alone for a security response if the group's area of operations extends much further. As a result, SAR continues to recommend that anyone considering to travel to or through the North East conducts a detailed risk assessment that considers the dynamic conditions of the region at present.

Loss of Life*

This month saw a significant increase in deaths associated with Boko Haram. Many of these lives are those of soldiers. Last month, we suggested that the relative stability in deaths associated with Boko Haram may be a sign that the government's operations are having a more sustained impact. The increase in deaths this month calls this into question.

Interestingly, the lives lost to incidents in the middle belt still exceed those associated with either the insurgency or criminality. Given these numbers, this violence really needs greater investigation and concerted effort to reduce the loss of life in this region.

**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 only an indication of the trends.*



Middle Belt Violence

Deaths and violence in the middle belt continued unabated this month in Nigeria. Similar to last few months, some states experienced greater levels of violence, but the majority of states experienced some. Zamfara State was one which was badly targeted. For example, bandits reportedly killed thirty in Maradun. Weeks later, a second incident occurred in the same area in which at least fifteen people were reportedly abducted. In a separate incident gunmen reportedly attacked a mosque and killed four in Zurmi, while two people were killed in Bungudu. A fifth incident occurred on the border of Zamfara and Sokoto State, in which forty people were killed by unknown gunmen.

Kaduna State also witnessed a number of incidents. Gunmen killed three police men in Birnin Gwari. A few days later, gunmen killed three people and reportedly abducted seven in the same area. A further four people were killed in Kaduna South. Similar incidents were reported in Adamawa State, Plateau State and Taraba State. Five people were killed in Guykua and fifty in Numan, both in Adamawa. Both incidents were said to have been conducted by herdsmen. Six people were killed by gunmen in Barkin Ladi, Plateau State and a clash resulted in the deaths of five in Jos, also in Plateau State.

The biggest loss of life in incidents occurred in Taraba State, over a period of three days, seventy three people were said to have been killed in clashes in the Lau area of the state. A further six people were also killed in Ardo Kola, Taraba State. Incidents also occurred in Gombe, Benue and Kebbi State. One person died in Gombe and three in Logo, Benue, whilst a police officer was reportedly killed in Kebbi.

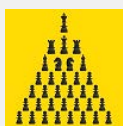
Forecast: *The relative pattern and trends of the past few months in the middle belt continued during the month of July. There was a very small reduction in the lives lost, but only very minimal. There seems to be a slight shift in the attribution of incidents, with many reports acknowledging that some of the incidents are not being conducted by herdsmen. However, there still appears to be a lack of significant understanding as to who is actually responsible and what is driving such violence, beyond the usual explanation of access to land, grazing and water. An interesting element that is continuing month on month, is the spread or dispersion of incidents beyond what was traditionally understood to be the middle belt to include states in the North West and North East of the country. When the year is over, it will be interesting to review the dispersion of incidents throughout the year to see if there is both a temporal and geographical element to such incidents, as often asserted. It would also be interesting given claims that some of the aggressors are not from Nigeria, but are travelling through. Such analytical understanding is needed to address this issue. It is clearly evident from the militancy in the North East and the experience in the Niger Delta that a hard security response alone will not be effective. As mentioned last month, it is unclear as to whom is responsible for these incidents, are they connected across states, motive, method, etc. Without a more concerted approach, it is difficult not to believe that such aggressors will continue to conduct their attacks, with relative impunity. In the interim, SAR recommends that risk assessments for the region are reviewed and adapted in light of what is looking to be a more protracted challenge.*

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Violence crime continued throughout Nigeria during July. An interesting dimension too many of this month's incidents relates to the target, be it direct or indirect. For example, A large number of incidents this month claimed the lives of policemen. The month started with reports that gunmen killed seven police officers and two civilians in Abuja. The officers were reportedly killed during a routine stop. Further south, two police men and one gunman were reportedly killed in a shootout in Port Harcourt. While in a separate and unrelated incident in Rivers State, three other policemen were reportedly killed later in the month. Four policemen were also reportedly killed in Edo State. Further north in Kaduna State, two policemen and two gunmen were also said to have been killed in a shootout with each other. While attacks on police are not rare, the sheer number of deaths this month, brings to the fore the lack of fear of many criminals throughout Nigeria of the police.

Niger Delta Region

Some positive news emerged from the Niger Delta this month. The Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) was reported to have said that the company is considering doubling investments in the Niger Delta region due to improved security situation. In addition, the National Council on Niger Delta held a meeting to discuss finding a solution to the regions problems. Topics discussed included infrastructural development, environmental management, human capital development, security and agriculture, illustrating their commitment to the region and its developments. This is also occurring in a backdrop where there is a growing acknowledgement that the JTF cannot maintain peace and order alone and require buy in and commitment from locals. Such an approach is also believed to be the best option as it will provide employment opportunities for locals. While all this is positive, it should not be forgotten that the Niger Delta region is volatile, violence can erupt at any time, so care should be taken whilst in this region.



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Providing peace of mind in changing security environments

Are you confident in 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 next audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.

Piracy

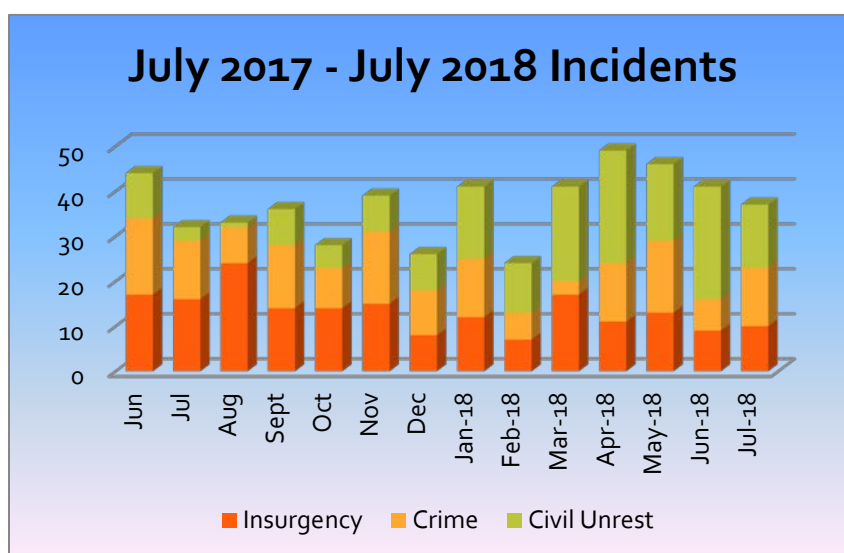
The EOS Risk Group reported that Nigerian pirates were responsible for the abduction of 35 crew members in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) since the start of 2018. They also reported that there had been 34 attacks by Nigerian pirates on vessels in the GoG. The report identified two interesting factors. The first relates to petro-piracy. They noted that there has been a return to such activities, not only in Nigerian waters, but Nigerian pirates are reportedly extending their area of operations into the waters of Benin and Ghana. Secondly, the report claimed that despite activities within the GOG, the key area of operations and attacks occur of the Niger Delta. In fact, it claimed that 95% of attacks recorded in Nigeria waters occurred near Bonny Island. They also noted that much of these attacks are kidnap for ransom.

U4 Anti-Corruption Report on the Nigerian Maritime Sector that may be of interest, co-authored by our Senior Analyst, Sheelagh Brady.

Capacity building for the Nigerian Navy: Eyes wide shut on corruption? International support to the Nigerian maritime security sector must address corruption. If it does not, such support can worsen corruption and facilitate crime such as smuggling, piracy and oil theft. <https://www.u4.no/publications/capacity-building-for-the-nigerian-navy-eyes-wide-shut->

Abduction & Kidnap

As in previous months, abductions continued across Nigeria. Most commonly, Nigerians are the target of attacks, but as is often the case, internationals are targeted too, and this month was no different. A Chinese man was taken by gunmen in Zamfara State. It was thought that he was working on an Irrigation Scheme there. A second but separate incidents also occurred in Zamfara State. Around 15 people were reportedly abducted from Maradun LGA, by unknown gunmen. This incident may be connected with other incidents of banditry in the state. A Senator from Kogi State was also kidnapped during July. It was reported that he was abducted whilst travelling to court. It was alleged that he may have staged his own abduction, but this has not been confirmed. This is not rare. This month a women was reportedly arrested in Lagos for staging her own abduction. In a separate incident in Kogi State, a Catholic priest was reportedly abducted by gunmen. It is reported that a ransom demand has been made for the safe return of the priest. Further south, in Akwa Ibom, 19 staff of ExxonMobil were reportedly abducted. A number of days later, the police reported the arrest of four suspects in the case. Some reports suggested that a village leader was responsible for ordering the abduction. However, this remains unsubstantiated.



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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.

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