

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.

April 2016 saw continued reports of successful military offensives by the Nigerian military against Boko Haram in the North East. This would appear to have had an impact, with the reported number of military operations outnumbering the number of reported Boko Haram attacks this month. That said, attacks still continue, and even in this reduced manner are claiming a considerable number of lives. Communal clashes in the middle belt continue unabated, with high levels of violence and associated deaths. This would appear to be garnering it increased media coverage both in Nigeria and globally. These incidents are unlikely to reduce in the short and medium term. The IG of the Police made a very interesting statement this month, noting that due to resources and financing the police did not have the ability to meet the expectation of the public with regard to security. This may be a contributory factor to the level of criminality throughout the country at present.



North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

April continued to witness reports from the military that their counter-insurgency strategy was working in the fight against Boko Haram. In fact, positive accounts of military successes appear to outnumber reports of Boko Haram attacks this month. Some have argued, as before, that this reduction in frequency of attacks is symbolic of the effectiveness of the military operations, however, it would still appear a little too early to accurately assess the effectiveness, given continued attacks during the month. That said, some of the military successes may be significant. Not only have they reported a large number of arrests of suspected militants and surrenders, they have also claimed that they have repelled attacks, and that they have regained more land. Furthermore, they reported that they released a number of individuals, who were being held captive by the group. The most significant results may be related to claims that they have cleared hideouts, food storages and weapons storages. The seizure of food and weapons is likely to have a significant impact on the group, given recent reports that they were already suffering from shortages. Reports claimed that their actions had also resulted in the arrest of the alleged leader of ANSARU, in Lokoja, Kogi State. Kogi State was a known stronghold for ANSARU during their days of heightened activity in 2013. On another positive note, talk about returning displaced persons back to their communities is increasing this month, but there has been a gradual acceptance that this needs to be managed with caution given that many communities have been severely damaged and services like water, health and electricity have largely been destroyed. It has been observed that as militants are fleeing they are planting mines, a tactic designed to instil fear into those returning home. If these claims are correct, the presence of IEDs is likely to greatly hinder the safe return of IDPs for some time to come and also the work of the military clearing these areas.

These positive achievements aside, the month was not without suspected Boko Haram attacks. The group, reportedly, attacked troops in Kareto, Gubio LGA, as they made their way to Damasak. It is unclear if anyone was killed. Furthermore, a military convoy was also reportedly attacked in Bama LGA, resulting in the death of one soldier. Three soldiers and two CJTF were also reportedly killed in Gwoza earlier in the month. While some may say that these attacks are a sign of desperation, they could also be viewed as continued ability within the group to challenge the military. Either way, it illustrates the continued risk to the military when moving between towns; a risk shared by anyone else wanting to use these

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routes. The group were also reported to have attacked Zango village in Gulani LGA, Yobe State killing over ten people. The media also reported that two female suicide bombers detonated suicide vests at an IDP camp in Banki, killing at least 7 people during the month. Interestingly, media reports noted this month, the increased use of young children, especially girls, as suicide bombers in the North of Nigeria. UNICEF reported that approximately 44 children were used in suicide attacks in 2015, while only 4 were reported in 2014.



April saw the second anniversary of the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, by suspected Boko Haram militants. The US government joined the discourse surrounding their disappearance and assured the Nigerians that efforts were still being made to locate and rescue the girls. That said, many still remain apprehensive that the girls will not be found. Reports of a 'proof of life' video showing at least 15 of the 200 Chibok schoolgirls was reported this week. If authentic the footage was the first time the missing schoolgirls have been seen since a previous BH video of May 2014, one month after the abduction.

Forecast: *Reports of military successes in the North East are likely to continue, interspersed with reports of attacks by Boko Haram. The nature of these attacks are likely to target remote villages, vulnerable military convoys travelling through remote locations, roadside IEDs, and attacks on vulnerable targets. However, the possibility of suicide attacks in urban areas should not be ruled out. Depending on how successful the military advances have actually been, these could be conducted as a last ditch effort to take on the establishment or be indicative of their continued capacity. As a result, those working, living or visiting these areas should be mindful of a possible increased risk in the short and medium term.*

Lake Chad Region

The State of Emergency in the Lake Chad region has been extended for six months by the Chadian authorities due to the continued cross border attacks by suspected Boko Haram militants.

The lack of sufficient intelligence exchanges is said to be a major obstacle to the fight against Boko Haram at this regional level. Many of the neighbouring countries and Nigeria are still reluctant to exchange information openly, as are some of the western nations helping these authorities. This is greatly inhibiting the militaries response to the continued threat of the group. However, it also symbolised the continued lack of trust between many of these nations, another factor likely to impact the efficiency of collaboration between all concerned.

April witnessed the US government commit to providing nearly \$40 million in new humanitarian assistance to support people whose lives are affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region. The monies will support the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN World Food Program (WFP), and other international aid organisations in the region.

Interestingly, this month saw reports from US officials in which they claimed that links between Boko Haram and Islamic State were deepening in the Lake Chad region. These claims were made as authorities from Chad claimed that they had seized a cache of weapons destined for the Lake Chad region, allegedly from Libya.

Three Cameroonian soldiers were reportedly killed in Dabanga, Cameroon by Boko Haram during the month. Reports of food shortages continued to emerge from Cameroon during the month.



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Kaduna State

Reports of kidnappings in Kaduna state continue this month. Fears amongst those travelling on the Abuja-Kaduna expressway are increasing as more kidnappings are reported, some of which are resulting in death. Where before travellers feared armed robbery on this route, they now fear abduction. It would appear that it is not only travellers who are at risk, reports this month alleged the abduction of a member of the NNPC, who was abducted from his house. In response to this increase, the police have deployed an Assistant Inspector General of Police to Kaduna to oversee the fight against these groups. It is hoped that such an approach will help reduce the recent upsurge of abductions.

Discourse and debate continue about the alleged killings in Zaria late last year, with still no clear government report of what exactly happened. Claims and counter claims are still being reported. Such debate is unlikely to go away in the short or medium term given that el-Zakzaky has reportedly sued the Nigerian Army and other security agencies of the Federal Government all alleged breach of his fundamental human rights.

Senator Sani, Kaduna Central is reported to have cautioned Kaduna State Governor to withdraw the Religious Bill before the House Assembly. His fear was that the law would remove the rights of Nigerian residents in the state the freedom of religion and worship, as entrenched in the Nigerian constitution. It would also give, if adopted, the governor of the state the right to issue licence and permit religious leaders to preach. Sani argued that the bill seeks to stifle freedom of speech and religion.

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Communal Clashes – Middle Belt

Similar to last month, violent destruction and death continued unabated in the middle belt. Incidents were more widely distributed throughout the middle belt than in recent months, with incidents reports in states such as Taraba, Nasarawa, Plateau and Benue. Taraba was particularly hard hit this month. Fulani herdsmen were the most common suspects in these incidents, with just over half of the incidents being attributed to them. In Taraba for example, they were suspected of attacking two villages in Angai and Ndole Villages, in Gashaka LGA, and for killing 15 people. Later in the month, they were suspected of killed just under 50 people and burning a similar number of houses in Uzo-Uwani LGA in Enugu state. It was also reported that an Enugu state auditor was abducted by herdsmen along Nsukka-Adani express road, also in Uzo-Uwani LGA during the month. N5 million was reportedly demanded for his release. Conversely, on the last day of the month, it was reported that approx. 20 herdsmen and over 80 cows were killed in Adayi and Loko areas of Nasarawa State. Other reports, however, only noted the killing of the cows. It was claimed that gunmen from an area straddling Benue and Nasarawa State were responsible. This ‘tit for tat’ style attack is common and serves to illustrate the cyclical nature of this conflict.

The rhetoric surrounding middle belt communal clashes has changed in recent weeks, albeit it has been an issue dating back years. Until recently little national or global coverage was given to this conflict, although a considerable numbers of lives were being lost to it. However, things have changed as more demands are being made on the government to look to alternatives to its oil based economy. As a result, the middle belt conflict can no longer go unnoticed given its location is some of the more fertile and arable land in Nigeria. While it has been reported that the President has instructed an increased security response, incidents continue, furthermore attacks on the police have also been reported. For example, in Benue State, suspected Fulani herdsmen were reported to have kidnapped a police officer after attacking his patrol team in Agatu LGA. Something more significant needs to be done to bring about peace in this area; however, in the meantime incidents are likely to continue. Interestingly, these incidents are increasingly being linked to the activities of Boko Haram either by the media or by sections of the government. This month, the Minister of Interior was reported to have warned that members of Boko Haram are monopolising the conflict between herdsmen and farmers to terrorise communities.

While there may be some credibility in these claims, they need to be investigated further, as the approach necessary to tackle Boko Haram is unlikely to be commensurate with that which is needed to tackle ongoing communal conflict.

Interestingly, reports from farmers in Lagelu LGA, Ibadan, Oyo State claimed that herdsmen attacked their communities, injuring a guard and stealing valuables. Whilst in Delta State, herdsmen were blamed for the abduction of 8 people and the death of 2 in Ukwuani. Attacks of this nature are not rare in these areas, but lately suspected Fulani attacks are being reported further south at a great frequency. Attacks of this nature are not common, but lately suspected Fulani attacks are being reported further south than usual. A number of other incidents of this nature but not attributed to the herdsmen this month, included reports that three people were reportedly killed in Obi LGA, in Nasarawa State in a farmland dispute between two communities. Approximately 40 people were reportedly killed in Makurdi, benue State. Furthermore, it was reported that approximately 24 houses and market stalls were burnt down in clashes between ethnic communities in Kudum and Dawaki, Plateau State during the month. Reports of communal clashes were also reported further south this month in Cross River State, where scores of people were reportedly killed over protracted land disputes in Obubra LGA. A further three incidents were also reported in Taraba State during the month. An incident in Bali was said to have claimed 44 lives, whilst a second incident in the area was said to have claimed 6. Seven were reportedly killed in Donga, alongside another 10 in Karim Lamido.

Forecast: *The volume and frequency of communal clashes in the middle belt are such that these types of incidents are increasingly been reported in the media. It would appear that this is likely to continue in the short and medium term, given that nothing seems to have been put in place that is significant to stopping it or, better still, to alleviate the underlying drivers of such conflict. As a result, such attacks could pose a risk to the international or donor community if in the wrong place at the wrong time. Furthermore, and notwithstanding the deaths and loss of property, the impact of these attacks is highly likely to become more significant in the medium to long term given that the locations of many of these attacks is the same area in which agricultural development will occur in the future. If left unchallenged, communal clashes have the potential to negatively impact development programmes and agricultural projects in this area.*

Report from the Police Inspector General

The Inspector General of Police, Solomon Arase, was reported to have stated that the Nigerian police cannot effectively provide security to all Nigerians due to inadequate funding and number of personnel noting that expectations of the people exceeds the current resources and capacity of the police. He said this in a speech in Jos during the month of April in which he also reported that there is approx. 305,000 police currently employed throughout the country, with females making up about 9.5% of the force. It was also noted that approximately 350 police officers have died in the line of duty since January 2014.

During his speech he purported that the key obstacles to proper policing in Nigeria are inadequate logistic and resources (especially transportation, telecommunication, arms and ammunition, accommodation, etc.), inadequate personnel with training, skill and orientation required for policing a country with complex security challenges, and inadequate resources for effective law enforcement, intelligence gathering, criminal investigation and prosecution. He also noted other challenges for the force, which he identified as the lack of appropriate police stations, offices, facilities and accommodation, the lack of modern forensic laboratory and other technological aid to law enforcement, inappropriate use of arms, and the absence of reliable and comprehensive criminal database and poor conditions of service, including low remuneration and pension benefits.

Such honesty may allow for a better understanding of the apparent high level of crime throughout the country and why there is a high degree of dependence on the military for security measures throughout the country.

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Abduction & Kidnap

This month saw reports of numerous kidnapping both of nationals and expats. For example, reports claim that gunmen killed a soldier and abducted 2 expatriates on the Ogbia-Nembe Road in Bayelsa State. Reports also noted that gunmen kidnapped a Lebanese man and killed two soldiers in Nembe, Bayelsa State. Three Osun government officials were also reported taken during the month from Lokoja, Kogi State, while a Senator was abducted for Egbado North, Ogun State. Gunmen also were reportedly to have kidnapped 5 people in Esit Eket, Akwa Ibom. These incidents illustrate the ongoing risk.

Violence in Rivers & Bayelsa

Media accounts report that 8 people were killed in Emuoha in cult clashes this month. 3 students were also reportedly killed by police in a protest in the state. Violence continued throughout the month, with it ending with reports of the deaths of approx. 16 people. It was also reported that gunmen, thought to be cultists, invaded Ula-Ukpatata and Edoha in Ahoada East LGA. Reports claim that five of the people were beheaded, with the assailants taking the heads. Political tensions continue in Bayelsa State with reports of a bloody clash between supporters of the APC and the PDP in Nembe LGA. It was reported that two people died and five injured in the incident.

Fuel Scarcity Crisis

Fuel scarcity remains an unresolved issue this month. This has resulted in the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) urging the Federal Government to declare a state of emergency in the oil sector. The PENGASSAN President argued that the solution to the problem was to building domestic refining capacity and not

continue to depend on importation for refined fuel goods. The issue is exacerbated by the level of theft of crude oil. It was reported that 400,000 barrels of crude oil are being stolen by pirates a day in the Gulf of Guinea, this coupled with damage made by the pirates is estimated to cost \$1.5 billion a month.

Piracy

Six Turkish crew members were reportedly abducted from a cargo ship off the coast of Nigeria by pirates. While an Egyptian and a Filipino were reportedly taken from a ship off the coast of Lagos.

Factors worth monitoring

- Continued attacks in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, possible more in IDP camps and roadside attacks.
- The rainy season may allow Boko Haram to regroup given that the military are unlikely to be able to access more remote areas.
- Increased criminality throughout the country is likely. This may pose a significant risk to expatriates, especially with regard to the threat of abduction.
- The economic situation should be monitored in the short and medium term due to the number of factors, including the fuel and oil crisis. Such turbulence is likely to have an impact on security.

SAR Consultancy would like to thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin. We hope you found it interesting. Please do not hesitate to contact us 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.
