

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.

September 2016 clearly illustrated the protracted nature of the ongoing conflict in the North East of Nigeria and neighbouring region. This coupled with increasing use of the word 'famine' to describe the seriousness of the humanitarian situation is becoming increasingly worrying. Neither the military nor Boko Haram appear to be advancing significantly more than the other, with each demonstrating their ability to exploit the weaknesses of the other at certain times. As a result, SAR assesses that the current situation is likely to further deteriorate in the short to medium term, especially from a humanitarian perspective. Attacks are also likely to continue, especially against convoys, villages, towns or markets, where supplies are being stored or moved through. Throughout the rest of the country, the risk of abduction, violence and criminality are likely to continue, with certain areas posing greater risk. Furthermore, due to increased military activity and personnel in the North West and in the Niger Delta region, increased clashes between security forces and communities are likely, given reports of simmering and growing tensions in these areas. SAR advises all those living or traveling to and through Nigeria to review their security plans frequently due to the nature and fluidity of risk associated with Nigeria.



North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

The month began with a report that the Nigerian air force conducted a precision attack on suspected Boko Haram leaders. The camp was reportedly at Tumbun Rego in Borno State. The report said that the leadership had regrouped there after a previous military operation at the end of August. As in similar operations, the military did not provide much specifics about the members of the leadership that had been killed or injured. As a result, it is difficult to confirm or refute their report. Throughout the month, reports of other successful operations continued but like before contradictory claims closely followed behind. The continued lack of access makes it difficult to assess the extent of truth in either claims. That said, and irrespective of the truth, it is widely accepted from both sides that clashes are continuing between them, with reported casualties on both sides. For example, this month saw reports that soldiers were killed during a clash between security forces and Boko Haram insurgents at Mallam Fatori, Borno State. Exact numbers are difficult to verify but reports suggest that as many as 40 soldiers and 20 insurgents could have been killed. Four Nigerian soldiers and approximately twenty suspect insurgents were killed when Boko Haram attacked troops in Marte, Borno. These continued attacks on the military could be indicative that despite the military reclaiming ground, Boko Haram still retain the capacity and commitment to take on the military when not in sufficient numbers.

Given that it is difficult to assess the credibility or validity in some claims made by the military and the insurgents, it is worth exploring the reports a little further. For example, reports emerged of clashes between those loyal to Shekau and those loyal to Al Barnawi had broken out this month. An army spokesperson went on to report that at least 18 people, suspected Boko Haram members, had surrendered themselves to the military in Monhuno following these clashes. It is unclear which side allegedly surrendered. Many analysts and military spokespersons have used these reports as indicative of a diminishing insurgency. However, SAR would like to see more evidence on the ground before supporting such an assessment. Even despite a recognition of positive advances by the military against the group SAR's assessment of the situation has not changed significantly over recent months. SAR still assesses that Boko Haram remain and pose a significant threat to Nigeria and the region. This is based on the continued range of attack methods and target selection used by the group. The group, although one which could be significantly depleted, still appears intent on inflicting fear and harm on isolated communities, against the general population or more specific targets, such as security forces. These attacks illustrate that a level of capacity is still retained within the group.

Attacks attributed to Boko Haram this month support such an assessment. A suspected member of Boko Haram reportedly detonated a suicide vest, resulting in his death, after he had been stopped by security forces in Rumirigo village, Akire LGA. In addition, a female suicide bomber was reportedly shot dead by security forces at a checkpoint at the Kara Cattle market in Dikwa. Two soldiers and a member of the CJTF was said to have been wounded as the explosive she was carrying was reported to have been detonated during the incident. The group were also said to have attacked a number of convoys during the month. They allegedly opened fire on a convoy of vehicles about 50km outside Maiduguri. The convoy was moving from Monguno to Maiduguri. They were also blamed for an attack on a convoy, which was being escorted by the military, between Damboa and Maiduguri. Six people were allegedly killed in this incident. A commonality in both incidents was that the convoys largely involved the movement of traders and their goods. This may illustrate that the group are seeking to replenish their stocks. The opportunity for such attacks is likely to have been presented as the military reopen highways in the state. This may be an unintended consequence of progress on the military front. The group were also said to have conducted a number of village attacks this month. For example, a local chief and his son, plus two other villagers were reportedly killed when suspected Boko Haram members attacked Tallari Village, Chibok LGA. Homes were also destroyed in the incident. Suspected insurgents, travelling by motorcycles, were also said to have attacked Christian worshippers returning from a church service in Kwamjilari, Chibok LGA.

Interestingly after highlighting the lack of reports from Yobe State over the last few months, this month saw reports that may indicate that things are not all quite as they may have seemed. For example, a Nigerian army spokesperson reported the arrest of Muhammed Bylama, a suspected member of Boko Haram, in Azare village, Gujba LGA, Yobe State this month, while media reports claimed that at least four suspected Boko Haram members were killed by soldiers, whilst riding motor cycles, in Jororo and Tombaeji village, Geidam LGA, Yobe State. Such reports are not surprising given the amount of insurgent activity in Yobe over recent years, but given the considerable reduction of reports over recent months from this area, this apparent increase is worth monitoring. Another rather quiet state of late is Kano state, but this month Kano also made the news. Reports from the DSS claimed that they, in conjunction, with the military arrested an IED specialist and two others in Kano. These reports, while not uncommon in Kano, had also significantly reduced in the past few months. Such reports may be indicative of Boko Haram members regrouping in the state. This would be in line with Shekau's threat.

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Forecast: *As months pass by peaks and troughs emerge in respect to military operations and suspected Boko Haram attacks. However, neither would appear to be significantly stronger or more determined to suffocate the other. While progress has been made by the military, Boko Haram still appear to retain the capacity and determination to find and exploit their weaknesses. This is resulting in a protracted conflict, which is having very serious consequences. Protracted offensives, such as these, are concerning and have, as is being seen, serious repercussions for the general population. This is clearly evident this month, where advances by the government with regard to regaining territory and roads reopening are being monopolised by suspected insurgents, thereby reducing the impact of the progress. The protracted nature of this conflict is likely to continue not just in the short and medium term, but also in the long term, if nothing significantly changes in the governments approach on the group. The direct victims of this will continue to be the population at large, especially the IDPs, as the nature of the conflict is preventing them from living their lives to the full, providing for their families, and developing and maintaining local economies. This is having a serious humanitarian impact, which coupled with the lack of access is making it very difficult, and in some cases impossible, for support to reach those who require it. While the military are providing some level of support, this is not consistent with the developing norms regarding the level and type of international humanitarian support required for such a serious problem. Now, neither the security nor the humanitarian situation can be viewed in isolation given the dynamics at play in the region. As a result, a greater conversation will have to emerge, and quickly, to ensure more lives are not lost unnecessarily. Protracted talks and actions will only exacerbate this situation for all concerned.*

Lake Chad Region

The insurgency still continues throughout the region. It was reported in the media that suspected Boko Haram insurgents, riding on camels, attacked the village of Toumour, Niger. Five people were reportedly killed, while houses were burnt down. Toumour village is over 60kms outside Diffa, this may be indicative of resources being limited in Diffa resulting in insurgents needing to push out further to replenish supplies. Or, Toumour may be becoming a staging post for the group, given that approximately a week later, clashes reportedly broke out troops and suspected insurgents in which members of both groups were reportedly killed. Activities in this area are worth monitoring given this apparent rise in insurgent presence. In Cameroon, a suicide bomber reportedly detonated an explosive, killing himself and three others in Djakana. It is suspected he was a member of Boko Haram. Whilst, seven suspected insurgents and four Chadian soldiers were reportedly killed in a clash in Djourouye, Chad.

This month the Nigerian Human Rights Commission (NHRC) following its special panel investigation, issued indictments against the military and the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) for clashes last December in Zaria, Kaduna State. This incidents resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people. The commission also called for the speedy trial of El-Zakzaky, the leader of the IMN who has been held since this incident.

Shekau

Despite military claims in the latter part of August of Shekau's demise, a video in which a male proclaiming to be Shekau emerged this month. The contents of the video would appear to have similar hallmarks to previous messages, in that the speaker denounced western education, President Buhari, the US, etc. In addition, the speaker also repeated that he would be willing to release the Chibok girls in return for the release of some of his brethren. Whilst videos of this nature are not uncommon, Shekau had appeared to take a break from producing such material in the last year or so. What motivated this video is uncertain and what it signifies is much more unclear. Some analysts suggest it may be a warning of increased violence to come, while others suggest it is the action of defeated man. Having monitored activities in the North East of Nigeria for a number of years, SAR suggests it is likely that it is indicative of a group who still have the intent and motivation to continue their cause, and a commitment to publicising their message to the masses. Whether they still have the same capacity as they did in 2012 and 2013 is questionable, but their current capacity does appear to be at a level that they can still induce fear and horror into the lives of many in the North East, and further afield if properly planned. What comes next is unclear, but SAR deems it to be highly unlikely that Boko Haram is anywhere close to defeat.

Communal Clashes

This month saw a significant reduction in reports of communal clashes. However, there were a few. Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed two people in Jema'a, Kaduna State. It is unclear whether this incident was related to the one last month in which eleven people were killed. Near the end of the month, reports emerged that a traditional ruler of Mbayongo village was killed by unknown gunmen in Vingir village, Katsina State.

Forecast: *This apparent reduction in incidents is unlikely to be significant with regard to illustrating an end of these type of incidents. It is more likely a reflection of the trends and patterns associated with these incidents, which rise and fall at different times.*

Cattle Rustlers

The military conducted a raid on a camp suspected to belong to cattle rustlers in Zurmi, Zamfara State this month. Seven suspected rustlers were reportedly killed in the incident, whilst a large amount of ammunition was recovered. Security operations in this area have increased over recent months and would appear to be having some impact. That said, the increase in security presence is rising frustrations amongst communities who report that the security operations are often targeted at the wrong people.

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Five suspected members of a militant group were reportedly shot dead by members of the Special military task force in Ohaji/Egbema LGA, Imo State. The reason behind the deaths is unknown at this time. Some have reported that the victims may not have been militants but cultists. Cultists reportedly killed

six people shortly after this incident in the same area. A clash reportedly broke out between Hausa and Fulani traders in the Agege District of Lagos, in which three people were reportedly killed and others injured.

While much of this violence is targeted, innocent bystanders 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, but 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.

Niger Delta Regions

Discussion are reportedly progressing this month between the Nigerian government and militant groups in the Niger Delta region. Yet, despite these claims and those that report that

the ceasefire is holding attacks continue. The Niger Delta Greenland Justice Mandate blew up a crude oil delivery line belonging to the NPDC and allegedly warned of further attacks during the month. The group also claimed an attack on a crude oil pipeline operated by NNPC in Ughelli, Delta State. Furthermore, other militants were said to have killed six soldiers in Bakassi, Cross River State during the month. While, the Niger Delta Avengers reportedly



blew up a pipeline in Bonny, Rivers State in the latter part of the month.

On the military side, things would not appear to be standing still either. Reports emerged this month that the military are increasing their number of personnel in the region, with reports suggesting that they have moved at least 3000 additional troops in. This, coupled with increased operations on the ground, has resulted in some communities complaining about the military being heavy handed in their search for militants. That aside, the military continue to reported increased operation successes against militants. For example, five suspected militants were killed in Ohaji/Egbema, Imo State and seven in Bakassi, Cross River State this month.

Forecast: *Similar to last month, claims of dialogue and ceasefires continue. These are coupled with reports of increased military numbers and operations. Despite this, attacks continue both against pipelines and the military. Furthermore, there are increasing reports of growing frustrations within communities that the military operations are not only being targeted at the militants. This insecurity in the region is continuing to have an impact on the level of crude oil production, thereby impacting the Nigerian economy. It would also appear to be impacting the local communities in which it is occurring. SAR Consultancy forecasts that these attacks will continue both in the medium and long term as no significant changes are being reported on the ground. This is likely to further impact the living conditions of local communities. SAR recommends that all those intending to travel through or to the region should ensure they have a thorough security plan in place.*

Abduction & Kidnap

Reports of abductions and kidnaps continued this month. Approximately 14 employees of Nestoil were reportedly abducted by unknown gunmen in Omoku, about 50 km from Port Harcourt. The abductees were said to have been on their way to work at the time of the incident. In Lagos, four landlords were reportedly kidnapped this month. In the later part of the month, the wife of Nigeria's Central Bank Governor was reportedly kidnapped in Oredo, Edo State. Rumours ensued about requests for ransoms. It is unclear if any was paid, but according to the media, the lady has been released safe and well. Coupled with these continued reports, the police are also reporting success. In Rivers State, they killed four kidnappers, whilst in Bauchi State, the military reportedly killed 7 suspected kidnappers in Lame Burra Forest area.

Piracy

The Nigerian Navy were reported in the media as claiming that the level of piracy and related crime had drastically reduce in the Niger Delta, attributing the success to the anti-piracy policies initiated by the Navy. However, activity still continues, which reports that pirates killed four Marine Policemen in Akuku-Toru, Rivers this month.

Factors worth monitoring

- Given reports of incidents this month in Kano and Yobe states, coupled with claims in the video allegedly featuring Shekau, these areas are worth monitoring a little more closely over the short and medium term. Areas of risk also include Bauchi, Kaduna and Adamawa.
- The humanitarian situation in the North East of Nigeria is becoming more serious by the day. This is likely to result in increased international



SAR Consultancy

Providing peace of mind in a changing security environment

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? How confident are you that your plan is fit for purpose?

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. *Don't wait for an incident to motivate a review. Be proactive.*

demands for access to areas in most need. However, access has been an issue hotly debated in the past, if a compromise cannot be reached, frictions are likely to emerge given that the international community will not want to stand by as communities die.

- For those of you interested in understanding the situation in the North East, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Mr. Chaloka Beyani, end of mission statement is well worth a read. He visited Nigeria between 23 and 26 August 2016. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20427&LangID=E>

- The risk of kidnap still remains present throughout Nigeria, with higher levels of risk in the South. That said, Kaduna also still remains high risk for abductions.
- As the economy deteriorates further, crime is likely to increase, in the form of burglaries, robberies and kidnapping for ransom. This risk is also likely to be influenced as Christmas approaches, a time in which higher rates of robbery and theft are often reported.

The word 'famine' is increasingly been used to describe the deteriorating situation in the North East of Nigerian and neighbouring region. Tens of thousands of people are dying due to hunger, while 65,000 people have been categorised in a 'catastrophe' or 'phase 5' situation. This categorisation is labelled where 'starvation, death and destitution' are evident.

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.