

SAR Consultancy

(Security Analysis & Research)

SECURITY INFORMATION BULLETIN

NIGERIA

March 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.

March 2017 – Actions on the ground in Borno State continue to illustrate the protracted nature of this conflict. Despite claims of success by the military in the North East against Boko Haram, reports of the groups’ demise are problematic to reconcile given the continued reports of suicide attacks, attacks on military installations, villages, etc. In fact, there is little evidence to support the argument that the group no longer retain the capacity to continue their insurgency. That said, the number of casualties appears to have decreased this month. Nonetheless, SAR assesses that this insurgency is likely to continue in the short and medium term. Furthermore, if the groups demise is linked to a security response alone, then the insurgency is likely to continue indefinitely. While it is acknowledged that peaks and valleys 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, especially given reports of a worsening humanitarian situation in the region. As in similar months, incidents during the month have shown that the security situation in other parts of the country is also precarious. Clashes in the middle belt claimed numerous lives. While violent crime, kidnapping and robberies continue throughout the country. The associated risk is likely to continue, with certain areas posing greater risk, in Lagos for example. As a result, SAR advises all those living in or travelling to Nigeria review their journey management plans frequently due to the nature and fluidity of risk in Nigeria.



North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

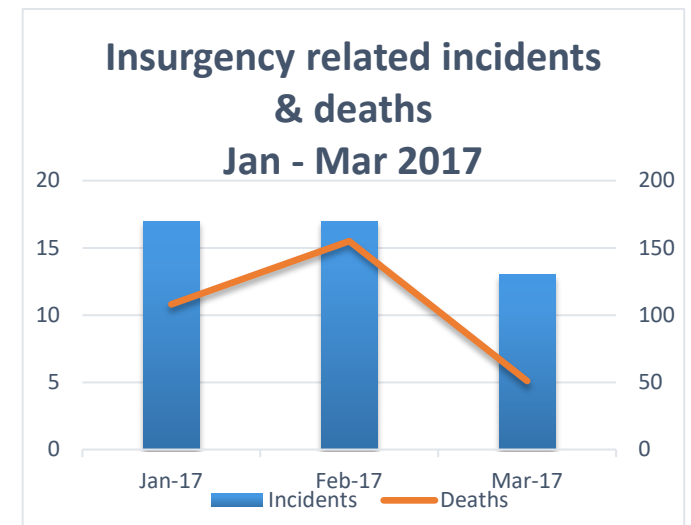
Suicide bomb attacks continued unabated this month in Borno State. Interestingly, a number of these incidents involved two or more attackers. For example, three bombers reportedly detonated their explosives near a fuel station along Damboa Road in Maiduguri, killing themselves and causing damage to fuel tankers. It was reported that two of the three were females. The location may have been targeted given reports that it is an assembly point for vehicles travelling to Damboa from Maiduguri. Travel to Damboa is often conducted in convoys for safety reasons. Fortunately, there were no vehicles waiting at the time of the incident. A number of days later, four female suicide bombers reportedly detonated devices in Usmanti, Maiduguri killing two and injuring over 15. While three suicide bombers killed themselves and four others in Jere, Borno. On a positive note, the frequency of suicide attacks is making the military more aware. Two suspected female suicide bombers were shot by security personnel near a checkpoint in the Umarari Molai District of Maiduguri. No one was injured as a result of this action. However, a second incident was reported in Umarari, Maiduguri later in the month in which three suspected suicide bombers reportedly detonated their devices when challenged. Four people were reportedly killed and others injured. Later in the month, explosions were reportedly detonated at an IDP camp near Muna, Maiduguri. Around five people were killed and over 15 injured. The explosions caused further damage in the camp. Additionally, a car blew up when it drove over an IED along the Dikwa-Maiduguri Road. It was suspected that Boko Haram planted the device.

Despite these attacks, the military continued to report successes, especially in respect to their control over Sambisa forest. Reports claim that the military killed at least twenty Boko Haram members in Kala/Balge, Borno. They also reportedly thwarted an attack on a military base in Magumeri LGA, Borno State, when suspected Boko Haram attempted to attack. However, unconfirmed reports suggest that a significant number of military personnel lost their lives during the incident. In fact, the military reportedly lost a considerable number of personnel this month. For example, at least one soldier was reportedly injured in Dikwa LGA, Borno State during an attempted ambush by suspected Boko Haram. A further three were reportedly killed in Ganye, Borno State by suspected Boko Haram, while five were reportedly killed by suspected Boko Haram members in Monguno, Borno State.

Forecast: *Despite military reports of success, the number, nature and location of incidents attributed to Boko Haram clearly illustrates that the group have not yet been neutralised. Notwithstanding successes of the government response, the group*

still appears to have the capacity and capability to circumvent the security systems in place. This is evident in the attacks in Maiduguri and on military targets. Furthermore, such attacks show that they retain their capacity, commitment and determination to attack both hard and soft targets, despite reports that they had lost all their key command

posts. As mentioned before, the pattern and nature of attacks is not a surprise. Boko Haram have shown throughout their history that they can work effectively as a splintered organisation when required. It is 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.



Contrary to numerous previous reports made by both the Nigerian Government and/or the military, the Nigeria Defence Minister Mansur Dan Ali is reported to have made a statement this month in which he acknowledged that Abubakar Shekau is still at large. This statement came around the same time as reports emerged of a video reportedly featuring Shekau was circulating. The video contained many of the hallmarks of past Boko Haram videos. As in other videos, Shekau reported that he was in good health. He also confirmed the group's involvement in a number of recent incidents and challenged the Cameroon authorities on the authenticity of recent reports, something he commonly does to the Nigerian Government and military. A second video also circulated during the month, which showed the alleged execution of three men. These men were said to be government spies. Shekau did not appear in this video. Neither video has been verified.

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Communal Clashes

The month started with reports that at least eight people were killed when farmers clashed with herdsmen in Gwer East LGA, Benue State. Such reports continued unabated throughout the month in Benue State. Days later, suspected Fulani herdsmen reportedly attacked two communities, Mkovur and Tombo, reportedly killing five people, in Buruku LGA, while, herdsmen were blamed for the deaths of five people in villages in Katsina-Ala LGA, Benue State. It was alleged that suspected herdsmen attacked the villages with machetes. Later in the month, unknown gunmen reportedly stormed a market in Zaki Biam, Ukum LGA, and Benue State, killing many locals and injuring others. Some reports suggest that approximately 50 people may have been killed in this incident.

Kaduna State also witnessed similar incidents, but this time herdsmen were killed. In fact, the death of two Fulani herdsmen in Jema'a LGA, Kaduna whilst they were reportedly herding cattle, sparked fears of renewed violence in the South of Kaduna. However, no major incidents were reported. That said, reports emerged during the month that seventeen herdsmen were killed by soldiers in Jema'a LGA in Kaduna. However, this has yet to be confirmed.

Five herdsmen and seven others were also reportedly killed by unknown gunmen in Nasarawa-Eggon LGA, Nasarawa State. It was claimed that over 500 cattle were taken after the attack. Further south, two people were reportedly killed by herdsmen in Ika South, Delta State.

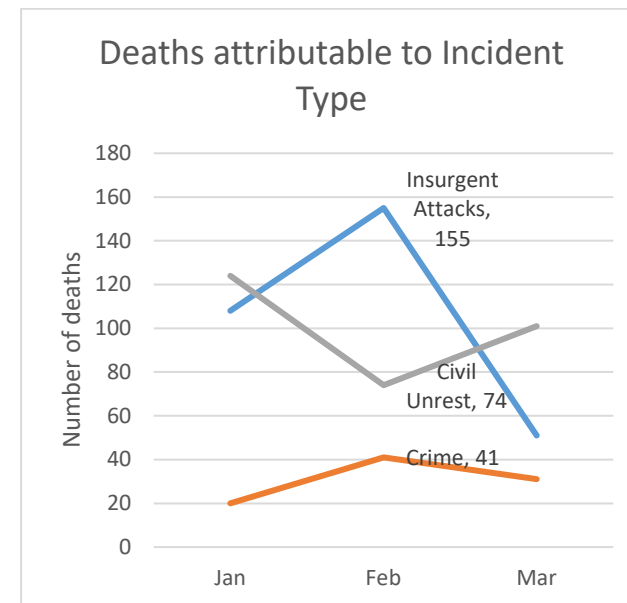
Forecast: *As in other months, some states seem to be disproportionately affected in comparison with*

others. During March it would appear to be Benue State. There are a number of factors that contribute to this trend, the most relevant would appear to be the reprisal nature of many attacks. This would appear to create a cycle of violent attacks in many states. However, also evident this month is that such incidents are not only confined to the middle belt. The last number of months have shown a more southern shift to attacks. This is likely to be attributable to the lack of grazing and access to land thereby pushing herds further south. Unless something new occurs in these states to try to console farmers and herdsmen violence is a likely outcome, resulting in the loss of life and destruction of property, 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

It is acknowledged that exact death rates in the aftermath of incidents in Nigeria are hard to assess. From the data that is available, it would appear that more people lost their lives from incidents attributed to clashes between herdsmen and farmers this month than those attributed to Boko Haram or in retaliation to their activities. This is a similar trend to January. This is not new, a number of analysts have raised similar observations in the past. However, deaths associated with such clashes appear to garner less

media attention, especially internationally than Boko Haram related incidents. Despite a large number of reported suicide attacks this month in Borno State, the associated death rate appears to have reduced, resulting in a reduced number of deaths overall.



Reports emerged this month of joint operations between the Nigerian and Cameroonian military. It was noted that many suspected Boko Haram members were killed in the operation. A number of days later, it was reported that a further clash emerged between Cameroonian military and Boko Haram, resulting in losses on both sides. This incident was said to have occurred in Soueram, Cameroon.

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Violent clashes continued to be reported throughout the country this month. For example, three people were reportedly killed in violent clashes in Obubra, Cross Rivers. In a separate incident in Oku-Bushhuyu, Boki LGA, Cross River resulted in the loss of four lives. Ten people were reportedly killed in Ife, Ogun. In a bank robbery in Akoko North-West, Ondo five people were reportedly killed. While, four people were reportedly killed in Baruten, Kwara.

Forecast: *As noted in the past, such levels of armed violence throughout Nigeria are nothing new... The use of weapons is a relatively common element of criminality in the country. This is unlikely to change even in the long term due, in part, to the prevalence and easy access to weapons. While 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.*

Niger Delta Region

There were few serious incidents in the Niger Delta region during March. Talks and negotiations over the past few months appears to be resulting in a new level of stability within the region. Media reports are suggesting that the



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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.

government is looking at the possibilities of turning illegal oil refineries into legal entities, so as to properly integrate them into the proposed business model. This is resulting in some tensions. However, discussions are still ongoing and a blueprint of what is likely to happen will not be available until May at the earliest, so further negotiations are likely.

Forecast: *The lack of reported incidents in the Niger Delta region this month is promising for the success of the ongoing discussions and negotiations. This stability may pave the way for implementation of new policies and procedures that are amenable to a large portion of the population. There is likely to have to be considerable compromise on all sides. That said, this stability should not be taken for granted. History has shown that incidents can occur with little notice. Therefore, SAR recommends that anyone travelling to the region take all necessary security measures to remain safe. Furthermore, the decrease in attacks on the pipelines should not be mistaken for a reduction in the kidnapping risk in this region.*

Abduction & Kidnap

The trend in kidnappings continued during March, with incidents reported throughout the country. For example, two businessmen were reportedly abducted from Giyama village, Goronyo LGA, Sokoto by unknown gunmen, while two others were reportedly kidnapped by unknown gunmen in Bwari, FCT. Further South, a female magistrate was reportedly abducted in Imo State and a Nigerian military lieutenant was reportedly abducted in Lagos. This incident resulted in reports of a very tense and highly charged incident between security forces and

suspected abductors. Others reports of operations targeting kidnapers were also reported throughout the month. The police reportedly killed a high profile kidnapper in Ikwere, Rivers State this month. Whilst a parade of suspected kidnapers was conducted in Rivers State.

Forecast: *These incidents serve to illustrate the continued risk of abduction in Nigeria. This threat is likely to remain in place in the short and medium term as either factor mentioned above are unlikely to change within this timeframe. As a result, all organisations and individuals are advised to assess whether their anti-abduction measures are sufficient and take necessary precautions if not.*

Factors worth monitoring

A number of illnesses have been reported throughout Nigeria this month that have claimed numerous lives. For example, Meningitis reportedly killed nearly 300 people, while Lassa Fever has been reported eight in Kano. SAR reminds 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.

Furthermore, as mentioned last month, the humanitarian situation in the North East is becoming more serious by the day. Increased discourse around famine is likely to result in increased humanitarian needs. However, as highlighted the continued insecurity is making the delivery of aid increasingly problematic. Attacks on convoys illustrate the ability and desire of militants to maximise the opportunistic

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Temporary Closure of Abuja Airport

Abuja Airport was temporarily closed on the 8th March 2017, for a period of 6 weeks, for a runway upgrade.

Reports this week are stating that works are on target and it will reopen on the 19th of April as planned.

In the interim, Kaduna Airport is being used as an alternative. If using Kaduna Airport, SAR recommends a Review of Travel Security Measures. Specific activities may include:

- Re-assess the applicability of current travel management plans, and review as necessary
- Review contingency plans, as this is likely to require planning in regard to medical assistance, overnight accommodation, secure parking, etc.
- Brief staff on amended measures
- Double check insurance implications
- Remain in regular contact with your Airline.

targets available to them. 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 be 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.