



# 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

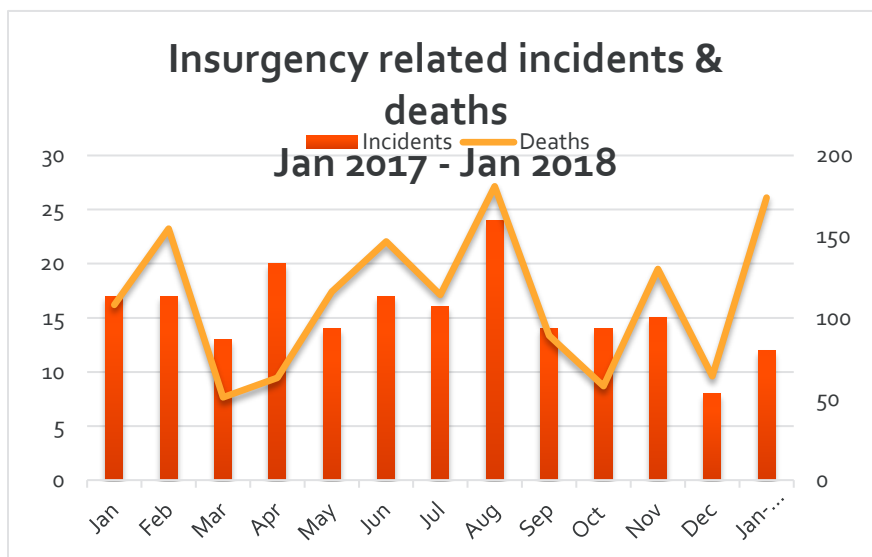
interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases. Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. 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.

*January 2018 – Security related incidents throughout Nigeria illustrate the pressure the security forces of the country must be facing at present; the insurgency in the North East, the instability in the Niger Delta, the communal violence in the middle belt, and the risk of kidnap and violence to highlight a few. Secondary to this, is the significance of the geographical spread of these incidents, no area seems immune from some aspect of such activity. Therefore while a positive relationship with the Nigerian Security Sector is of huge importance, the situation is such that one should not depend entirely on their response within an organisational security management plan. As a result, SAR recommends conducting regular audits of security plans given to ensure you and your organisation are in position to respond to situations if and when they emerge, without over reliance on the security services, as this is not advised.*

## North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

January 2018 witnessed a wide range of incidents, illustrating the spectrum of MO used by Boko Haram. They also show an extension of operations to include Adamawa. While it is acknowledged that Adamawa has been targeted before and is not new to such activity, the last few months have shown more restricted activity by the group to Borno State. However, the month started with reports that the group planted a bomb in Madagali, Adamawa, killing at least three. They also continued to conduct suicide attacks in Borno, targeting Ngala in a number of incidents. For example, a suicide bomber killed himself and thirteen others at a mosque, while two suspected suicide bombers were killed by soldiers before they could detonate their devices, both incidents

occurred in Ngala. Troops were also said to have killed a suicide bomber before she could detonate in Kala/Balge, Borno. While four suspected bombers killed themselves and ten others in Maiduguri when they detonated their devices. At the end of the month a further two suspected suicide bombers reportedly killed five people when they detonated devices at the Dalori IDP camp on the outskirts of Maiduguri. Many others were injured in the incident. The group were also blamed for deaths in Maiduguri, Madagali and Bama throughout the month.



The group appears to have returned to abduction as an MO of choice since the start of the New Year. They were suspected of abducting around thirty loggers in Ngala, at least five in Madagali and seven children in Ardo Kola, Adamawa. Others were reportedly killed in these incidents. Such incidents are not rare, but often go unnoticed or unreported especially if they occurring in remote and inaccessible locations.

That said, the military continued their advances throughout the month. They reported killed approximately ten suspected Boko Haram members in the Lake Chad area, around Monguno. They also reported a clash in Mobar, Borno, between soldiers and suspected militants. Reports claims that 3 soldiers, 1 CJTF member, and 107 Boko Haram militants were killed in this incident. Seven soldiers, one civilian, and four suspected militants were also said to have been killed in a clash in Toumour, Niger, while seven Boko Haram militants were killed in Gwoza, Borno. It is unclear how they died. The Air Force also reported that they had bombed a suspected Boko Haram artillery base in the Sambisa Forest Area, destroying an artillery gun and some trucks.

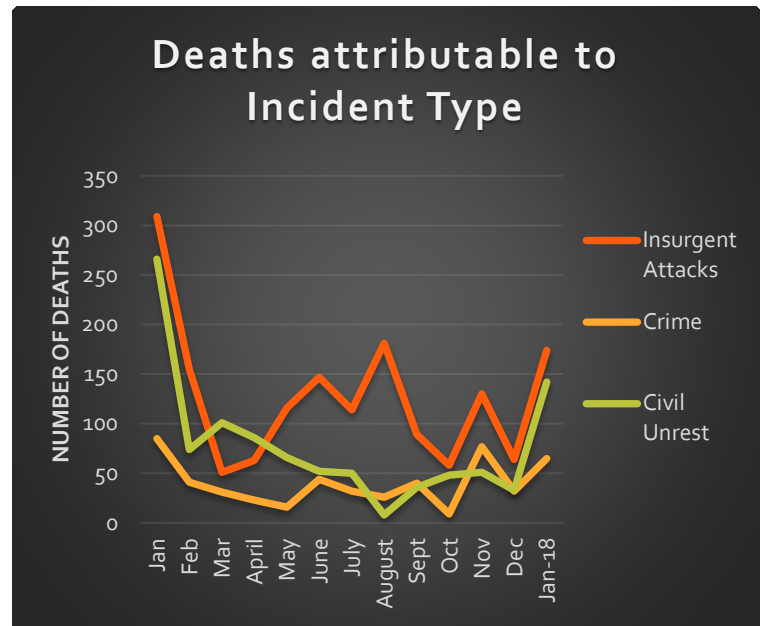
Despite this, the group still appear to be active across the border in Cameroon, with a number of incidents reported. For example the group were said to have killed three and abducted two in Kolofata and to have killed one in Ashigashiya. Additionally, Nigerian gunmen were blamed for an attack on a border post in Ekok, Cameroon.

**Assessment & Forecast:** *The Nigerian Government continue to report the end of the insurgency in the North East is near. However, as 2018 unfolds, Boko Haram would appear to have a different perception and if the incidents of January are anything to go with, like previous months, it is difficult not to see more credibility in Boko Haram's claims. For example, they still continue to conduct suicide attacks, killings and abductions with apparent ease. They continue to be able to cross state and nation borders also with apparent ease. While this makes one question the government's claims it also calls into question the safety of people returning home from IDP camps. That said, the suicide attacks on camps illustrates that they are not inherently safe either. In fact, they would appear to be a desired target given the number of times they have been attacked (or attempts). Secondly, reports of the military killing scores or more of suspected militants should be read with caution. For example, the military and government are reporting that the group is near demise, yet if they can still gather in groups bigger than 100, this would seem to be questionable. If over 100 people were killed, one would wonder how the assessment was made that they were members of the group before killing them; but if they were and over 100 were killed, how big was the group initially. Having the capacity and willingness to gather in such large groups may indicate the group are not yet on their knees. Attacks on roads appear to have reduced this month, but this may be due to the governments travel restrictions on certain highways rather than a reduction of desire or capacity within the group. While this may keep people safe from roadside attacks, such a response is likely to impact aid distribution and commercial activities by road, which is significantly important to people in the region. This further calls in to question plans to return people to their homes outside Maiduguri.*

## Loss of Life\*

January started with a similar pattern in respect to deaths across terrorism, crime and civil unrest incidents. All three say an increase in the number of deaths recorded. That said, neither deaths associated with crime nor terrorism returned to the levels witnessed in January 2017. Interestingly, the number of people killed in incidents relating to civil unrest was similar as with this period last year. It will be interesting to monitor this during the year in order to see if there is still a seasonal nature to such incidents. This finding may help illustrate if there is a change in the trends and nature of these incidents.

*\*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.*



## Communal Clashes

Communal clashes were widespread this month throughout the middle belt. Very few, if any, states were incident free. Furthermore, few states only reported one incident. For example, in Logo, Benue State, approximately 70 people were reportedly killed in three incidents, with two policemen killed in a fourth incident in Logo. Two other people were reportedly killed in Guma LGA and one in Okpokwu LGA. Plateau State also witnessed a number of incidents, as did Taraba and Kaduna. For example, in Plateau State approximately 15 people lost their lives in incidents in Bassa LGA. While approximately twenty people lost their lives in Taraba State in at least four different attacks. Additionally, approximately twenty people were reportedly killed in Kaduna State in a number of different incidents in Birnin Gwari LGA. Approximately twenty were also reportedly killed in separate incidents in Nasarawa, Kwara, Adamawa, Delta and Zamfara states. Two girls were reportedly abducted during the incident in Zamfara.

**Forecast:** *Incidents of communal clashes this month, continue to illustrate patterns and trends often discussed in the past, such an apparent retaliatory nature of attacks given the number of incidents reported in specific areas of affected states. They also show, if analysed in conjunction with other figures from previous months, that there is a seasonal nature to such incidents. However, what they do not show is who is actually conducting these attacks, why exactly they are occurring and are they even related. For some, these incidents have been blamed on herdsmen and farmers, both shifting from victim to suspect perpetrator and back to victim depending on the incident, but does this really explain such attacks. While it is likely that it explains a percentage of these incidents, it is clear that it does not explain all. As mentioned before, the apparent lack of investigation and research into these incidents and the apparent single lens from which they are viewed is likely to see certain other parties continue to perpetrate attacks under the radar of the security forces..*

*Furthermore, consistent blame on herdsmen and farmers is likely to further strain their relationships, relationships that have developed over generations. Given the number of lives lost in such incidents, this requires a detailed investigation. Additionally, such incidents are happening in one of the most fertile and agriculturally rich areas of Nigeria, which is likely to be impacted if this is not managed effectively. That said, such incidents do appear to be garnering a greater priority of late, with the President assuring Nigerians that such incidents will be brought under control. However, this will not be easy. Firstly, as mentioned above, these incidents are unlike to be motivated by a single factor, incidents are largely cyclical and seasonal, which requires consideration in how they are handled, and additionally, the security services in Nigeria are already under pressure in the North East and the Niger Delta regions and therefore, they may not the ability to dedicate the necessary resources to the middle belt region.*

## Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Incidents of violence in Rivers State continued throughout January. For example, unknown gunmen killed twenty in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni and seven in Emuoha in two, apparently, unrelated incidents. A week to ten days later, a further four were killed in Khana. In Akwa Ibom State, a neighbouring state to Rivers, at least two incidents of a cultist nature were reported. In one incident four people were reportedly killed in a clash, while in the second incidents, Nigerian troops reportedly killed two suspected members of a cult in Etim Ekpo. Similarly, members of the CJTF reportedly killed approximately five in Burutu, Anambra State. The motivation behind this incident is unknown.

**Forecast:** *The size of Nigeria should never be underestimated. It is a huge country which includes considerable differences, such a land type and usage, weather, culture, language and religion. Interestingly, such differences are also evident in crime types, styles, weaponry and violence depending on the location in which they occur. This is very apparent when one compares current challenges in the North East and the Niger Delta regions. However, less variances is often considered in lower level violence, but it is there. For example, reports of cultish violence are more common in the South. Therefore, when travelling through Nigeria, security managers should ensure they are aware of the different risks in different areas and take this information into consideration when conducting their security risk assessments and related risk management plans.*



## SAR Consultancy

*Providing peace of mind in changing security environments*

**As 2018 begins, 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 2017 audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.*

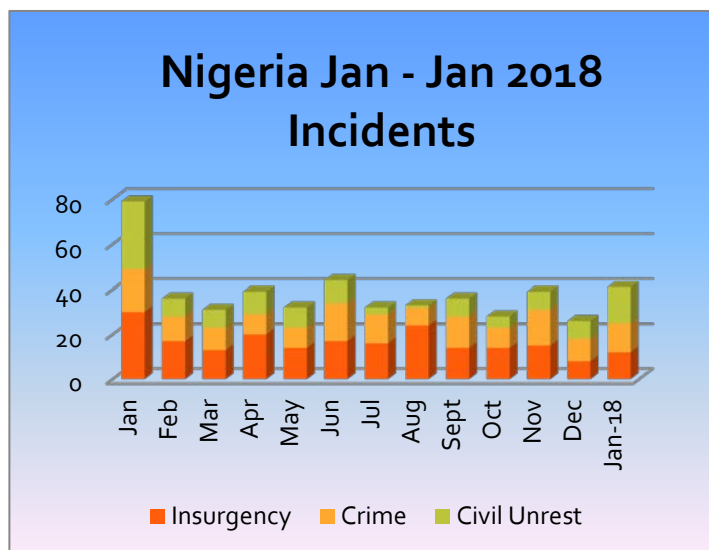
## Niger Delta Region

Threats from the region continued this month, illustrating the communities continued frustration and disenchantment with the political action, or lack thereof, in the region.

**Forecast:** *Given these continued frustration, coupled with previous statements about a possible resumption in hostilities, SAR, 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.*

## Abduction & Kidnap

Kidnaps continued into 2018, which incidents targeting a range of communities. For example, eight APC chieftains were reportedly abducted in Munya, Niger State. Less than two days later, three young girls were also taken from the residence of the Chairman of Munya LGA, Niger state. The most high profile incident of the month, given that it involved the abduction of internationals, occurred in Kaduna State. Reports suggest that two Americans and two Canadian citizens were taken when they were traveling from Kafanchan to Abuja by road. Fortunately, all were recovered and freed within a week of the incident. Further south, five oil workers were reportedly kidnapped in Warri North, Delta. At the time of writing, it is unclear as to whether they have been released.



## Piracy

A number of incidents were reported in January. For example, the MT Barrett and 22 crew of its crew were reportedly hijacked in the middle of the month in the Gulf of Guinea. The incident is believed to have begun when the

**Forecast:** Reports of abductions are not rare in Nigeria, but often go unreported which makes it difficult to assess the extent of the problem, further complicating the development of mitigation strategies. That said, when incidents involve internationals, those working for international companies, or high ranking internationals, reports usually surface in the public domain. This information can help in creating anti-kidnap strategies, but security professionals should keep in mind they may not have a complete picture of the risks posed to their staff. Incidents of abduction often occur in local communities, and ransoms are paid, yet rarely do such incidents become public knowledge. So incidents of this month, serve to illustrate the risk to all throughout the country. That said, if one analyses the information that is available, hotspots can become relatively clear. For example, the Kano-Kaduna-Abuja highway and the Niger Delta appear to maintain a high level risk for long periods, while other areas are more cyclical. Therefore, SAR recommends that security managers keep a consistent eye on the location of incidents as they are reported. Which bearing in mind that the risk is also likely to be present in locations where incidents are not reported. The risk is ever present, despite significant increase in the police response.

vessel was anchored off the coast of Benin. The incident reportedly last 6 days, with the crew brought back to Lagos safe and well. While it is unclear as to whether a ransom was paid, those who took the vessel made contact with the company owning the vessel and they both reportedly negotiated resolution, that include the release of the crew. In another incident, pirates reportedly killed to police officers in Ogbia, Bayelsa. While in Lagos, two suspicious incidents were also reported, while vessels were anchored. The alarm was raised in one incident when a crew member noted that two small boats had tied up to the anchor chain and one suspect has come on board. In the second incident, crew members thought they saw someone on board and raised the alarm. Crews mustered in both cases and notified the Navy patrol boats, before the incidents could escalate.

**SAR**  
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Ireland

*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](mailto: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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