



# 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 herdsman, cultists, and ordinary criminals, notwithstanding the allegations of security force involvement and alleged political

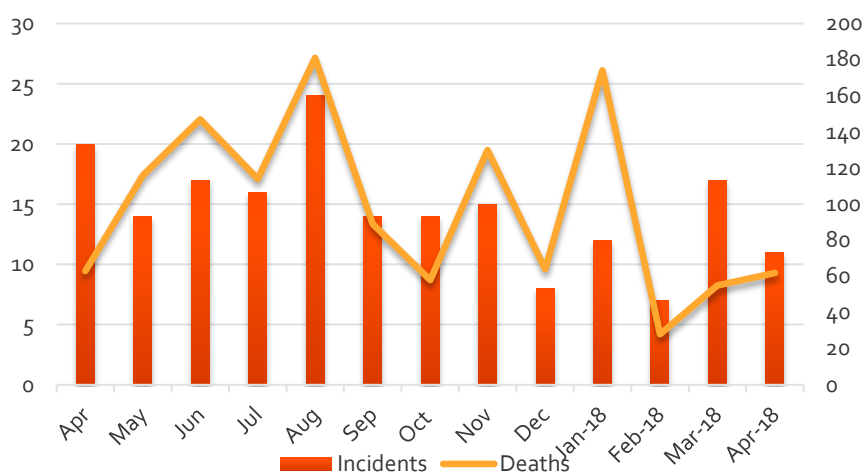
interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases. Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. 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 2018** – *What a month? With reports of operational successes by the military throughout the month, one may be fooled again that Boko Haram are on the back foot. Incidents attributed to them clearly present the alternative but none the less, positive reports are welcome news. But this is not the story of the month, the violence in the middle belt is. Whether it is attributed to farmers, herdsman or militants, the death toll is considerable and a worrying increase in light of reports of withdrawal of troops from these areas. Further demands on troop resources may be the norm for some time yet, as the Niger Delta Avengers withdrawn from their ceasefire. If they return to attacks, demands for increased military to the region are highly likely to create a significant challenge for the President, at time where he and his government will want to focus on the forthcoming elections. For anyone with interests in Nigeria, SAR recommends close monitoring the situation, as it is likely to be dynamic.*

## North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

The ongoing insurgency in the North East continued to present challenges for the military throughout April, with some successes and a number of direct clashes reported. For example, the month started with a reported attack in Maiduguri, in which over ten insurgents, one soldier and over ten civilians were killed. The loss of life on both sides continued to be reported throughout the month. In a clearance operation near Sambisa Forest, five suspected militants were reportedly killed, with another five arrested. Three militants were said to have been killed in Gwoza and seven in Mafa and Damboa LGAs in Borno. The military also reported that they bombed a number of camps in Borno State during the month, killing scores of suspected militants in these incidents.

### Insurgency related incidents & deaths Apr 2017 - Apr 2018



The military also reported to have repelled attacks by suspected Boko Haram insurgents at Gamboru Ngala and in the Jidari Polo ground in Maiduguri. They also reported being involved in direct clashes with the group in Madagali, Adamawa. This incident is said to have resulted in the deaths of five militants and one civilian. The military also reported the rescues of nearly 150 people who were said to have been held captive by the group. The group were also blamed for killing three Chadian soldiers in Abadam, Borno. The exact details of this incident are unclear, but the soldiers were reportedly patrolling near the border when the incident occurred. Days later the group were blamed for the deaths of over eighteen civilians in Ngala Borno State. A further three people were killed by a mine in the same area. Boko Haram are suspected of laying the mine.

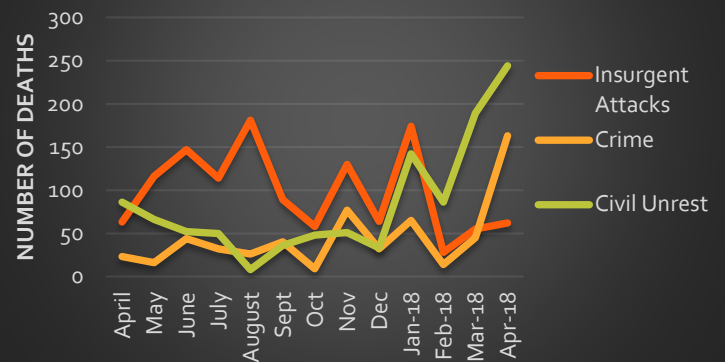
However, despite these operations and responses, the group did not seem deterred for activity. For example, two suicide bombers attempted to conduct an attack on the University of Maiduguri. However, they only succeeded in killing themselves when they detonated their device, due to reported intervention from the security forces. Later in the month, suicide bombers in Bama had more success. A male and a female reported killing themselves and at least three others, whilst injuring many others, as at mosque. A number of days later, a second incident was reported in Bama, when three suicide bombers reportedly killed themselves. No one else was injured. Near the end of the month, another incident was reported in Maiduguri, when a suicide bomber reportedly killed themselves and three civilians. On a positive note, a suspected female suicide bomber was arrested at the Bakassi IDP Camp before she could detonate her device. The military also reportedly killed two suspected suicide bombers in Konduga, Borno before any further loss of life occurred.

**Assessment & Forecast:** Month after month, analysts including ourselves report that although Boko Haram have been weakened, they have not been defeated and then proceed to evidence their point. At first glance, this month appears no different. Reports of military intervention clearly illustrate success in their activities. However, the credibility of some of these reports require examination. For example, when the military report that they release large numbers of 'captives', they rarely come with a list of names and elaboration on the nature of how the individuals became captive. In addition, such reports seem in direct contrast to previous reports that the group no longer has the capacity to gather in large groups. Surely the ability to contain 150 people requires more than just a few militants. This raises another point in relation to post-bombing reports. Many of these report the death of scores of militants; statements that also appear to contradict early reports on inability to gather in large groups. This raises a number of issues; (i) are the military lying (ii) if not, are they underplaying the retained capacity within the group (iii) do they fully understand the strength and capacity of the group? These all raise interesting areas of concern individually and collectively. While it is unlikely that a direct answer would ever be given to these questions, it is clearly evident, that the nature of reported attacks attributed to Boko Haram, coupled with the military reports, suggest that the group are not defeated and any weakness has yet to considerably impact the level of risk in certain parts of the North East, but more specifically Borno State. 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 the region at present.

## Loss of Life\*

Like last month, April witnessed an increase in deaths associated with all three incident types, with the most significant increase evident in incident attributed to civil unrest. This really does seem to be an area that requires greater investigation and response. Additionally, these figures do not include any incident in the middle belt that were said to be conducted by bandits. If these had been included, the figure would have been considerably higher. \*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.

## Deaths attributable to Incident Type



## Middle Belt Violence

Reports of 'communal clashes' in the middle belt used to be a relatively fair way to describe incidents of violence throughout the region. However, for a number of years now, this may not be as appropriate. As a result, we have taken the step to change the section and titled it 'Middle Belt Violence'. Whilst we have acknowledged before that this region required greater investigation into the nature of the violence reported, and while we ourselves (like so many others) have yet to fully understand the complexities of it, we are hoping that framing the violence differently may enable deeper insight over time.

This month over 40 incidents of violence were reported in the middle belt region. For ease of reference, these will be presented state by state. Benue State has always been a state known for violent clashes, and incidents of this month illustrate that this situation has not changed. One area which witnessed a number of incidents is Gwer LGA. Over 50 people were killed in a number of incidents, which were largely attributed to clashes between herdsmen and farmers. In Logo LGA, in incidents also attributed to such clashes, over 25 people were reportedly killed. Four of whom were reportedly policemen. Incidents in Guma LGA reportedly claimed the lives of over 75 people, all attributed to farmer herdsmen clashes with the exception of one. This incident claimed four lives and was reportedly the result of an interaction between the military and militia.

Similar incidents were reported in Zamfara. Two soldiers and over 20 bandits were reportedly killed in Anka during a clash between both. Whilst a number of days later, another incident claimed the lives of over 25 people near Anka LGA, when gunmen reportedly attacked villages in the area. Followed by the deaths of approximately 30 in Maru, Kogi State witnessed an attack on a police station, in which two policemen were killed. While days later, over 10 people were reportedly killed in an attack in Bassa LGA. It is unclear who was involved in this incident. However, a

number of aggressors were reported killed. Near the end of the month, four construction workers were also reportedly killed in the same LGA.

Over 45 people were reportedly killed in Taraba State during the month. The majority of these lives were reportedly lost in clashes between herdsmen and farmers. However, five were lost to reported militants. Nasarawa State was also targeted this month, with reports of over 100 killed in different incidents. Similar to other states the majority of deaths were attributed to clashes between herdsmen and farmers. Interestingly, bandits were blamed for all incidents in Kaduna State. The combined loss of life was over 27.

Many of these incidents happened in the backdrop of reports that the military had recalled troops for the region.

**Forecast:** *The middle belt, synonymous with reports of clashes between herdsmen and farmers, of death, stolen cattle and conflict over resources, such as grazing rights, water and land, has been emerging as an area of considerable concern for some time. The increase in violence is significant. However, the level of attention the region receives is minimum. Notwithstanding that, the loss of life is often attributed to clashes between farmers and herdsmen, and while a percentage of the incidents are, there is an apparent change in incident dynamics of late. This is illustrated in the change of targets, which now include police and military, the reduction in retaliatory attacks (which are still present in traditional communal clashes) and the nature and MO of attack. While this needs greater review and a greater official response, SAR recommends that risk assessments for the region are reviewed and adapted in light of an apparent new aggressor and change in targets.*

## Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

As is the case every month, reports of crime involving violence continue to emerge, such as reports of cultist activities in Rivers and Ogun States. This type of crime reported claimed at least ten lives this month. While in Kwara State, violence during a bank robbery reportedly resulted in the loss of many lives. According to media reports, approximately ten policemen and scores of civilians were killed. Communal clashes reportedly claimed the lives of over 15 in Abia and Cross River States.

## Niger Delta Region

Media accounts report that the Niger Delta Avengers announced an end to their ceasefire, which they had entered into in August 2016. That said, they had reportedly carried

out a number of attacks during that period. Such an announcement is important for a number of reasons. It threatens the economic growth that Nigeria had just been developing. Given the insurgency in the North East and the increased violence in the middle belt, the military resources are already reportedly stretched, having to return in mass to the Niger Delta would mean depleting resources elsewhere. Thirdly, given the presidential elections next year, it is likely to prove to be an unwanted challenge for President Buhari. It is also likely to worry the oil companies, which had not experienced any major attacks since earlier in the year. In fact, media reports suggesting that they are bracing themselves for an up surge in attacks. Only time will tell if relationships developed during the ceasefire are strong enough to bring people back to the table. While many people have a lot to lose, some have much to gain if negotiating between peace and violence in the run up to elections.



## SAR Consultancy

*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.*

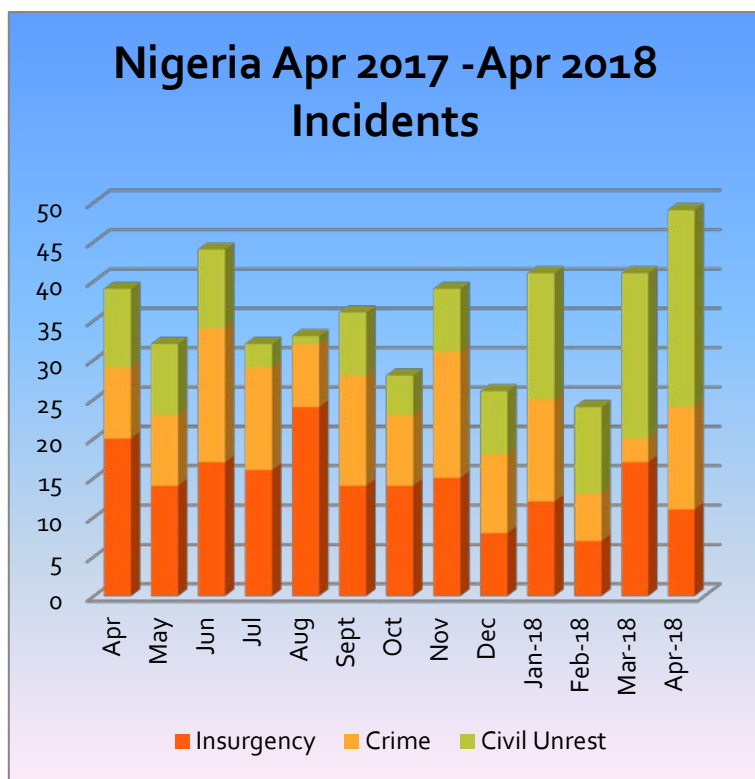


## Piracy

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) reported in April that Nigerian waters were extremely dangerous, with an increase in incidents year on year, with Nigeria reporting 22 incidents in the first quarter of 2018. Furthermore, of the 11 ships fired upon worldwide, 8 of these were in Nigerian waters. This risk was illustrated later in the month when 12 crew members of a Dutch flagged ship were taken off the coast Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Such incidents are having considerable impact on freight moving through the Gulf of Guinea.

## Abduction & Kidnap

Reports of kidnaps continued to be reported throughout Nigeria this month. Gunmen reportedly kidnapped a German construction workers in Kano State, killing a police man in his company. Five men were reportedly involved in the incident. Such incidents are not rare, and are usually motivated by a perceived ransom that such abductees with garner. It remains unclear as to whether a request for ransom has been made. In Kaduna State, over 10 people were reportedly taken by bandits during an incident in Birnin Gwari, Kaduna. At least three people reportedly escaped. SAR assesses that such incidents are likely to continue in the medium and long term, given the current security and economic situation in the country. As a result, SAR recommends a regular review of Anti-Kidnap and Abduction plans/procedures.



### Clashes in Abuja

Violent clashes were reported in Abuja during the month, between Shitte Muslims and police men. These Shittes are reportedly members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN.) Tear gas and bullets were reportedly used to disperse the group. These incidents are said to be motivated by the alleged imprisonment of the group's leader Sheik Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, who is said to have been in detention since December 2016. Such clashes are likely to continue until this situation is resolved as IMN have been holding regular protests in Abuja since as a court ruled El-Zakzaky's detention without trial illegal.

**SAR**  
Consultancy  
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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