Please be aware System Risk Management has asked all members to prohibit travel to extreme risk countries and regions. Please reference memorandum from the Chancellor regarding procedures relating to international travel to be followed by all System members found at this link:


Should you have any questions, please contact me directly. Thank you.

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Country Travel Advisory List:

Any travel to the below listed countries requires an International Travel Questionnaire submission to System Risk Management for review.

- Afghanistan
- Central African Republic
- Cuba
- Gaza Strip
- Libya
- North Korea
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Syria
- Yemen
Any travel to the specified regions within a country noted below requires an International Travel Questionnaire submission to System Risk Management for review.

Information on Travel Restrictions From Listed Countries: Sudan, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia and Yemen.


- **Armenia**: Within 2km of the line of contact in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region
- **Azerbaijan**: Within 2km of the line of contact in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region
- **Cameroon**: Far North (Extreme-Nord) region and within 50km of Cameroon's shared border with Nigeria in the country's North (Nord) and Adamawa (Adamaoua) regions.
- **Chad**: Ennedi-Est, Ennedi-Quest, Wadi Fira, Quaddai and Sila (which border Sudan), the southern regions of Logone Oriental, Mandoul, Moyen-Chari and Salamat, the northern regions of Tibesti, Borkou and Ennedi-Qest (which border Libya) and the western Kanem and Lac regions.
- **Democratic Republic of Congo**: The eastern Nord-Kivu, Sud-Kivu, and Tanganyika provinces, as well as the north eastern Ituri, Haut-Uele and Bas-Uele provinces and the southern Kasia Central province.
- **Egypt**: North Sinai governorate.
- **Eritrea**: Within 20km of Eritrea's borders with Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Sudan.
- **Ethiopia**: Within 20km of Ethiopia's border with Eritrea in the Tigray and Afar regions, within 20km of the South Sudan border in the Gambela and Benishangul-Gumuz regions, and the Somali region (excluding the two northern zones of Fafan, formerly Jijiga, and Sitti, formerly Shinile).
- **Iran**: Sistan va Baluchestan province
• **Iraq**: Baghdad, Anbar, Salah ad-Din, Kirkuk, Diyala, Ninewa, Karbala and Babil governorates and the northern Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)-held and disputed territory west of the Green Line.

• **Israel**: Within 2km of the shared Gaza Strip-Israel border in southern Israel and all travel to the Gaza Strip due to the threats of conflict and secondary threats of kidnapping and terrorism.

• **Japan**: Within a 20km radius of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Okuma.

• **Kenya**: Within 50km of the Somali border in the Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Lamu counties.

• **Lebanon**: An area within 15km of the shared border with Syria in the Bekaa and North governorates and Palestinian refugee camps across the country.

• **Mali**: Gao, Kidal, Mopti and Timbuktu regions

• **Mexico**: Due to the high risks of kidnapping, violent crime and an escalating drug cartel-related conflict, red24 currently advises against non-essential travel to the countryside outside of major cities and primary resort areas as well as the states of Tamaulipas, Michoacan, Coahuila, Sinaloa, Nayarit and Guererro.

• **Niger**: Within a 50km radius of Niger’s shared border with Nigeria in the administrative regions of Diffa and Zinder and to within a 100km radius of Niger’s shared borders with Chad, Algeria, Libya and Mali.

• **Nigeria**: Adamawa, Borno, Yobe and Gombe in the northeast. Rural and remote areas within Kaduna, Bauchi, Plateau, Benue, Zamfara, Enugu and Taraba states in the “Middle Belt” and the Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta and Rivers states in the south.

• **Pakistan**: Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces

• **Philippines**: The southern Mindanao region and the Sulu Archipelago.

• **Russia**: Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria (including the Mount Elbrus region).

• **Saudi Arabia**: Within 10km of the shared border with Yemen

• **Somalia**: Most of Somalia except Puntland and Somaliland.
- **Sudan**: Dafur region, South Kordufan state, Blue Nile state and the disputed Abyei region.

- **Tunisia**: The Djebel Chambi National Park (Kasserine governorate) and South of but not including the towns of El Borma and Dhehiba (Tataouine governorate)

- **Turkey**: Within 10km of the shared border with Syria in the Turkish provinces of Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Mardin and Sirnak.

- **Uganda**: Areas within 30km of Uganda’s shared borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan, excluding major towns.

- **Ukraine**: The Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and the Crimean Peninsula.

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**News summary**

**Africa**

- **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** - Anti-UN Protests Erupt following Student's Death in Bangui
- **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** - Militia Attack in Gambo Kills UN Soldier
- **CHAD** - Anti-American Rally Held in N'Djamena over US Corruption Investigation Implicating Chadian President
- **COTE D’IVOIRE** - African Union-European Union Summit to Take Place in Abidjan
- **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO** - Opposition Maintains Call for Marches in Kinshasa
- **ETHIOPIA** - Violence Likely along Border of Oromia Region and Somalia after Ethnic Clashes Kill at least 20
- **GHANA** - Starbowl Airline Suspends Operations after Plane Skids off Runway at Airport in Accra
- **KENYA** - Presidential Inauguration Planned in Nairobi amid Heightened Security
NIGERIA - Boko Haram Militants Attack Magumeri Town

SENEGAL - Protests Likely in Dakar after Parliament Lifts Immunity for Opposition Politician

Asia

CHINA - Investigation Ongoing into Explosion at Factory in Ningbo, Zhejiang

CHINA and NORTH KOREA - Chinese Authorities Announce Indefinite Closure of Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge

CHINA - Police Free Kidnapped Businesswoman during Operation in North Point Area of Hong Kong

INDIA - Bank Officials Kidnapped in Tripura

INDIA - Hawkers Plan Large Rally at Azad Maidan in South Mumbai

INDIA - Protests Continue Nationwide due to Potential Release of Controversial Movie

INDONESIA - Bali Airport Closed until Nov. 28; Mount Agung Alert Raised to Highest Level

PAKISTAN - Nationwide Protests Ended following Agreement with Authorities

PAKISTAN - Pakistani Taliban Claims Responsibility for Suicide Bombing in Quetta

Central/South America

BRAZIL - US Diplomat Shot during Armed Robbery Attempt in Angra dos Reis

VENEZUELA - Portuguese National Killed in Caracas

Europe

ALBANIA and KOSOVO - Nationalists to Protest at Morine-Vermice Border Post

ITALY - Transport Workers Plan Rail, Urban Transport Strikes

ROMANIA - Trade Unions Protest Government Reforms in Bucharest

SPAIN - Taxi Drivers Plan Nationwide Strike

Middle East/North Africa

EGYPT - Security Elevated following Mass-casualty Attack at Mosque in Bir al-Abed

TUNISIA - Mine Explosion Wounds Forest Ranger in Jebel Chaambi

YEMEN - Al-Hudaydah and Salif Ports Reopen; Humanitarian Flights to Sana’a International Airport Resume
**Yemen** - Drone Strike Kills Seven Militants in Shabwah

**North America**

**Mexico** - Volcanic Activity Fluctuates at Popocatepetl Volcano; General Alert Active

**South Pacific/Oceania**

**French Polynesia** - Air France Cabin Crew Strike to Continue

**New Zealand** - Severe Weather Forecast in Central Regions

**Papua New Guinea** - Magnitude-6.0 Earthquake Strikes off the Coast of Southern New Ireland

**Africa**

**Central African Republic (Country Risk Rating: Extreme)** - Anti-UN Protests Erupt following Student's Death in Bangui

Residents staged protests over the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) presence in Bangui following the death of a student the morning of Nov. 24. Authorities said that a MINUSCA vehicle arrived at the scene where the student had been hit by a car shortly after the accident, leading to rumours that a UN member was responsible for the death. Protesters then torched at least two MINUSCA vehicles and attacked several others at locations across Bangui. The violence continued despite a government announcement that a local soldier hit the student and has since been detained.

**Analysis:** More protests are possible in the days ahead, especially if residents do not accept the government report that a soldier was responsible for the incident. Demonstrators may block roads, attack MINUSCA vehicles, or attempt to rally outside MINUSCA facilities. Significant transport and commercial disruptions can be expected if unrest continues.

**Central African Republic (Country Risk Rating: Extreme)** - Militia Attack in Gambo Kills UN Soldier

On Nov. 26, armed anti-Balaka militiamen attacked UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) forces in Gambo, killing one UN peacekeeper and wounding three others. At least five militia fighters were also killed in the violence. Gambo is 410 km (255 miles) from Bangui.

**Analysis:** On May 8, a militia attack in Yogofongo village killed four UN peacekeepers. The MINUSCA, which comprises around 12,000 troops, has been the main peacekeeping force in CAR since the end of France’s Operation Sangaris in October 2016. CAR’s police and army forces have little control over the countryside, which is dominated by rival armed militias who often engage in deadly fighting with one another as well as
with MINUSCA troops, creating a perilous security environment. The splintering of the main ex-Seleka and anti-Balaka militias into multiple smaller armed factions has only increased the violence.

CHAD (Country Risk Rating: **High** - Anti-American Rally Held in N'Djamena over US Corruption Investigation Implicating Chadian President

Additional anti-US rallies are possible in downtown N'Djamena amid an ongoing US Department of Justice investigation into a corruption scandal involving Chadian President Idriss Deby. Around 2,000 people rallied at Palais du 15 Janvier (15 January Palace) in downtown N'Djamena Nov. 26. Future rallies could also occur near the US Embassy over the issue. Authorities have stepped up security outside the US Embassy after anti-American slogans, including several singling out Ambassador Geeta Pasi, were chanted during the Nov. 26 protest.

**Analysis:** Expect localised transport disruptions near potential protest sites. Security forces may forcibly disperse unsanctioned gatherings, particularly unruly demonstrations staged near government or diplomatic buildings. On Nov. 17, US authorities arrested former Senegalese minister of foreign affairs, Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, and an ex-Hong Kong official, Patrick Ho, on allegations of violating the Foreign Corrupt Practises Act and running a multimillion-dollar bribery scheme. Officials accuse the duo of bribing Deby and Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa in return for oil rights for an unnamed Shanghai-based energy firm.

COTE D'IVOIRE (Country Risk Rating: **High** - African Union-European Union Summit to Take Place in Abidjan

The 5th AU-EU Summit is scheduled to take place in Abidjan Nov. 29-30. The event will occur at the Sofitel Abidjan Hotel Ivoire, located in the Cocody area. At least 5,000 people will participate in the summit, including regional and foreign heads of state, as well as other dignitaries. The gathering aims to build stronger relations between the two continents and will focus on youth investment.

**Analysis:** Authorities will likely implement additional security measures, especially around the event venue, major hotels, and Felix-Houphouet-Boigny International Airport (ABJ). The measures may include deploying additional security personnel, erecting checkpoints, carrying out random searches of vehicles, and closing roads adjacent to the summit site, such as Boulevard Hassan II and Rue Washington. Localised transport disruptions are likely near the main event site. Though no group has announced protest plans during the summit, activists may use the gathering's high-profile platform to draw attention to political grievances. If protests materialise, security personnel will likely use force to disperse them.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (Country Risk Rating: **High** - Opposition Maintains Call for Marches in Kinshasa

Authorities banned pro- and anti-government rallies in Kinshasa Nov. 28 and Nov. 30, respectively. The political groups belonging to the Presidential Majority (MP) have yet to comment on the rally ban; MP supporters were scheduled to march from the Gare Central to Place Triomphale near Stade des Martyrs (Martyrs Stadium) Nov. 28.

It remains unclear if a Nov. 28 protest by the civic youth group Front for the Referendum (Front Pour Le Referendum) will go ahead in Kinshasa. Front members had planned to march from the Echangeur in Limete, along Boulevard Lumumba and Boulevard Sendwe, toward Boulevard Triomphal (near Stade des Martyrs) between 0900-1200 to demand political reforms.

The opposition indicated Nov. 26 that they would defy the protest ban. Opposition supporters are scheduled to gather at political party offices across Kinshasa from 0700 Nov. 30 before converging on the Place Triomphe, between Boulevard Triomphal and Avenue de l'Enseignement, adjacent to Stade des Martyrs. Supporters will then rally at Place Triomphe at 1700.

**Analysis:** Authorities will likely deploy a significant number of police officers in Kinshasa through the week, particularly on Nov. 30. Security forces are likely to forcibly disperse opposition gatherings, including the use
to live ammunition. Clashes are likely if the opposition defies the protest ban. More opposition marches or protests could also take place in other major cities Nov. 30, including Beni, Bukavu, Butembo, Goma, Kananga, Kisangani, Lubumbashi, Mbandaka, and Mbuji-Mayi. Localised traffic disruptions are possible, including on access routes to Ndolo Airport (NLO) and N'Djili International Airport (FIH).

The Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) released its electoral calendar Nov. 5, scheduling the country's general election for Dec. 23, 2018. The timetable secures Kabila's position until January 2019. The opposition contends that the electoral time frame violates accords signed between Kabila's ruling coalition and the opposition in December 2016. Opposition leaders are demanding that Kabila resign by the end of 2017.

The opposition, including Fight for Change (LUCHA) and Rally of Forces for Change (Rassemblement), called for nationwide protests Nov. 15. Police deployed throughout the country and arrested dozens of activists, including in Goma, Lubumbashi, Matadi, and Kinshasa. Several people suffered injuries when opposition supporters clashed with police in Kenge, 270 km (168 miles) east of Kinshasa. Opposition protests are expected to persist in the DRC in the coming months.

ETHIOPIA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Violence Likely along Border of Oromia Region and Somalia after Ethnic Clashes Kill at least 20

Additional ethnic fighting is likely along the Oromia-Somali border over a protracted border dispute. Ethiopian government officials reported Nov. 26 that at least 20 people were killed in renewed ethnic clashes in the past week in the Oromia region. Ethnic Oromo clashed with Somali Special Police (Liyu) personnel in the Borana area, Oromia, on Nov. 24. Security forces also detained 98 Oromos and five Somalis over the past week.

Analysis: Additional indiscriminate violence may occur without warning. A significant federal and regional security presence remains in place along the Oromia-Somali border. Troops could set up checkpoints and roadblocks. The Oromia and Somali regions have been rocked by sporadic, tit-for-tat violence since September 2017 as a protracted border dispute escalated into ethnic clashes. Scores of people have died in the violence and between 200,000 and 400,000 people have been displaced, particularly along the 1,400 km (870 miles) long Oromia-Somali border. The violence began on Sept. 9 when unknown assailants shot dead a Somali regional official and members of his entourage. Two days later, two Oromia officials were killed in an apparent reprisal attack that local authorities blamed on Somali Special Police officers.

The incidents triggered deadly rioting in the villages of Aweday, Dedere, Qa Qobo, and Chelenko on Sept. 12. In Aweday, located between Harar and Dire Dawa, nearly 18 people were killed in ethnic riots. An unofficial tally placed the death toll at around 40. Since then, both Somali and Oromia officials have faced accusations of expelling thousands of residents, while the regions' special police forces are alleged to have been involved in ethnic clashes.

GHANA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Starbow Airline Suspends Operations after Plane Skids off Runway at Airport in Accra

Domestic carrier Starbow (S9) suspended all operations with immediate effect Nov. 26 after one of its planes skidded off the runway at Accra's Kotoka International Airport (ACC). At least five people were injured in the incident, which did not disrupt flight services through ACC. Starbow operations will remain suspended until a thorough investigation into the incident is complete.

Analysis: Starbow is a major domestic carrier and received an IATA Operational Safety Audit Certification in 2015. However, the airline had recorded sporadic minor accidents including in 2015 when an aircraft crash landed at Tamale Airport (TML); there were no injuries. The previous year, a similar incident left two people injured.

KENYA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Presidential Inauguration Planned in Nairobi amid Heightened Security
The swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Uhuru Kenyatta is scheduled to take place at Moi International Sports Centre in Nairobi's Kasarani area on the morning of Nov. 28. The event is slated to begin around 1200, and attendees - including national leaders from foreign countries - will start to arrive from 0800. Officials expect the 60,000-person stadium will be filled, while more than 40,000 people will gather in nearby areas. The military will perform a 21-gun salute to mark the occasion, and cannon fire will likely be audible near the complex. Kenyatta's inauguration will likely be welcomed by celebratory rallies in the capital and other urban centres.

Analysis: Expect tight security in Nairobi, particularly around the Kasarani complex, in the central business district (CBD), near Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO), and at other sensitive locations. Security personnel may set up checkpoints and conduct vehicle searches. Heavy traffic congestion is likely near the stadium; police may temporarily close roads to facilitate motorcade movements, especially between the complex and NBO. Crowds could block some major roads, including the Nairobi-Embu (A2) highway near the stadium. Expect increased security at NBO; the arrival and departure of foreign dignitaries could cause minor flight disruptions.

Supporters of the opposition National Super Alliance (NASA) that rejected Kenyatta's re-election could hold protests nationwide. Opposition demonstrations in Nairobi could take place in the CBD, but will most likely occur in NASA strongholds, especially the Baba Dogo, Huruma, Kawangware, Kibera, Mathare, and Ruaraka neighbourhoods. Opposition activists could attack Kenyatta supporters near the investiture, as Ruaraka borders Kasarani. NASA demonstrations outside the capital will most likely occur in Mombasa and the southwest, including Homa Bay, Kisii, Kisumu, Migori, and Siaya.

As a precaution, authorities will also almost certainly deploy additional security personnel near government buildings in other major cities, including Kisumu and Mombasa. Police will likely fire tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse any unauthorised protests, and could use live ammunition if significant violence takes place. Protesters may throw stones and Molotov cocktails at officers. Skirmishes and violence between rival political activists are possible. Activists could block roads with burning debris and indiscriminately attack vehicles passing near protests. Authorities may shut down communications networks if significant violent unrest takes place, as social media is often used to coordinate protests.

Political tensions remain high after the Supreme Court rejected petitions disputing President Kenyatta's re-election Nov. 20. Kenyatta officially won 98 percent of the vote in a rerun election held during October, after NASA boycotted the polls. His flawed return to power has undermined the government's legitimacy. On Sept. 1, the Supreme Court annulled the Aug. 8 presidential election, deeming it not transparent enough to be declared free and fair. NASA supporters have repeatedly defied protest bans and held demonstrations, and police gunfire has killed at least 33 people during post-election unrest.

NIGERIA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Boko Haram Militants Attack Magumeri Town

According to reports, Boko Haram militants seized control of the town of Magumeri in northern Borno State, located approximately 53 km (32 miles) northwest of Maiduguri, Nov. 25. Witnesses and media reports claim the militants began the attack on the town at around 1900, randomly firing at people and buildings and throwing explosive devices, forcing residents to flee. Military sources confirmed the attack on the town but refused to say whether Boko Haram had seized control of Magumeri.

Analysis: Nigerian military units are likely to move into the area in the coming days to reassert control over the area. Checkpoints and skirmishes are likely across the region; authorities could set up roadblocks and impose curfews. The attack on Magumeri came four days after a suicide bomber killed at least 50 people at a mosque in Mubi in neighbouring Adamawa State, and prompted authorities to put police on red alert nationwide. Boko Haram militants had also attacked the town of Magumeri in mid-March 2017, burning homes and a police station before withdrawing. The Nigerian army claims it repelled a Boko Haram attack at that time and asserted that Magumeri residents might have been complicit in the attack.
The frequency of terrorist operations against targets in and around Maiduguri has increased following the end of the rainy season in September, after diminishing in number and severity during 2016. Boko Haram conducts small- and large-scale coordinated attacks involving mass shootings, suicide bombings, and detonations of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in northeast Nigeria. The group would almost certainly kidnap foreign nationals should the opportunity present itself.

SENEGAL (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Protests Likely in Dakar after Parliament Lifts Immunity for Opposition Politician

Senegal's National Assembly voided the parliamentary immunity for prominent opposition politician Khalifa Sall, late Nov. 25. Minor clashes erupted between Sall supporters and police in front of the National Assembly; police used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. Additional protests could materialise near the legislature and outside the Place de la Nation (formerly Place de l'Obelisque).

Analysis: Authorities increased security around the National Assembly as lawmakers debated Sall's immunity, and security at other potential protest venues will likely be augmented as a precautionary measure. Precedent suggests that hundreds of people could participate in the protests, if they occur; security personnel could disperse the crowds if officials do not authorise the demonstrations, potentially leading to clashes. Security forces may utilise tear gas and water cannon to disperse dissenting protesters. Expect localised transport disruptions near potential protest sites.

Authorities have held Khalifa Sall since March 2017 and accuse him of embezzling public money during his term as Dakar's mayor. His supporters claim the charges are an attempt by the government to prevent him from running in the 2019 presidential elections. The former mayor's supporters argue that the Constitution guarantees him immunity and that he must be freed immediately to take his seat in Parliament after winning polls during the July legislative elections. Sall's opponents counter that he does not qualify for immunity since he was convicted before being elected.

Asia

CHINA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Investigation Ongoing into Explosion at Factory in Ningbo, Zhejiang

An explosion occurred in a factory in the port city of Ningbo, Zhejiang Province at around 0850 Nov. 26. The blast in the city's Jiangbei District was powerful enough to cause several nearby residential buildings to collapse. Reports indicate that two people were killed and more than 30 people were injured. The buildings that collapsed were earmarked for demolition, which may have helped decrease the casualty toll.

Analysis: The cause of the blast remains currently unknown but under investigation; poor enforcement of safety regulations in factories is a systemic problem in China. The explosion does not appear to have affected Ningbo's port operations.

CHINA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) and NORTH KOREA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Chinese Authorities Announce Indefinite Closure of Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge

Chinese authorities announced the indefinite closure of the Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge linking Dandong, China with Sinuiju, North Korea, Nov. 24. The closure is reportedly to allow for maintenance.

Analysis: Automobile and train transport is likely to be rerouted for the duration of the closure. Alternative border crossing points may experience increased traffic, leading to delays. The Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge carries more than 70 percent of trade between China and North Korea. The closure will likely cause supply chain problems, especially in North Korea. In recent months, Chinese authorities have increased
economic pressure on North Korea in response to Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme; the bridge closure may be related to these tensions. The bridge was last closed for repairs for one week in October 2015.

CHINA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Police Free Kidnapped Businesswoman during Operation in North Point Area of Hong Kong

Police freed an abducted Chinese businesswoman from Fujian, China, during an operation in the North Point area of Hong Kong late Nov. 26. The woman was reportedly kidnapped Nov. 23 after arriving in the city the previous day. Her family reported the abduction to police after receiving a ransom demand of HKD 4 million (USD 512,783). Following the victim's rescue, officers raided several nearby apartments in North Point, arresting seven suspects.

Police said the detained individuals had conducted business with the victim, who owned clothing and property companies, though there was no reported link between the suspects. The businesswoman reportedly had unsettled debts of USD 128,191 and USD 512,783 in the city. The victim's connexion to the suspected abductors and outstanding debts suggest that the abduction was likely intended to settle a business dispute.

Analysis: While the threat of kidnapping is low in Hong Kong, abductions related to business dealings and disputes do occasionally occur. Additionally, criminal gangs have targeted high net-worth individuals in the city in the past, demanding large ransoms. Almost all victims are released unharmed.

INDIA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Bank Officials Kidnapped in Tripura

Security forces have launched a manhunt for four employees of the Tripura Grameen Bank (TGB), who were kidnapped in northeastern Tripura State evening of Nov. 24. Authorities said the bank officials were abducted while returning to Agartala in a vehicle through Teliamura in Khowai district. The perpetrators' identity is unclear, but the abductees' families have reportedly received calls demanding a ransom payment in exchange for their release.

Analysis: Kidnappings are a concern in many northeastern Indian states, and are usually the work of either separatist militants or criminal groups. While Tripura has not seen extremist-related abductions or attacks in recent years, government and security officials suspect that militant groups may resume activities in the state ahead of the February 2018 assembly elections. Foreign nationals are not typically targeted for kidnappings in northeast India, as that would prompt a harsher security crackdown on involved groups. Local businesspeople and other wealthy individuals, government officials, security personnel, migrant workers, and those involved with infrastructure projects remain the most preferred kidnapping targets of militant groups in the region. Most victims are released unharmed, though militants have occasionally also killed their hostages.

INDIA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Hawkers Plan Large Rally at Azad Maidan in South Mumbai

Multiple hawker unions are organising a joint rally at Azad Maidan in South Mumbai Nov. 29 to protest ongoing attacks on hawkers. The attacks are allegedly being conducted by Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) party activists, as well as police and municipal authorities. The opposition Indian National Congress (INC) party is supporting the hawkers' cause and has indicated that its members will join the rally. Participation in the event will be high, possibly numbering thousands.

Analysis: Significant traffic delays are possible in South Mumbai, especially on routes leading to Azad Maidan. Police may cordon off adjacent roads and detour traffic. Increased congestion is also possible at nearby bus and train stations as demonstrators arrive and depart. Demonstrators could clash with police or MNS activists, although significant unrest is not likely.

MNS leader Raj Thackeray has launched a campaign to evict hawkers operating illegally near railway stations in the Mumbai metropolitan area following the deaths of 23 people in a stampede at Elphinstone Road station in late September. MNS activists have targeted several hawkers and vandalised their stalls since late October. Hawker unions also claim that police and municipal authorities have been treating them as "criminals" and forcibly evicting them. The unions are demanding that the Maharashtra government take action against those
perpetrating violence against the hawkers. They also want the government to withdraw police cases against those hawkers who retaliated against the attacks.

INDIA (Country Risk Rating: **High**) - Protests Continue Nationwide due to Potential Release of Controversial Movie

Members of the Rajput community and other groups are continuing protests in several parts of India over the potential release of a controversial movie. The film's producers have postponed its release from the originally scheduled date of Dec. 1; however, protests and other agitation related to the film have persisted, with demonstrations in New Delhi, Mysuru, and other cities, Nov. 24-26. Protest marches and rallies have also occurred in other areas of India in recent weeks, including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Haryana. Participation in these events has ranged from a few dozen to tens of thousands of people.

**Analysis:** Authorities will likely continue to closely monitor all protests, and may temporarily close roads and/or detour traffic in nearby areas. Traffic disruptions are probable near all demonstrations. Protesting groups could also organise localised or regionwide shutdown strikes, which may lead to business and transportation disruptions in some areas. The impact of such actions will probably be much less significant in major cities, though localised disruptions cannot be ruled out. Widespread violence is not anticipated during protests, but localised clashes may occur in some areas, especially if protesters defy police orders or law enforcement forcibly disperse demonstrations. Protesters could also vandalise or attack movie theatres that plan to show the film. Demonstrations against the film have been organised by Hindu nationalist and caste-based groups; large protests may intensify preexisting communal tensions and result in clashes between rival demonstrators.

Rajput community members and other activists are demanding a ban on the upcoming movie "Padmavati," claiming it has distorted historical facts and is an attack on Hindu culture. They have threatened to further escalate their protests if the film is released. Many leaders from Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have also called for a ban on the movie.

INDONESIA (Country Risk Rating: **High**) - Bali Airport Closed until Nov. 28; Mount Agung Alert Raised to Highest Level

Authorities raised the alert status of Bali's Mount Agung from 3 to 4 - the highest on the scale - at around 0600 Nov. 27, after the volcano's eruption intensified. The National Disaster Mitigation Agency said Bali's Ngurah Rai International Airport (DPS) has closed for 24 hours, and authorities would consider reopening it on Nov. 28 after evaluating the situation. Officials closed the nearby Lombok International Airport (LOP) the morning of Nov. 26 until early Nov. 27; the airport's closure could be further extended depending on the volcano's activity. Individual airlines may still suspend flights even after the airports reopen.

Authorities have also extended the exclusion zone from 7.5 km (4.5 miles) to 10 km (6 miles), and issued warnings for the public to remain outside the zone with the likelihood of a major eruption now increasing. Officials have been ordered immediately to distribute masks to several villages in affected areas. Ground transport disruptions are also occurring near the volcano, as the ash has covered roads, cars, and nearby buildings.

**Analysis:** The volcano's most recent activity began in September, prompting officials to order 140,000 residents to leave the immediate area. Three minor eruptions early Nov. 26 shot ash and smoke as high as 4,000 metres (13,120 feet) into the air. Prevailing winds carried the plumes eastward, and prompted authorities briefly to raise the Volcano Observatory Notice for Aviation (VONA) from Orange (the second highest of four levels) to Red (the highest level). A Red notice signifies that an eruption of ash is imminent or underway, and typically lasts until the eruption has definitively ceased. The brief elevation in the VONA level prompted delays or cancellations of around 30 flights at LOP and DPS. An earlier minor eruption of Mount Agung, the evening of Nov. 25, emitted a smoke and ash plume about 1,500 metres (4920 feet) into the air. The volcano's last significant eruption in 1963 killed nearly 1,600 people.
PAKISTAN (Country Risk Rating: High) - Nationwide Protests Ended following Agreement with Authorities

Tehreek-e-Labaik Ya Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLYRAP)'s firebrand leader Khadim Hussain Rizvi announced the end of a protracted sit-in demonstration at the Faizabad Interchange between Islamabad and neighbouring Rawalpindi the morning of Nov. 27. The announcement came hours after Federal Minister of Law and Justice Zahid Hamid resigned from office, which was the main demand of the hardline religious group. The government has also agreed to meet several other TLYRAP demands. The Faizabad Interchange is one of the main access points to the capital, and the sit-in, as well as official roadblocks on several other routes, had been causing major transport disruptions. Transport operations will likely normalise Nov. 28 as protesters depart the area and security personnel lift roadblocks.

Rizvi has also ordered his supporters to end their ongoing protests throughout Pakistan following the agreement. TLYRAP and other associated groups, who had called for a nationwide shutdown strike Nov. 27, will likely discontinue their action following Rizvi's announcement. Violent and disruptive protests erupted across the country, including in major urban centres such as Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar, after security personnel tried to forcibly disperse the sit-in at the Faizabad Interchange Nov. 25. That operation was eventually aborted after clashes between protesters and security personnel killed seven people and wounded nearly 200 others.

Analysis: The TLYRAP launched an indefinite sit-in at the Faizabad Interchange Nov. 8 to demand the resignation of the Federal Minister of Law and Justice after laws were amended to reword an oath sworn by elected officials. The change was quickly withdrawn, but Rizvi's supporters accuse Hamid of blasphemy. Rizvi is a prominent leader of Pakistan's Sunni Barelvi sect, which has become increasingly hardline and outspoken in its criticism of perceived enemies of Islam, particularly persons or groups accused of blasphemy. The TLYRAP is a coalition of various Barelvi groups, including the Karachi-based Sunni Tehreek, a political group that has been branded a radical militant organisation. Groups that belong to the TLYRAP are virulently opposed to the Ahmadiyya movement, as well as the Deobandi and Wahhabi sects; the current unrest has sparked concerns about a potential widespread outbreak of sectarian violence. Barelvis constitutes a large majority of Sunni Muslims in Pakistan, and adherence to the sect's beliefs and practises has historically been more pronounced in urban areas, especially Karachi and cities in Punjab Province.

PAKISTAN (Country Risk Rating: High) - Pakistani Taliban Claims Responsibility for Suicide Bombing in Quetta

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that targeted a security forces vehicle on Sariab Road in Quetta, Nov. 25. The blast - which occurred near a bus station in the city's suburbs - killed four people and injured 19 others. Security personnel have launched a manhunt for the assailants responsible for the attack.

Analysis: The bombing came nine days after a motorcycle-borne bomber targeted a senior Pakistani police officer in Balochistan Province Nov. 15, killing the officer and three family members. An explosion Nov. 9 in Quetta targeted a police vehicle in an apparent suicide attack, killing at least three security personnel and injuring four others. Both Islamist and Baloch separatist militants regularly attack security forces in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan Province, in addition to other targets.

Central/South America

BRAZIL (Country Risk Rating: High) - US Diplomat Shot during Armed Robbery Attempt in Angra dos Reis

A gunman shot and injured a US diplomat during a suspected attempted robbery in Angra dos Reis, Rio de Janeiro State, around 2100 Nov. 23. Authorities said the deputy consul was travelling in a vehicle with her husband along Highway 101 when they stopped near the town of Ariro to check directions. The couple began driving away when two gunmen approached, prompting the assailants to open fire; the deputy consul was shot in the foot, and her husband was uninjured. Angra dos Reis is located about 120 km (75 miles) west of the city of Rio de Janeiro.
Analysis: The incident is indicative of the high crime rate in much of Rio de Janeiro State. Though the threat of crime varies widely between neighbourhoods, the likelihood of violence increases considerably after nightfall. While anti-crime efforts are ongoing, police forces are struggling to combat criminal organisations, as the economic crisis in Rio de Janeiro State has left limited resources for security services. As demonstrated in the Nov. 24 shooting, assailants are often armed and rarely hesitate to use force if met with resistance. It is unlikely that the victim was targeted because she was a US diplomat; indeed, it appears doubtful that the thieves were able to approach close enough to identify the US citizen. Instead, the thieves likely targeted the victims because they were in a well-maintained vehicle, suggesting potential wealth.

VENEZUELA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Portuguese National Killed in Caracas

A family friend identified the body of a Portuguese expatriate Nov. 13; the deceased was last seen alive being detained by members of the Bolivarian National Police (PNB) in Caracas Nov. 10. Morgue personnel indicated that they had received the body Nov. 11. Claims regarding the circumstances of the man’s death vary. According to the police officers, the man was shot when he pulled out a gun at some point during the security operation, triggering a firefight in the La Planicie sector. Meanwhile, the person who identified the remains said that the body showed signs of trauma suggesting the deceased had been beaten with a blunt object. The case remains under investigation.

Analysis: Venezuelan security forces have been accused of numerous human rights violations in past years. According to citizen accounts, police officers are known to force their way into houses during early morning hours and gun down accused criminals. At other times, they may raid houses for food and other products. The police have been accused of targeting government dissidents for such raids. It is unclear why the man, who had lived in Venezuela for more than 30 years, was arrested, but it is unlikely that his detention was related to his nationality.

During the week of Nov. 20 alone, members of the Scientific, Penal, and Criminal Investigation Service Corps (CICPC), Venezuela's investigative and intelligence organisation, have been accused of killing at least three people. Any injustices committed by the CICPC or the PNB will likely continue to go unpunished for the foreseeable future. No reliable government-issued crime statistics have been published in at least the last decade, and only an estimated 8 percent of homicides in Venezuela result in a conviction.

Europe

ALBANIA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) and KOSOVO (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Nationalists to Protest at Morine-Vermice Border Post

Nationalists affiliated with the Movement for United Albania are planning to rally at 1000 Nov. 28 at the Morine-Vermice border post on the Albania/Kosovo frontier. The demonstration is being held to demand the abolition of the mutual border with Kosovo.

Analysis: Several hundred activists will likely take part in the rally, and disruptions are possible on the E851 highway if participants attempt to block the route. Security forces could attempt to disperse unruly protesters forcibly, leading to isolated clashes. Any violence could prompt a temporary suspension of customs cheques and tailbacks on both sides of the border. Morine-Vermice is the principal crossing point; there are no alternative crossing routes nearby, so the closure or blockage of the crossing could lead to lengthy diversions. The Movement for United Albania was formed in 2016 to work toward the foundation of a “Greater Albania” encompassing ethnic-Albanian populations in neighbouring territories including Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. Albanian police arrested the group’s founder at the Kosovo border in June 2017 for inciting ethnic tensions.

ITALY (Country Risk Rating: Low) - Transport Workers Plan Rail, Urban Transport Strikes
Unionised transport workers are planning strikes in several Italian regions through Dec. 6. Weekday disruptions are unlikely to be crippling because Italian law requires that a minimum level of service be maintained. Specific rail sector walkouts include the following:

- **Calabria and Lombardy regions**: Trenitalia staff to stage 24-hour strike starting at 2100 Nov. 30
- **Tuscany Region**: Rail maintenance staff to strike from 0900-1700 Dec. 1
- **Trentino-South Tyrol**: Trenitalia train crew to strike from 0900-1700 Dec. 6

In addition, the following local transportation strikes are scheduled:

- **Venice**: ACTV public transport workers to strike from 1000-1300 Dec. 1
- **Lazio Region**: Cotral bus workers to strike from 2000-0000 Dec. 3
- **Florence**: ATAF public transport workers to strike from 1700-2100 Dec. 3
- **Rome**: ATAC bus and tram workers to stage a 24-hour walkout Dec. 5

**Analysis**: Further strikes could be called at short notice. Transport strikes in Italy are often cancelled at the last minute. However, should the walkouts proceed, short and long-haul routes on Trenitalia freight and passenger train lines will likely be subject to delays, schedule changes, and cancellations. Replacement buses to airports will likely operate during strike periods. Increased road traffic congestion should be expected, particularly in urban centres, as commuters use private vehicles. Transport disruptions could begin several hours before scheduled strike times as operators position stock in preparation for altered timetables. Residual disruptions are also possible after the strikes end. Striking workers could stage demonstrations; while these are very unlikely to involve any disturbances, the presence of large numbers of protesters could prompt some localised and short-lived road disruptions.

ROMANIA (Country Risk Rating: Medium) - Trade Unions Protest Government Reforms in Bucharest

Several civic groups and trade unions, including the National Trade Union Bloc (Blocul National Sindical, or BNS) and the National Trade Union Confederation (Cartel Alfa), held a major demonstration in central Bucharest Nov. 26. Tens of thousands of people attended the event, which concluded peacefully. The groups are planning similar rallies Dec. 12.

**Analysis**: The recent protest forms part of a campaign to denounce the government, which is dominated by the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and policy reforms proposed by the administration. Trade union, civil society groups, and opposition groups have staged a number of anti-government demonstrations; these have been well attended and have concluded without major incident.

SPAIN (Country Risk Rating: Low) - Taxi Drivers Plan Nationwide Strike

Unionised taxi drivers in Spain are planning to stage a nationwide strike Nov. 29 to protest increased competition and perceived unfair government policies regarding app-based ride sharing services.

**Analysis**: Tens of thousands of taxi drivers may join the strike, though organisers have pledged to guarantee emergency service to hospitals, police stations, and airports. Expect limited taxi availability during the labour action; other modes of public transport may experience increased crowding. Taxi drivers could organise protests in city centres, or "go slow" actions to restrict traffic. The largest of any demonstrations would likely take place in Madrid. Localised traffic disruptions are likely near protests and along adjacent thoroughfares.

Middle East/North Africa

EGYPT (Country Risk Rating: High) - Security Elevated following Mass-casualty Attack at Mosque in Bir al-Abed
Authorities are boosting security at potentially sensitive sites in Egypt in the wake of a mass-casualty attack at the Al Rawdah mosque in the North Sinai Governorate Nov. 24. Additional security personnel are patrolling Cairo International Airport (CAI) and have intensified passenger screening; checkpoints are also in place on roads to CAI. Similar security measures are possible near other major transportation, government, and tourist sites; the moves appear to be precautionary only, as there is no indication that another attack is thought to be imminent.

Egyptian President Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi convened an emergency security meeting following the midday attack, and declared a state of emergency in the Sinai. The complex attack saw gunmen set off improvised explosive devices at the Sufi mosque in the town of Bir al-Abed, located about 75 km (45 miles) west of El Arish, during midday Friday prayers, before opening fire on survivors as they tried to flee. Some reports suggest that roads around the mosque had also been blocked by the assailants, to make it difficult for survivors to escape. The four assailants apparently fled after the attack. As of the morning of Nov. 27, the death toll had risen to more than 300 people, while at least 120 others had sustained injuries.

**Analysis:** There have been no immediate claims of responsibility; however, Islamic State (IS) militants are active across the North Sinai Governorate. The IS-affiliated Wilayat Sinai is one of the more capable and effective militant groups operating in Egypt and frequently targets security personnel in North Sinai, particularly in and around its strongholds in El Arish, Sheikh Zuweid, and Rafah. The militant organisation appears to have been increasing its frequency of high-profile attacks in recent months; Egyptian officials said that the Nov. 24 attack, if determined to be the work of Wilayat Sinai, would be the first on a large mosque since the group emerged. Extremists in Egypt continue to conduct frequent shootings and bombings against military and police forces nationwide. Most militant attacks take place in the northern Sinai Peninsula, but occasional attacks also occur in mainland Egypt.

**North America**

**MEXICO (Country Risk Rating: High) - Volcanic Activity Fluctuates at Popocatepetl Volcano; General Alert Active**

Volcanic activity has fluctuated at the Popocatepetl Volcano, located approximately 65 km (40 miles) east-southeast of Mexico City, since the beginning of May. The volcano produced nine sizeable eruptions Nov. 24, including over 480 low-intensity emissions. A significant amount of ash fell on the nearby municipality of Atlixco the afternoon of Nov. 24, forcing residents to use facemasks. The National Centre for Disaster Prevention (CENAPRED) upholds a Yellow Phase 2 alert (the second of three levels) with the following restrictions:

- Access is restricted within a 12-km (7-mile) radius immediately surrounding the volcano
- The highway connecting Santiago Xalitzintla, Puebla, and San Pedro Nexapa, Mexico restricted to authorised vehicles

**Analysis:** There are no evacuation orders in effect; however, authorities urge residents to avoid the immediate vicinity of the volcano. In addition to ash and gas emissions, Popocatepetl has been known to produce short-range pyroclastic flows, and mudslides during significant volcanic events. Large-scale eruptions at Popocatepetl have the potential to cause transport disruptions in the surrounding area. Ashfall might reduce visibilities and cause hazardous driving conditions. Winds in the region typically blow toward the east, reducing the likelihood that residents of nearby Mexico City will be affected. Flight disruptions are nonetheless possible at Benito Juarez International Airport (MEX) in Mexico City, as well as Puebla International Airport (PBC) if a significant eruption occurs. Authorities have been known to close PBC for several hours following volcanic activity due to ash accumulations on the airport’s runway.
South Pacific/Oceania

FRENCH POLYNESIA (Country Risk Rating: Low) - Air France Cabin Crew Strike to Continue

An ongoing Air France (AF) cabin crew strike is set to continue after talks with the airline’s management broke down Nov. 27. Cabin crew employees based at Fa’a’a International Airport (PPT) in Papeete have been on strike since Nov. 10 to demand better compensation and safety controls. On Nov. 21, the union accused AF of not providing sufficient staff rest periods to meet international safety regulations, a claim the airline has denied.

Analysis: Air France is chartering aircraft from Air Tahiti Nui (TN) and Portugal-based airline Hi Fly (5K) to continue its international service to PPT. Air France operates three weekly international flights between PPT and Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), as well as limited domestic service within French Polynesia. Some flights are a codeshare with Delta Air Lines (DL). Air France has urged passengers to arrive at PPT as usual. The airline will provide accommodation in the event a flight does not depart, with priority given to non-residents due to limited hotel rooms. Flight disruptions remain possible on domestic routes.

NEW ZEALAND (Country Risk Rating: Low) - Severe Weather Forecast in Central Regions

Severe thunderstorms are possible in central New Zealand through the evening of Nov. 27. The MetService has issued a severe thunderstorm watch for Taumarunui, Taupo, Taihape, inland parts of Taranaki, Whanganui Hill Country, Manawatu, Hawkes Bay, and Wairarapa in North Island. A severe thunderstorm watch is also in effect for mountainous areas in Marlborough, Nelson, and North Canterbury on South Island. Forecasts indicate that up to 40 mm (1.5 inches) of hourly rainfall may occur in affected areas.

Analysis: Flash flooding and landslides are possible, especially in mountainous areas, where rainfall is projected to be higher. Flooding and landslides could block roads, triggering localised traffic disruptions. Severe convective weather is likely and could cause minor flight delays at regional airports. Minor flight disruptions cannot be entirely ruled out at Wellington International Airport (WLG). Similar rainfall caused widespread flooding in Roxburgh, Central Otago, on South Island Nov. 26. Landslides also caused disruptions on State Highway 8.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (Country Risk Rating: High) - Magnitude-6.0 Earthquake Strikes off the Coast of Southern New Ireland

A magnitude-6.0 earthquake occurred in the Solomon Sea, off the coast of southern New Ireland, at 1711 Nov. 27. The temblor struck approximately 109 km (68 miles) east-southeast of Kokopo, New Britain, at a depth of about 57 km (35 miles). Weak shaking likely occurred in parts of New Britain, New Ireland, and Bougainville. No tsunami warnings have been issued. There have been no initial reports of damage or casualties in the affected areas.

Analysis: Moderate-to-strong aftershocks are likely in the coming days. Brief infrastructure disruptions may occur after all tremors, as authorities assess for possible damage.