

The Aid Security Monthly News Brief

March
2016

Security Incidents

Africa

Central African Republic

14 March 2016: Four motorcycle-borne gunmen ambushed and stole an Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) vehicle in the northeast town of Ndele, Bamingui-Bangoran Prefecture. The vehicle was eventually recovered by elements of the former Seleka movement. Source: [RJDH](#).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

02 March 2016: Three local employees of Save the Children were kidnapped by unknown assailants in the eastern town of Lubero, North Kivu Province, where insecurity continues to hamper humanitarian efforts. The victims were released unharmed six days later. Several organisations subsequently suspended their operations in the area. Sources: [ACAP](#) and [Reuters II](#).

25 March 2016: South of Uvira Territory, South Kivu Province, a group of unidentified gunmen attacked a car belonging to Caritas, which was carrying teachers' salaries from schools in Fizi Territory. The perpetrators shot the driver dead, wounded an accountant, and stole a large sum of money. Source: [Radio Okapi](#).

Nigeria

17 March 2016: Four anti-polio campaigners were kidnapped by suspected Fulani herdsmen in the village of Gazmari, Chikun Local Government Area, Kaduna State. A ransom has been demanded for their release. Source: [Pulse](#).

31 March 2016: Trucks carrying humanitarian relief for internally displaced people (IDPs) from Benué State, Central Nigeria, were attacked by 13 gunmen, six of whom have been arrested. Source: [Nigeria News](#).

Somalia

15 March 2016: Al Shabaab militants abducted three Somali Red Crescent Society national staff in the village of Sidimo, Gedo Region. The victims were released a day later after an unspecified amount of ransom was paid. Sources: [Shabelle News I](#) and [Shabelle News II](#).

This monthly digest comprises threats and incidents of violence affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is prepared by Insecurity Insight from information available in open sources.

All decisions made, on the basis of, or with consideration to, such information remains the responsibility of their respective organisations.

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22 March 2016: Government forces raided a camp for the internally displaced in Somalia's capital Mogadishu as part of an anti-al Shabaab security operation across the city that night. Source: [Shabelle News](#).

31 March 2016: Unidentified gunmen shot six civilians, including two Turkish hospital workers and their driver and security guard in Mogadishu. Source: [The East African](#).

South Sudan

05 March 2016: A driver of a vehicle carrying relief supplies was killed in an area near Bentiu. No more specific information is available. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

13 March 2016: Section Two of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan base in the northeast city of Malakal, Upper Nile State, was set on fire by a group of displaced people, after attempting to loot. An unspecified number of people running away from the blaze sustained minor injuries, and about 50 homes of mainly Dinka people, who had fled the camp last month due to ethnic strife were destroyed. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

18 March 2016: A Save the Children national employee working on a health programme was shot dead in unclear circumstances in the northeast city of Akobo, Jonglei State. No information about the motivation of the assailants is available, but it appears that the killing was deliberate. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

19 March 2016: In the South Sudanese capital, fighting broke out between two groups of Nuer people in a UN Protection of Civilians site, forcing some residents to flee the camp. Dozens of people were wounded and one died as a result. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

21 March 2016: SPLA officials arrested a South Sudanese employee of the International Committee of the Red Cross along with three Sudanese traders in the northwest town of Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal State. The reason behind their arrest is not known, and the victims continue to be held captive. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

Sudan

24 March 2016: Female human rights activists have faced threats, assault and rape at the hands of government officials as means to force them into silence according to a Human Rights Watch report. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

10 March 2016: A humanitarian convoy from the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Darfur Regional Authority was ambushed *en route* from the town of Kutum to Kabkabiya, North Darfur State by an unknown group of gunmen whilst. This attack resulted in the death of a South African UN peacekeeper and the injury of another. Sources: [Star Africa](#) and [Reuters](#).

19 March 2016: Six barrel bombs were dropped in the close proximity of a UN–African Union Mission in Darfur site in Sortony, North Darfur, in which more than 62,000 IDPs from Jebel Marra, a village in South Darfur, are being sheltered. Source: [Dabanga](#).

Asia

Afghanistan

Early-March 2016: Government authorities raided the premises of an unspecified local medical NGO in the northern province of Baghlan and confiscated equipment. Source: [Washington Post](#).

08 March 2016: Two deminers were killed when unidentified militants opened direct fire in the western district of Maiwand, Kandahar Province. Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the assault. Source: [Khaama Press](#).

17 March 2016: Two BRAC employees were snatched from their car by an unknown group of armed men whilst en route from the northern city of Kunduz to the Afghan capital. No information about the pair's whereabouts and the motivation of the assailants is available. Sources: [Benar News](#) and [BRAC](#).

Myanmar

29 March 2016: A land rights activist was sentenced to 21 days in prison by a court in Bago Region, Central Myanmar, for an educational talk she held in Hlaingthaya Township, Yangon, in 2014. Source: [Eleven](#).

Russian Federation

02 March 2016: The leader of a local NGO Planet of Hopes, which had sought legal redress for victims of the 1957 Kyshtym nuclear disaster, continues to face charges of treason under Russia's foreign agent law. Source: [Bellona](#).

Middle-East

Egypt

13 March 2016: The authorities raided the office of the charity group Islamic Relief in Egypt over allegations that it has links to the terrorist group Muslim Brotherhood. No further information is available. Source: [Albawaba](#).

Pakistan

16 March 2016: Three unescorted female members of the Lady Health Worker programme sustained gunshot injuries when unidentified gunmen attacked them in the area of Garhi Yasin, Shikarpur District, Sindh Province. Source: [Dawn](#).

17 March 2016: A local female polio worker was shot and seriously injured by two unknown motorcycle-borne gunmen as she was returning home from a vaccination drive in the southeast village of Garhi Khuda Baksh, Sindh Province. Source: [Outlook](#).

26 March 2016: In the tribal district of Khyber, a health official was shot and killed by gunmen in his clinic in the Lwargi area, where he had been supervising an anti-polio drive. So far, nobody has claimed responsibility for this assault. Source: [RFE/RL](#).

State of Palestine

28 March 2016: Dozens of Palestinians gathered in front of the UNRWA offices in the southern city of Rafah, Gaza, demanding that the agency speeds up its promised compensation for refugees affected by Israel's 2014 offensive. Source: [Ma'an News Agency](#).

Syrian Arab Republic

13 March 2016: A volunteer from the Syrian Civil Defence Group 'White Helmets' was killed by shelling in the town of Hayan, Aleppo Governorate. Source: [AEJ](#).

16 March 2016: A health facility in the northwest city of Maarrat al-Nu'man, Idlib Governorate, was raided and looted by al-Nusra and Jund al-Aqsa militants. Source: [The Revolting Syrian](#).

20 March 2016: Russian convoys carrying humanitarian relief were attacked by unspecified militants whilst on their way to the settlements of Harasta, Rif Dimashq Governorate, and Kafr Nan, Hama Governorate. Source: [Russia Today](#).

23 March 2016: A volunteer from the Syrian Civil Defence Group White Helmets, was killed by shelling in Harasta, Damascus. Sources: [EatingMyPeaz](#), [Mutasem AbouAlShamat](#) and [tintin](#).

25 March 2016: In the southwest city of Al-Zabadani, Rif Dimashq Governorate, a surgeon from the Syrian American Medical Society died tragically in unspecified circumstances. Source: [SAMS](#).

31 March 2016: A volunteer from the Syrian Civil Defence Group White Helmets was killed during an air strike in the southern village of Deir al-Asafi, Rif Dimashq Governorate. Source: [tintin](#).

31 March 2016: Another volunteer of the Syrian Civil Defence Group White Helmets was killed when a White Helmet ambulance was hit in an attack during a rescue operation in Ghouta, near Syria's capital Damascus. Sources: [Mechteld Schiphorst](#) and [The White Helmets](#).

31 March 2016: A Syrian Civil Defence Group, White Helmets centre was destroyed by air strikes in the centre of Ghouta, near Damascus. Sources: [EatingMyPeaz](#) and [Syrian Civil Defence in Damascus Countryside](#).

Yemen

01 March 2016: The MSF-supported Shiara Hospital in the district of Razih, Sa'dah Governorate, sustained damages from a nearby double-tap strike. A young man was injured as a result. Health staff and patients were subsequently evacuated. Sources: [MSF Yemen I](#), [MSF Yemen II](#) and [MSF Yemen III](#).

04 March 2016: In the port city of Aden, Southwest Yemen, four heavily armed men attacked a home for the elderly run by the Missionaries of Charity, slaying at least 15 people, including two local staffers, four nuns from Mother Teresa's congregation, and a security guard. The militant group Islamic State is suspected of being behind this assault. Sources: [News.va](#) and [Vatican Radio](#).

09 March 2016: An armed group attacked the IOM Migrant Response Point in the eastern city of Al Hudayah. A 16 year old, unaccompanied migrant was killed. Source: [IOM](#).

21 March 2016: Four volunteers from the Yemeni Red Crescent Society were wounded by shelling whilst performing duties in an unspecified location in Yemen. The condition of one remains critical. Source: [British Red Cross](#).

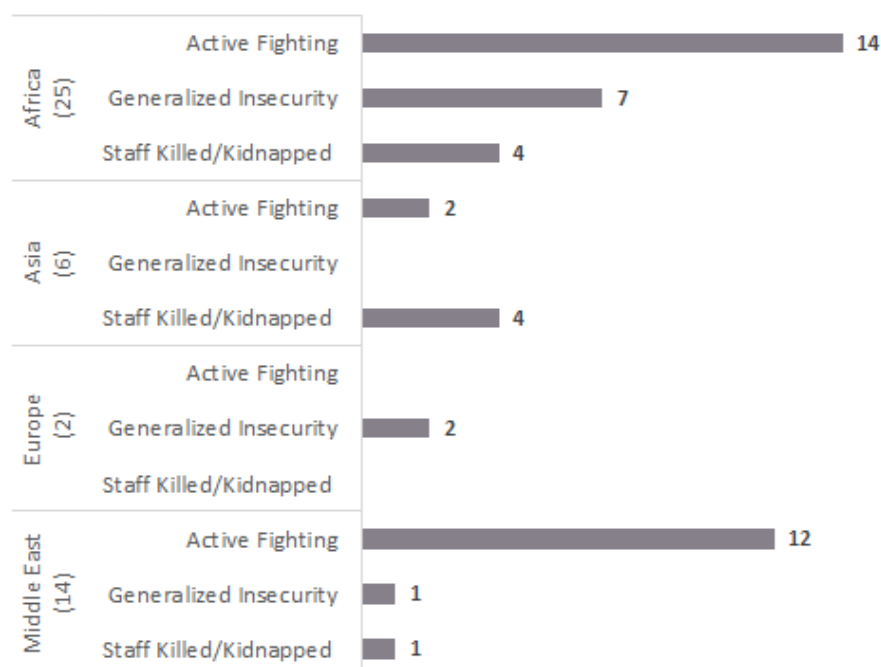
The Americas

Honduras

03 March 2016: In the western city of La Esperanza, Intibucá Department, the co-founder of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras was shot to death in her home by suspected government-linked gunmen, a week after she was threatened for opposing a hydroelectric project. A Mexican campaigner was also wounded in the same attack. Source: [The Guardian](#).

12-Month Trend Reporting (April 2015-March 2016).

The circumstances that motivated aid agencies to temporarily close or suspend programmes as reported over a 12 month period in open sources, by world region.



Between March 2015 and March 2016, the media reported 47 times circumstances that motivated humanitarian agencies to take measures to protect their staff and assets and thereby affected the planned delivery of aid.

Security-related access restraints

Africa

Central African Republic

08 March 2016: The ongoing conflict continues to affect the services MSF provides for victims of sexual violence. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

Democratic Republic of the Congo

02 March 2016: Several organisations suspended their operations in the area in North Kivu Province, in response to the abduction of three local Save the Children employees on 2 March. Sources: [ACAP](#) and [Reuters II](#).

Egypt

17 March 2016: The Government of Egypt has set up a special unit intended to observe and assist the activities of international charity organisations in the country. The purpose of this unit remains unclear. Critics say the function of this office is to monitor NGOs and restrict their work, but Cairo insists that its purpose is to assist them. Source: [Egypt Independent](#).

27 March 2016: The founders of the human rights groups Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights and the Arab Network for Human Rights Information have been accused by the local authorities that they took foreign funding to destabilise the country. They have been banned from travelling abroad, and their assets have been frozen, pending a court decision expected to take place on 20 April 2016. Source: [Fortune](#).

Libya

23 March 2016: The government in Tripoli has denied permission for the UN Envoy for Libya to land in Tripoli. Source: [Stratfor](#) and [Tunisia Live](#).

South Sudan

05 March 2016: Humanitarian aid trucks are often stopped at checkpoints between South Sudan's capital Juba and the northern town of Bentiu, Unity State, where demands for money are made. Source: [Radio Tamazuj](#).

Sudan

08 March 2016: The Sudanese authorities prevented the Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Darfur from visiting Nertiti camp for IDPs in Central Darfur. Source: [UN OCHA Sudan](#).

Western Sahara

17 March 2016: The Moroccan Government ordered the pull out of 84 civilian staff from the UN Mission after accusing the Secretary General of the UN of not being neutral in the run-up to the referendum in Western Sahara. Sources: [Reuters I](#), [Reuters II](#), [Reuters III](#), [Reuters IV](#), [Telquel](#) and [The New York Times](#).

Asia

Cambodia

28 March 2016: In the capital of Preah Vihear Province, Tbeng Meanchey, plainclothes police officers broke up a meeting held between the UN Human Rights Envoy to Cambodia and villagers from the Kuoy ethnic group, who claim they have lost their land because the authorities gave a land concession to a Chinese sugarcane plantation. Source: [Cambodia Daily](#).

China

10 March 2016: The Parliament of China continues to discuss a bill that, if enacted into law, would ban foreign and domestic aid groups from sponsoring activities deemed to endanger national security. Analysts fear that this legislation is unlikely to offer much protection to groups dealing with human rights-related issues, which have been targets of a sweeping crackdown under the current president. Penalties range from the revocation of their registration to unspecified forms of punishment. Sources: [Reuters](#) and [Reuters Africa](#).

Indonesia

The founder of the rights group GAYa NUSANTARA, a local sexual and gender minority group, claims that sexual minorities have security concerns that prevent them from coming to the organisation's office. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

Pakistan

09 March 2016: The offices of three Islamabad-based advocacy groups, Rozan, Sahil and Tameer-e-Millat Foundation have been raided and their work has been restrained following charges of not keeping mandatory records, and of acquiring foreign funding without official permission. Source: [The Express Tribune](#).

Europe

Greece

22 March 2016: MSF pulled out of the refugee camp of Moria, Lesbos, and stopped its bus service between the north of the island and the camp, stating that the European Union-Turkey deal, intended to halt illegal migration flows, has turned the so-called hotspot facilities into deportation centres. Sources: [MSF International](#), [MSF Sea I](#), [MSF Sea II](#) and [Reuters](#).

22 March 2016: Citing similar concerns, the UNHCR stopped transporting newly arrived migrants from the shoreline of Lesbos to Moria, but continued to provide life-saving assistance alongside volunteers on the beaches and at ports. Sources: [Reuters](#) and [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

23 March 2016: The Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee ceased most of its works in the hotspot facility known as Vial, island of Chios, where access to vulnerable refugees is now restrained by the police. Sources: [Laura Pitel](#), [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) and [Reuters](#).

Middle-East

Iraq

08 March 2016: The WFP continues to face difficulties reaching people in the western city of Fallujah, Al Anbar Province, where tens of thousands of civilians are now facing food shortages, as a near total siege by the Iraqi Army and its allies continues. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

21 March 2016: Fighting has severely hindered humanitarian access to the western part of Ramadi, a city in Anbar Province, Central Iraq. The ICRC managed to deliver life-saving assistance to 1,200 displaced families in that area. Source: [Rudaw](#).

Israel

08 March 2016: The organisation known as Darkenu, previously called V15, is among the targets of a proposed legislation, which, if passed into law, would ban groups seeking to influence Israeli elections, in manners such as conducting polls or advertising on the media. Source: [Times of Israel](#).

30 March 2016: The entry of UNRWA construction material into the Gaza Strip has been blocked, which is delaying 46 of the agency's building projects within the territory. Source: [Middle East Monitor](#).

Lebanon

17 March 2016: The Palestinian Popular Committees closed down the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the refugee camp of Ain al-Hilweh, Sidon City, Southern Lebanon, to protest against recent adjustments to its health care policy, requiring Palestinian refugees to pay part of their hospital bills. Source: [Press Reader](#).

Jordan

23 March 2016: Refugees are finding it difficult to access critical health care services in the country owing to lengthy bureaucratic procedures and unaffordable hospital fees imposed on them by the Jordanian authorities. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

State of Palestine

20 March 2016: The United States Congress is blocking an aid disbursement to the Palestinian National Authority in what seems to be an effort to pressure the latter to restart negotiations with Israel. Source: [Ma'an News Agency](#).

29 March 2016: The Ministry of Interior closed down the headquarters of the Norwegian Refugee Council, west of Gaza City, Gaza Strip. Source: [Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights](#).

Syrian Arab Republic

March 2016: Violence and starvation sieges by all parties to the conflict in Syria continue to impede humanitarian access to many parts of the country, including Daraya, Deir ez-Zor, Douma, East Harasta and Madaya, despite a widespread temporary truce that has helped reduce violence in the country's western parts. This has affected medical aid. Sources: [Associated Press](#), [Reuters I](#), [Reuters II](#), [Reuters III](#), [Thomson Reuters Foundation I](#), [Anadolu Agency](#), [Reuters](#), [VOA News](#), [Independent](#) and [UNICEF](#).

20 March 2016: Delivering vital support to vulnerable communities controlled by extremist groups remains a difficult task also because of ambiguous anti-terrorism laws in the West. Source: [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

25 March 2016: The UN announced in March that there are currently 35 UN personnel, mostly from UNRWA, currently missing or detained in the Syrian Arab Republic. Source: [Associated Press](#).

Yemen

March 2016: Intense fighting in several parts of Yemen continues to restrict millions of people from reaching needed health care. Source: [Reuters](#).

24 March 2016: For local traders, buying food from global markets is becoming increasingly difficult as international banks are now averse to offering letters of credit for cargoes to the war-torn Yemeni state, where nearly the entire population is in need of humanitarian support. Source: [Reuters](#) and [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

23 March 2016: The Saudi-led coalition has been imposing curbs on access to ports under Houthi control, whereas the latter continue to prevent supplies from reaching certain areas across the country, including the southwest city of Taiz, Taiz Governorate. Source: [Reuters](#).

23 March 2016: Key roads leading to Taiz Governorate remained blocked until 11 March 2016. It was only halfway through this month that the UNHCR managed to deliver emergency relief items to the districts of Mashra'a Wa Hadnan and Sabir Al Mawadim, Taiz Governorate, using a direct route from the southwest city of Aden. Moreover, reduced violence along the Yemen-Saudi border has allowed the same agency to reach Saada Governorate. Source: [UNHCR](#).

