

NATIONAL HUMAN SECURITY EARLY WARNING BRIEF OF GHANAWARN

Quarter Ending June 2014

INTRODUCTION

Ghana's political leadership and clout in the region has been enhanced through the recent election of President John Dramani Mahama as the Chair of Authority of Heads of States and Government of ECOWAS. While this feat should be celebrated, it comes with a lot of responsibility especially within the context of current peace and security challenges in the region as well as within the country.

In this regard and under the Chairmanship of President Mahama, ECOWAS has held two Summits including an emergency one to deliberate on how to collectively address regional threats to peace and human security. Prominent on the agenda of the Authority of Heads of States and Government are the spread of the deadly Ebola disease and the menace of the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and the Sahel and its implication for the entire region.

Ghana's internal challenges include the increasing inflation rate and weakening of its currency now described by many economists as the "free fall of the cedi" with implication on essential commodities and services. As the value of the cedi continuously depreciate, its consequences on the economic and social lives of the citizens, remains palpable even amidst government's resolve to cushion the effect(s) on the short

term and arrest the situation on the long term.

The areas that continue to generate tension include incessant changes in the prices of petroleum products, transportation as well as food commodities. In the course of the year for example, petroleum prices have been increased about 6 times (approximately 22%). Energy and Economic experts attribute this to the removal of fuel subsidies and the deteriorating value of the cedi against the dollar while the government opine that this is short-term discomfort that will in the long run be beneficial to the economy and the citizens.

The agitations from the labour front (especially education and health sectors) have not helped matters either; even as some sections of the society believe that some of their demands are unrealistic within the milieu of current economic challenges. On their own part, the Labour Union has argued that should the country want its citizens to sacrifice, the government has to take the lead and demonstrate its patriotism.

At the social front, the security agencies are relentless in their efforts to reduce crime such as murder, armed robbery, and proliferation of arms, drug and human trafficking especially in the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions. However recent communal, chieftaincy and land violence have raised concerns about the security

architecture in general. While arrests are crucial in ensuring that perpetrators are brought to book, efforts should be intensified and resources invested more in prevention through community early warning and engagement, dialogue and mediation in order to address the underlying causes of the conflicts and improve the trust amongst the communities in dispute. A case in point is the Bimbilla crises, which had all the early warning signs and could, have been mitigated if actions through political will was galvanised early enough.

THREATS IDENTIFIED

Records from the **WANEP-Ghana's National Early Warning system, (GHANAWARN)** in the second quarter of 2014 indicate that **Violent Attacks** especially *Target Killings* remains the highest security issue in the country. Under this category, children have equally become victims. **Motor Accidents** is the second topmost security threat. Recently, **lake disasters** have resulted in loss of lives. During the quarter, 3 of such incidents have been captured by GHANAWARN. **Threat** of diseases, labour agitations and related social tensions was the third.

The three threats have been identified based on their frequency, casualty levels and potential to degenerate into worse situation

REGIONAL VULNERABILITIES

Table 1: Cumulative Regional Human Security Threats for Second Quarter, 2014

Region	Accident (air, road and sea)	Armed Attack/Robbery	Arrest /Detention	Natural Disaster	Threats	Sexual Offence	Human Trafficking	Disease Outbreak including threats	Demonstrations/Threats	Physical Assault	Homicide/Target Attacks	Fraud/Property Crime	Other	Total
Ashanti Region		3	7	2	1					3	1		4	21
Brong Ahafo				1							1			2
Central Region			4	1		1			1					7
Eastern Region	1	0	2								2		2	7
Greater Accra	4	1	19	2	5	3			1	2	1		3	41
Northern Region		6	2	1	2						1		2	14
Upper West	1									1				2
Upper East				1	1									2
Volta Region	3	2	2								1		2	10
Western Region	3	1	2	1	1	1				1	2		3	15
Total	12	13	38	9	10	5	0	0	2	7	9	0	16	121

The **Table 1** indicates regional representation of incidences reported, with the Greater Accra region recording the highest number (41). It can be reasoned that the cosmopolitan nature of the population accounts for the trend. However, other structural causes such as unemployment and social imbalances need to be further interrogated. The region also has the highest record (19) of Arrests/Detentions. These were related to armed robbery, drug etc. cases. Crime **relating to illegal and fraudulent car sales, rent, land is also on the increase in the region**. Demonstrations and labour unrest (5 incidences) was the second, identified in the region.

The region with the second highest threat is the Ashanti region. It has 21 incidences and also account for seven (7) cases that attracted arrests. Next is the Western Region with 15 incidences while the Northern region had fourteen (14) incidences. Specifically, the **Northern Region recorded the highest number (6 incidences) of violence relating to communal violence (chieftaincy and land)**. Volta region had a total of 10 incidences, while Central and Eastern Regions had 7 incidences apiece, and Brong-Ahafo, Upper West and Upper East regions had 2 incidents each.

TOP THREE THREATS IDENTIFIED IN THE QUARTER

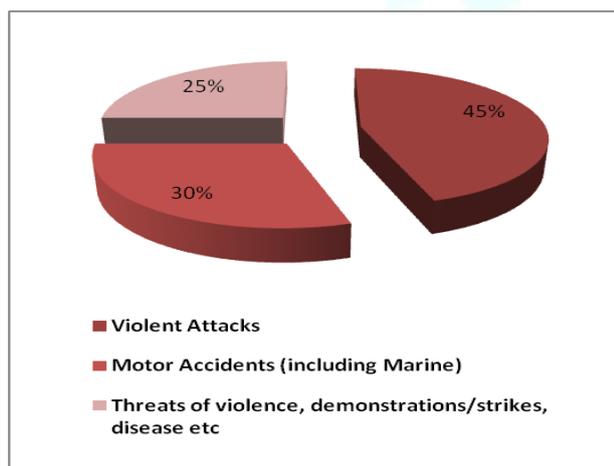
Risk 1: Violent Attacks: Figure 1 indicates data captured under Violent/physical attacks including shooting, stabbing, clubbing etc with some resulting to death. The total number of incidents captured under that category is 18 (45%) of the total top three incidents for the quarter. These incidences are distributed as follows:

- Armed Robbery – 6
- Homicide – 6
- Land dispute – 4
- Chieftaincy – 1
- Politics and Governance - 1.

The incident that is of utmost concern under this category is the violence in Bimbilla, which took place on 19th June, resulting in the death of Naa Andani Dassana Abdulai II, the Overlord of the area and some others. WANEP-Ghana lauds the efforts of the security agencies in curbing and mitigating violence but advocates for a more robust architecture that would include crime profiling, early warning analysis and other preventive mechanisms. Partnership with civil society organizations and think tanks would make efforts in this direction more result oriented

and effective. There were also cases of violence in Kpemale with land at the center of the clashes leading to some loss of lives. **These conflicts including potential skirmishes in Chereponi, Yiyamba and Bariba, Fielmuo and Nimoro should be closely monitored and measures put in place to prevent any act of degeneration into violence.**

Figure 1: Three Highlighted Incidents per Quarter Two, 2014



Per the data from WANEP-Ghana, children are victims of the perpetrators of Homicide. In the period under review, five (5) of such incidents were captured by the system. Children who were not attended to by their guardians were the most vulnerable, with their bodies found in a manner circumstantial of murders. All together, Homicide related cases in addition to those under Armed Attacks were nine (9). The locations of such incidents include Ejisu (Ashanti), Shama (Western), Hohoe (Volta) and Dansoman (Accra). An emerging trend of the violent attack is what is popularly called 'lynching' or 'instant justice'. Some suspects were beaten to death without recourse to the rule of law. The act is age old and one could ask why it is persistent. While such acts might 'kill' sources of information to address fundamental security challenges, it re-echoes calls to make public, outcomes of prosecutions of some crimes in order to increase citizens- security trust.

The total number of casualties resulting from Violent Attacks was 32 deaths and 11 injured as indicated in *Figure 2*.

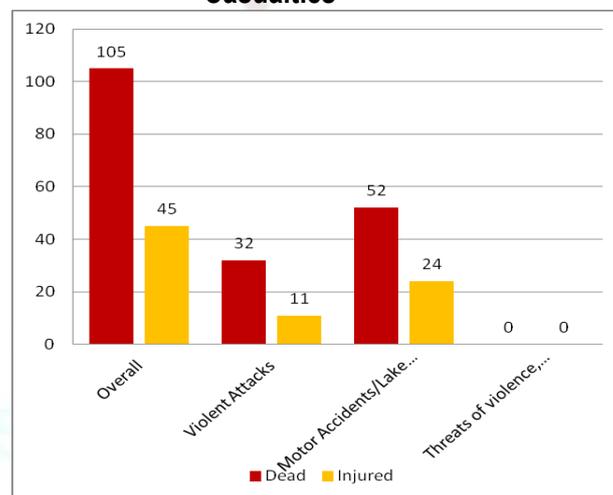
Risk 2: Motor Accidents:

The number of incidents relating to Motor Accidents was 12 (30%). Of the figure, 9 were road accidents while 3 were incidents relating to water transport. Some of the accidents occurred on the Accra-Tema motorway, Dodowa and Adenta in the Greater Accra Region; Tarkwa and Takoradi in the Western Region; and Bame and Sege in the Volta Region respectively. At Aburi in the Eastern Region, four students died in a car crash allegedly due to over speeding and poor visibility.

Regarding water transport disasters, seven (7) people drowned in the Sika Ne Asem River at Prestea Huni-Valley in the Western region. A total of eighteen bodies were retrieved from the Volta Lake after a boat disaster on Saturday 14th June at Tokroanu in the Krachi-East district. In another incident, two students of Ada Senior High also got drowned at Ada-Foah in the Greater Accra region. These incidents call for an evaluation of strategies employed to limit such mishaps.

Overall, the total deaths resulting from the accidents are fifty-two (52), while the injured are twenty-four (24). These are presented in *Figure 2*.

Figure 2: Casualties of Top Three Incident Types compared to Overall Casualties



Risk 3: Threats of Violence, Demonstration/strikes, disease:

This category of threats is varied. It has 25% (10 absolute figures) of the top three incidents. Four (4) of these were threats of violence relating to

Chieftaincy and Land disputes. Three (3) were threats of disease outbreak and food poisoning, one (1) public demonstration, one (1) strike action and threat posed by trading of arms for motorbikes at the Ghana-Burkina Faso border at Pusiga in the Bawku Municipality of the Upper East Region.

Besides these threats, the conflicts at Kpemale, Bimbilla, Yiyamba and Bariba, Chereponi, all in the Northern Region, Alavanyo and Nkonya in the Volta as well as Fielmuo and Nimoro in the Upper West Region, which are being managed, should be closely monitored while we continue to ensure the protection and safety of citizens against the dreaded Ebola disease.

Others: Categories that are not specifically labeled is considered 'Other' and is made up of various degrees of human security challenges. Sixteen (16) incidents out of the overall incidents of one hundred and twenty-one (121) recorded during the quarter were captured. It contains incidents, which are increasingly common and requires urgent and early steps to avert their negative effects on the population. These are Collapse of private buildings that sometimes result in loss of lives of whole families and Fraud in car sales, rent and land.

Media reports about theft of babies have also become common since the loss of an alleged stillborn at the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi in February this year. For instance three female suspects were arrested in Kumasi regarding the theft of a day old baby at a Maternity Home. A 51-year old prophetess was also arrested by the Police for claiming ownership of the baby of one Paulina Sasraku in Koforidua. At Dzodze in the Volta Region, a 33-year old man was apprehended for stealing a baby, while in one situation at Bibiani in the Western Region, a man who was attempting to sell his 10-year old son was also arrested.

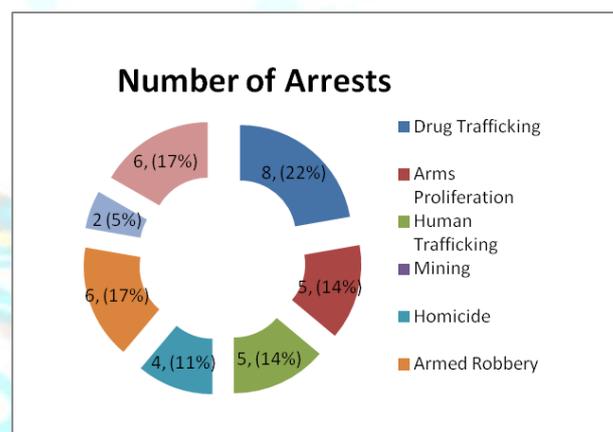
RESPONSE

Arrests/Detentions:

At the level of response, the security made some arrests, which cut across various issues and at various locations. Of the total number of 121 incidents recorded within the Quarter, thirty-eight (38) representing thirty-one per cent (31%) were Arrests. Eight (8) of the arrests were drug related,

six (6) of them Armed Robbery, Arms and Human Trafficking had five (5) arrests each, while arrests over Murder/Homicide had 4 incidences. Two (2) each of the incidents were Chieftaincy and Mine related while six (6) were related to other types of incidents as shown in *Figure 3*. In total, the number of persons arrested was two hundred and seventy-four (274).

Figure 3: Sub-types of Incidents of Arrest



OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE

Based on these data, WANEP-Ghana proposes options as follows:

- The Ghana Police Service should continue its regular monitoring and intelligence to flush out criminals especially those involved in armed robbery, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, drug trade (**also the use of narcotics at some lorry stations in the evenings**) and human trafficking.
- The Northern Region Security Council (NREGSEC) and the Judiciary should remain resolute in devising appropriate response strategies for the Bimbilla conflict and other ones in the region. The outcomes of key criminal prosecutions across the country should be made public so as to serve as deterrent to those who intend to engage in similar acts.
- The leadership of the Police should increase the forensic capacity of the Police to ensure effective investigation of crimes. Private forensic departments should also be established to compliment the Police efforts in this direction.
- On-going dialogue and early warning processes by the state and civil society agencies should be

sustained across the country especially at Kpemale, Bimbilla, Chereponi, Filemuo and Nimoro to reduce the risks of those conflicts degenerating further.

- The government should continue its communication interface with the citizenry to reduce the social risk of the perceived economic hardships while instituting measures to stabilise the economy.
- Parents and guardians should not leave children unguided in order to prevent child theft and murders.

In order to sustain and broaden this publication, we encourage the general public to report incidents of

human security concern to the appropriate bodies and through the following contact:

By Phone Call - (Toll free: 080010029 or Hotline: 0201131885).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS REPORT
AND THE GHANAWARN PLEASE CONTACT**

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