

On 16 Nov 08, two militants were killed in an incident with JTF soldiers in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. It was reported that the militants invaded the city via the Epie Creek and attacked the soldiers who were stationed near the Bayelsa State Government House. The gunmen, who were thought to be members of a local cult group, escaped through the creeks.

On 17 Nov 08, unidentified gunmen killed three members of the JTF manning a checkpoint in Port Harcourt. It was reported that there was an exchange of small arms fire between the JTF and the gunmen in the D-Line area, though the reason remains unknown.

On 26 Nov 08, the Abia State Police Command stated that they had killed five suspected kidnappers in separate incidents. Two suspects were killed during an exchange of small arms fire with the police at approximately 0800hrs in Aba following information that they were planning to kidnap a bank employee. In a second incident, three suspected kidnappers were killed during a rescue operation of a woman, Comfort Erundu, who was being held at UgbaUzo-iyi Umuodochi in Nsulu, Isiala Ngwa North Local Government Area.

On 4 Dec 08, Mobil Producing Nigeria (MPN), a subsidiary of ExxonMobil, reported that an unidentified person was killed when gunmen attacked one of its convoys on the Eket-Qua Iboe road in Akwa Ibom State. The reason for the attack is unknown at present; however, it is likely that the motive was kidnapping for a financial reward.

On 5 Dec 08, there were unconfirmed reports that armed men attacked two police stations, during the night, in the vicinity of Borokiri and West Trans Amadi in Port Harcourt. The gunfight with the police reportedly lasted until 0600hrs. No casualty information has been released in relation to the incident, with reports stating that the gunmen were pursued to Okrika.

## Piracy

Piracy along the coast of Nigeria continues at high levels. The IMB continues to designate Nigeria as a hotspot for piratical activity and advises extreme caution whilst travelling in Nigerian waters, particularly in the waterways surrounding Lagos and on the Bonny River. Pirates in the area can be violent whilst attacking and robbing vessels and they have also been known to kidnap crews along the coast and rivers, when at anchorages and ports. For 2008, the IMB gave Nigeria the second place for piratical activity, after Somalia. The IMB was recorded 40 incidents during 2008 in the country, with 27 vessels boarded, five hijacked and 39 crew members abducted. Even though, the number of incidents reported to the Bureau is under-reported, it still serves as a useful comparison tool with other countries. As such, Nigeria should be viewed as a critical spot of piratical activity, regardless of the criminals' motivations.

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