

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing Criminal Violence and Targeted Killings in Abia State

April 02-08, 2023

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on targeted criminal violence and killings in Abia State. According to data (see map below), organized criminal violence including targeted attacks on government security forces as well as counter-insurgent violence caused over 200 fatalities in Abia State between January 2020 and December 2022. Recent incidents indicate a resurgence of targeted criminal violence and killings in the State. In January 2023, for instance, a police officer and two separatist militias were reportedly killed during a gun battle along Iheorji-Ohanku Road in Ukwa West LGA. In February, separatist militias reportedly attacked a police station, injured three police officers, and stole weapons from the armory in Nkporo community, Ohafia LGA. Recently, on March 31, 2023, five members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) were allegedly killed by government security forces during a street protest at Ama Ogbonna Junction along Osusu Road in Aba North LGA. Members of the group were reportedly protesting the continued detention of their leader.

Why it Matters

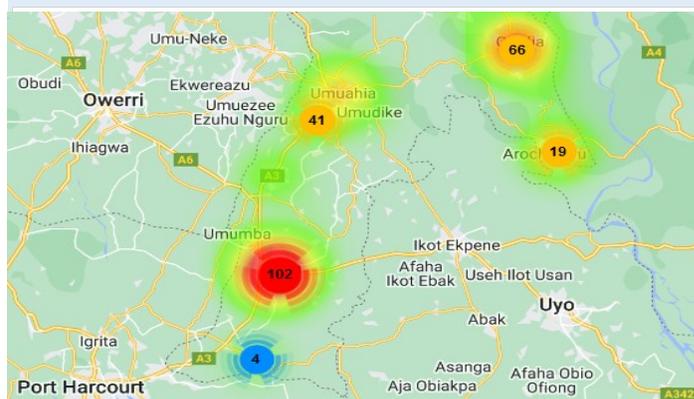
The recent resurgence of organized criminal violence and targeted killings could intensify insecurity in the State, especially against the backdrop of ongoing separatist agitation and rising political tensions in the aftermath of the 2023 general elections in the South-East and South-South regions. If not mitigated, the situation could snowball into widespread hooliganism and lawlessness, and the deployment of security countermeasures that could cause human rights violations. This could intersect with ethnic tensions and cause significant social, economic and political disruptions at the state and regional levels.

Social: A resurgence of targeted criminal violence and killings could bring about serious psychosocial and health consequences that can undermine the social wellbeing of residents. An increase in organized criminal violence and targeted killings could cause a general feeling of insecurity that can force residents to adopt violent coping measures and hostile self-help strategies including vigilante and mob violence. This could bring about social strife and a breakdown of law and order.

Economic: Targeted criminal violence and killings could bring about a general feeling of uncertainty and a 'siege mentality' that could result in the restriction of movement and disruption of economic activities. This could cause loss of livelihoods, business opportunities, revenue, and consequently undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: A resurgence of targeted attacks on security facilities and personnel could weaken citizens' trust in the capacity of the government to protect lives and properties. This could trigger unrest and disorder, and therefore cause more security challenges for the State.

Fatalities Heat Map of Criminal Violence and Targeted Killings in Imo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities caused by organized criminal violence in Abia State from January 2020 - December 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The recent resurgence of organized criminal violence and targeted killings could adversely impact the socio-political, economic, and security situation in the State. Stakeholders should collaborate with the relevant government agencies to deploy appropriate strategies to curtail the situation including measures to safeguard security personnel. Peace and development actors should team up with the federal and state governments to initiate long-term developmental, political, and institutional measures to mitigate the situation.

Contact Us

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Report Incidents: IPDU Early Warning System

Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system: Text report to **080 9936 2222**

Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description.



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