

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

TOP LINE

COVID has plateaued and, as an end is in sight, we look to the future for economic recovery, job creation, and the reopening of schools and businesses. However, it is unrealistic to ignore the threats of violent extremism, foreign government (and pseudo-government) hacking operations, and a rise in opportunistic crime. We anticipate that there will be an increasing number of security challenges before a return to law and order.

Unfortunately, security must be planned for in any event and 2021 has seen no shortages of extremes. Over a million Texas homes are [without power](#) during a record cold snap and [criminals](#) are using this to their advantage. The outage has also highlighted the affect that a strategic geopolitical attack could have had. "[Electric power](#) has been considered a critical target in every war since World War II."

The violent insurrection mounted at the United States Capitol on February 6th represents a catastrophic security breach and intelligence failure. Current investigations, utilizing archived [links](#), is showing an extensive network of armed activists. Multiple countries have been sourced as [disinformation](#) points for COVID information and conspiracy theories. In addition to [disinformation campaigns](#) in the U.S., foreign governments, and "pseudo-state(s)", have made very strategic moves in coastal and central Africa. Indeed, these are [unprecedented times](#) and the challenges ahead are of epic proportions.

An efficient security system requires leaders to avoid waste, pursue clarity of purpose, and embrace foresight.

Question to Consider:

Enterprise risks ranging from active shooter incidents, geopolitical threats, cyber-security incidents are all real as evidenced last week's shooting and murder at the Alina Health Clinic in Buffalo, Minnesota. As a business leader, have you refined and tested your crisis management & business continuity plans in relation to these enterprise security risks?

BEYOND THE NOISE: AFRICA

Endemic corruption and a huge disparity in wealth has been a significant driving force behind instability and insurrection throughout the continent.

Currently, al-Shabaab's reach and power has metastasized to large areas of the [Swahili Coast](#), making national news using a complex attack against the [Hotel Afrik](#) in Mogadishu. Militants in Mozambique recently [took](#) control of areas around key offshore LNG developments.

In other part of Africa: Al Qaeda's Sahel faction in Mali is [targeting](#) French and UN personnel; A [suicide bombing](#), orchestrated by Boko Haram, killed 13 in Cameroon; and [ISIS](#) forces [continue to grow](#) in Sub-Saharan Africa. A state of emergency has been declared by the Central African Republic, which has forced [200,000](#) refugees out of their homes, with more than half moving into the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The huge instability has led to entire chunks of Africa being used as international chess pieces, with Sino-Russian PMCs being well utilized. Recent comments from NATO Secretary General [Stoltenberg](#) stated that Russia had expanded into "other parts of Africa, the Middle East, Syria, the Baltic region and high north," and that this was of "great concern."

As we see western military focus move from the Middle East, we can expect to see a refocusing on Africa. This is, in part, due to the scramble for concessions in Africa's resource-rich environment. The increased Russian and Chinese presence – arguably to 'protect' their national interests, threatens to further destabilize the region and see a return to the many 'Proxy-Wars' of the 1970s and 80s.

SSI has local research and security assets to assist our clients maintain safe and commercially viable business operations in many African countries. We are well placed to support clients who wish to expand or relocate their operations and offer a full suite of services from FCPA compliance checks on new or existing supply chain elements, to turnkey security solutions, and large scale contingency planning and implementation.

Question to Consider:

Companies with an interest in defense, technology, aerospace, and telecommunications may be prime targets of foreign state actors. What steps has your company taken to protect confidential data, and employee records? SSI has a range of counter-intelligence services at our disposal, including covert due diligence, penetration testing, and technical surveillance counter-measures.

TRUSTED RESOURCES: for COVID numbers & guidance

[Johns Hopkins University](#) – Coronavirus Resource Center

[World Health Organization](#) – COVID-19 Pandemic

[Center for Disease Control](#) – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please contact Secure Source International at info@securesource.com to schedule a leadership roundtable with our intelligence and security experts to dive into these topics and to discover solutions to the most complex security-related problems. For information about our enterprise risk visualization platform check out www.acceptedrisk.com.