

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing a Resurgence of Violent Agitation in Abia State

November 07-13, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights ethno-nationalist agitation in the Niger Delta with a focus on the resurgence of violent separatist agitation in Abia State. According to data (see map below), violence associated with separatist agitation caused over 150 fatalities in Abia State between January 2018 and September 2021. Recent incidents indicate a resurgence of violent agitation in the State, apparently triggered by the rearrest and detention of the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) by the federal government. Clashes between government security forces and separatist agitators as well as a weekly 'sit-at-home' order allegedly issued by supporters of IPOB has intensify insecurity in the State. In August, for example, supporters of IPOB reportedly attacked commercial busses over non-compliance with the 'sit-at-home' order, and inflicted injuries on several travelers along Ohafia-Umuahia road, Ohafia LGA. Recently, on October 21, 2021, at least three persons were reportedly killed during clashes between government security forces and armed supporters of IPOB in Arochukwu town, Arochukwu LGA.

Why it Matters

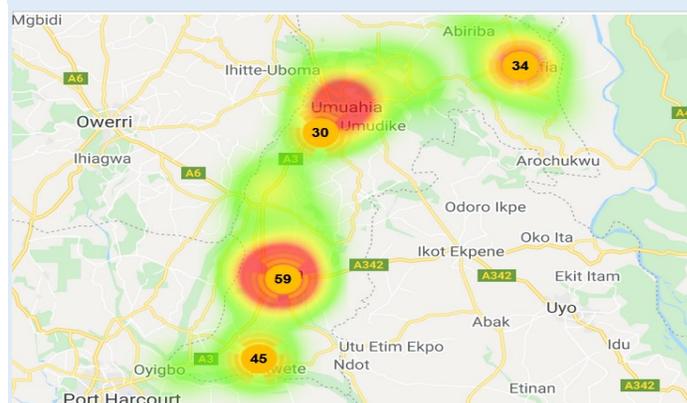
A resurgence of violent separatist agitation has the potential to intensify armed clashes and insecurity in the State. If the situation is not appropriately mitigated it could escalate and intersect with organized criminality and communal tensions in ways that could result in the deployment repressive countermeasures by government security forces. This could adversely affect the dynamics of conflict and bring about serious socio-economic and political disruptions in the State.

Social: Violent separatist agitation and the ensuing restriction of movement could cause social instability and undermine the wellbeing of residents. A resurgence of separatist agitation could also result in the breakdown of law and order and intensify clashes between public security forces and separatist militias. This could cause human rights violations, collateral damage and criminal victimization of residents.

Economic: Violent agitation could create an environment that is hostile to economic development. Clashes between separatist militias and public security forces, and restriction of movement could disrupt economic activities and cause loss of lives, livelihoods and business opportunities in Abia and neighboring states. A resurgence of violent agitation could also scare off investors, reduce government revenue from taxation and undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: Violence associated with the separatist agitation could cause civil unrest and therefore present additional security challenges for the State. The situation could also escalate into criminal insurgency which could undermine the authority of the State government.

Fatalities Heat Map of Violent Separatist Agitation in Abia State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities associated with violent separatist agitation in Abia State from January 2018 - September 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current wave of violent separatist agitation has the potential to escalate in ways that could intensify insecurity in the State, especially against the backdrop of rising tensions over the recent arrest and detention of the leader of IPOB by the federal government. Peace and security stakeholders should collaborate with the State and Federal governments to de-escalate the situation. Stakeholders should also develop long-term political, developmental and institutional strategies to discourage separatist agitation in the region.

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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