



Africa

Egypt: A Croatian expat was abducted from the outskirts of Cairo and purportedly beheaded three weeks later by the Islamic State in the Sinai Peninsula. The kidnapping brought to light the rising militancy in the Sinai and its encroaching threat on the capital. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Libya: The security situation in Libya remains critical with political instability perpetuating the ongoing conflict. This was the first quarter without a mass abduction reported since June's kidnapping of Eritrean refugees in Tripoli. However, there was still a high volume of kidnappings, with Egyptians, Filipinos and Indians being targeted, as well as four Italian construction workers taken near an oil field west of Tripoli. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Nigeria: A media report claimed that about 110 kidnapping for ransom cases have been recorded to date in 2015. A total figure of USD \$5,025,125 has been paid in ransoms. Kidnapping gangs are well organised and find the crime a rewarding cash cow. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 14 October 2015)

Sudan: On 26 October, 30 UN personnel were abducted by up to 100 heavily-armed rebels in Kaka, Upper Nile province in South Sudan. The group, consisting of 18 United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) uniformed personnel and 12 South Sudanese contractors were transporting fuel from Malakal to the UN base in Renk. The rebels took weapons, fuel and communications equipment. The 18 uniformed personnel were released two days later; the 12 contractors on 01 November. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Somalia: According to a leaked document, Italy's intelligence agency, AISE, as a way to hide a ransom payment, helped concoct a story about the rescue of Bruno Pelizzari, an Italian, and Debbie Calitz, a South African, who were kidnapped by Somali pirates in 2010 and released in 2012. The document, marked "secret", states that AISE paid a ransom of USD 525,000. In order to conceal the payment, AISE, SNSA (Somalia's national security agency) and the hostages agreed to inform the media and public that the release of the hostages was the result of a successful rescue operation by the Somali security forces. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 8 October 2015)

Asia and Australia

Afghanistan: Kidnappings in Afghanistan this quarter targeted the construction and developmental sector. 70 percent of the victims were regional nationals, and the rest Europeans. 57 percent were released, 28 percent are missing, and the remainder escaped. Captivity period of those released this quarter varied from one week to three months. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)



China: Chinese officials have complained about the frequency in which Chinese nationals are targeted for kidnapping in Angola, linking the inability of Angolan authorities to address this to the potential for future investment. The frequent kidnapping of Chinese nationals in Angola is a scourge that could discourage investment by the country, an official from China's embassy in Africa's second-largest oil producer said. A Chinese national is targeted for abduction "every two days" in the capital, Luanda. (www.krmagazine.com – 10 November 2015)

India: Nearly 70,000 were kidnapped last year. Among this figure is an epidemic of missing children, many ultimately falling prey to traffickers who hold them for ransom, exploit for sex, force into labour or sell into marriage. A small number of high profile foreigners have also been kidnapped. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 22 September 2015)

Hong Kong: A Hong Kong billionaire was successfully rescued after he was allegedly held hostage for more than a month over a 70 million HKD (£6 million) ransom. The influential tycoon, believed to be worth nearly 20 billion HKD (£1.7 billion), was reportedly abducted on September 20. A special police force was established immediately in hope of rescuing him. However, it wasn't until October 20 that Pearl Oriental Oil Limited, the oil and gas exploration company Wong owns, received a ransom video demanding 70 million HKD in the form of bitcoins. The police launched a rescue campaign on the night of October 27 and successfully saved Wong in Yunlin County, in western Taiwan. (www.dailymail.co.uk - 29 October 2015)

Indonesia: The German yacht Faraway was hijacked in Strait of Lombok off Bali Island, Indonesia. The yacht with two people on board was on around the world trip, when it was attacked by armed pirates in Java Sea. No ransom request was sent and Indonesian Police and German Embassy hide the incident for several days as they launched an investigation and to find the yacht. "Until now the German yacht Faraway has not been found. We have ordered carry out search tasks to the maximum to investigate the accident", said the Indonesia Police Department. (www.newsmaritime.com – 29 September 2015)

Malaysia: Both foreign and domestic nationals in Sabah face a persistently high kidnap threat emanating from the Philippines-based ASG, which possess the capability to conduct cross-border, targeted kidnappings. In response to the threat, the Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM) was established in 2013 to enhance security of the region's porous coastal border. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Pakistan: According to a 2014 US State Department risk assessment, the kidnapping of both Pakistani citizens and foreign nationals continues to "increase dramatically nationwide". (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 22 September 2015)



The Philippines: The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) released a Travel Advisory: “There is a threat of kidnapping, particularly in the southern Philippines. Kidnapping could occur anywhere, including on coastal and island resorts, as well as dive boats and sites in the Sulu Sea. Foreigners have been targeted in rural, urban and coastal areas in the past”. The Government of Canada also issued a similar Travel Advisory. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 23 September 2015)

Singapore: Virtual kidnap cases tripled last year from the year before. Police received 422 reports of such scam attempts last year, 40 of which were successful - compared with 13 out of the 178 reported in 2013. These scams usually involve the victim getting a call from someone pretending to be their relative in distress. The highest sum handed over in a single incident last year was \$45,000 in January 2015. (www.news.asiaone.com – 12 October 2015)

Europe and CIS

Overview: Dependants of wealthy businesspeople are the most targeted demography in central Europe. Ransom payments for high-value targets tend to be in the millions of USD, especially if the criminal group is sophisticated, although more often than not, criminals simply research the wealth of the abducted. High-net worth individuals are advised to adopt security measures, and avoid publicising personal information online, which can be used by kidnappers to surveil a potential target. More than twice as many Europeans travelling and working abroad were targeted compared to last quarter, accounting for 13 percent of global foreigner abductions. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Germany: In Germany, a pair of would-be criminals demanded \$3.1 million USD for the release of a wealthy businessman’s daughter, kidnapped near her home in Saxony. Although the family appeared ready to pay a ransom, she was murdered after one of the captors believed she would recognize their faces after her release. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Latvia: Two businessmen, one Irish and one Swedish, were kidnapped on 11 September outside a hotel in Riga, the capital of Latvia. Police rescued the victims shortly after the abduction as they were travelling in a vehicle with the kidnappers. They arrested seven people. It is believed that the kidnappers planned to demand a ransom. (Control Risk, Kidnap Briefing – October 2015)

United Kingdom: Details emerged in October of the kidnap of a Belgian national on 30 June in Oadby (Leicestershire County). The kidnapper sent a threatening email to the victim’s boss demanding a ransom to be sent in a suitcase on the Eurostar train service. He also withdrew money using the victim’s bank card. The Belgian was rescued after a couple of hours in captivity. The kidnapper was arrested and jailed for eight years. (Control Risk, Kidnap Briefing – November 2015)



Spain: A French millionaire was released after two months in captivity in the southern coastal city of Marbella. The gang extorted \$1.5million USD from the victim throughout this period before he was released for a final ransom payment of \$113,000 USD. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Switzerland: The cabinet decided that the law passed by parliament in November 2014 will come into effect on 1 November 2015. The law states that Swiss citizens living abroad must register their whereabouts and reimburse government costs of coming to their aid if they are kidnapped or taken hostage. It is estimated that more than 756,000 Swiss citizens live abroad, about one in ten of the population. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 7 October 2015)

Middle East

Lebanon: Czech media reported that five Czech nationals, believed to have been abducted in July in Lebanon are alive, and that negotiations to secure their release are on-going. Some reports indicate the abduction was linked to the detention of Lebanese national Ali Fayad in the Czech Republic, in an effort to prevent Fayad's extradition to the US on terrorism-related charges. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Syria: Islamic State (IS) announced in its English-language magazine Dabiq that it is holding one Chinese and one Norwegian hostage and demanded an unspecified ransom. Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg ruled out paying a ransom to secure the release of either hostage, fearing it 'could increase the risk that other Norwegian citizens are taken hostage.' IS identified the Chinese victim as Fan Jinghui, a 50-year-old consultant. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Yemen: Military forces from the United Arab Emirates rescued a British oil worker after one year and six months captivity in Yemen's eastern Hadramawt. Local commentators allege a \$25 million USD ransom was paid for his release. If verified, the ransom is among the highest paid to militants in Yemen. In 2013, four European nationals were released against \$20 million USD, and \$10 million USD was paid for two Dutch journalists held by AQAP. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

North America

USA: Authorities in Mexico on 20 September announced that Mexican Federal Police, working with US officials, had rescued a US national from a house in Reynosa (Tamaulipas state). The victim was kidnapped in Sullivan (Texas state, US) on 27 August. The kidnappers demanded a large ransom and it was not known whether a ransom was paid. It was thought the kidnappers were criminals, possibly members of a drug cartel. (Control Risk, Kidnap Briefing – October 2015)



Latin America and the Caribbean

Argentina: On 20 October, Argentina police detained two people for the kidnap of the former racing driver Eduardo "Lalo" Ramos at the end of August. Ramos was kidnapped by a local gang disguised as police officers after being stopped on the highway between Mar de Plata and Puerto Madero. He was released a few hours later after reportedly paying ransom. The incident followed the express kidnapping of a Colombian footballer playing in Buenos Aires. He was released after paying an undisclosed ransom. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Argentina: A Chinese national known by the initials SSW and an alias of "Leandro" was arrested along with eight other suspects in connection with the kidnapping of a 17 year old Chinese whose name could not be released on legal grounds. The victim is the son of the owner of a supermarket in Barrio Parque San Martin, Merlo. The kidnappers demanded a ransom, but released the victim after his father paid a lower amount. "Leandro" knew the victim well and had a close friendship with the victim's father. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 11 October 2015)

Brazil: Unity recorded more foreigner kidnappings in Brazil this quarter than in all of 2014. In one particular case, criminals in Sao Paulo demanded high ransom for a Chinese woman who was subsequently rescued by the authorities. Unity's statistics shows that 60 percent of abductions in Brazil are express kidnappings, 20 percent virtual, with the remainder recorded as kidnap for ransom. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Brazil: Alexandre Ferreira Sousa, Treasurer of the Badesco Bank branch in Acailandia, 600km from Sao Luis, was held hostage in his residence along with his family by gunmen who forced an entry. While the family was held hostage, he was forced to go to the bank as usual the following morning. In the late morning, he left the bank with the money requested and then returned to the bank to await a phone call from the kidnappers telling him where to find his family. He told the Bank Manager what had happened at this stage. In the late afternoon, the family were left by the kidnappers on a highway about four kilometres from Acailandia. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 10 September 2015)

Brazil: The Manager of a branch of the Bank of Lagoa Santa in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte was kidnapped along with his family. The following morning, the criminals separated the Manager from his family and took him to his bank, and ordering to withdraw money if he wanted his family back. He managed to raise the alarm and the military police proceeded to the bank. The criminals fled and the Manager's family was later found in a wooded area. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 15 September 2015)

Brazil: Douglas Wilson Ramos (28), Manager of a cement store in Cuiaba, was kidnapped by armed men who came to the business site, robbed the workers of their valuables before forcing him into the



trunk of his car and driving away. Four days after the incident, the family still had not received any ransom demand. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 25 September 2015)

Brazil: The wife and three children of the Branch Manager of the Bank of Brazil in Luis Eduardo, Western Bahia, were released after being abducted on 4 October along with the Manager. The criminals entered the family home around 9:00pm and held the family hostage all the night. In the morning, the Manager was taken to the bank while his family remained with the criminals. After the Manager handed over the money the criminals fled in a pickup. His family was released later that morning in St. Desiderius. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 5 October 2015)

Brazil: A bank employee was kidnapped by four men on 14 October as he arrived home at night in Presidente Dutra (Maranhão state). His wife and son were inside, and the criminals managed to leave with the bank employee and his son. They were released after an hour when the police pursued the criminals. It was thought that the kidnapers intended to take the employee's wife and son hostage so that he would comply with their demands to withdraw money from the bank. (Control Risk, Kidnap Briefing – November 2015)

Colombia: Colombia's government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) announced a breakthrough in peace talks. While a subsequent FARC disarmament would further reduce Colombia's already low kidnapping numbers, disaffected FARC members may continue their participation in the drug trade and other illicit activities, including kidnapping and extortion. Colombia is a high-risk country and a significant kidnapping risk remains for foreign business travellers, particularly in the rural north-eastern and south-western departments. (HCC, Crisis Monitor – 3rd Quarter Report 2015)

Colombia: On 03 September the businessman and local government adviser Ramon Jose Cabrales was kidnapped by the National Liberation Army (ELN) in the city of Ocaña. The liberation of Cabrales, who remains missing, is a precondition for the government before any peace negotiations with the ELN can begin. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Colombia: On 08 September national police launched an operation to dismantle a kidnap gang operating in Bogotá, whose members pretended to be FARC fighters to intimidate their victims. In the operation a 22-year-old businessman was freed. According to security forces they have rescued more than 45 people from kidnapers in 2015 to date. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Colombia: On 21 September an 18-month-old baby was kidnapped in Puerto Carreno, located close to the border with Venezuela. In the incident the girl's baby-sitter was killed. The victim was released later the same day on the Venezuelan side of the border, after her parents allegedly paid a ransom. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)



Colombia: A communicate issued by el Comando de la Tercera Brigada del Ejercito Nacional, stated that Diego Alexis Figueroa (21), an University undergraduate, was kidnapped along with two workers from his father's finca in the north of Cauca during the morning. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 4 October 2015)

Colombia: Gloria Amparo Montilla (62) was rescued after an investigation by el Grupo Gaula Militar Valle Avanzada Cauca and el Cuerpo Tecnico de Investigacion CTI Fiscalia. The victim had been kidnapped on 10 March 2015, from her finca located in la Vereda San Rafael, Tulua, Valle, by four armed members of a criminal gang operating in Valle de Cauca, Cauca and Narino. The kidnappers had demanded high ransom for her release. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 10 October 2015)

Colombia: Luis Carlos Villegas, Minister for Defence, confirmed that two soldiers were kidnapped by the guerrilla group, el Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional (ELN), after an attack on a military patrol in Guican, Boyaca Department, near the border with Venezuela. Twelve soldiers and a policeman were killed during the attack. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 27 October 2015)

Costa Rica: A Canadian expatriate who was kidnapped in northern San José province in January has continued to suffer extortion attempts since his release in February. After his initial abduction, the perpetrators reportedly demanded high ransom for his release. He was finally freed following five weeks in captivity, after payments were made to accounts in several countries. The funds were then converted into bitcoins. Since the victim's release, the criminals have continued to attempt to extort money by issuing threats against his family. In mid-August, a bomb with no detonator was placed outside the victim's San José office. (Control Risk, Kidnap Briefing – November 2015)

Ecuador: Three adults and one youth were arrested by la Policia Nacional in Manta, suspected of being involved in the kidnapping for ransom of a 20 year old man on 16 October. The kidnappers contacted the victim's mother on 17 October and demanded ransom. The police broke into a house where they found the victim. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 25 October 2015)

Haiti: It was reported that Dauphine Libere (27), a Frenchwoman working at L'Institut Francais in Port-au-Prince, was released by her kidnappers during the night of 30 September, after being kidnapped for one week. She had been kidnapped the previous Thursday night by a group of men who contacted the French Ambassador a few hours later and demanded high ransom against a threat to kill her. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 4 October 2015)

Honduras: On 27 October, university student Paola Raudales was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen while driving her car in the area of Miraflores, Tegucigalpa. The kidnappers reportedly contacted the victim's family with a ransom demand, but subsequently killed her. Also in Honduras, on 04 October, during an operation conducted by the judiciary police, a kidnap gang acting in Tegucigalpa was dismantled, and seven kidnap victims were freed. The police reported that a number of the victims



continued to be held captive despite the payment of an undisclosed ransom. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)

Mexico: The father and brother of a well-known Mexican filmmaker were killed in Tamaulipas by a suspected drug cartel two weeks into their captivity, despite the family having made a ransom payment. (Unity Resources Group, Monthly Kidnap Digest – September 2015)

Mexico: Agents from la Policia Federal arrested nine suspected kidnappers, after rescuing an unnamed kidnapping victim, who had been abducted on 3 September. The kidnapping gang had been operating in Iztapalapa and Azcapotzalco in el Distrito Federal, and Tecamac, Ecatepac de Morelos and Ixtapaluca in el Estado de Mexico. The gang is thought to have been involved in at least five other kidnapping cases between June 2014 and September 2015. They held their victims for between 50 and 70 days and made substantial ransom demands. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 7 September 2015)

Mexico: The body of Rosa Fernandez (68), a businesswoman from Abasola, was found 24 days after being kidnapped while approaching her ranch in the morning, a journey she undertook daily. Few hours later, the kidnappers contacted the victim's family and demanded a high ransom. The family paid the amount requested, but the kidnappers killed the victim. Three suspected men were arrested for the kidnapping. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 9 September 2015)

Mexico: La Procuraduria General de Justicia (PGJ) arrested six suspected members of a criminal gang from Veracruz as they rescued an unnamed student (18) who had been kidnapped in Huauchinango, Puebla. The victim was kidnapped on 5 September, and shortly after, one of the kidnappers contacted the victim's father on his cellular telephone and demanded a ransom. The family reported the kidnapping to the authorities. The PGJ managed to establish the location where the victim was being held and mounted a rescue operation. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 14 September 2015)

Mexico: Criminals in Pueblo demanded ransom for the release of a female U.S. national. She was rescued by security forces after six days in captivity. (Unity Resources Group, Monthly Kidnap Digest – October 2015)

Mexico: During a press conference in Puebla, the head of la Procuraduria General de Justicia en el Estado de Puebla, said that an unnamed American female had been rescued after being kidnapped on 9 October in the municipality of Chiautla de Tapia. The following day, the family received a telephone call with a ransom demand. The authorities located the house in Axochiapan, Morelos State, where the victim was being held. La PGJ de Puebla cooperated with la Fiscalia de Morelos and a rescue operation was mounted. Four suspects were arrested. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 17 October 2015)



Mexico: La Policia Federal rescued four kidnapping victims after locating a house in El Coyol, Veracruz, where the victims were being held. The four victims had been kidnapped several weeks earlier and had been held naked, with their hands handcuffed behind their backs and blindfolded. They were also beaten repeatedly. The police mounted the operation after learning that the kidnappers were going to kill one of the victims. Two suspects were arrested during the operation. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 17 October 2015)

Mexico: During la Reunion Regional de Justicia y Seguridad Publica organised by the government of Tamaulipas State and held in Ciudad Madero, the governors of the states of Tamaulipas, Veracruz and San Luis Potosi signed an agreement to combat kidnapping and extortion. The cooperation will be the responsibility of the respective Coordinaciones Estatales Antisecuestros such as la Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, Armada de Mexico, Policia Militar, Policia Federal and procuradurias Generales de Justicia y de la Republica. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 21 October 2015)

Mexico: La Fiscalia General del Estado de Chihuahua paraded Nallely Cedillo Sanchez, who is accused of being involved in the kidnapping of Chinese restaurant owners in Chihuahua city. In 2015, the suspect avoided being arrested by la Unidad Modelo Antisecuestro when they disbanded “Los Bustillos” kidnapping gang. “Los Bustillos” are suspected of having been involved in the kidnapping of at least 42 people, mainly owners and employees of Chinese restaurants. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 22 October 2015)

Mexico: On 17 October, two sisters aged 58 and 68 years were abducted once they left their small farm near San Agustin, Atilhuacan, Xicotepec de Juarez, by vehicle. The kidnappers released one of them on the understanding she would raise a ransom for the release of her sister. On 19 October, the family reported the incident to the authorities. On analysing the information, the authorities realised the incident was similar to one in August in which the victim was killed in spite of the family paying two ransoms. After locating the safe house of the kidnappers, the security forces mounted a rescue operation. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 25 October 2015)

Panama: Rodrigo Meron, former player and technical director of Panama Metro baseball team, recounted to TVN Noticias his experience of being the victim of an “express kidnapping” on 23 October. They demanded he hand over money. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 24 October 2015)

Trinidad: The Anti-Kidnapping Squad of the Police Service was called in to help find Carolyn Katwaroo (43), owner and operator of a wholesale business importing vegetables, who had not been seen since leaving her home at Palmiste, near San Fernando on 11 September. The following day, her white Mercedes Benz was found abandoned in Union Hall, San Fernando. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 15 September 2015)



Venezuela: Jose Antonio Castro Costa and Roxana Catalan Padron, well known business people in Puerto Ordaz, were kidnapped by armed men as they travelled to a meeting. The kidnappers contacted their families by telephone and demanded a substantial ransom for their release against a threat to kill the two victims. The ransom was paid and the two victims were released after having been held for five hours. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 13 September 2015)

Venezuela: The authorities found the body of an unnamed 52 year old Portuguese merchant who owned two shops, selling Deli in Los Rosales, Caracas. The victim had been kidnapped the previous evening in Charalleve, while returning home and is believed the kidnappers would have asked a high ransom. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 22 September 2015)

Venezuela: Kidnappers entered during an evening the home in Araguaney of Lorenzo Martin Duarte Figueira (34), a Portuguese national and a businessman in the dairy sector. After taking items of value, they kidnapped the Portuguese and drove him away in his car. The police immediately started a search and on 16 October, the victim's body was found. Two men and a woman aged between 21 and 23 years were arrested on suspicion of being involved in the crime. (Griffin Underwriting, Security update – 15 October 2015)

Venezuela: There has been a notable rise in criminality across the country attributed to the country's economic woes, specifically the rise in poverty and unemployment. On 30 September, unidentified gunmen attempted to kidnap the journalist Roberto Rodriguez while arriving to his house in the city of Maracay. In response to a rise in kidnappings, national security forces have increased efforts to crackdown perpetrators across the country. On 16 October, members of the intelligence police foiled the kidnap of a 71-year-old Italian businessman, killing one assailant and detaining a second. (NYA, Kidnap for ransom update – October 2015)