

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **AKE Releases Quarterly Kidnap Report**

**LONDON** – Risk consultancy firm AKE has released its quarterly Kidnap Report, confirming Latin America as the top hotspot for kidnap and ransom incidents. Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia continue to register the highest number of abductions worldwide.

AKE's kidnap analyst Taryn Evans explains that the pressure being placed on rebel and criminal groups is likely to lead to an increase in opportunistic kidnap in both Colombia and Mexico in the short term. The northern triangle of Central America is likely to see an accompanying rise in the number of abductions as the security situation continues to deteriorate. In Venezuela foreign nationals are at high risk in urban centres, with express kidnappings occurring with the greatest frequency.

“Kidnap groups across the region are rapidly developing into sophisticated networks that are capable of operating transnationally” Evans adds.

The Afghanistan / Pakistan border region is also high risk, with businessmen, tradesmen and construction workers being frequently targeted. Insecurity overall is also set to increase in Iraq following the withdrawal of US troops. This will likely lead to an increase in the number of abductions in 2012.

Africa has witnessed a noticeable deterioration in security conditions over the last three months. In the east, along the Somalia / Kenya border, four foreign nationals were taken, all of whom remain in captivity.

“The deteriorating humanitarian situation in the region, accompanied by an influx of aid workers, is leading to higher rates of abduction, especially around refugee camps”, explains Evans.

Further west in the Sahel region, kidnappings have increased in and around Mali, where five foreign nationals were taken and one shot dead.

“Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is likely to begin teaming up with returning Tuareg fighters in the coming months and try to extend its influence into northern Nigeria.”

AKE produces a quarterly report analysing kidnap for ransom trends worldwide. If you would like a free trial of the condensed Kidnap Brief, please enter your details [here](#).

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to editors**

If you would like to receive a copy of the latest AKE Kidnap Report please email the [intelligence department](#).

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