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## **TOP 10 KIDNAP COUNTRIES NAMED BY RED24**

The top 10 threat areas for kidnap for ransom have been identified in a new report published by crisis management assistance company red24. The report illustrates that the crime has become a multi-billion dollar global phenomenon that is now occurring more frequently, and in more locations across the world.

The top 10 list, which is of greatest relevance to foreign nationals or local individuals of high-net worth, shows that historically risky locations such as Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia continue to experience very high levels of kidnapping, hostage taking, piracy and extortion. However, places such as Iraq, Pakistan and Nigeria also feature.

The locations on the list have been pinpointed by red24's security analysts using a variety of criteria, including official and unofficial statistics, anecdotal evidence, overall crime levels and the kidnap risk posed by issues such as political instability, terrorism and police corruption.

Other locations where kidnap for ransom has been identified as a significant or growing threat include Afghanistan, Somalia, the Sahel-Sahara region of Northern Africa, Kenya, India, China, Yemen and the Philippines, although not all of them made it on to the top 10.

Kidnapping statistics are difficult to obtain – primarily because incident classifications vary from country to country and many kidnappings are not reported for fear of retaliation by the kidnappers or fear of police corruption and ineptitude. However, the official data available - covering Nigeria, Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, plus piracy victims off Somalia and NGO kidnap victims in Afghanistan - reveals that there was a nine per cent increase in kidnapping incidents between 2010 and 2011.

Overall, 50 per cent of extortion-related kidnappings are resolved within five days or less and 90 per cent are resolved within 50 days. However, in terms of Somalia piracy, only 10 per cent are resolved within 50 days or under and an estimated 50 per cent of incidents last over 100 days, while 40 per cent last over 200 days and at least two incidents have exceeded a year.

Maldwyn Worsley-Tonks, Chief Executive of red24, said: "Our report confirms that kidnap for ransom is a growing, global threat. The crime, which was once synonymous with Colombia and the wider Latin America region, has spread to more locations across the world, making it a risk that both businesses sending employees abroad and individual travellers cannot afford to ignore.

"Companies and individuals operating and travelling in these regions need to be fully aware of the risks and ensure they take the necessary security precautions. They also need to have an emergency response programme in place in case they should fall victim to this fast-growing crime.

red24 provides tailored advice to clients that are sending employees to areas with a high risk of kidnap. Apart from having a thorough understanding of the threat level in the country being visited, red24 recommends that travellers should keep a low profile, avoid routines and avoid mentioning their company name, or nature of their business in the country, to strangers.

### **Top 10 threat areas for kidnap for ransom in 2012:**

1. **Afghanistan:** Around 950 kidnappings for ransom per year but foreign exposure is currently limited due to travel restrictions.
2. **Somalia:** The offshore threat is well established; 24 vessels were seized in 2011 with over 400 hostages taken (and 265 still held captive).
3. **Iraq:** No official figures are available for 2011, but red24's anecdotal evidence suggests the risks remain high. The country provides a complex kidnapping risk environment with criminal, terrorist and politically- motivated parties all carrying out kidnappings.

4. **Nigeria:** The country records well in excess of 1,000 kidnappings for ransom a year.
5. **Pakistan:** Official statistics reveal over 15,000 kidnappings a year and the true number is likely to be higher due to underreporting. However, only 10-20% of abductions are for ransom.
6. **Yemen:** Over 200 foreign nationals have been kidnapped over the past 20 years.
7. **Venezuela:** Official statistics revealed over 1,000 kidnappings for ransom in the first ten months of 2011, and the country has one of the highest per capita rates of abduction in the world.
8. **Mexico:** Official statistics for 2011 are likely to reveal over 2,000 kidnappings for ransom. However, the actual number is far higher and the Mexican NGO, Consejo para la Ley y los Derechos Humanos (CLDH), reported that its statistics revealed some 17,889 kidnaps.
9. **Haiti:** Incident numbers now in the low hundreds, which is a significant decline on 2006 when some 720 incidents were recorded. However, a significant threat persists and per capita abduction rates are second only to Venezuela.
10. **Colombia:** Despite a significant reduction in incidents over the past ten years, incident numbers in recent years are still high with 258 kidnappings recorded by the authorities in 2011.

To download a full copy of red24's *Threat Forecast 2012 Report* log on to:  
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#### **About red24**

red24 is a crisis management assistance company providing guidance, assistance and response within crisis management, travel tracking, product recall, kidnap and ransom and travel security. red24 was founded in 2000 and is listed on the London AIM Stock Exchange (REDT). For more

information on our services, please contact [pressoffice@red24.com](mailto:pressoffice@red24.com) or visit our website [www.red24.com](http://www.red24.com)