

Protest

MAY

13:32 UTC

DRC Tactical: Civil society group slated to hold protest march towards PM office in Kinshasa at 7:30 (local time) on May 3; maintain vigilance

Please be advised

- According to an official notice, the National Movement of the Offended Consumers (MNCL) called for a protest march in Kinshasa on May 3.
- Protesters are slated to gather at the Huileries roundabout at 07:30 (local time), and march toward the Prime Minister's (PM) office. The exact route of the march remains unclear.
- The protest is reportedly organized to demand the cancellation of the Register of Mobile Devices (RAM) tax, which the MNCL claims to be a "state fraud".



Assessments & Forecast

1. The RAM tax was established in September 2020 with the aim of fighting the circulation of stolen mobile phones. This, coupled with reports of widespread internet outages, prompted civil society

elements to launch the MNLC as a platform to express locals' grievances related to internet and mobile phone services. Despite thousands of followers on the MNLC's social media pages, the movement's mobilization capability remains unknown as the slated march appears to be one of its first protest activities.

2. – : Given these circumstances, and the relatively narrow agenda of the protest, the turnout can be expected to be limited with mid-to-high dozens of participants. Given the anti-government nature of the protest march and the sensitivity of its locations, bolstered security deployments are expected in the vicinity of the Huileries roundabout and the PM office starting from the early morning hours, with potential checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent access of potential protesters. Given that the COVID-19 regulations prohibit gatherings of over 10 people, the security forces are liable to forcibly disperse the protest, likely using batons and arrests. Traffic disruptions can be expected around the protest march route.

Recommendations

Those operating or residing in Kinshasa on May 3 are advised to maintain vigilance and allot for traffic disruptions in the vicinity of Huileries roundabout and the PM office during the morning hours due to the planned protest and potential for unrest.