



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On October 16th, European Union (E.U.) health ministers met in Brussels, Belgium, to discuss ways to strengthen Europe against the Ebola threat. While the group reached consensus on the need to improve the systems in place in West Africa to screen travelers for Ebola, there was a lack of agreement on screening procedures for passengers arriving in Europe. France, the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the Czech Republic have implemented enhanced screening measures for travelers arriving from West Africa. Meanwhile, Belgium and other countries continue to believe that regulations do not require more stringent screening measures. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 16th, in response to growing pressure for the White House to name an Ebola czar, U.S. President Barack Obama indicated it might be appropriate to designate a single individual to coordinate the Administration's Ebola response efforts. In addition, President Obama said he was not philosophically opposed to a travel ban from the Ebola-stricken region of West Africa if it would keep Americans safe, but expressed his belief that a travel ban could be counterproductive. President Obama's comments were noted [here](#).

On October 16th, U.S. President Barack Obama and Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven spoke about the Ebola crisis. President Obama encouraged Sweden to play a leading role in the international response and welcomed increased coordination between Sweden and the U.S. The leaders also agreed on the urgency of the crisis in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, and the need for the international community to do more and act quickly to address it. The discussion was summarized [here](#).

On October 16th, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke by phone with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper regarding the Ebola outbreak. President Obama thanked Prime Minister Harper for Canada's commitment to international efforts to combat Ebola. The leaders also agreed on the need for greater international action and recognized the U.S. and Canada could collaborate further to halt the spread of the outbreak and growth of new cases in West Africa. Outcomes of the conversation were highlighted [here](#).

On October 16th, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) hosted a webinar to solicit industry feedback on the use of the Public Health Electronic Health Records Vendors Collaboration Initiative in screening patients for Ebola. The objective of the initiative is to include a travel history and assessment of pertinent clinical signs and symptoms in an electronic format that can help clinicians diagnose and isolate patients infected with the virus. The program was previously used to help providers meet Stage 1 and 2 meaningful use public health objectives. An article on the initiative can be read [here](#).

On October 16th, the CDC decided to expand its outreach to passengers who traveled with recently diagnosed Ebola patient, Amber Vinson, on an outbound flight from Dallas to Cleveland. Passengers who traveled on the October 10th Frontier Airlines flight were asked to contact the CDC to be interviewed regarding any potential risk of exposure to Ebola. The CDC had previously started monitoring passengers on Vinson's return flight to Dallas on October 13th. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On October 16th, enhanced screening measures for incoming travelers from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, were implemented at Washington Dulles International Airport, Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, and Newark Liberty International Airport. Similar measures were implemented at JFK International Airport last week. The new screening measures allow Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers to single out travelers from Ebola-afflicted nations, ask them to fill out Ebola-specific questionnaires, and take their temperatures. An article on the screening procedures can be read [here](#).

On October 16th, North Carolina-based biopharmaceutical company Chimerix said it had received authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to conduct a clinical trial of its experimental Ebola drug, brincidofovir. The company reported that brincidofovir tablets are available for immediate use in clinical trials. The experimental drug has previously been provided on an emergency basis to Ebola patients Thomas Eric Duncan and Ashoka Mukpo. The clinical trial was announced [here](#).

On October 16th, Nina Pham, one of two Dallas nurses infected with Ebola, was transferred from Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for treatment. The NIH facility is one of four in the U.S. with a special biocontainment unit. Pham's transfer to the NIH was reported [here](#).

On October 16th, Northeastern University Professor Alessandro Vespignani, an expert in running computer simulations of infectious disease outbreaks, said there could be as many as two dozen people in the U.S. infected with Ebola by the end of the month. Professor Vespignani said the projection for Ebola cases in the U.S. is highly dependent upon containment of the virus in West Africa and the numbers may rise significantly if the outbreak is not stopped at its source. The study was described [here](#).

On October 17th, in a draft document, the United Nations (U.N.) World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged its failures in trying to stop the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. According to the document, the WHO believes its experts should have realized that traditional infectious disease containment methods would not work in West Africa, given porous borders and lacking health system infrastructure. The agency also admitted that its own bureaucracy created challenges in managing the response effort. Excerpts from the document were highlighted [here](#).

On October 17th, U.N. Crisis Communications Chief Sarah Crowe told press Ebola survivors who have developed immunity to the virus are being trained to care for children in Liberia and Sierra Leone. According to a U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) survey, children in West Africa face stigma and rejection from community and family members, especially if the children are Ebola survivors. The U.N. estimates approximately 3,700 orphans are in the region, with only 600 having been reunited with a relative. More can be read [here](#).

On October 17th, U.S. President Barack Obama convened his national security and public health teams to discuss the whole-of-government response to Ebola. In addition to discussing the situation in Dallas, cabinet members discussed coordination at the federal, state, and local levels, and with frontline health care workers. A summary of the discussion was posted [here](#).

On October 17th, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry delivered remarks to members of the U.S.

diplomatic corps on the response to Ebola. Secretary Kerry discussed the support the U.S. is already providing in West Africa, including the provision of \$258 million in assistance and the deployment of 4,000 troops to the region. In addition, he noted the need for more vehicles for the transportation of resources, more mobile laboratories, treatment centers, and beds, and more health care workers to care for patients in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Secretary Kerry's full remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On October 17th, Ranking Member of the U.S. Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee Susan Collins (R-ME) sent a letter to President Barack Obama offering her support for Ebola-related travel restrictions. She recommended the Administration restrict travel to the U.S. from West African countries most affected by Ebola to essential personnel, including health care and aid workers, and develop quarantine procedures so that anyone traveling from these countries can be monitored for a 21-day incubation period for symptoms of the virus. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 17th, U.S. Congressmen Kenny Marchant (R-TX) and Sam Johnson (R-TX) announced plans to introduce legislation banning travel between the U.S. and the countries in West Africa afflicted by Ebola. They plan to introduce their bill once Congress reconvenes on November 12th. The forthcoming bill is anticipated to suspend travel visas for non-U.S. citizens traveling to the U.S. from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, as well as any country that experiences an Ebola outbreak in the future. Congressman Dennis Ross (R-FL) has expressed interest in introducing similar legislation. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 18th, former Cuban leader Fidel Castro said Cuba is ready to work with the U.S. to help contain the spread of Ebola in West Africa. Castro indicated the partnership on Ebola will not be an attempt to seek peace between the two countries. Cuba has already pledged to send 460 doctors and nurses to West Africa to help stem the spread of the virus at the source. Castro's remarks were recorded [here](#).

On October 18th, the Government of Canada announced plans to ship 800 vials of the experimental Ebola vaccine VSV-EBOV to the WHO for utilization in West Africa. The vaccine was developed by the National Microbiology Laboratory and the Canadian Government has licensed NewLink Genetics Corp. to ramp up production of the vaccine in response to the crisis in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The first shipment was made on Monday. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 18th, the White House issued a video message detailing the steps the Administration is taking at every level of government to respond to the Ebola crisis. President Barack Obama said the Ebola virus is a public health and national security priority. He also described how the virus is transmitted and detailed how confirmed Ebola patients are treated. The video can be watched [here](#).

On October 18th, U.S. President Barack Obama convened members of his national security and public health teams to update him on the response to domestic Ebola cases. The President's advisers detailed the status of the contact tracing process to identify and monitor all individuals who may have come into contact with Ebola patients in Dallas following their exposure. The group also reviewed efforts to ensure that Dallas has all of the appropriate resources to diagnose any additional Ebola cases safely and effectively. There was also a discussion of the preparedness of the health system nationwide. A readout of the meeting was posted [here](#).

On October 18th, Cleveland Hopkins International Airport sent home a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officer who patted down Dallas nurse Amber Vinson in a routine security check before she was diagnosed with Ebola. Vinson did not display any symptoms of the Ebola virus at the time of the pat-down and the officer had been wearing disposable medical gloves. The CDC reported the TSA sent the officer home out of an abundance of caution. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 18th, the *New York Post* reported Angel Staffing Inc. is seeking applicants to assist CBP officers and CDC officials in identifying possible Ebola patients at JFK Airport's international terminal. The job posting noted that EMTs will be paid \$19 an hour, while paramedics will be paid \$29 an hour for their services. Information on the job posting was shared [here](#).

On October 19th, the WHO announced Nigeria has not had a confirmed case of Ebola for 42 days, the equivalent of two incubation periods, and the country is now considered Ebola-free. The WHO made a

similar announcement declaring Senegal Ebola-free on Friday. The progress made by both was described [here](#).

On October 19th, Spain's Special Committee on Ebola announced that after being treated in isolation in Madrid, Spanish nurse Teresa Romero has tested negative for Ebola. Romero was the first confirmed case of Ebola transmission outside of West Africa. While her blood no longer shows traces of the virus, Romero is likely to remain in quarantine and spend three more weeks in the hospital to recover and ensure the virus does not reappear. An update on Romero's case was provided [here](#).

On October 19th, U.S. President Barack Obama appointed Ron Klain to serve as his Ebola czar. White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest reported that Klain will be responsible for ensuring that all government agencies participating in the Ebola response integrate their efforts. Klain, who is a former Chief of Staff to Vice President Joe Biden and to Vice President Al Gore, will report to White House Homeland Security Adviser Lisa Monaco and National Security Adviser Susan Rice. His appointment was announced [here](#).

On October 19th, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced he has directed Northern Command Commander General Chuck Jacoby to prepare and train a 30-person expeditionary medical support team that could, if required, provide short-notice assistance to civilian medical professionals in the U.S. treating patients with Ebola. The team will consist of 20 critical care nurses, five doctors specializing in infectious diseases, and five trainers in infectious disease protocols. Once formed, the team will receive training from the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases. A press release was issued [here](#).

On October 19th, the CDC issued stricter guidelines for health care professionals treating Ebola patients. The original recommendations were issued in August and provided some flexibility. The new guidelines are more specific, especially regarding the coverage of all skin, procedures for removing protective gear, and the handling of medical waste. News of the revised guidelines was reported [here](#).

On October 19th, CEO of Texas Health Resources Barclay Berdan published letter in local papers apologizing for the hospital's failure to diagnose Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan with Ebola during his first visit to the emergency room at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital. Berdan noted the system is taking aggressive actions to improve its response and to protect the health and safety of its employees and the larger community. The system is also continuing to investigate how Nina Pham and Amber Vinson, two nurses who cared for Duncan, became infected with Ebola. The letter can be read [here](#).

On October 19th, the *Wall Street Journal* detailed the development and testing of GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) experimental Ebola vaccine. The vaccine, developed by NIH Vaccine Research Center Senior Investigator Dr. Nancy Sullivan, is scheduled to undergo full human testing by early 2015 and could potentially be deployed for use in West Africa. GSK estimates one million doses of the vaccine could be available next year. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On October 19th, Carnival Cruise Lines announced that a female passenger who had been isolated after possible exposure to Ebola tested negative for the disease. The passenger is a lab worker at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital. While she did not have contact with Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan, it is believed she may have come in contact with his test samples. The ship was not permitted to dock in Belize or Mexico because of the presence of the woman on board. The U.S. State Department worked with the cruise line to safely bring the passenger back to the U.S. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 20th, Pentagon Spokesman Colonel Steve Warren announced more U.S. troops are arriving in Africa this week to help fight the Ebola outbreak. More than 500 troops are already deployed in Liberia to build treatment centers and provide logistical support. Another 115 troops are in Dakar, Senegal, establishing a transportation hub to support the mission. An additional 80 troops were expected to arrive in West Africa on Wednesday, to be followed by thousands more. Colonel Warren's comments can be seen [here](#).

On October 20th, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) announced a full committee hearing on the U.S. Government response to the Ebola outbreak to be held on November 6th. It is expected the Committee will discuss emergency funding for the Ebola crisis to be

considered during the lame duck work period. Reportedly, the White House has already held preliminary discussions with Senate appropriators about a new Ebola funding request. The hearing was announced [here](#).

On October 20th, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) announced plans to introduce legislation in November to impose a travel ban on new visas for nationals of Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone in response to the Ebola outbreak. The legislation will call for the ban to remain in place until the CDC determines the Ebola outbreak has been contained. In addition, there will be a carve-out for visas for individuals who have been approved for travel to the U.S. to receive Ebola-related training. Details on the forthcoming legislation were shared [here](#).

On October 20th, U.S. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) called on the CDC to extend the 21-day incubation for monitoring for symptoms of Ebola. According to a study recently published in the *Public Library of Science (PLOS)*, approximately 5 percent of Ebola patients had an incubation period longer than the 21-day period. CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden rejected the study, and said the CDC remains confident in the 21-day incubation period. A video of Congresswoman Gabbard's comments can be watched [here](#).

On October 20th, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal signed an executive order directing all state agencies, including universities, to develop plans for dealing with Ebola and travelers from affected countries. The order directs schools and agencies to report any travel of staff and students to Ebola-stricken countries and calls for restrictions on those individuals' travel and appearances in public. The executive order can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 20th, the 21-day monitoring period ended for 43 people who had contact with now deceased Texas Ebola patient Thomas Eric Duncan. The group of people who had contact with Duncan was monitored for symptoms of Ebola during the incubation period and none contracted the virus. Among those cleared were four of Duncan's family members who cared for him when he first became symptomatic and then remained in the apartment where Duncan had fallen ill after his hospitalization. The end of the monitoring period was noted [here](#).

On October 20th, health officials in Dallas continued to monitor approximately 120 people for possible infection with Ebola because they may have had contact with Eric Duncan or with Nina Pham or Amber Vinson, the two nurses who fell ill with Ebola after caring for Duncan. The monitoring period for these patients is due to end on November 7th. Details can be seen [here](#).

On October 20th, three Belton Independent School District schools that were closed last week following an Ebola scare reopened. School district officials reported that Sparta Elementary School, North Belton Middle School, and Belton Early Childhood School were closed for disinfection because students had been on a flight with confirmed Ebola patient Amber Vinson. The students who were on the flight will remain at home for 21 days. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 20th, the third Ebola patient treated at Emory University hospital was released. The patient, a WHO doctor was infected while working in Sierra Leone and has opted to remain anonymous, had been in critical condition when first arriving in the U.S. on September 9th, but made a full recovery after more than a month of treatment. An update on the case was provided [here](#).

On October 20th, National Nurses United, the largest nurses' union in the U.S., launched a week of events across the country intended to pressure the Obama Administration and Congress to require strict standards for Ebola treatment at U.S. health centers. A kickoff event was held at St. Louis University Hospital in Missouri, with additional events planned in California, Illinois, Maine, and Florida. The campaign was described [here](#).

On October 20th, New York University (NYU) announced new restrictions prohibiting students, faculty, and staff from traveling to Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia, for university purposes because of the Ebola outbreak. In addition, NYU said it is strongly discouraging any travel to the region for personal reasons, as well as the hosting of any personal visitors or visitors for university-related activities from countries under CDC travel warnings. More information was shared [here](#).

On October 21st, the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda reported that Rwanda's Ministry of Health is now requiring all travelers arriving in Rwanda who traveled to Spain or the U.S. in the 22 days prior to report their health conditions to medical authorities. The new requirements have been implemented in response to reported Ebola cases in both countries. Rwandan Health Minister Agnes Binagwaho said travelers will be required to report their temperatures upon arriving in the country and be asked to fill out a questionnaire. There have been no reported Ebola cases in Rwanda, but 30 people have been quarantined as a precaution since the outbreak in West Africa began in March. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 21st, as part of the \$9.5 million in World Bank funding provided to the U.N. for delivery of food and non-food items in response to the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, the World Food Programme (WFP) airlifted 20 ambulances and 10 mortuary pickup trucks to scale up the response capacities of the Government of Sierra Leone. A total of 74 vehicles worth roughly \$4 million will ultimately be delivered to a logistical hub for Ebola response efforts in Freetown. The delivery was noted [here](#).

On October 21st, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Army General Martin Dempsey posted a video on YouTube seeking to address concerns about U.S. troops deploying to the region in West Africa ravaged by Ebola. Chairman Dempsey said the operation in West Africa is a national security priority and the Department of Defense (DOD) will do all it can to protect the health of its personnel during and after deployments. The video can be watched [here](#).

On October 21st, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced new restrictions on travelers to the U.S. from Ebola-afflicted countries, effective October 22nd. The new restrictions require all air passengers whose travels originate in Liberia, Sierra Leone, or Guinea to arrive at one of the five airports that currently have advanced Ebola screening measures and additional resources in place. DHS also noted that measures are also currently in place to identify and screen anyone at all land and sea ports of entry into the U.S. believed to have been in Liberia, Sierra Leone, or Guinea, in the preceding 21 days. The announcement was largely praised by travel groups, including the U.S. Travel Association. In addition, Airlines for America (A4A) reported that U.S. airlines were prepared to cooperate fully with the new protocols. A press release was issued [here](#).

On October 21st, U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI) reacted to DHS's new restrictions on travelers from West Africa. Congressman Upton said the new policy requiring travelers from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone is a good start, but not a complete solution. He said more comprehensive travel restrictions should be used to keep Ebola from spreading and to contain the disease in the affected countries. Congressman Upton's statement was posted [here](#).

On October 21st, 16 members of the U.S. House Republican Doctors Caucus sent a letter to President Barack Obama urging the Administration to consider implementing a temporary travel ban for individuals who are citizens of, or traveled to countries affected by Ebola in West Africa. While acknowledging that a travel ban could hinder response efforts, the policymakers urged that the presence of the virus in the U.S. necessitates a travel ban in the interest of public health. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 21st, the *Washington Post* reported that since enhanced screening procedures were implemented at five U.S. international airports, 521 passengers from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia have been subjected to Ebola questionnaires and having their temperatures taken upon arrival in the U.S. Of those screened, only three people had elevated temperatures. Additionally, 28 other passengers received additional CDC testing across the five airports. The full article can be read [here](#).

On October 21st, a new study was released finding if no exit screenings occurred as air passengers left Ebola-afflicted countries in West Africa, three people with Ebola might fly out the region each month. Researchers at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto used international flight data to make their projections, but acknowledged that screening measures are not foolproof, as it can take up to three weeks for people who are exposed to Ebola to develop symptoms. The study was outlined [here](#).

On October 21st, an airline passenger landing at Newark International Airport after spending time in Liberia was brought to University Hospital for evaluation after showing symptoms of Ebola in the enhanced screening process. The Liberian national was traveling on a connecting flight from Belgium. Travelers who were on the flight will be notified if the patient's evaluation requires testing for Ebola. The

full story is available [here](#).

On October 21st, Spanish health officials declared Spanish nurse Teresa Romero free from Ebola virus. Romero was determined to have beaten the disease after four consecutive tests came back negative for the presence of the virus in her bloodstream. Officials reported that Romero was treated with plasma from an Ebola survivor and an experimental drug. It remains unclear when she will be discharged from the hospital. An update was provided [here](#).

On October 21st, Nina Pham, the Dallas nurse being treated for Ebola at the NIH Clinical Center Special Clinical Studies Unit, had her clinical status updated from fair to good. Pham was first admitted to NIH for treatment on October 16th. Developments related to her condition were shared [here](#).

On October 22nd, the WHO released new figures measuring the depth of the Ebola crisis in West Africa. As of October 19th, the WHO reported at least 9,936 cases of Ebola and 4,877 deaths. The WHO warned, however, that the real number of cases is likely much higher than reported, likely by a factor of 1.5 in Guinea, 2 in Sierra Leone, and 2.5 Liberia. An update on the scope of the crisis was issued [here](#).

On October 22nd, the U.N. Health Committee met for the third time in three months to discuss the organization's response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. At U.N. headquarters, Spokesperson Farhan Haq said the WHO's International Health Regulations Emergency Committee has begun talks in Geneva as part of U.N. mandate. More can be read [here](#).

On October 22nd, the WHO said testing of two Ebola vaccines will begin in West Africa in January and three additional vaccines will begin safety testing in healthy volunteers in the first quarter of 2015. Vaccines developed by the NIH and GSK and the Public Health Agency of Canada are currently in Phase 1 clinical trials. The three additional vaccines are being developed by Johnson & Johnson, Inovio Pharmaceuticals, and Protein Sciences. The vaccines were highlighted [here](#).

On October 22nd, White House Ebola Czar Ron Klain met with U.S. President Barack Obama and senior Administration officials coordinating Ebola response efforts during his first day on the job. Following their meeting, President Obama said he is cautiously more optimistic about the Ebola situation in the U.S. While some have praised Klain's appointment to serve as Ebola Response Coordinator, others have criticized his lack of medical training. Klain's first day reporting for duty was outlined [here](#).

On October 22nd, the White House issued a new fact sheet on the U.S. Government's response to Ebola at home and abroad. The fact sheet highlights efforts to enhance domestic preparedness, including new screening measures and travel restrictions, tightening of CDC protocols, and strengthening of federal, state, and local coordination. It also addresses aspects of the U.S.-led international response to stop Ebola in West Africa, including the deployment of medical personnel, the scaling up of the DOD presence, and support for community outreach and safe burials. The fact sheet can be accessed [here](#).

On October 22nd, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke by phone with Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott about the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The two leaders agreed the international community must act boldly and quickly to end the epidemic in Africa. Additionally, they discussed additional commitments to the Ebola response effort. The discussion was summarized [here](#).

On October 22nd, U.S. President Barack Obama convened a call with health care workers at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital to thank them for their courage and perseverance in dealing with the first cases of Ebola in the U.S. President Obama also wished the two nurses who were infected with Ebola a speedy recovery. Additionally, he explained how the lessons learned at the hospital will be integrated into Ebola response plans moving forward. A readout of the call can be seen [here](#).

On October 22nd, the *New York Times* reported that beginning on November 7th, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) will host a series of brainstorming meetings to explore how robotic technologies can be used to help contain the Ebola epidemic. The first round of meetings will be held at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Texas A&M, the University of California, Berkley, and in Washington. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On October 22nd, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel spoke with French Minister of Defense Jean-Yves

Le Drian about the international response to Ebola in West Africa and counterterrorism operations in North Africa. Secretary Hagel welcomed the French commitment to expand its efforts to assist with the Ebola outbreak. The leaders also discussed ways to improve information sharing in dealing with extremists in the Sahel. A readout of the call was posted [here](#).

On October 22nd, Liberian Minister of Defense Brownie Samukai welcomed the incoming commander of Operation United Assistance Major General Gary Volesky to Monrovia. Major General Volesky will replace Major General Daryl Williams, who has led the U.S. military mission to fight Ebola in West Africa for the past five weeks. Major General Volesky's arrival was detailed [here](#).

On October 22nd, CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden said all travelers arriving in the U.S. from Guinea, Sierra, Leone, and Liberia, will be closely monitored by public health officials for 21 days. Passengers will be required to report their temperatures twice a day and will be contacted daily by public officials. Approximately 70 percent of travelers arriving in the U.S. from the countries affected by Ebola remain in New York, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Georgia. The new policies were described [here](#).

On October 22nd, the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) began early human clinical trials to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the VSV-EBOV Ebola vaccine. The vaccine is also being tested at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR). The Phase 1 clinical trials will also generate comparative data on varying dosage levels of the vaccine. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On October 22nd, *Reuters* reported U.S. health officials are considering setting up a network of approximately 20 hospitals to handle care of Ebola patients, rather than relying on any medical facility to take on domestic Ebola cases. According to Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) for Preparedness and Response Nicole Lurie, the network would operate using a tiered, regional approach to Ebola care. A priority will be to identify hospitals near U.S. cities where travelers might be arriving from countries battling Ebola. Additional details can be found [here](#).

On October 22nd, some hospitals indicated they are considering withholding medical interventions in some Ebola cases because they are too dangerous to doctors and nurses and unlikely to help the patients. Some hospitals are even developing new policies and guidelines to suggest when it might be appropriate to withhold care for Ebola. More information was shared [here](#).

On October 22nd, two passengers arriving at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport from Liberia were placed under observation at Chicago hospitals after falling ill during their flights. One passenger, a child, vomited during the flight. The other passenger reported nausea and diarrhea during the trip. Initial evaluations found that neither patient required testing for Ebola and health officials said they pose no public health risk. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On October 22nd, Johnson & Johnson announced plans to begin testing an Ebola vaccine in January. The company reported it could have as many as 250,000 doses available by May. The vaccine has been proven safe in testing on monkeys. Details can be seen [here](#).

On October 22nd, Ashoka Mukpo, the freelance cameraman who fell ill with Ebola while working for *NBC News* in Liberia, was released from Nebraska Medical Center and declared Ebola-free. Mukpo arrived at the hospital on October 6th and was treated with blood plasma donated by fellow American Ebola survivor Dr. Kent Brantly. He was also treated with a pill-form of the experimental Ebola drug brincidofovir. Mukpo's discharge was reported [here](#).

On October 22nd, Amber Vinson, the second Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital nurse to fall ill with Ebola, tested negative for the virus. Vinson will remain at Emory University Hospital for treatment and will undergo additional testing to confirm she is Ebola-free. News of Vinson's improved condition broke [here](#).

On October 23rd, at the E.U. Leaders' Summit, the E.U. announced \$31 million in new funding to help fight Ebola and explored the creation of a \$1.26 billion Ebola response fund. E.U. Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said the money would be dedicated for medical research for an Ebola vaccine. An

update on the EU's Ebola response efforts was provided [here](#).

On October 23rd, U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Ranking Member John Thune (R-SD) sent a letter to President Barack Obama highlighting the capabilities of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) and suggesting the Administration seek participation from CRAF carriers to help move medical supplies and personnel to West Africa to assist in the Ebola response. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 24th, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee will host a hearing on "The Ebola Crisis: Coordination of a Multi-Agency Response." Witnesses will include Assistant Secretary for HHS Nicole Lurie, Assistant Secretary of Defense Michael Lumpkin, DOD Deputy Director of Political-Military Affairs for Africa Major General James Lariviere, DHS Inspector General (IG) John Roth, National Nurses United Co-President Deborah Burger, and International Medical Corps Senior Vice President for International Operations Rabih Torbay. The hearing was announced [here](#).

Nigeria

On October 17th, a spokesperson for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced the increase in violence caused by insurgent groups in northeastern Nigeria has caused a significant increase in refugees fleeing to bordering countries. Cameroon, Niger, and Chad have experienced an influx of refugees over the past two months. As a result, there has been a strain on weak infrastructure and minimal resources. More on the issue can be read [here](#).

On October 17th, Nigeria's Chief of Defense Staff Alex Badeh announced Nigeria's military had reached a ceasefire agreement with the Islamist militant group Boko Haram and that the schoolgirls captured by Boko Haram in April will be released. The agreement was announced by the Nigerian Government at the close of a three-day security meeting between Nigeria and Cameroon. As part of the meeting, a government delegation met twice with representatives of the Islamist group. The ceasefire was reported [here](#).

On October 20th, while negotiations between the Nigerian Government and Boko Haram were due to resume in Chad, there were no reports signaling that peace talks had restarted. Additionally, there was no further word on the release of the schoolgirls still held hostage by Boko Haram. The stalling of peace talks was noted [here](#).

On October 20th, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf confirmed reports that a ceasefire agreement had reportedly been reached with Boko Haram in Nigeria. Deputy Spokesperson Harf said the U.S. would support a ceasefire, call on all parties to implement and maintain the ceasefire, and hope that such a ceasefire would return peace to the northeastern region of the country. She noted, however, that negotiations continue related to the release of the schoolgirls who were kidnapped by Boko Haram in April. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On October 23rd, two villages in Nigeria's northeastern Adamawa state reported the abductions of dozens of additional women and girls by suspected Boko Haram militants. While yet to be confirmed by Nigerian authorities, the abductions come amidst conflicting reports related to a ceasefire with Boko Haram and as Nigerian lawmakers approved a \$1 billion loan to be used to upgrade military equipment and train more units to fight insurgents in the northeastern part of the country. The reports of the additional abductions surfaced [here](#).

Democratic Republic of Congo

On October 16th, U.N. Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Martin Kobler condemned the surge in deadly attacks in territories associated with the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). According to the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), approximately 20 people were killed in an attack on the night of October 15th. Special Representative Kobler reiterated the support of MONUSCO to local and national authorities in efforts to combat ADF and other armed groups. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 18th, U.N. Special Representative for the DRC Martin Kobler called for decisive joint military actions by Congolese forces and U.N. peacekeeping troops after two deadly attacks by suspected Ugandan-based rebels near the eastern town of Beni. Following an attack on the night of October 15th, about two dozen people were killed between October 17th and 18th. Special Representative Kobler travelled to Beni on the 17th to pay tribute to the families of victims. The incidents were detailed [here](#).

On October 19th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein condemned the decision by the Government of the DRC to expel the Director of the U.N. Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) Scott Campbell from the country. Regarding the decision, High Commissioner Zeid said Congolese authorities risk setting back years of strenuous efforts by U.N. human rights staff and some sectors of the Congolese authorities to assist victims of human rights violations and strengthen rule of law. High Commissioner Zeid's comments were captured [here](#).

On October 20th, the U.S. Department of State issued a press statement expressing concern for the decision of the DRC Government to expel the Director of the U.N. Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) in the DRC following a UNJHRO report released last week alleging serious violations by some members of the DRC security forces that resulted in nine deaths and 32 enforced disappearances. The State Department urged the DRC to reverse its decision and to investigate the allegations in the UNJHRO report. The full statement can be seen [here](#).

On October 21st, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon criticized the decision made by the DRC Government to expel its top U.N human rights official from the country. Secretary-General Ban said the decision is an indication the Government of the DRC is failing to uphold its obligations and is hindering human rights progress in the country. Secretary-General Ban's position was articulated [here](#).

On October 22nd, a group of youths congregated on the premises of a U.N. base in North Kivu, leading to the evacuation of 12 staff members. According to reports, the crowd was throwing stones on the premises of the Mavivi Airport before Congolese and U.N. forces intervened to secure the area. In response to this attack and others, MONUSCO is enhancing security. Details can be read [here](#).

Libya

On October 18th, the Governments of France, Italy, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S. issued a joint statement condemning the ongoing violence in Libya and calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities. In particular, the leaders condemned Ansar al-Sharia's crimes in Tripoli and the attacks launched by former Libyan General Khalifa Hiftar in Benghazi. The governments also expressed support for the work of U.S. Special Representative to Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Bernardino Leon and urged all parties to cooperate with his efforts to reach an agreement on the location of the House of Representatives elected on June 25th and the foundations for a Government of National Unity. In addition, the world powers threatened to use sanctions against those who threaten the peace, stability, or security of Libya, or obstruct or undermine the political process. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On October 21st, Libya's Tobruk-based House of Representatives ordered the Libyan army to launch a military operation aimed at liberating Tripoli and state institutions in the capital city from armed militias. In addition, the House of Representatives called on local residents in Tripoli to complement military efforts by staging a campaign of civil disobedience against the Libya Dawn fighters in control of the city. More information can be found [here](#).

South Sudan

On October 20th, U.N. Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura held a press conference at U.N. headquarters to report on her first mission to South Sudan. Special Representative Bangura said there has been widespread rape, gang rape, forced abortion, and sexual harassments committed by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the national police force, and the Justice and Equity Movement (JEM) as part of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. During her visit, she recommended the South Sudanese Government issue military orders prohibiting sexual violence, offer psychosocial, legal, and medical assistance to victims, and ensure these crimes are addressed in the peace process. Excerpts of the press conference were highlighted [here](#).

On October 21st, sites in Juba, Malakal, and Bor were opened by the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UMISS). Derk Segaar, head of U.N. Resident's Coordinators Office Relief, Reintegration and Protection (RRP), said the new sites have been constructed to improve the living conditions for 28,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). He added the new sites are meant to be a temporary solution. Overall, UMISS bases are protecting more than 100,000 civilians across South Sudan. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 22nd, in a briefing to the U. N. Security Council, Special Representative for South Sudan and Head of UNMISS Ellen Margrethe Loj said it is vital for the warring groups in the country to come to the negotiating table. Special Representative Loj said without a political agreement, the violence in South Sudan will continue. She called on the Security Council and leaders in the region to remain engaged in efforts to bring both sides together to negotiate a compromise. Since the start of the crisis, 1.8 million people have been uprooted and 7 million are at risk for hunger and disease. Excerpts from the briefing were reported [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On October 21st, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his decision to continue the national emergency with respect to the situation in the DRC declared in previous executive orders. The national emergency has been extended by one year through October 27, 2015. President Obama justified the decision by stating the situation in the DRC continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the U.S. President Obama's notice to Congress can be read [here](#).

Department of State

On October 21st, the State Department designated Egyptian national Ramzi Mawafi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. Mawafi is a veteran member of Al Qaeda and is best known as the former doctor to Osama bin Laden. He has also served as an explosives expert for the terrorist organization. Mawafi escaped from an Egyptian prison in 2011 and is believed to be in the Sinai Peninsula coordinating money and weapons for militant groups. The terrorist designation was posted [here](#).

On October 22nd, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin attended an African Leadership Academy reception in Washington, DC. Assistant Secretary Rivkin's participation was noted [here](#).

On October 22nd, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne Richard met with Director of the UNHCR Africa Bureau George Okoth-Obbo, at the Department of State. The meeting was listed [here](#).

On October 22nd-28th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield will travel to South Africa and Zambia. In South Africa, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield will visit Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Cape Town, for a regional conference of U.S. Ambassadors and bilateral meetings. She will then travel to Lusaka in honor of the 50th anniversary of Zambia's independence. In both countries, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield is also expected to meet with local youth, including alumni of the 2014 Mandela Washington Fellowship. Her travel was announced [here](#).

On October 23rd, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement in recognition of Zambia's independence day. Secretary Kerry said the U.S. and Zambia will continue to work closely to strengthen democracy, support human rights, spur economic growth, and improve the health and education of the Zambian people. In addition, he noted Zambian Vice President Guy Scott's participation in the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield's participation in Zambia's Jubilee celebration. The full statement can be read [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On October 16th, Nina Rosenberg, an Information Officer in USAID's Office of Food for Peace, authored

a post for USAID's *Impact Blog* on U.S. food assistance provided this year. Some of the largest food assistance efforts this year were launched in South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). In South Sudan, USAID has provided 64,000 metric tons of U.S. food commodities to support families impacted by the political crisis. In the CAR, where armed conflict and political instability have been challenges since December 2012, USAID has reached over one million vulnerable, food insecure people. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On October 20th, Yirgalem Gebremeskel, a Livestock Program Specialist in the Economic Growth and Transformation Office of USAID Ethiopia, observed that USAID training and financing have allowed Ethiopian women to take on leadership roles in livestock and dairy production. As part of the Feed the Future initiative, USAID and Project Mercy have launched an innovative cattle cross-breeding program. Additional information can be found [here](#).

On October 22nd-23rd, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah was on overseas travel to Stockholm, Sweden, for meetings related to President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative with partners and institutional investors. As part of his trip, Administrator Shah co-chaired the Task Force Meeting on Mobilizing Institutional Investment for African Infrastructure with Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA). He also met with Swedish Development Minister Isobella Lovin and Finance Minister Magdalena Andersson to discuss mobilizing investments in Africa and the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Administrator Shah's travel was announced [here](#).

Department of Defense

On October 20th, U.S. and Nigerien forces reported that an unarmed U.S. MQ-9 Reaper drone crashed at the Diori Hamani International Airport in Niamey. The drone made a hard landing and damaged the runway, but no one was injured. The U.S. has been operating surveillance drones from a base outside of Niamey since the 2013 French operation against Al Qaeda affiliates in Mali. The incident was reported [here](#).

On October 20th, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) detailed a recent volunteer event organized by 25 service members from CJTF-HOA. As part of the event, the volunteers donated and distributed shoes, clothes, toys, and school supplies to children and the Caritas Djibouti Clinic. The volunteers also played soccer, danced, and took photos with the children. The event was described [here](#).

On October 21st, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) described the support the Command has received from the National Guard and Reserve Component over the past year. In FY14, over 118 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard personnel supported AFRICOM's mission. The force was complemented by 74 Reserve personnel at AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, and on the continent. Reservists and Guardsmen have contributed additional capacity in intelligence analysis, logistics planning, and human resources. More information can be found [here](#).

Department of Justice

On October 20th, Libyan terror suspect, Ahmed Abu Khattala, who has been charged with masterminding the September 2012 attacks on U.S. compounds in Benghazi, pleaded not guilty to all charges in federal court. Khattala was ordered to be held without bond by U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper. Last week, a grand jury filed 18 charges against Khattala, including murder and other crimes eligible for the death penalty. An update was provided [here](#).

On October 22nd, U.S. District Judge Lewis Kaplan in New York postponed the trial for suspected Al Qaeda terrorists Abu Anas Al-Liby and Khalid al-Fawwaz for more than two months until January 12, 2014. The proceedings were delayed to allow attorneys more time to gain access to old computer files seized from the defendants. Liby and Fawwaz are both charged with conspiring in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The postponement of the trial was noted [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On October 18th-30th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) will sponsor a Sub-Saharan

Africa Light Aircraft and Helicopter Reverse Trade Mission (RTM). The RTM will introduce delegates from across sub-Saharan Africa to U.S. technology and industry best practices in the aviation sector. Delegates from private sector aviation companies in sub-Saharan Africa will participate in site visits where they will meet with U.S. industry experts and suppliers of light aircraft and helicopters. Details on the RTM were posted [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On October 16th, in recognition of World Food Day, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) published a blog post on Mtanga Farms Limited's efforts to restore potato crops in Tanzania, supported by a \$3.5 million loan from OPIC. Mtanga Farms will make clean seeds available to more than 150,000 Tanzanian farmers, which is intended to help relieve the food burden and reinvigorate farming in the country. The project was detailed [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On October 17th, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) produced a video on the positive outcomes of the MCC's Tourism Project in Namibia. The project is helping to improve life in the northern part of the country by attracting tourists and equipping communities with the means to profit from travelers and create jobs locally, while also conserving Namibia's wildlife. The video can be streamed [here](#). A blog post on the Tourism Project can be read [here](#).

North Africa

On October 17th, the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED) and the Congressional Tunisia Caucus held a panel discussion titled, "Previewing Tunisia's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections." Speakers included Ambassador of Tunisia to the U.S. M'hamed Ezzine Chelaifa, Alexis Arieff of the Congressional Research Service (CRS), Jeff England of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and Stephen McInerney and Cole Bockenfeld of POMED. The event was summarized [here](#).

On October 20th, Algerian Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal said the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has no presence in Algeria. Following the beheading of French hiker Herve Gourdel last month near the Algerian border with Niger, there has been speculation of ISIL's expansion from Iraq and Syria into North Africa. Gourdel is thought to have been killed by militants affiliated with Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), who has pledged its allegiance to ISIL. Prime Minister Sellal's comments were captured [here](#).

On October 22nd, the John Hopkins University Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) hosted a discussion on the upcoming presidential election to be held in Tunisia on November 23rd. Independent Tunisian presidential candidate Mondher Zenaidi discussed his view on the polls. Event logistics were shared [here](#).

East Africa

On October 16th, U.N. Special Representative for Somalia and head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Nicholas Kay condemned the second car bombing attack in Mogadishu in less than a week. The car bomb was detonated outside of a popular restaurant, killing at least five people and wounding many others. Special Representative Kay urged a quick response to bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice. The incident was noted [here](#).

On October 18th, Suni, one of the last two breeding male northern white rhinos in the world, was found dead by rangers at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy near Nairobi, Kenya. Suni, the first of his species to be born in captivity, was not poached, but the cause of his death remains unclear. Three northern white rhinos remain at Ol Pejeta Conservancy. Only three other northern white rhinos are alive in the world. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 20th, U.N. Special Representative for Somalia Nicholas Kay condemned the recent attack on African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces in Somalia's Hiiraan region. AMISOM troops were attacked and blocked by armed men when they were deployed to help restore peace near the

village of Deefow. Special Representative Kay urged the de-escalation of tensions and called for peaceful dialogue in cooperation with federal and regional governments. Special Representative Kay's feedback on the incident was posted [here](#).

On October 21st, the World Bank announced \$75 million in additional financing for the Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project. The International Development Association (IDA) credit will continue to support the project, which is intended to improve the livelihoods and resilience of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists living in drought areas in the Horn of Africa and enable their governments to respond effectively to emergencies. The IDA credit was awarded [here](#).

On October 22nd, U.N. Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman said while progress has been made combating piracy off the coast of Somalia, a long-term solution must be instituted. Under Secretary-General Feltman said the solution must involve the presence of effective government and state institutions that are able to provide alternative options for people to earn a living. Under Secretary-General Feltman's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

West Africa

On October 14th-16th, a delegation from Ghana including Finance Minister Seth Terkper, Minister of Employment and Labor Relations Haruna Iddrisu, and Bank of Ghana Governor Kofi Wampah held discussions with International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff on a possible IMF program. The delegation reported the dialogue was productive and identified economic and policy reforms that could be supported by an IMF program. Discussions are expected to continue, included as part of an IMF mission to Accra in November. The discussions were summarized [here](#).

On October 16th, U.N. Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel Robert Piper said the region needs additional resources and joint action in order to deal with serious challenges, such as climate change and peace processes in Darfur, Mali, and Libya. Coordinator Piper highlighted food and security as major areas of concern for the area. In February, the U.N. and its partners asked for \$2 billion for the region. Currently, the appeal is just half funded. Details on challenges facing the Sahel can be read [here](#).

On October 17th, in anticipation of the resumption of peace talks in Algeria, the U.N. Security Council asked parties in Mali to engage with one another with the ultimate goal of creating a long-term peace agreement. The Security Council called for all Malian parties to comply with commitments made in the first phase of negotiations held in July. While some improvements occurred in 2013, the security situation in Northern Mali has recently deteriorated, with a rise in attacks aiming explosive devices at Malian and international security forces. Feedback from the Security Council was presented [here](#).

On October 20th, the World Bank reported its West African Agricultural Productivity Program (WAPP) is providing Senegalese farmers with one-time subsidies on the sale maize, millet, and sorghum seeds following dust storms and a lack of rainfall that withered crops. The emergency program is intended to help farmers produce higher yields, make their crops more drought resistant, and produce with shorter maturity cycles. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On October 15th, Seychelles became the first African nation to gain access to World Bank contingency financing to help in its response to natural disasters, such as cyclones and landslides. Funded through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the Development Policy Loan with a Catastrophic Deferred Draw Down Option makes available a \$7 million reserve to assist in disaster recovery. A press release was issued [here](#).

On October 16th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke out against the remarks of former President of Madagascar Marc Ravalomanana, who criticized the legitimacy of the country's democratic institutions. In his statement, Secretary-General Ki-moon called on the politicians and stakeholders in Madagascar to continue the nation's progress in strengthening democratic governance. Secretary-General Ban's comments can be read [here](#).

On October 18th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon applauded the people of Mozambique for the

calm atmosphere in which the presidential, legislative, and provincial elections were held on October 15th. Secretary-General Ki-moon also asked stakeholders to continue cooperating in the framework of the electoral law and to engage constructively throughout the process while results are tabulated. More can be read [here](#).

On October 18th, Lesotho's parliament reopened for the first time since an August 30th coup attempt. Prime Minister Tom Thabane has suspended the body in June fearing a vote of no confidence that would have ousted him from office. Since the coup, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been facilitating peace talks between sparring factions in Lesotho. Early elections are expected in February 2015. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 20th, Director of the IMF's Africa Department Antoinette Sayeh presented the 2014 IMF Regional Economic Outlook for sub-Saharan Africa. Director Sayeh reported the region is on track to continue strong growth trends, with the economy expected to expand by five percent this year. While the growth momentum appears especially promising in low-income sub-Saharan African countries, Director Sayeh also expressed concern for the potential economic effects of the West Africa Ebola outbreak. Director Sayeh's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On October 21st, South African Olympian Oscar Pistorius was sentenced to five years in prison for killing his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. On September 12th, Pistorius was acquitted of murder, but convicted of culpable homicide. Under South African law, Pistorius must serve at least the first ten months of his prison sentence and will then be eligible to apply for house arrest. The sentence was detailed [here](#).

On October 21st, the Cato Institute hosted a discussion titled, "Hope in the Face of Torture and Theft: Life of a White Farmer in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe." Panelists included Zimbabwean author, farmer, and human rights activist Ben Freeth, Winston-Salem State University Professor of Economics Craig Richardson, and Senior Policy Analyst for the Cato Institute's Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity Marian Tupy. Event details can be viewed [here](#).

General Africa News

On October 17th, President of the U.N. General Assembly Sam Kutesa stated that Africa's economic growth and development will depend on the building of infrastructure, facilitated by both domestic and international partnerships. Assembly President Kutesa applauded the efforts of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). He also underscored the importance of eradicating malaria, which remains endemic in Africa. Excerpts from President Kutesa's speech can be read [here](#).

On October 28th, The Brookings Institution will host an event entitled, "The International Energy Agency's (IEA) Africa Energy Outlook." Speakers will include Faith Birol of the IEA and Charles Ebinger and Amadou Sy of The Brookings Institution. The panel is expected to address how limited energy access on the continent presents a significant obstacle to development. Event details were posted [here](#).

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