



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Burundi

On February 12th, the United Nations (U.N.) Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (CAR) (MINUSCA) announced its decision to repatriate three military officers on suspicion they committed human rights violations during political unrest in their home country, Burundi. The alleged violations were committed prior to their deployment in the ongoing violence in opposition to President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial third term. The decision was reported [here](#).

On February 12th, just days after the Burundian Government accused the Government of Rwanda of arming and training refugees to fight the government, the Government of Rwanda announced it plans to relocate Burundian refugees to other host countries. Since the rise of tensions in Burundi last April following President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term, more than 70,000 Burundians have sought refuge in Rwanda. For details, click [here](#).

On February 15th, European Union (EU) foreign ministers said they were prepared to strengthen economic sanctions on Burundi following the failure of talks to end the political crisis in the country in which more than 440 people have been killed. The sanctions under consideration would target additional individuals whose actions might have led or might lead to acts of violence and human rights violations. More information was posted [here](#).

On February 17th, Burundi's first Vice President Gaston Sindimwo appeared on national television to call for talks with the Government of Rwanda on the suggestion that Rwanda has been training Burundian rebels. In his televised remarks, Vice President Sindimwo indicated the Government of Sudan had offered to mediate such talks. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has repeatedly dismissed the accusations, leading many to believe the Rwandan Government would not seriously consider dialogue with the Burundian Government on this issue. The situation was discussed [here](#).

Libya

On February 15th, U.N. Special Representative to Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Martin Kobler welcomed the announcement by the Libyan Presidency Council on the nomination of the Government of National Accord outlined by the Libyan Political Agreement. Special Representative Kobler called on the House of Representatives (HOR) to quickly endorse the proposed national unity government and give it the chance to govern. His remarks can be found [here](#).

On February 16th, the U.S. Department of State welcomed the February 14th announcement of the composition for a cabinet for the Libyan Government of National Accord. The State Department urged all Libyans to continue moving forward with implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and the formation of the new government, noting finalizing the cabinet is an essential step towards providing the Libyan people the opportunity to rebuild their country and to counter the threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The State Department's feedback was shared [here](#).

On February 17th, U.S. President Barack Obama said the U.S. will continue to try to keep ISIL from establishing a foothold in Libya, where the group has taken advantage of the conflict between two rival governments. President Obama said the U.S. military will continue to undertake clear operations with specific targets. He also noted the U.S. will continue to work with coalition partners to prevent ISIL from growing its presence in Libya. President Obama's remarks were recorded [here](#).

On February 17th, *The Washington Post's* Editorial Board penned an op-ed urging the Obama Administration to take swift action in Libya to prevent ISIL from expanding its territory beyond Sirte. Additionally, the op-ed acknowledged the Pentagon's estimate that there are now more than 5,000 fighters in Sirte and that ISIL controls nearly 200 miles of Libya's coast line. ISIL militants have also been attacking Libyan oil infrastructure and potentially planning attacks against European targets. The op-ed was published [here](#).

South Sudan

On February 11th, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir issued a decree restoring opposition leader Riek Machar to the Vice President position he last held in 2013. The move fulfills an important condition of the peace agreement that was signed in August, but has since been violated by both parties. It was not immediately clear if Machar would accept the appointment and return to the capital of Juba. Since the signing of the peace agreement, Machar has been staying in Ethiopia, where he has questioned President Kiir's sincerity in resolving the conflict. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On February 12th, U.S. Department of State Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner acknowledged South Sudanese President Salva Kiir's appointment of Riek Machar as first vice president of South Sudan as called for in the peace agreement signed by both parties in August. Deputy Spokesperson Toner said the move is a necessary step forward in the implementation of the peace agreement and urged both sides to quickly finalize the security arrangements necessary to facilitate Machar's return to Juba to form a transitional government of national unity. His feedback was transcribed [here](#).

Nigeria

On February 11th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the recent double suicide attack carried out by suspected Boko Haram elements on the Dikwa Camp in Borno state, Nigeria. Secretary-General Ban deplored the deaths of scores of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and called for an end to all acts of terrorism and sectarian violence in Nigeria. Secretary-General Ban's feedback was articulated [here](#).

On February 11th, Nigerian defense forces responding to the suicide bombing attack on the camp for people displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency in Dikwa discovered a third teenage girl who had been intended to serve as a third suicide bomber in the attack. According to the girl's account, she tore off her explosives as soon as she was out of sight of her Boko Haram handlers. The girl, who had been held captive by Boko Haram for several months, also shared information with security forces regarding future planned attacks. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 11th, U.S. Department of State Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner condemned the recent suicide attacks on the camp for IDPs in Dikwa, Nigeria. Noting the attacks killed 58 people, Deputy Spokesperson Toner reaffirmed the U.S. remains committed to assisting those affected by the conflict in northeastern Nigeria and elsewhere in the Lake Chad Basin region through humanitarian relief efforts. He also expressed support for efforts to provide greater protection for civilians across the region and said the U.S. continues to support Nigeria and other countries in West Africa in their fight against terrorism. Deputy Spokesperson Toner's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On February 14th, addressing the Munich Security Conference, Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud reported that Boko Haram fighters have been trained in Somalia by Somalia-based terrorist group Al Shabaab. While President Mohamud did not comment on whether Boko Haram fighters may still be training in Somalia, he argued greater stability is needed in his country to address broader security challenges across the continent. President Mohamud's remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On February 15th, a group of U.N. human rights experts urged the Nigerian Government to ensure the areas they claim to have liberated from Boko Haram forces are truly safe for the displaced persons to return. They also called for camps for IDPs, both formal and informal, to be adequately protected, and stressed that all returns should be voluntary and coordinated. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 16th, the World Food Programme (WFP) announced that the agency, working with its partners, has been able to deliver food and nutrition support to thousands of people recently displaced by Boko Haram violence in Chad and Cameroon. According to the WFP, in Chad alone more than 5,000 IDPs received food and nutrition assistance for the first time as insecurity and access concerns had previously cut them off from any support. In the broader region of West Africa affected by Boko Haram, there are roughly 2.8 million people who have been displaced. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On February 16th, *The New York Times* reported that a new crisis is unfolding in Nigeria as many of the women and girls freed from Boko Haram activity are rejected when they return to their home communities. The rejection stems from fears that the women and girls, many who have been raped by their captors, have been radicalized and are only returning home to help recruit for Boko Haram. An article on the struggles the women and girls encounter once they are freed was published [here](#).

Central African Republic

On February 11th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Lieutenant General Balla Keita of Senegal as the Force Commander of MINUSCA. Lieutenant General Keita will replace Major General Martin Chomu Tumenta of Cameroon, who passed away in late November. Since early November, Lieutenant General Keita has served as Acting Force Commander of MINUSCA. His appointment was announced [here](#).

On February 12th, as voters in the CAR prepared for the second round of presidential and legislative elections, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) urged the candidates to make strong commitments to invest in the survival, education, and protection of children to ensure lasting peace in the country. UNICEF's input on the elections was articulated [here](#).

On February 12th, as the CAR prepared for voting in the second round of presidential elections that will bring the country's political transition closer to an end, the U.S. Department of State expressed its solidarity with the Central African people and reiterated its commitment to continuing to help the country find peace and stability. The State Department urged all people in the CAR to exercise their right to vote on February 14th and urged all candidates, political parties, and supporters to use the country's legal system to address any potential disputes. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 13th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on all Central Africans, including the candidates, to ensure that the presidential runoff and the new round of legislative elections, to be held on Sunday, would be conducted in a peaceful and credible manner. His remarks were recorded [here](#).

On February 14th, voters in the CAR went to the polls to cast ballots in the second round of the country's presidential election. The first round of voting, held on December 30th, resulted in former Prime Ministers Anicet Georges Dologuele and Faustin Archange Touadera leading the candidates and positioned to compete in a runoff. The results of the election are expected within two weeks. Details were reported [here](#).

On February 16th, a U.N. spokesman said U.N. peacekeepers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been accused of sexually abusing four children who were living in a camp for displaced civilians in the CAR. These are the latest allegations in a recent wave of accusations of sexual abuse perpetrated by MINUSCA peacekeepers.

The U.N. also made clear it is working to ensure that the victims in the new cases have access to the help they need. Details can be seen [here](#).

Uganda

On February 12th, ahead of the national elections scheduled in Uganda for February 18th, the U.S. Department of State called for a peaceful, transparent, and credible electoral process, before, during, and after voting. The State Department argued violence or threats of violence from any group or individual are unacceptable and urged all parties to refrain from provocative actions or rhetoric. Further, the State Department urged the Ugandan Government and electoral authorities to ensure a level playing field and transparent electoral process. A statement on the elections was issued [here](#).

On February 15th, Ugandan police briefly detained opposition leader and presidential candidate Kizza Besigye and fired teargas to disperse hundreds of his supporters in the capital Kampala. One person was killed and 19 others were injured when police attempted to break up a campaign rally. The tensions occurred just days ahead of the presidential election scheduled for February 18th. Besigye's brief arrest was reported [here](#).

On February 16th, the leading challenger to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Kizza Besigye, said he had no confidence that elections this week would be free or fair, and accused police of increasing violence ahead of the vote. While Besigye has previously run for president and lost three times, this year's contest is expected to be the toughest yet for incumbent President Yoweri Museveni, who first came to power in 1986. Besigye's comments were captured [here](#).

On February 16th, U.S. Department of State Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner condemned recent elections-related violence in Uganda and expressed hope such violence would not be repeated as Ugandans planned to head to the polls on Thursday. Deputy Spokesperson Toner expressed concern that the police detained opposition presidential candidate Kizza Besigye and tear-gassed some of his supporters. He warned that restrictions on public assembly, especially when disproportionately applied to one side contesting the elections, escalates tensions in an already heated electoral environment. Deputy Spokesperson Toner's remarks can be read [here](#).

On February 18th, Ugandans began voting in a presidential election with President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power for three decades, pitted against two members of leading opposition parties. In recent days, all sides contesting the election have accused each other of stoking tensions and assembling vigilante groups, and the leading opposition candidates have predicted vote rigging. Meanwhile, the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party, expressed its belief turnout would be high and urged a peaceful vote. Details are available [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On February 17th, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The latest situation report notes that the last known Ebola patient in Sierra Leone was discharged on February 4th and efforts to locate untraced contacts will continue through February 24th. If no new cases are detected, Sierra Leone will once again be declared Ebola-free on March 17th. The Ebola outbreak in Liberia ended on January 14th, while disease transmission came to an end in Guinea on December 29th. The latest data was analyzed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On February 12th, President Barack Obama nominated Christine Ann Elder to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Liberia. Elder is a career member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as Director of the Office of Southern African Affairs at the Department of State. She has previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Mozambique and held numerous other positions at the Department of State and the Department of Commerce. Her nomination was highlighted [here](#).

State Department

On February 11th, U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa Thomas Perriello departed on an extended trip to Africa including stops in Angola, South Africa, Burundi, the DRC, and Tanzania, focused on supporting regional efforts to resolve the crisis in Burundi and support upcoming elections in the DRC. During his trip, Special Envoy Perriello will engage with regional and Burundian stakeholders and East African Community (EAC) leadership about next steps for advancing dialogue and creating conditions for the deployment of human rights monitors to Burundi. Special Envoy Perriello is also scheduled to meet with Congolese stakeholders to discuss how to move the country's electoral process forward. Finally, Special Envoy Perriello will attend the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Summit in Luanda, the Private Sector Investment Conference in Kinshasa, and the EAC Heads of State Summit in Arusha. His travels were outlined [here](#).

On February 16th, Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken delivered a speech at the Brookings Institution titled, "New Frameworks for Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism." In his remarks, Deputy Secretary Blinken recalled his recent visit to Djibouti, where he met with civil society leaders to talk about violent extremism and how Djibouti is mobilizing an effective response. Deputy Secretary Blinken's prepared remarks can be read [here](#).

On February 16th-25th, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Shannon will be on travel, making stops in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Burkina Faso, and Mali. On February 16th-17th, Under Secretary Shannon visited Rabat for meetings with government officials, young entrepreneurs, and teachers and students in a U.S.-supported English Access Microscholarship Program. On February 18th-19th, Under Secretary Shannon will travel to Tunis for meetings with government officials, civil society leaders, and staff in the U.S. Libya External Office. Under Secretary Shannon will be in Algiers February 20th-22nd for government meetings on countering terrorism, as well as meetings with local business leaders and entrepreneurs to discuss opportunities for continued U.S. investment in Algeria. From February 22nd-23rd, Under Secretary Shannon will be in Ouagadougou for meetings with Burkinabe President Roch Marc Christian Kabore, Prime Minister Paul Kaba Thieba, the Ministers of Security, Justice, and Foreign Affairs, and the head of the National Assembly. Under Secretary Shannon will visit Bamako to meet with Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and other government ministers focused on security and development. His travel was announced [here](#).

On February 18th, Secretary of State John Kerry met with Moroccan Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar at the Department of State. Foreign Minister Mezouar also met separately with Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda-Thomas Greenfield. The meetings were noticed [here](#).

On February 18th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement extending best wishes to the people of The Gambia on the 51st anniversary of their independence. Secretary Kerry said he looks forward to working with The Gambia in the coming year to strengthen democracy, promote human dignity, and combat terrorism and extremism. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be viewed [here](#).

On February 18th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with Ethiopian Ambassador to the U.S. Girma Birru Geda at the Department of State. The meeting was listed [here](#).

On February 18th, the U.S. Department of State expressed concern about increased violence against civilians and the humanitarian situation in and around Jebel Marra, Darfur. The State Department observed initial attacks by the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) on Sudanese armed forces prompted a response from Sudan's military that included aerial bombardments, despite the U.N. Security Council's demand for a ceasefire in Darfur. The attacks have forced 73,000 people to flee their homes and left thousands without aid. The State Department called on all sides to recommit to a cessation of hostilities and urged the Government of Sudan to work with the African Union (AU) to de-escalate tensions. A statement was issued [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On February 15th-19th, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Chief Innovation Officer and U.S. Global Development Lab Executive Director Ann Mei Chang traveled to Tanzania and Kenya. Chang's visit focused on how science, technology, innovation, and partnerships can help address development challenges. While in Tanzania and Kenya, Chang met with USAID missions, civil society leaders, members of the innovation and technology community, and local entrepreneurs. Details were shared [here](#).

Department of Defense

On February 10th, U.S. soldiers from the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) joined Senegalese Special Operations Forces soldiers as they landed on the shores of Saint Louis, Senegal during the culmination exercise of riverine training. The training was held as part of Flintock 2016, a series of exercises designed to train regional forces in North and West Africa to counter the threats of today. The riverine training included tasks such as tactical movements on land and sea, treating casualties, marksmanship, room clearing, mission planning, and communications training. Details can be seen [here](#).

On February 16th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) highlighted its Environmental Security Office's participation in a recent panel discussion titled, "Climate Change, Disasters, and Security: Unconventional Approaches to Building Stability," held at the Wilson Center in Washington. The discussion focused on collaboration between U.S. agencies to strengthen the response capabilities of countries that are vulnerable to natural disasters exacerbated by climate change. Event details were posted [here](#).

On February 17th, U.S. military officials indicated they are unsure if Algerian militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar was killed in airstrikes carried out in eastern Libya last June. The airstrikes were used to demolish a farmhouse where Belmokhtar and his associates were thought to be hiding and killed at least five militants. However, U.S. officials were never able to confirm Belmokhtar's death. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 17th, the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) called attention to representatives of the Africa Army civil affairs battalion and information operations office's recent visit to the Rwandan Defense Force's Civil Military Cooperation office (CIMIC). The purpose of the visit was to share best practices and gather information for future operations between the two forces. The engagement was summarized [here](#).

Department of Homeland Security

On February 18th, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced it will add Libya and Somalia to the list of countries facing restrictions under new Visa Waiver program rules. The new rules, which passed in December,, block travelers who have visited certain countries or hold specific dual citizenships from entering the U.S. without a visa. According to DHS, individuals with recent travel to Libya or Somalia will be affected, while dual citizens of those countries will not be affected at this time. For details, click [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On February 16th, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) used its blog to highlight how financing under the Portfolio for Impact (PI) program, launched in 2014 to focus on supporting high-impact projects that might be challenged to obtain financing, has supported small rural farmers in Africa. A \$4.75 million loan to PAMIGA Finance S.A. has encouraged lending to small and rural farmers in a number of sub-Saharan African countries for investments in household water, micro-irrigation, and home solar power. Details can be accessed [here](#).

Congress

On February 12th, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA), House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX), and Congresswoman Candice Miller (R-MI), the author of the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act, sent a letter to Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson expressing concern about ISIL's expansion into Libya. The letter requested that the Obama Administration make individuals who travel to Libya ineligible for visa-free travel to the U.S. A copy of the letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On February 18th, House Select Committee on Benghazi Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) released a statement following the Committee's 75th witness interview with former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center Matt Olsen. Congressman Gowdy also highlighted recent interviews with National Security Advisor Susan Rice and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes, noting the Committee has now interviewed 59 witnesses that had never been interviewed by Congress regarding the September 2012 attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya. Congressman Gowdy's statement was published [here](#).

North Africa

On February 12th, *Defense One* estimated Sudan is spending as much as \$4 million per day at its wars in Darfur, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile. While calculations on Sudan's military spending vary, the country is expected to spend between 25 percent and 70 percent of its total budget for 2016 on war. This has attracted criticism, especially as nearly half Sudan's population lives in poverty. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 14th, an official delegation of seven Executive Directors (EDs) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) concluded an eight-day consultation mission to Egypt. The purpose of their visit was to learn the current development situation and future outlook for Egypt, and to gain a better understanding of the AfDB's support program in the country. The consultation mission was summarized [here](#).

On February 14th, Swedish furniture retailer Ikea indicated it will soon open a store in Casablanca, Morocco following the resolution of a diplomatic dispute between the Moroccan and Swedish governments. Tensions were previously high over the Swedish Government signaling that it planned to recognize the independence of the disputed Western Sahara territory. After Sweden abandoned its plans to recognize the Western Sahara, the Moroccan Government granted the assurances needed for Ikea to move ahead with opening its new store. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 15th, Egyptian officials suspended a television talk show after a guest suggested that almost a third of the country's women were unfaithful to their husbands. The country's media authority has banned the show for 15 days after complaints about the comments. The situation was described [here](#).

On February 16th, former U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali died in his hometown of Cairo, Egypt. The first African U.N. Secretary-General, Boutros-Ghali died at a hospital in Giza, where he had been admitted days earlier for treatment of a broken leg. Current U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized Boutros-Ghali as a memorable leader who helped to provide world peace and international order in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. His legacy was discussed [here](#).

On February 16th, more than 300 employees of the Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) across South Sudan went on strike, demanding a six-fold increase in their salaries to cover the rising cost of living. The striking employees said the pay raise were needed to keep up with the costs of food and other basic needs, which are also on the rise. Many of KCB's customers were not informed of the strike and expressed concern their financial stability could be impacted if the strike continues. The strike was detailed [here](#).

On February 17th, the U.N. estimated the number of citizens fleeing the Jebel Marra area in Sudan's Darfur region has jumped to 73,000 from 38,000 due to the conflict between the government and a faction of the SLA. The displaced have been gathering next to a base operated by the AU-U.N. Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), where food and other emergency relief including water, shelter, medical supplies, and nutrition supplements were provided to the newly displaced earlier this week. The report can be accessed [here](#).

On February 18th, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UMISS) condemned the violence that erupted overnight between Shilluk and Dinka youths and continued into the morning. UMISS police in charge of maintaining order within the U.N.'s protected sites intervened with tear gas to displace the crowd. The violence between youths from both communities involved small arms, machetes, and other weapons and resulted in five fatalities and approximately 30 injuries. The situation was described [here](#).

On February 18th, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began talks with Tunisia over a new credit program, tied to measures to strengthen its economy and finances. Tunisia's economy has struggled since the 2011 uprising against autocrat Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali that sparked the Arab Spring revolutions across North Africa. Details on the program under consideration can be viewed [here](#).

On February 18th, the World Bank highlighted how Morocco's recent waste management improvements serve as a pathway to fuel the economy while also reducing environmental impacts. Morocco's Programme National des Déchets Ménagers, supported by the World Bank, intends to increase the rate of material collected and recycled from 5 percent today to 20 percent by 2022 while improving the conditions of waste pickers. Details can be viewed [here](#).

East Africa

On February 12th, International Criminal Court (ICC) judges were expected to rule on the admissibility of witness testimony against Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto for acts of violence committed in 2007-2008. ICC prosecutors, whose similar case against Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta fell apart last year after witnesses withdrew their testimony, claimed witnesses were bribed or threatened to back away from the case. Meanwhile, Deputy President Ruto's lawyers argued without the testimony of witnesses, there is no case. An update on the proceedings was provided [here](#).

On February 15th, Islamist militant group Al Shabaab killed Somalia's former Defense Minister Muhayadin Mohamed with a car bomb detonated in the capital of Mogadishu. Al Shabaab, which is aligned with Al Qaeda, claimed to have planted the bomb to target Minister Mohamed as he carried out his duties as an adviser to the speaker of the Somali parliament. That bombing was reported [here](#).

On February 16th, speaking at a parade, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said he plans to construct a new prison facility to hold violent extremists. According to President Kenyatta, the facility will be used to contain extremist ideologies and prevent their spread throughout the country. The move is thought to be motivated by the recent spike in terrorist attacks carried out by Al Shabaab in Kenya. Details can be seen [here](#).

On February 18th, Kenyan army officials announced that Kenyan troops working under the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) killed Al Shabaab intelligence chief Mohamed Karatey in February 8th airstrikes on a graduation ceremony for insurgent fighters. Karatey is believed to have been the mastermind behind last year's Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University in northeastern Kenya, which left 148 people dead. According to the Kenyan military, more than 50 Al Shabaab militants, including ten commanders, are thought to have been killed during the airstrikes. Meanwhile, Al Shabaab refuted the report. More information was posted [here](#).

West Africa

On February 9th-11th, over 100 stakeholders from Government, private sector, civil society, and international organizations gathered in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, for the annual Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Africa Workshop. The event was geared towards keeping track of and advancing progress towards sustainable energy in Africa, mobilizing resources to support implementation of SE4All Action Agendas (AAs) and Investment Prospectuses (IPs), and coordinating energy initiatives. A report on the event was published [here](#).

On February 11th, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the WFP, and UNICEF urged donors to mobilize the resources needed to provide assistance to 50,000 Malian refugees in the Mberra camp in southeastern Mauritania. The U.N. entities warned that current funding will only support humanitarian assistance through the end of April and argued that efforts to provide access to clean water, health care, and community services must be maintained. More information can be seen [here](#).

On February 11th, the first round of Benin's presidential election was postponed by a week to March 6th. According to the country's constitutional court, the delay was attributed to problems with the distribution of voting materials. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 12th, five U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) peacekeepers were killed when their base in Kidal was hit by mortars, gunfire, and a truck bomb belonging to suspected Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). At least three of the peacekeepers killed were from Guinea, and at least 30 others were wounded in the attack. In a separate incident, three Malian soldiers were killed and three others wounded when their military convoy was ambushed on a road between Timbuktu and Goundam. Both incidents were reported [here](#).

On February 12th, senior U.N. officials condemned the early morning attack against the MINUSMA camp in Kidal, which killed at least five peacekeepers and wounded 30 others. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underscored that attacks targeting U.N. peacekeepers constitute war crimes under international law and called for the perpetrators of the attack to be brought to justice. Meanwhile, U.N. Special Representative for Mali and head of MINUSMA Mahamat Saleh Annadif expressed outrage at the attack, which occurred a week after local

arrangements between the Coordination of Movements of Azawad (CMA) and Platform, and just 48 hours after his visit to Kidal. U.N. officials' responses to the attack were posted [here](#).

On February 14th, 125 women and supporting personnel that constitute an all-Indian police unit will return to India following their one-year rotation in Liberia. Since the Liberian civil war ended in 2003, the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has been supporting Liberia in rebuilding its institutions so it can maintain stability without its presence. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 17th, the U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) warned the U.N. Security Council that the drawn-out political crisis in Guinea-Bissau could delay implementation of critical reforms and erode progress in the country's development. Miguel Trovoada, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and Head of UNIOGBIS warned the more State institutions and the main political actors remain divided, the more the current political situation will become more complex. He also expressed concern about growing organized crime, citing recent break-ins at the residences of a member of the government and an international U.N. official. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 17th, Senegalese President Macky Sall said the country's top court had rejected his proposal to cut short his current, seven-year presidential term by two years. The court's ruling comes in response to President Sall's proposed constitutional reforms, which included a recommendation to limit a president's mandate to two, five-year terms. The package of reform proposals will be put to a referendum on March 20th. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 18th, at least 53 people died in Ghana when a bus hit a truck head-on north of Accra. Initial accounts of the cause of the crash cited a mechanical failure on the bus, but police have launched a formal investigation. The incident is the country's deadliest road crash in years. Other information regarding the crash can be found [here](#).

[Sub-Saharan Africa](#)

On February 8th-11th, the AfDB's African Natural Resources Center (ANRC) hosted a series of events at Mining Indaba 2016 held in Cape Town, South Africa. The events are part of a campaign to support African governments in their efforts to attract sustainable and environmentally friendly investment. The AfDB delegation included representatives from the ANRC, the African Legal Support Facility (ALSF), the Africa50 Infrastructure Fund, as well as the Bank's Development Research, Regional Integration and Trade, and private sector departments. Much of the discussion throughout the conference was focused on the current downturn in the commodities market affecting the mining sector. More information was shared [here](#).

On February 11th, South African President Jacob Zuma said in his state of the nation address that his government will set up a state-owned pharmaceutical company to compete with local firms in supplying medicines to public hospitals. The move is intended to address health authorities concerns regarding the costs of acquiring antiretroviral drugs to treat HIV/AIDs. The proposal was detailed [here](#).

On February 11th, Angola's National Director of Health Adelaide de Carvalho said a yellow fever outbreak in the country has killed 37 people since December, with 24 new cases reported within the most recent 24 hours. The outbreak of yellow fever, which is transmitted by mosquitoes, began in a suburb of Luanda and spread, infecting 191 people. Director de Carvalho noted health officials are monitoring suburbs around the capital where infections have been worsened by unsanitary conditions caused by a backlog in trash collection. Her comments were captured [here](#).

On February 12th, a government official at the South African Energy Ministry claimed South Africa will finalize requirements for its 9,600 megawatt (MW) nuclear power plant by April, with Russia and China the front-runners to win the bid. His remarks came as President Jacob Zuma pledged nuclear procurement would proceed on a scale and pace that South Africa can afford. For details, click [here](#).

On February 11th, the DRC, Africa's top copper producer, dropped plans to revise its mining code. The announcement is an apparent contradiction to comments made earlier by Minister of Mines Martin Kabwelulu, indicating the government planned to complete a three-year revision process of mining regulations. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 15th, the new World Bank Country Manager for Burundi, Nestor Coffi, officially took office. Before assuming his position in Burundi, Coffi served as the World Bank's Country Manager in Niger and as Lead Operations Officer in the Governance Practice in Washington. The announcement was shared [here](#).

On February 16th, a one-day general strike in the DRC paralyzed most economic activity in the capital of Kinshasa. The strike, which resulted in empty streets and markets, was organized as part of an effort to pressure President Joseph Kabila to quit power when his mandate ends in December. The strike was reported [here](#).

On February 16th, the Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe (CAAZ) found the body of a suspected stowaway on a U.S.-registered cargo plane carrying cash for the South African Reserve Bank. The plane has been impounded and the case remains under investigation. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 16th, Austrian mining company Lucapa Diamond Company announced the discovery of a 404.2 carat diamond in Angola. At an estimated value of \$20 million, the white diamond is the 27th largest diamond ever discovered. An article on the discovery can be read [here](#).

On February 16th, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) held a discussion titled, "Burkina Faso and the Sahel: Turning Points in Elections and Security." Speakers included Dr. Benjamin Nickels of ACSS, Aminata Kasse of NDI, Anis Samaali of Mourakiboun, and Kevin Adomayakpor of NDI. The panel was moderated by Chris Fomunyoh of NDI. Event details were posted [here](#).

On February 17th, the U.N., AU, EU, and International Organization of La Francophonie issued a joint statement emphasizing the importance of an inclusive political dialogue within the DRC, as well as the search for agreement between political actors. Additionally, the organizations committed to closely coordinating their efforts in the DRC, in accordance with their principles and values, with particular regard to the promotion of democracy and the rule of law in light of the upcoming elections. The full statement can be viewed [here](#).

On February 17th, South African Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson told the South African parliament South Africa expected to connect two privately-built coal-fired power plants to the grid by 2021. The Energy Ministry is planning to announce the preferred bidders for the construction of the first 2,500 MW of capacity during the second quarter of this year. The announcement comes as South Africa continues to face energy shortages. Minister Joemat-Pettersson's remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On February 18th, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, who turns 92 on Sunday, said he would remain in power until his death. President Mugabe is Africa's oldest leader and has been frequently criticized for his policies, including the seizures and redistribution of white-owned commercial farms. President Mugabe maintained that his party will choose a successor, but he plans to contest the next election in 2018, seeking his last five-year term under a new constitution that would allow him to rule through the age of 99. More information was posted [here](#).

On February 18th, Zimbabwean police fired teargas and water cannon to disperse hundreds of war veterans planning a march on the ruling party's headquarters as factions tussled over who should succeed President Robert Mugabe. War veterans have previously mobilized election support for President Mugabe, but they have publicly criticized a group in the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party led by Mugabe's wife Grace which has been dubbed G-40 by local media. Further coverage of the protest is available [here](#).

On February 18th, South African President Jacob Zuma said that 2.7 million households would be affected by ongoing drought conditions in the country. President Zuma told parliament that \$29 million has been allocated by government for drought relief. More information was printed [here](#).

On February 18th, South Africa's cabinet announced a decision to delay the implementation of a controversial tax law to May 1, 2018 after the nation's biggest union federation threatened to strike over a clause preventing workers from withdrawing their entire pension when they retire. The law was meant to ensure workers leaving employment do not use up their entire pension and then fall back on state welfare, but the Congress of South African Trade Unions contends the law is too prescriptive regarding how and when workers must spend their pensions. More information on both the law and the scheduled strike can be found [here](#).

General Africa News

On February 14th, the AfDB announced the appointments of Kevin Chika Urama and Maria Mulindi as advisors to AfDB President Akinwumi Adesina. Brief biographies of appointees and details regarding their new posts can be accessed [here](#).

On February 17th, UNICEF warned millions of children in Eastern and Southern Africa are at risk from malnutrition, hunger, water shortages, and disease caused by erratic rain and drought conditions combined with one of the most powerful El Nino events in the past 50 years. The situation has also been aggravated by rising food prices. The situation was described [here](#).

On February 18th, the AfDB the Washington-based Environmental Law Institute (ELI) launched a new report on natural resources management in fragile and conflict-affected countries. The report, "From Fragility to Resilience: Managing Natural Resources in Fragile Situations in Africa," delves into cross-cutting issues such as climate change, governance, private sector, regional integration, and conflict sensitivity. It also provides options for the design and implementation of natural resource-related programs geared toward building the resilience of African countries. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

On February 18th, the Woodrow Wilson Center's (WWC) Global Women's Leadership Initiative, the Africa Program, and the Rule of Law Program held a discussion on "Women Leaders Against Corruption: What Works." Speakers included Africa Scholar Betty Bigombe, Aminata Niane of the AfDB, former member of the South African Parliament Lindiwe Mazibuko, and Gwen Young of the Women in Public Service Project. More information can be accessed [here](#).

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