



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Libya

On March 16th, a U.S. Special Operations Command Europe Navy SEAL team, at the request of both the Libyan and Cypriot Governments, boarded and took control of the commercial tanker Morning Glory, which was seized last week by three armed Libyan rebels. The ship was carrying oil owned by the Libyan Government National Oil Company that was illicitly obtained from the Libyan port of As-Sidra. The ship's transit back to a Libyan port will also be supervised by U.S. sailors. A U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) press statement on the mission was posted [here](#).

On March 18th, the leader of the militia that attempted to take control of the Morning Glory, Ibrahim Jedran, accused the U.S. of piracy in seizing control of the tanker that Jedran and his affiliates planned to use to illegally export oil belonging to the Libyan Government. Jedran also accused the U.S. of siding with Tripoli at a time when the eastern part of Libya is seeking autonomy. Jedran's comments were recorded [here](#).

On March 18th, the United Nations (U.N.) Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) condemned Monday's terrorist attack against a graduation ceremony at a military academy in Benghazi. Attackers killed at least eight people and wounded more than a dozen others. UNSMIL called on Libyans to reject the recent series of kidnappings, assassinations, and bombings in Libya targeting national institutions and government personnel. UNSMIL's response to the attack was detailed [here](#).

On March 19th, in response to the recent hijacking of an oil tanker in Libya, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning attempts to illicitly export Libyan crude oil and imposing sanctions on any vessels attempting to do so. The sanctions regime would permit U.N. Member States to prohibit such vessels from entering their ports and keep Member States from engaging in financial transactions for crude oil with the vessels' crews. The resolution also authorizes Member States to inspect vessels and take action to return them to the Libyan Government. More information can be found [here](#).

On March 19th, *Reuters* reported the Morning Glory had been operated by Dubai-based Saud Shipping, part of the ZAD Group, at the time it was seized by Libyan rebels. The ship's captain, Pakistani Mirza Noman Baig, said the head of the ZAD Group has ordered the tanker to stop at the port in eastern Libya. As more information became available, ZAD denied involvement in any plans to help the Libyan rebels illicitly export government-owned crude oil. Developments were shared [here](#).

On March 19th, U.S. Army officials announced that small team of soldiers will deploy to Libya in the coming weeks to prepare for a larger U.S. mission to train Libyan soldiers in Bulgaria. While less than a dozen U.S. military personnel are expected in Libya in the near term, as many as 500 U.S. troops could ultimately be involved in training as many as 8,000 Libyan soldiers. Preparations for the training were noted [here](#).

South Sudan

On March 13th, the Executive Directors of the World Bank approved \$44 million in new financing to help South Sudan provide health services and other humanitarian relief to people affected by conflict in South Sudan's Jonglei and Upper Nile states. A \$25 million grant and a \$10 million International Development Association (IDA) credit were approved for the Health Rapid Results project, which provides primary health care services to women and children. In addition, the World Bank announced a \$9 million IDA grant for the Southern Sudan Emergency Food Crisis project, which will fund food relief for an additional 140,500 people. The World Bank funding was announced [here](#).

On March 13th, while in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for peace talks between the South Sudanese Government and forces loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar, U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Ambassador Donald Booth said thousands of people have died in South Sudan despite the signing of a ceasefire agreement in January. Ambassador Booth called on all parties to respect the ceasefire agreement and called on foreign forces, notably Uganda, to withdraw from South Sudan. Ambassador Booth's comments were reported [here](#).

On March 14th, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf responded to developments in South Sudan, including rebel leader Riek Machar's opposition to the proposed deployment of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) monitors and South Sudanese President Salva Kiir's opposition to the media broadcasting interviews with rebels from South Sudan. Deputy Spokesperson Harf expressed U.S. support for the IGAD process and expressed support for freedom of the press in South Sudan. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On March 17th, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) announced it is in the process of relocating civilians who have sought refuge at U.N. facilities ahead of the approaching rainy season. As part of the process, UNMISS peacekeepers are escorting buses of internally displaced people between the Tomping Compound in Juba and the U.N. House. Additionally, UNMISS is looking to expand its facilities for displaced civilians in Malakal, Bentiu, Bor, and Juba. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 18th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in South Sudan. Under-Secretary-General Ladsous reported on violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement and cautioned that the security and humanitarian situation in South Sudan will continue to deteriorate until there are inclusive peace talks and total access for U.N. and humanitarian partners. The briefing came as UNMISS reported renewed fighting in Malakal. AN update on the situation in South Sudan was provided [here](#).

On March 18th, *Foreign Policy* reported that relations between South Sudan and the U.N. have reached an all-time low as the South Sudanese military continues to launch targeted attacks against U.N. personnel. According to the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), there have been a number of incidents in violation of the Status of Forces agreement which provides immunity for U.N. personnel. The incidents reported include beatings of U.N. and relief workers, unwarranted vehicle searches, and public demonstrations against the U.N. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On March 10th, *All Africa* shared information on Uganda's military involvement in the conflict in South Sudan. While initially considered a humanitarian mission, as many as 4,500 Ugandan troops may have deployed to South Sudan since December. Ugandan troops are reportedly assisting South Sudanese forces in retaking towns that fell into rebel control and securing oil fields near the border with Sudan. The full story is available [here](#).

Central African Republic

On March 13th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met with religious leaders from the Central African Republic (CAR) at U.N. headquarters in New York to discuss the manipulation of religious and ethnic

affiliations as part of the ongoing conflict in the country. Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bangui Dieudonne Nzapalainga, President of the Islamic Council in the CAR Imam Oumar Kobine Layama, and President of the CAR's Evangelical Alliance Reverend Nicolas Guerekoyame-Gbangou said they refuse to be enemies and called for support from the international community to end interreligious fighting. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On March 14th, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) announced plans to ramp up efforts to assist refugees from the CAR who are arriving ill in Cameroon. UNHCR reported that many refugees who have recently crossed into Cameroon have spent weeks hiding in the bush without access to food and water and are suffering from hunger and exhaustion when they arrive. UNHCR predicted as many as 80% of the CAR refugees in Cameroon are suffering from serious ailments. More information was provided [here](#).

On March 18th, following reports of new firefight in Bangui, CAR Defense Minister Theophile Timangoa delivered a statement over state radio calling on all residents in Bangui to lay down their arms. He cautioned that anyone in Bangui still wielding a weapon would be considered a military target. Minister Timangoa also condemned the death of a military officer who was killed by armed individuals in Bangui earlier that day. Minister Timangoa's comments were reported [here](#).

On March 18th, the U.N. appealed for immediate additional aid to fund health services for people affected by the ongoing conflict in the CAR. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the CAR was already among the countries with the highest child and maternal mortality rates before the resurgence of violence over a year ago. The renewal of fighting has left the CAR's already weak health care system virtually collapsed. An article on the resources needed in the CAR can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, the Brookings Institution hosted an event on "Peace and Stability in the CAR." Panelists included Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bangui Dieudonne Nzapalainga, President of the Islamic Council in the CAR Imam Oumar Kobine Layama, and President of the CAR's Evangelical Alliance Reverend Nicolas Guerekoyame-Gbangou, who discussed efforts to prevent violence and promote interreligious tolerance in the CAR. Event details were posted [here](#).

On March 19th, upon completing a visit to Bossangoa in the CAR, U.N. World Food Program (WFP) Executive Director Ertharin Cousin warned of increasing food insecurity and malnutrition as sectarian violence in the country continues. Executive Director Cousin also noted that women and children who have been displaced by violence are most in need of assistance. More on Executive Director Cousin's visit to the CAR was shared [here](#).

Egypt

On March 17th, while the Egyptian Government has not issued a public figure on the number of arrests since the toppling of President Mohammed Morsi last summer, the *Associated Press* reported as many as 16,000 people may have been jailed over the past eight months, including many high profile members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Human rights groups also reported that prisons in Egypt have become overcrowded and that prisoners are suffering human rights abuses. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 19th, Egyptian police officers used teargas to break up student protests in Cairo and Alexandria. The rallies were intended to demonstrate support for the Muslim Brotherhood and deposed President Mohamed Morsi. The demonstrations were organized to coincide with the anniversary of the referendum following the toppling of President Hosni Mubarak. The protests were detailed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On March 18th, National Security Advisor Ambassador Susan Rice welcomed 12 governors and one deputy governor from Nigeria to the White House for discussions on bilateral issues of mutual interest. Topics included violence and insurgency in northern Nigeria, opportunities to promote economic growth, the need to protect human rights and strengthen democratic governance, and the approaching 2015 Nigerian elections. Information on the governors' visit to Washington can be seen [here](#).

On March 19th, the Office of the White House Press Secretary announced that President Barack Obama will host Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa at the White House on April 4th. The leaders are expected to discuss a broad range of bilateral and regional issues, including U.S. economic, political, and security assistance to support Prime Minister Jomaa's reform agenda, as well as the commitment of Tunisian leaders to advancing democracy. Prime Minister Jomaa's visit to Washington was announced [here](#).

State Department

On March 13th, the U.S.-Libya Higher Education Task Force held its first meeting in Washington, DC. The meeting was chaired by U.S. Ambassador to Libya Deborah Jones and Libyan Higher Education Minister Mohamed Abukbakkar. The Task Force, established in September 2013, is intended to deepen bilateral cooperation in education by increasing exchanges, improving the administration of scholarships and exchanges, forming partnerships between American and Libyan universities, and expanding the availability of English language and academic resources for Libyans wanting to study in the U.S. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 13th, the State Department issued a media note announcing its sponsorship of a special exchange program on Open Educational Resources (OER) for education leaders in the Middle East and North Africa. As part of the three-week program, educational innovators and policymakers from Egypt, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia will visit the U.S. to meet with their U.S. counterparts and to complete mini-internships at U.S. organizations involved in the open education movement. The exchange program was announced [here](#).

On March 13th, the State Department announced a panel discussion on U.S. global health diplomacy and the role of ambassadors to be held at the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). The event featured remarks from U.S. Ambassador to Malawi Jeanine Jackson and Acting Special Representative for the Secretary's Office of Global Health Diplomacy and former U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique Leslie Rowe. Event details were published [here](#).

On March 14th, Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall met with U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez at the Department of State. The meeting was listed on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which was posted [here](#).

On March 14th, the State Department's Rewards for Justice program announced it is offering rewards of up to \$3 million each for information leading to the arrest or conviction of Al Shabaab members Abdikadir Mohamed Abdikadir, Jafar, and Yasin Kilwe. The State Department noted that Al Shabaab has killed thousands of civilians, aid workers, and peacekeepers since 2006 in separate attacks in Somalia, Uganda, and Kenya. The State Department also expressed concern that Al Shabaab continues to threaten the stability of East Africa and the national security interests of the U.S. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 17th-18th, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom traveled to Tunisia for meetings with Tunisian officials, business leaders, students, and civil society representatives to discuss ways to strengthen the U.S.-Tunisia bilateral relationship. Deputy Secretary Higginbottom also articulated the U.S. belief that Tunisia remains a bright hope for a successful transition to democracy. Deputy Secretary Higginbottom's travel was noted [here](#).

On March 18th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said that due to Uganda's recent enactment of an anti-homosexuality law, the U.S. has stopped funding a salary top-off for 18 senior Ugandan health officials, which expired last month. While noting that a significant amount of the aid the U.S. has provided to Uganda goes towards health services and medication for HIV/AIDS and justice programs, Spokesperson Psaki said the U.S. continues to review assistance to Uganda and is considering additional steps that will not have a detrimental impact on Ugandans currently benefiting from U.S. funded health programs. Comments from Spokesperson Psaki can be found [here](#).

On March 19th, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Dean Pittman met with U.N. Special Representative for Cote d'Ivoire and Head of the U.N. Operation in Cote d'Ivoire

(UNOCI) Aichatou Mindaoudou at the Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On March 19th, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Uzra Zeya met with Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S. Moahmed Tawfik at the State Department. The meeting was listed [here](#).

On March 20th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement congratulating Namibia on 24 years of independence. Secretary Kerry applauded bilateral efforts to combat HIV/AIDS in Namibia, as well as coordination on initiatives in Namibia to enhance education, agriculture, conservation, health, and economic growth. Secretary Kerry's full statement was published [here](#).

On March 20th, State Department Director of Policy Planning David McKean met with U.S. Ambassador to Algeria Henry Ensher at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be viewed [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On March 14th, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Rajiv Shah met with Moroccan Ambassador to the U.S. Rachad Boulal at USAID. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On March 19th, Alex Their of USAID's Bureau for Policy Planning and Learning authored a post on USAID's Impact Blog on methods the agency is using to help improve the agriculture sector in Nigeria, where more than 70% of the population earns their livelihood from agriculture. In Nigeria, USAID is focused on connecting local farmers to new markets and technologies as a means of lifting Nigerians out of poverty. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

Department of Defense

On March 14th, AFRICOM Public Affairs issued a video address on the command's weekly activities. Filmed at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, this week's update provided insights on the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa's (CJTF-HOA) efforts to enhance the military capabilities of East African partners. The video update can be watched [here](#).

On March 14th, *The Pentagon Channel (TPC) News* released a video report on Exercise Central Accord 14, which is currently underway in Cameroon. The multinational exercise brings together military personnel from Africa, the U.S., and Europe with the goal of enhancing the humanitarian missions of partners in West Africa. The view report can be viewed [here](#).

On March 14th, the War is Boring blog ran a post on DOD's plans to send 350 more Marines and additional aircraft to Moron, Spain, to focus on crises response in Africa. Marines were first deployed to Spain following the September 2013 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya. Since then, the Marines have deployed to Uganda and Djibouti to assist with evacuations from South Sudan and have participated in training with African and European forces. The blog can be accessed [here](#).

On March 17th, the War is Boring blog published a post on the U.S. military presence in Somalia. While the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Special Operations Forces, and U.S. unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have operated in Somalia over the past 20 years, an October raid launched against Al Shabaab and the recent deployment of U.S. military advisors to the country mark a shift in the U.S. military presence in Somalia. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, AFRICOM reported on the North Dakota Army National Guard's role in managing multinational training activities during Exercise Central Accord 14. The training activities are part of a broader exercise to promote partnerships between participants from the U.S., Nigeria, Gabon, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Chad, and the Netherlands. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 20th, Program Manager for Invisible Children Sean Pool visited AFRICOM headquarters to discuss the work the organization is doing with the African Union (AU) Regional Task Force to defeat the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony. Invisible Children, founded in 2004 to raise awareness for the LRA's recruitment of child soldiers, has become the leading civilian organization contributing to efforts combat the LRA. More information can be viewed [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On March 14th, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) launched a blog post on the 100 megawatt Lome Thermal Power Plant project in Togo, the winner of OPIC's Impact Award for Critical Infrastructure. Representing one of the largest investments ever made in Togo, the project was completed in 2010 with the support of OPIC financing and political risk insurance. Since then, the power plant has been used to triple Togo's energy production and reducing blackouts. The blog post can be seen [here](#).

On March 19th, the OPIC blog recognized SunEdison for receiving the OPIC Impact Award for Renewable Resources for its work on a solar project in Boshof, South Africa. With a \$250 million OPIC loan, SunEdison is constructing a 60 megawatt solar photovoltaic power plant. In addition to providing new power generation, the project is also boosting the local economy with the creation of 200 new construction jobs. The project was detailed [here](#).

Congress

On March 13th, during a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations hearing on the FY15 budget request, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs Chris Coons (D-DE) questioned Secretary of State John Kerry about funding for the President's Power Africa initiative, the peacekeeping mission in the CAR, humanitarian challenges in Sudan and South Sudan, wildlife trafficking, and other U.S. priorities in Africa. A recording of the exchange can be watched [here](#).

On March 27th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) will host an Africa policy breakfast on "Leadership in Africa: A Discussion with Young African Leaders." Event details were posted [here](#).

North Africa

On March 13th, *The Hill* shared a blog post on the importance of Libya co-authored by Karim Mezran of the Atlantic Council and Mattia Toaldo of the European Council on Foreign Relations. While raising concern for political instability, insecurity, and economic weakness, Mezran and Toaldo suggest Libyan is important to the U.S. and Europe because of the country's role in global energy security, to security in the region between the Sahel and the Sinai, and the proximity to U.S. military bases in Europe. The full blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On March 19th, Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa completed a trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain intended to reassure Gulf partners of Tunisia's stability and encourage foreign investment in the country. The European Union (EU) and the World Bank have already agreed to increase their financial assistance to Tunisia this year, especially as Tunisia's current federal expenditures outpace its revenues. An article on Prime Minister Jomaa's trip can be read [here](#).

East Africa

On March 17th, Al Shabaab insurgents drove a car bomb into the Camalow hotel in Bulobarde, Somalia, instigating several hours of fighting between Al Shabaab militants and Somali soldiers. At the time of the attack, several AU and Somali soldiers were meeting at the hotel. Al Shabaab reporting killing 32 Somali soldiers in the attack. Meanwhile, authorities speculated that Al Shabaab was also responsible for an attack on a military convoy near Mogadishu, which left four soldiers dead. Both incidents were reported [here](#).

On March 18th, Ugandan security agencies issued a terror warning after receiving threats that Al Shabaab is planning to attack Uganda by targeting fuel tankers in transit across the Kenyan-Ugandan border or stopped at fuel depots or stations. Authorities increased security at depots and stations and, in some cases, are escorting tankers in their travels. Details can be found [here](#).

On March 18th, following a caucus meeting of opposition leaders in Uganda, the political opposition, including the Norbert Mao (DP), Gen Mugisha Muntu (FDC) and Olara Otunnu (UPC) parties, issued a

list of proposed electoral reforms and demanded a response from President Yoweri Museveni within one month's time. Among the reforms, the opposition has proposed the creation of an independent electoral commission to organize free and fair elections. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 18th, at the 2014 IBM Cognitive Colloquium held in Nairobi, Kenya, IBM unveiled its new ten-year business plan for addressing cognitive computing in Africa. As part of the plan, IBM is planning to launch a cognitive hub in Kenya. Using sensitive computer networks connected to the cloud, IBM hopes to make information on education on health care, education, and other sectors of the African economy readily available for research and business purposes. IBM's ten-year plan was detailed [here](#).

On March 19th, the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) issued a news release applauding the Somali National Army (SNA) and the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for their efforts to regain control of territories occupied by Al Shabaab in south-central Somalia. UNSOM noted the new offensive against Al Shabaab is the most significant and geographically extensive military advance against the terrorist organization since 2007. The news release was issued [here](#).

West Africa

On March 14th, Fulani herdsman traveled from Nigeria's Plateau state to Kuduna state and launched attacks against three villages, killing at least 100 people and wounding several others. The attacks were part of a longstanding dispute between Fulani Muslims and Nigerian Christians over land. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 14th, the West Africa Venture Fund (WAVF) said that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can assist in creating jobs, providing essential services, and rebuilding the economies of post-war West African nations, including Liberia and Sierra Leone. The \$40 million fund, which was created in 2010 to jumpstart the West African private sector, is supported primarily by the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC). More information can be viewed [here](#).

On March 14th, a ceremony was held in Timbuktu, Mali, to recognize the beginning of reconstruction work on the World Heritage mausoleums that were destroyed during fighting in northern Mali in 2012. The reconstruction project, which is being financed primarily by Malian authorities and the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is expected to be completed within one month. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 14th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay concluded a four-day visit to Nigeria. While recognizing the progress that Nigeria has made in advancing human rights, High Commissioner Pillay urged Nigeria to undertake more robust efforts to tackle poverty and to ensure that vulnerable groups, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, are protected. Noting that Nigeria currently serves as a member of the U.N. Security Council, High Commissioner Pillay insisted that Nigeria's position on human rights could impact the country's future on the international stage. Details can be found [here](#).

On March 14th, Nigerian financial security app, i.Sec, and Nigerian private equity firm Synergy Capital announced they have entered into an investment agreement of up to \$10 million. The i.Sec app establishes authentication for users with the goal of protecting customers from malicious debits on their accounts and allows users to report financial fraud in real time. The startup company is on target for a public launch in May. The investment agreement was announced [here](#).

On March 19th, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission concluded a visit to Bamako, Mali to prepare for the first review of the government's economic program supported under the IMF's Extended Credit Facility (ECF), which was approved in December 2013. The mission met with Malian Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly, Minister of Economy and Finance Bouare Fily Sissoko, and Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) National Director Konzo Traore, among others. The IMF team noted that Mali's manufacturing and service sectors have rebounded as Mali emerges from the political and security crisis of 2012 and forecasted 6.5% economic growth for 2014. The mission's analysis was posted [here](#).

On March 20th, *Daily Trust* reported that the Government of Nigeria is working with government officials for neighboring countries to schedule a summit to discuss Nigeria's battle against insurgents, notably

Boko Haram, in the northeastern part of the country. The meeting, which will be hosted by Cameroonian President Paul Biya, is likely to include high-level participants from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin. Details on the forthcoming meeting were shared [here](#).

On March 20th, the son of Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Teodorin Nguema Obiang Mangué, was charged with money laundering. Teodorin Obiang also serves as Equatorial Guinea's Vice President and previously served as Agriculture Minister. While Teodorin Obiang denies allegations that he embezzled state funds, he is well known for his lavish lifestyle. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 20th, Nigerian cosmetics brand House of Tara (HOT) announced plans to launch 100 makeup stores in sub-Saharan Africa over the next five years. The company currently operates 15 stores with more than 4,000 African sales representatives. While Revlon holds the greatest market share for cosmetics in Africa, other beauty product brands, such as L'Oreal, are looking to establish distribution deals with HOT as the company expands across the continent. More information can be found [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On March 13th, World Bank Vice President for Africa Makhtar Diop delivered remarks at the High-level Forum on Higher Education, Science, and Technology in Africa. Acknowledging the large youth population in sub-Saharan Africa, Vice President Diop noted the importance of getting more African children enrolled in primary and secondary school. He also discussed the importance of reforming African university systems to focus on the science and technological skills needed to spur economic growth. Vice President Diop's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On March 13th, the IMF reported on a conference it recently hosted with the Government of Cameroon in Yaounde on "Financing the Future: Infrastructure Development in Central Africa." The conference brought together 250 government officials, academics, financiers, and members of civil society from the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to discuss best practices for financing infrastructure development. The conference outcomes were summarized [here](#).

On March 13th, an IMF staff team concluded a visit to Mozambique. The IMF team met with Prime Minister Alberto Vaquina, Finance Minister Manuel Chang, Planning and Development Minister Aiuba Cuereneia, and Bank of Mozambique Governor Ernesto Gove. The IMF team observed that Mozambique's economic growth remains strong and is likely to accelerate over 8% in 2014. Additional analysis of Mozambique's economy was provided [here](#).

On March 14th, President of Mozambique Armando Guebuza announced changes to his cabinet. Notably, President Guebuza dismissed Defense Minister Felipe Nyussi from his post after his selection as the ruling Frelimo party's October presidential candidate. Minister Nyussi will be replaced by Deputy Defense Minister Agostinho Mondlane. Mozambique's cabinet reshuffling was reported [here](#).

On March 14th, *Venture Burn* reported on Cape Town, South Africa's efforts to promote local startup companies. These efforts coincided with Cape Town's recent recognition as the 2014 World Design Capital by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID). A number of technology startups that have been recognized for design, culture, and innovation were profiled [here](#).

On March 14th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement expressing concern about violence between political officials and opposition members in Burundi, likely caused by growing restrictions on freedom of expression, association, and assembly. Following reports that authorities in Burundi had broken up opposition party meetings, Secretary-General Ban called on all of Burundi's political parties to campaign against violence ahead of presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015. Feedback from Secretary-General Ban can be seen [here](#).

On March 14th, U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in the country. Special Representative Kobler highlighted the progress the DRC has made towards restoring stability, as evidenced by Goma's ability to host the recent Amani Music and Dance Festival for Peace. He noted the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) will continue to prioritize security and protection of civilians, as well as disarming and reintegrating armed groups. Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

On March 16th, during a luncheon in recognition of his recent 90th birthday, Zimbabwean Robert Mugabe accused Nigeria and its people of being corrupt. Specifically, President Mugabe said that Nigerians must be paid for every service. Ironically, according to global rankings for corruption, corruption is much worse in Zimbabwe than in Nigeria. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 18th, following an incident at a rally addressed by Malawian President Joyce Banda on Sunday that left two people dead, the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) announced an all-party conference to discuss way to eliminate political violence in the campaign period leading up to the May 20th elections. More information can be found [here](#).

On March 19th, the IMF issued a press release on economic conditions in Angola. The IMF observed that Angola has returned to a path of solid economic growth, reasonable inflation, and a stable exchange rate, with growth projected to increase to 5% in 2014. The IMF cautioned, however, that Angola must properly manage oil revenues, especially as production continues to increase. The press release was posted [here](#).

On March 19th, the trial of South African Olympian Oscar Pistorius for the murder of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp, entered into its 13th day of proceedings. At the end of the day, the prosecution was granted a postponement of the case until Monday to allow the state to consult with its remaining four or five witnesses. The latest developments in the trial were reported [here](#).

On March 19th, *Voice of America* reported that the Burundian Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (MSD) party has been suspended for four months and 46 members of the party are facing the possibility of life in prison after being charged with insurrection for the demonstrations the party organized in Bujumbura earlier this month. While MSD members argue the crackdown was politically motivated, government officials deny any deliberate targeting of the opposition. Developments in Burundi were noted [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 13th, *The Washington Post* published an article on the public health consequences of recently enacted anti-homosexuality laws in Nigeria and Uganda. While these countries have made progress in the past decade in promoting testing for HIV/AIDS, reducing transmission, and providing treatment, the new laws are likely to further stigmatize homosexual populations and make those with HIV/AIDS more difficult to reach. The full article can be read [here](#).

On March 17th, the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies held a discussion on "The Current Security Challenges in Africa." Panelists included Michael Swetnam and Yonah Alexander of the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Ambassador of the CAR to the U.S. Stanislas Moussa-Kembe, former Ambassador of Mali to the U.S. Al Maamoun Baba Lamine Keita, Nancy Walker of AfricaNet Consulting, Christos Kyrou of the Center for International Relations, and Don Wallace of the International Law Institute. Event information was posted [here](#).

On March 17th, consulting firm A.T. Kearney released its first African Retail Development Index, ranking the 20 African countries identified as having the best potential for retailers. According to the report, Rwanda is the most attractive market on the continent for retailers looking to expand their presence in Africa. Other countries listed in the top ten included Nigeria, South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. Excerpts from the report were highlighted [here](#).

On March 18th, 31 central bank officials from Angola, Botswana, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia participated in an IMF Africa Training Institute (ATI) course on monetary policy analysis. The course covered new forecasting techniques and applied them to country studies. The participants also presented on their macroeconomic forecasts and policy recommendations. A press release on the course was issued [here](#).

On March 19th, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) celebrated its tenth anniversary. The occasion was marked with a ceremony attended by parliamentarians and current and former African heads of state. Many of the speakers who delivered remarks to commemorate the anniversary expressed concern that the body must become more proactive. Details were shared [here](#).

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