



ML Strategies Update

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MARCH 27, 2014

Africa Update

Leading the News

Uganda

On March 23rd, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his plans to deploy additional U.S. forces to Uganda to intensify the search for Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony. According to Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs Amanda Dory, four CV-22 Osprey aircraft and 150 Air Force Special Operations personnel were scheduled to arrive in Uganda by the middle of this week. U.S. forces, working with African Union (AU) forces based in Uganda, plan to search for Kony in the jungles of the Central African Republic (CAR), where he is believed to be hiding. Details were reported [here](#).

On March 24th, the Department of State issued a fact sheet detailing U.S. efforts to support regional initiatives to counter the LRA. The fact sheet described the comprehensive, multi-year U.S. strategy to assist the Governments of Uganda, the CAR, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and South Sudan, as well as the AU, to increase protection of civilians, to apprehend Joseph Kony and other senior LRA commanders, to promote defections, disarmament, and reintegration for LRA soldiers, and to provide humanitarian relief to affected communities. The fact sheet can be accessed [here](#).

On March 24th, in addition to addressing new U.S. efforts to counter the LRA, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf detailed U.S. efforts to show support for Uganda's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in response to the country's enactment of anti-homosexuality legislation. She noted the U.S. has redirected funding for the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and suspended the start of an HIV/AIDS survey because it now poses a danger to respondents and staff. In addition, \$3 billion in U.S. assistance previously designated for tourism promotion in Uganda has been redirected, and a Department of Defense (DOD) sponsored Africa Air Chief Symposium and East Africa Military Intelligence course will be relocated from Uganda. Details are available [here](#).

Egypt

On March 24th, a court in Minya, Egypt, convicted 529 supporters of ousted Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi of charges including murder and attacks on people and property and sentenced them to death. In advance of a final trial scheduled for April 28th, the verdict will be considered by Egypt's Grand Mufti. The defendants have indicated they will appeal the verdict, especially because they had no chance to present their case. The sentences were handed down in advance of another trial about to begin this week for 700 more Muslim Brotherhood supporters. The proceedings were detailed [here](#).

On March 25th, the United Nations (U.N.) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expressed alarm at Egypt's mass imposition of the death penalty against 529 people following a trial that was rife with procedural irregularities and in breach of international law. OHCHR also expressed concern that the charges of membership in the Muslim Brotherhood and participation in demonstrations do not surpass the threshold where the death penalty is warranted. Feedback from OHCHR was shared [here](#).

On March 25th, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf kicked off the Department's daily press briefing by calling Egypt's imposition of the death penalty on 529 defendants after a two-day trial unconscionable and a flagrant disregard for basic standards of justice. She said U.S. Government officials are making clear to the Egyptian Government that these verdicts should not be allowed to stand as they continue to call on Egypt to refrain from politically motivated detentions, charges, and trials. Comments from Deputy Spokesperson Harf were transcribed [here](#).

On March 26th, after meeting with a council of Egypt's top military officials, Egyptian Field Marshal General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi appeared on state television to officially resign as Egypt's Defense Minister and Commander of the Egyptian Armed Forces and to announce his candidacy in Egypt's upcoming presidential elections. In his address, Field Marshal Sisi said he would decline to unveil his policy platform until Egypt's electoral commission finalizes preparations for the elections registration process. Hamdeen Sabbahi, a leftist politician, is the only other candidate registered to run for president. Highlights from Field Marshal Sisi's announcement were noted [here](#).

On March 26th, Secretary of State John Kerry spoke directly on the sentencing of 529 Egyptian citizens to death following a quick mass trial, noting that many of the defendants did not appear in the courtroom. Secretary Kerry suggested there are many avenues of legitimate review for this judgment and urged Egyptian authorities to remedy the situation. Additionally, Secretary Kerry warned that if the sentences are upheld, the international community will question Egypt's commitment to international law and inclusivity. Secretary Kerry's remarks can be seen [here](#).

On March 27th, one day after interim Egyptian President Adly Mansour issued a decree announcing that Sedki Sohby would succeed Field Marshal General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi as Egyptian Defense Minister, Sohby was officially sworn in and attended his first cabinet meeting, led by Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehlab. More information is available [here](#).

Sudan

On March 24th, following an incident in which 300 armed men attacked a camp for internally displaced persons in South Darfur, the AU-U.N. Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) issued a news release on its efforts to protect at least 2,000 refugees who were residing at the camp. UNAMID is providing additional services to refugees from villages that were also attacked by armed men in North Darfur. Additional information from UNAMID was released [here](#).

On March 25th, Operations Director for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) John Ging called for the urgent mobilization of aid for the people of Sudan, where approximately 6.1 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. Director Ging said the crisis in South Sudan only increases the urgency to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Comments from Director Ging can be viewed [here](#).

On March 26th, the U.S. State Department issued a press statement expressing concern for the recent escalation of violence in the Darfur region of Sudan between government forces, government-sponsored militias, and Darfuri armed movements. Following a series of recent attacks, the State Department estimated there have been numerous civilian casualties and that more than 15,000 civilians have been displaced. In addition, the State Department reiterated its call on all parties to stop attacks targeting civilians, as well as its demand that the Government of Sudan take actions to prevent further violence. The press statement can be accessed [here](#).

South Sudan

On March 20th, speaking at an event held parallel to the annual meeting of the U.N. Commission on the

Status of Women, Executive Director of the U.N. Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) Phumzile Mlambo-Ngucka said that women must be full participants in the process to restore peace and stability in South Sudan. Executive Director Mlambo-Ngucka noted that women in South Sudan have been vocal in urging all parties to respect January's ceasefire agreement and in encouraging peace talks. Observations from Executive Director Mlambo-Ngucka were noted [here](#).

On March 21st, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that local residents of South Sudan's Upper Nile state have demanded that 60,000 people residing at two nearby refugee camps leave within two months as food shortages continue to escalate tensions in the region. Small attacks launched by residents on the camps have also led some refugees to flee. Developments in Upper Nile state were reported [here](#).

On March 22nd-25th, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Nancy Lindborg traveled to South Sudan to observe U.S. efforts to respond to the humanitarian crises as violence continues in the country. Assistant Administrator Lindborg met with South Sudanese Government officials, USAID staff, and other humanitarian partners providing assistance to civilians. A press release on Assistant Administrator Lindborg's travel was issued [here](#).

On March 25th, the U.S. Department of State announced \$83 million in additional humanitarian assistance for the people of South Sudan. The new funding includes \$68 million for U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide food aid and relief supplies to more than 708,000 people displaced in South Sudan. Additionally, the funding includes \$15 million to support South Sudanese refugees that have fled to Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan. The new funding was announced [here](#).

Central African Republic

On March 20th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay visited Bangui in the CAR. High Commissioner Pillay reported that the humanitarian situation in the CAR remains dire, with acts of violence being committed by spontaneous mobs, as well as organized armed fighters. Inter-communal fighting in the CAR has killed thousands of people and left more than two million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Comments from High Commissioner Pillay were recorded [here](#).

On March 21st, following her second visit to the CAR, U.N. Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura expressed concern that while some improvements have been made to the security situation in the country, women and children remain particularly vulnerable to attacks. While in Bangui, Special Representative Bangura and CAR President Catherine Samba-Panza agreed to the deployment of a U.N.-backed rapid response unit to respond to sexual assault incidents. Feedback from Special Representative Bangura was summarized [here](#).

On March 26th, the U.N. Peacebuilding Mission in the CAR (BINUCA) called on civilians, political stakeholders, and religious leaders to speak out on the dire situation in the country and the need for greater humanitarian assistance. In order to accelerate the disbursement of funds pledged for relief efforts in the CAR, which according to BINUCA are not enough to meet demands, the U.N. has created a multipurpose trust fund (MPTF) for response efforts in the country. More information can be found [here](#).

Libya

On March 22nd, the U.S. Navy handed the Morning Glory, an oil tanker carrying crude that had been hijacked by Libyan rebels at Es Sider port, back over to Libyan authorities. The handover occurred in international waters off the coast of Libya, where U.S. military personnel had been escorting the vessel back to Libyan control. Just before the handover, rebels from three of Libya's eastern oil ports attacked an army base, injuring at least 16 people. More information was shared [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On March 24th, President Barack Obama announced the appointment of Douglas Brooks as the Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP). In this role, Director Brooks will work with the White House National Security Council (NSC), the State Department's Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator, and international bodies to ensure that America's response to the global pandemic is integrated with prevention, care, and treatment efforts around the world. The appointment was announced [here](#).

State Department

On March 21st, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism Tina Kaidanow met with Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S. Mohamed Tawfiq at the U.S. Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On March 25th, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism Tina Kaidanow held a second meeting with Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S. Mohamed Tawfiq. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be found [here](#).

On March 25th, Special Advisor for Children's Issues Ambassador Susan Jacobs departed on foreign travel to Egypt. Special Advisor Jacobs met with government officials and NGOs to encourage Egypt to become a party to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and to discuss how the U.S. and Egypt can work together to resolve international parental child abduction cases. Information on Special Advisor Jacobs' travel was shared [here](#).

On March 25th, the State Department's Bureau of Overseas Building Operations announced that the new U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura, Burundi, has received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, making it the first LEED certified building in the country. The facility, which utilizes 960 solar panels, architectural shading and a white roof, and light emitting diode (LED) task lighting, has reduced energy costs by 52% from the baseline. Water consumption has also been reduced by 39%. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 26th, the State Department announced Secretary of State John Kerry's upcoming travel to Algeria and Morocco. Following his visit to Brussels, Belgium, on April 1st, Secretary Kerry will travel to Algiers for meetings with senior Algerian officials and to co-chair the U.S. Algeria Strategic Dialogue with Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra. Secretary Kerry will then travel on to Rabat to meet with senior Moroccan officials and to co-chair the U.S.-Morocco Strategic Dialogue with Moroccan Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar. Secretary Kerry's travel was detailed [here](#).

On March 26th, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel hosted the first in a series of live Twitter chats on the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and Young African Leaders Network (YALN). These programs are focused on connecting the next generation of African entrepreneurs with resources overseas. The chat had more than 12,000 participants, including high participants from youths in Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Cameroon, and Uganda, and the #YALICHAT hashtag was briefly trending on Twitter. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 26th, State Department Counselor Tom Shannon met with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mission Chief for Egypt and Adviser Chris Jarvis, at the IMF. The meeting was noted [here](#).

On March 26th, Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Ambassador Frederick Barton traveled to New York to give a talk at Columbia University on "Conflict in Crisis: On the Ground in Syria, Burma, and Nigeria." In his address, Assistant Secretary Barton noted the State Department is driving a multi-media campaign aimed at reducing the likelihood of mass violence in the Niger Delta. More information on Assistant Secretary Barton's presentation was posted [here](#).

On March 26th, Special Representative for Global Partnerships Andrew O'Brien met with Chairman of the Uganda Democratic Federation Dr. Athanasios Magimbi. The meeting, which was hosted at the Department of State, was announced [here](#).

On March 27th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield traveled to Chicago, Illinois. After delivering remarks at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and

visiting with students at the Whitney Young Magnet School, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield delivered the keynote address at the meeting of the Overseas Security Advisory Committee's Africa Regional Council. Details on Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's schedule in Chicago can be found [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On March 21st, in recognition of World Water Day, USAID Global Water Coordinator and Deputy Assistant Administrator Chris Holmes authored a blog post on USAID water programs that are strengthening resilience to disease, climate change, drought, floods, and water shortages in Kenya. During a recent trip to Kenya, Assistant Administrator Holmes visited USAID health clinic, sanitation, and water storage projects in Kaputir and Kalimngorok. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

On March 25th, USAID published a blog post on the agency's efforts to combat corruption in North Africa. In partnership with Transparency International, USAID has launched the Addressing Corruption Through Information and Organized Networking (ACTION) project to study corruption in Morocco and Egypt. The project has identified laws that fuel corruption in both countries, including secrecy laws that limit access to information that is critical to identifying corruption. The USAID blog can be accessed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On March 21st, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Public Affairs reported on a recent visit to AFRICOM headquarters by a group of military officer and civilian students from the Defense Academy of the United Kingdom (U.K.). AFRICOM leaders briefed the group on AFRICOM's role and mission in working with African partner militaries to increase stability on the continent. The group's visit to AFRICOM headquarters was described [here](#).

On March 21st, *The Pentagon Channel (TPC) News* posted a video of a practice parachute drop conducted by U.S. and African partner nation militaries as part of Exercise Central Accord 14. Hosted by Cameroon, the exercise brought together more than 1,000 troops from the U.S., Nigeria, Gabon, Burundi, the DRC, Chad, and the Netherlands to build multinational partnerships and capacity on peacebuilding operations, humanitarian disaster response, and counterterrorism. The video can be viewed [here](#).

On March 24th, the AFRICOM Public Affairs Office distributed a weekly video update on the Command's activities. Included in this week's update was information on the continuing U.S. Army led exercise Central Accord in Cameroon, as well as the conclusion of Exercise Saharan Express 2014. The update also addressed AFRICOM's participation in World Water Day. The full update can be watched [here](#).

On March 25th, AFRICOM reported that the Government of Benin presented its final draft of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan and the Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) Disaster Contingency Plan during a recent ceremony hosted by AFRICOM in Cotonou. The ceremony followed a five-day workshop intended to validate the plans and to enhance Benin's disaster response capabilities. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 25th, the opening ceremony for Africa Partnership Flight Angola 2014 was held at the Luanda Air Base in Angola. Over the course of the next week, airmen from the U.S., Zambia, and Angola will participate in workshops focused on mission planning, disaster preparedness, and cargo buildup. Information on the military exchange was provided [here](#).

On March 27th, Marine Forces Europe and Africa reported on the recent conclusion of the Military Basic Intelligence Officer's Course, Africa 10 (MIBOC-A) in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. Twenty-five students from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, and Burundi completed the eight-week course, which was intended to build interoperability between African intelligence communities. The course focused on skills in intelligence gathering, counter-insurgency, and counterterrorism. More information is available [here](#).

On March 27th, AFRICOM noted, that as part of its scheduled deployment supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts, the guided-missile destroyer USS Nitze recently visited Port Louis, Mauritius, where U.S. sailors volunteered at the Association pour la Promotion de la

Sante (APSA) Diabetes Clinic and The Center for Women and Children in Distress. An article on the volunteer activities can be accessed [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On March 24th, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield authored a post on OPIC's blog about OPIC's efforts to support American investors in Malawi. After recently spending two days meeting with business leaders and government officials in Lilongwe and Blantyre, President Littlefield said her interest has peaked in supporting development projects to address Malawi's power shortages, food insecurity, and poor access to finance. While in Malawi, President Littlefield also urged government reforms that will make the business environment friendlier and more transparent. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

Congress

On March 25th, House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) received a letter from Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs Elizabeth King responding to his inquiries regarding the Department's spending to comply with congressional investigations of the September 2012 attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi. Assistant Secretary King said DOD and other federal agencies have spent millions of dollars and thousands of man-hours responding to numerous and often repetitive requests related to approximately 50 different congressional oversight briefings, hearings, and interviews. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On March 26th, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-MD), joined by all of the Democratic members of the Committee, sent a letter to Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) calling for an end to the Committee's investigation of the 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi. Committee Democrats argued the investigation has not only become partisan but has also cost millions of dollars and forced federal agencies to spend a significant amount of time responding to congressional demands. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 27th, the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs held a hearing on President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. Witnesses included USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Earl Gast, Africa Director for the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank Rick Anguoni, and Executive Vice President of OPIC Mimi Alemayehou. Testimony was also provided by Paul Hinks of Symbion Power, Del Renigar of General Electric (GE), Tom Hart of The ONE Campaign, and Tony Elumelu of the Toney Elumelu Foundation. A webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

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

North Africa

On March 21st, Chadian Environment Minister Mahamat Issa Halikimi announced a \$1.2 billion fine on China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) for environmental violations and demanded that CNPC repair the damage caused by pollution of the Bongo Basin. CNPC has operated in Chad since 2003. In August 2013, the Government of Chad suspended CNPC's activities in the country through October, when it was believed that CNPC had made improvements to its environmental practices. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 23rd, the campaign period kicked off for upcoming presidential elections in Algeria, scheduled for April 17th. Director of Public Safety at the National Gendarmerie Colonel Mohamed Tahar Benaamane said 130,000 gendarmes have been tasked with securing the presidential candidates and election offices and indicated that additional units will be deployed to protect polling stations across the country. Information on security procedures for Algeria's upcoming presidential elections can be found [here](#).

On March 24th, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) kicked off its 28th Regional Conference for Africa in Tunis, Tunisia. Addressing the conference, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa Bukar Tijani noted that Africa remains the world's most food insecure

continent. To address this issue, FAO suggested that African Agriculture Ministers develop key initiatives to support small farms and to provide food assistance for women and children. Highlights from the conference were noted [here](#).

On March 24th, the U.S. Institute of Peace hosted an online discussion on the national dialogue process in Sudan. Panelists included former U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan Ambassador Princeton Lyman, Nasredeen Abdulbari and Dr. Mohamad Haroun of the University of Khartoum, Ahmed Hussain Adam of Columbia University, Magdeldin Elgizouli of the University of Freiberg, Dr. Abdullahi Ibrahim of the University of Missouri, Dr. El Wathig Mohamed Kameir of the Sudan Institute for Research and Policy, Sayed Elkhatib of the Center for Strategic Studies, and Jon Temin of the U.S. Institute of Peace. More information can be found [here](#).

On March 24th, an IMF mission completed a trip to Tunisia to conduct the third review of Tunisia's economic and reform program supported by a 24-month Stand By Arrangement (SBA) approved by the IMF last year. IMF officials held several meetings with senior government and central bank officials, as well as representatives of the banking and private sectors, trade unions, political parties, the donor community, and civil society. The IMF delegation observed that recovery of the Tunisian economy remains slow, with economic growth forecasted at only 2.8% in 2014. The IMF mission also identified short term risks to the Tunisian economy, including a potentially lengthy political transition, security tensions, and worsening economic outlooks for Tunisia's primary trade partners. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 31st, the American Security Project will host a briefing with founder and elected leader of the Egyptian Social Democratic Party Dr. Mohamed Aboulghar. The discussion will focus on upcoming presidential elections in Egypt, the role of Egypt's political opposition in the country's democratic transition, and reforms to restore economic prosperity in the Nile Delta. Event details were posted [here](#).

East Africa

On March 20th, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$205 million International Development Association (IDA) credit to help the Government of Ethiopia increase access to clean drinking water and improve sanitation services. The funds will support the Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Project, which envisions 100% access to water and 84% improvement in household latrines by 2015. A press release on the funding can be viewed [here](#).

On March 23rd, Kenyan security officers began an intensive search in the Likoni area for gunmen who attacked the Joy in Jesus Church in Mombasa last week, killing four people and injuring 21 others. The search intensified as Kenya Interior Principal Secretary Mutea Iringo ordered the sealing of all exits from Likoni. It remains unclear if a terrorist group was responsible for the attack. An article on the incident and the search for the attackers can be read [here](#).

On March 24th, the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) condemned the outbreak of violence in Baidoa between supporters of different state formation initiatives that left at least eight local elders dead. The Government of Somalia has suggested that the murders were perpetrated by Al Shabaab insurgents who were targeting a state building conference underway in the area. In addition, UNSOM reiterated its commitment to working with the Government of Somalia to advance the reconciliation and state formation process. Details on the incident were reported [here](#).

On March 24th, Kenya's Lake Turkana Wind Power Project moved forward with the signing of over \$879 million in financial agreements with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other funders. The project, which is considered part of President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative, will add 300 megawatts of low cost grid energy to Kenya's national grid. Wind power generation currently accounts for less than six megawatts of Kenya's installed capacity. Information on the financial structure for the project can be found [here](#).

On March 26th, Kenyan Interior Minister Joseph Ole Lenku ordered all refugees living in Kenyan cities to return to their camps, including the Dadaab and Kakuma camps that are notoriously known for overcrowding. It has been speculated that the order comes out of concern that Somali militant groups, such as Al Shabaab, have started using refugee camps and refugees living in Kenyan cities to launch attacks in retaliation for Kenya's intervention in Somalia. More information can be seen [here](#).

West Africa

On March 20th, head of the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Karin Landgren briefed the U.N. Security Council on Developments in the country. Despite reporting improvements in Liberia's political and security landscape, Special Representative Landgren warned the country is still struggling to implement important reforms, as evidenced by recent demonstrations in Liberia organized by unions, health care workers, and students. Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

On March 21st, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided detailed analysis on the conclusion of the annual Discussion on Common Policies of Member Countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). The IMF welcomed strong economic growth and moderate inflation in the region and noted that the near term economic outlook for West Africa remains strong. The IMF also suggested that regional trade integration could enhance economic opportunities and encouraged coordinated action to remove nontariff barriers, fill infrastructure gaps, and improve business and legal environments. More information was provided [here](#).

On March 23rd, a bomb was detonated in a crowded marketplace in the town of Bama in Borno state, Nigeria. While no group claimed immediate responsibility for the attack, officials in Nigeria believe the attack was perpetrated by Boko Haram fighters. At least 29 people were killed in the attack and several others wounded. The incident was reported [here](#).

On March 23rd, Guinea's Ministry of Health reported that the ebola epidemic that recently began in southern part of the country has now spread to the capital city of Conakry. Guinean officials reported that 59 of 80 people who reported contracting ebola have died and expressed concern that the epidemic could soon spread to Sierra Leone and Liberia. Developments on the spread of the epidemic were shared [here](#).

On March 24th, the IMF officially opened its fifth regional technical assistance center (AFRITAC) in Accra, Ghana. The New AFRITAC will serve Ghana, Cabo Verde, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia by providing capacity building assistance on financial sector supervision, monetary operations and payment systems oversight, tax and customs administration, public financial management, and macroeconomic statistics. More information was posted [here](#).

On March 26th, Ghanaian President John Mahama said the rehabilitation project at Ghana's Tema port will make the facility the largest port in West Africa. The expansion project, which is expected to cost as much as \$1 billion, is a public-private partnership between Ghana's Ports and Harbor Authority and Meridian Port Services. The Tema port manages more than 70% of Ghana's maritime freight activities. The port expansion project was detailed [here](#).

On March 26th, *The Guardian* reported that Nigeria is vulnerable to a potential food crisis. Food shortages in Nigeria are likely to be caused by a relatively short rainy season, ongoing sectarian violence, and greater demand for Nigeria's agricultural outputs from Niger. Factors affecting Nigeria's food security were noted [here](#).

On March 26th, an IMF team concluded a visit to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to meet with Burkinabe authorities on the first review of their economic and financial program supported by the IMF under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and a surveillance review required every two years. IMF staff met with Prime Minister Luc-Adolphe Tiao, Minister of Economy and Finance Lucien Bembamba, Minister of Mines Salif Kabore, Minister of Budget Clotilde Ki-Nikiema, and National Director of the Central Bank of West African State Charles Ki-Zerbo. While the IMF team projected strong economic growth at 6.7% for 2014, it also urged Burkina Faso to make more transparent budgetary transfers and to pass the revising mining code. Additional economic analysis can be found [here](#).

On March 26th, Head of the U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) Jean Anders Toyberg-Frandzen briefed the U.N. Security Council on the approaching end of the U.N. Mission in the country. UNIPSIL will officially close on March 31st. UNIPSIL's engagement in Sierra Leone began 15 years ago when 17,000 peacekeepers were deployed to the country and tasked with disarming rebel militants at the height of the country's civil war. Since then UNIPSIL has also operated a civilian political mission to assist with reconciliation efforts. More information on the wind down of UNIPSIL can be

viewed [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On March 21st, the Executive Directors of the World Bank approved \$60.9 million in IDA funds to assist the Government of Rwanda in upgrading its infrastructure as a means of intensifying Rwandan farmers' agricultural productivity. The newly announced funding will support the Feeder Roads Development Project (FRDP), which is improving roads allowing connectivity to agricultural markets in Karongi, Rwagana, Gisagaram and Nyamasheke, as well as the Third Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP 3), which will expand irrigation systems and promote sustainable land management practices. Both projects were detailed [here](#).

On March 23rd, South African Public Protector Thuli Madonsela detailed her findings in the investigation related to accusations that President Jacob Zuma embezzled funds to pay for unnecessary upgrades to his home in Nkandla. In a recently released report, Madonsela recommends that President Zuma pay back 245 million South African Rand that were spent on upgrades that were not security-related, including a swimming pool, paving, and a visitor's center. While President Zuma's African National Congress (ANC) party charges the report's recommendation was politically motivated, opposition parties, including the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), continue to demand President Zuma's resignation. The full story can be found [here](#).

On March 24th, UNHCR express sadness when a boat transporting Congolese refugees who were living in Uganda back to the DRC capsized on Lake Albert. Following the incident, authorities rescued 41 refugees and recovered 98 bodies. Several people remain missing. Uganda still hosts approximately 175,500 refugees who continue to evade ongoing fighting in the DRC. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 24th, *Venture Burn* reported on the success of Shopstar, the African ecommerce platform launched in Cape Town, South Africa, last year. Given its success, Shopstar has recently partnered with the Cape Craft and Design Institute (CCDI) to launch a series of ecommerce workshops to educate entrepreneurs on how to create successful online solutions. More information on Shopstar's activities was shared [here](#).

On March 25th, the Government of South Africa, with support from the World Bank, hosted a regional ministerial meeting on harmonizing the response to tuberculosis (TB) in the mining sector. The meeting, held in Johannesburg, brought together government officials from Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, and Swaziland to discuss a regional approach to combating TB in the mining industry. Approximately two million ex-mineworkers in the four countries are at high risk of TB. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 25th, officials at South Africa's Mineral Resources Department indicated that final rules to allow hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in the country will be published in mid-April. Once the rules are finalized, experts expect it could take two years for exploratory fracking to be completed. South African President Jacob Zuma has recently said that fracking could be a game changer for the country's economy. More information on fracking in South Africa can be found [here](#).

On March 25th, the prosecution in the South African Oscar Pistorius murder trial rested its case, concluding its effort to highlight the Olympians' tendency for jealousy and rage that resulted in him murdering his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. Pistorius, who will plead not guilty and asserts that he accidentally shot Steenkamp thinking she was an intruder, may take the stand when the defense begins its case on Friday. Developments in the proceedings were noted [here](#).

On March 26th, *Reuters* reported that South Africa's abalone mollusk is on the verge of extinction due to increased demand in Asian countries and illegal poaching. The delicacy, also known as white gold, is sold for as much as \$420 a kilogram on the South African black market, and can attract as much as three times that price in Asian markets. The full story is available [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 24th, Standard Bank forecasted there will continue to be growth in the number of high net worth individuals (HNWIs) in Africa. Between 2011 and 2012, there was roughly a 10% increase in

HNWIs in Africa, compared to just 9.2% for the rest of the world. In some of the wealthiest countries in Africa, such as Nigeria, the number of HNWIs grew by as much as 24% over the same period. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On March 25th, *Forbes* published a list of the top ten female tech founders in Africa. Included on the list are Founder of AppsTech, Rebecca Enonchong of Cameroon, Co-Founders of MFarm, Jamila Abass, Linda Kwanboka, and Susan Oguya of Kenya, and Co-Founder of Obani, Barbara Mallison of South Africa. The full list was posted [here](#).

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