



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Burundi

On February 25th, Human Rights Watch (HRW) unveiled a new report documenting a wide range of human rights abuses, including killings, torture, abductions, and arbitrary arrests committed by Burundian security forces during recent political unrest. In the report, HRW called on Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza to publicly denounce security force abuses and ensure those responsible are held to account. Additionally, HRW said opposition leaders should order their supporters to stop human rights abuses. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

On March 2nd, the U.S. Department of State welcomed signs of intensified regional and international commitment to resolve the crisis in Burundi, including the appointment of former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa as the full-time facilitator for the regionally mediated dialogue and recent commitments by the Government of Burundi to the United Nations (U.N.) and the African Union (AU) to release political prisoners and allow independent monitors. The State Department urged prompt action by the Burundian Government to implement President Pierre Nkurunziza's promise to release at least 2,000 detainees, and called for the Government to lift all restrictions on media, create conditions for citizens to safely express dissenting views, and drop charges against and release political opponents. A full statement was posted [here](#).

Libya

On February 25th, the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a new report evidencing widespread human rights violations and abuses committed in Libya since the beginning of 2014, including unlawful killings, indiscriminate attacks on highly populated residential areas, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, abductions and disappearances, and gender-based violence and discrimination against women. OHCHR recommended urgent action to stop the proliferation of Libyan armed groups through disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and called on the international community to ensure the International Criminal Court (ICC) can carry out investigations and prosecutions related to the abuses. The report was discussed [here](#).

On February 25th, fighting continued between Libyan forces and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) militants in Sabratha. Sabratha Municipal Council Major Hussein al-Thwadi reported a government operation had been successful in killing one militant fighter believed to be planning to execute a suicide attack and detaining a militant commander. Three Libyan soldiers have been killed in the fighting and ten others wounded. An update was provided [here](#).

On February 28th, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) announced plans to scale up the repatriation of African migrants suffering abuse and exploitation in Libya, primarily at the hands of police and local militias. Over the last few months, the IOM has repatriated thousands of Africans from Libya to Burkina Faso, The Gambia, and Senegal. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 28th, airstrikes were reported in the Libyan town of Bani Walid. While no group claimed responsibility for the operation, it was believed the airstrikes were targeting a suspected convoy of ISIL militants. It was not immediately clear if the convoy was hit. Both U.S. and Libyan government forces have carried out airstrikes against Libyan jihadists in recent months. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 29th, Brigadier General Donald Bolduc, head of U.S. Special Operations Forces in Africa, said Libyan forces will be unable to defeat ISIL without the help of the U.S. According to Brigadier General Bolduc, Libyan partners are in need of U.S. advice and assistance, as well as training and a certain amount of equipping to be successful. His comments come as ISIL maintains control of a 150-mile stretch of land around Sirte and has been engaged in fighting over control of Benghazi. Brigadier General Bolduc's comments can be seen [here](#).

On March 1st, British Defense Minister Michael Fallon announced the United Kingdom (U.K.) is sending a training team of 20 troops to Tunisia to help prevent ISIL fighters from moving into Libya. The assistance comes at the request of Tunisia authorities in light of growing Western concern that ISIL is seeking to use its position in Libya to plan and carry out attacks. Minister Fallon clarified the U.K. has no current plans to deploy ground troops to Libya in a combat role. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 2nd, U.N. Special Representative for Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Martin Kobler briefed the U.N. Security Council on recent political and humanitarian developments in the country. Special Representative Kobler reported the humanitarian situation in Libya has deteriorated further against the background of poor funding for response efforts. Across the country, more than 2.4 million people are in need of assistance, while 40 percent of health facilities are not functioning and more than one million children face a vaccine shortage. Special Representative Kobler also said while the majority of the Libyan people support the Libyan Political Agreement, there are those on both sides who have delayed the formation of the Government of National Accord. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

South Sudan

On February 25th, as part of the last day of his visit to South Sudan, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon met with President Salva Kiir to stress the urgency of forming a transitional government. He also spoke by phone with former Vice President and opposition leader Riek Machar and visited a protection of civilians site. During his time in the country, Secretary-General Ban urged President Kiir to work with Machar to rebuild trust from the people of South Sudan and the global community, and to put the country on a path to stability. Secretary-General Ban's visit to South Sudan was highlighted [here](#).

On February 26th, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Kyung-wha Kang, who accompanied U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during his recent visit to South Sudan, called on all parties to the conflict in South Sudan to protect civilians and grant safe and unhindered humanitarian access. During her time in the country, Assistant Secretary-General Kang met with humanitarian partners and the diplomatic community. She also visited the site of recent violence in Malakal. Her trip to South Sudan was outlined [here](#).

On February 29th, *Al Jazeera* reported that logistical and political obstacles threatened to delay the planned March 1st return of opposition fighters with the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLM-IO) to Juba, South Sudan to further implementation of the national unity government. The return of 1,370 opposition troops to the capital to prepare for opposition leader Riek Machar's return to the country was included as a key component to the implementation of the August 2015 peace agreement. The obstacles were discussed [here](#).

On March 3rd, a U.N. source said at least 50,000 people have been killed in South Sudan's two-year civil war. This figure is more than five times the death toll humanitarian agencies reported in the early stages of the political conflict between South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar. Additionally, the

U.N. estimates as many as 2.2 million people have been displaced by violence and warned of food insecurity over the coming months. More information was posted [here](#).

Nigeria

On February 25th, the Pentagon indicated it is developing plans to deploy dozens of Special Operations advisers to the front lines of Nigeria's fight against Boko Haram, per the recommendation of U.S. Special Operations Commander for Africa Brigadier General Donald Bolduc. U.S. military officials are anticipating the plans to deploy U.S. personnel to Nigeria in strictly noncombat advisory roles will be swiftly approved by both the U.S. Defense and State Departments. Details were shared [here](#).

On February 26th, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) reacted to reports that the Pentagon is planning to send U.S. Special Forces as advisers to Nigeria. Congressman Royce said he is glad U.S. forces will assist in the fight against Boko Haram, as the U.S. cannot allow the terrorist group to continue spreading carnage and chaos throughout Nigeria and West Africa. While Congressman Royce urged the Secretaries of Defense and State to quickly approve these deployments, he observed success in the fight against Boko Haram ultimately depends on the Nigerian military and the forces of neighboring countries. His remarks were recorded [here](#).

On February 26th, multiple explosions rocked a police station in Yola, Nigeria when a police officer tried to move devices seized from Boko Haram militants. At least four police officers were killed by the explosions. The incident was reported [here](#).

On March 2nd, the Nigerian military announced 76 emaciated members of Boko Haram begging for food had surrendered to authorities. The group of Boko Haram fighters, which included women and children, turned themselves in to soldiers last weekend in Gwoza and are currently being detained at military headquarters in Maiduguri. The detainees have suggested other Boko Haram militants may also be willing to surrender. The full story is available [here](#).

Central African Republic

On February 29th, U.S. Acting Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Arasalan Suleman delivered a speech to the Conference on Intra-Muslim Dialogue and Capacity-building in the Central African Republic (CAR). Special Envoy Suleman reiterated the U.S. Government will remain a committed partner to various faith communities in the CAR, including the Muslim community. He also observed a new president taking power in the CAR will be an opportunity for a united Muslim community to redefine its relationship with the government and fully engage in reconciliation efforts. His speech was transcribed [here](#).

On March 1st, the latest Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) conducted in the CAR by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) revealed that three years of conflict in the country and ongoing displacement continues to disrupt agriculture and severely constrain people's access to food. The situation has been exacerbated by poor harvests, disrupted markets, and rising prices for staple foods. Conditions in the CAR were detailed [here](#).

On March 1st, the CAR's constitutional court confirmed former prime minister and current mathematics professor Faustin Archange Touadera won the recent presidential election, setting the stage for an inauguration to be held on March 25th. The court certified that Touadera had won the election in the runoff contest with 62 percent of the vote. The court also rejected complaints lodged against the election by individuals who had supported Touadera's opponent in the runoff, Anicet Georges Dologuele, also a former prime minister. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 2nd, National Security Council (NSC) Spokesperson Ned Price provided a readout of National Security Advisor Susan Rice's meeting with CAR President Catherine Samba-Panza. Ambassador Rice congratulated the people of the CAR on the recent peaceful national elections and commended President Samba-Panza for her strong leadership and progress towards peace and reconciliation during her tenure in office. Both Ambassador Rice and President Samba-Panza underscored the importance of ensuring the next government is inclusive of the regional, ethnic, and religious diversity of the CAR and shared concern regarding continuing reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by U.N. peacekeepers in the country. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 2nd, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry held a meeting with CAR Transitional President Catherine Samba-Panza at the Department of State. Secretary Kerry noted that President Samba-Panza is one of three female presidents in Africa and has presided over a remarkable transition during difficult times in the CAR. Noting that President-elect Faustin Archange Touadera will take office at the end of March, Secretary Kerry expressed admiration for President Samba-Panza's efforts to set an example for stewardship, responsible transfer of power, and holding of good elections. His remarks on the meeting can be read [here](#).

Uganda

On February 25th, the European Union's (EU) Election Observer Mission that oversaw the February 18th vote in Uganda urged Uganda's Electoral Commission to release detailed results from last week's presidential election. While the Commission has already declared incumbent President Yoweri Museveni the winner with 60 percent of the vote, the opposition continues to claim the results are fraudulent, given widespread reports of fear, intimidation, and other undue restrictions on voting. Feedback from the EU Election Observer Mission was shared [here](#).

On February 26th, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-NY) issued a statement expressing concern about last week's election in Uganda, noting that Ugandan authorities actively undermined a free, fair, credible, and transparent process, while voters faced intimidation and threats of violence at the polls. Congressman Engel also outlined steps to correct Uganda's path, calling for the renunciation of violence and the use of legal channels to address concerns about the elections, the publication and verification of vote tallies, and the release of Kizza Besigye and other opposition officials. He also urged Africa leaders, and President Yoweri Museveni in particular, to give up on the idea that they should remain in power forever. Congressman Engel's feedback was articulated [here](#).

On February 29th, Ugandan charity Kyampisi Childcare Ministries (KCM) reported there were at least six cases of the mutilation and murder of children as good luck sacrifices during the recent elections. The cases were reported from October to February in the Sesembabule, Mukono, Buikwe, and Mubende districts in central Uganda. Suspects have been apprehended, but the cases have yet to go to court. An article on the child sacrifices in Uganda can be read [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On February 25th, researchers with the U.S. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke found that although the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has ended, many people who were infected with the virus are still experiencing neurological problems. Of a group of 82 Ebola survivors interviewed in Liberia, nearly all had some neurological problems at six months or longer after they recovered from the virus. Two thirds of the participants had abnormalities in the way their eyes followed moving objects and one third had tremors, abnormal reflexes, and other sensory abnormalities. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 2nd, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on Ebola cases in West Africa. The WHO noted the last Ebola patient in Sierra Leone was discharged from treatment on February 4th after providing a second negative blood sample. All contacts linked to the case completed follow up on February 16th, and Sierra Leone will once again be declared Ebola-free on March 17th if no new cases are reported. The Ebola outbreak in Liberia ended on January 14th, while transmission of the virus in Guinea came to an end on December 29th. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On March 2nd, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) released President Barack Obama's 2016 Trade Policy Agenda. In addition to outlining key priorities in U.S. bilateral and multilateral trade and investment relationships, the report provides an overview of major trade accomplishments under President Obama's leadership, including the renewal of the General System of Preferences (GSP) program and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to promote development in Africa. The 2016 Trade Policy Agenda can be downloaded [here](#).

On March 3rd, USTR issued a fact sheet on the Obama Administration's actions to open up the South African market to U.S. agriculture. The fact sheet notes the U.S. and South Africa have negotiated the removal of longstanding barriers to U.S. agricultural products entering South Africa, following intensive engagement under the new out-of-cycle review mechanism of AGOA. According to USTR, the removal of unfair barriers opens the door for American poultry, pork, and beef to be available to consumers in South Africa, delivering real value for American farmers. The fact sheet can be accessed [here](#).

State Department

On March 1st, Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken presented the 17th annual Secretary of State's Awards for Corporate Excellence (ACE). The award emphasizes the important role of U.S. businesses abroad in advancing ethical practices, sustainable development, and democratic values through exemplary conduct in their overseas operations. This year's finalists included Gigawatt Global in Rwanda and Newmont Ghana Gold Limited in Ghana. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 2nd, State Department Chief of Protocol Ambassador Peter Selfridge co-hosted a reception with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Gayle Smith to celebrate the signing of the Electrify Africa Act at Blair House. The reception was noticed [here](#).

On March 3rd, Secretary of State John Kerry met with U.N. Special Representative to Libya and head of UNSIL Martin Kobler, following his appearance at U.N. headquarters. The meeting was held at the Department of State, and listed [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On February 25th, Katie Taylor, USAID's Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator and Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Global Health authored a blog post on the need for more community health workers in developing countries. Deputy Assistant Administrator Taylor said the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is a reminder of human frailty and the need for vigilance and responsiveness. The blog post was published [here](#).

Department of Defense

On February 26th, the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) highlighted a recent visit to the Djiboutian Armed Forces (FAD) headquarters to share information on the Africa Data Sharing Network (ADSN) and deliver training on equipment that will allow Djiboutian forces to access the ADSN. The ADSN will provide a platform for U.S. and Djiboutian military personnel deployed in Somalia to communicate and share information with each other. Details can be seen [here](#).

On February 26th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) noted that members of the explosive ordnance unit assigned to CJTF-HOA recently completed a 25-day humanitarian mine action training class hosted by the Tanzania People's Defense Force (TPDF) in Dar es Salaam. The U.S. military team instructed a class of TPDF soldiers in topics including ordnance disposal, knot tying, emergency medical care, and weapons identification. The purpose of the class was to enhance the TPDF's skills in detecting and clearing landmines, identifying and disposing of explosive remnants, and providing physical security and stockpile management of explosive hazards. Details were posted [here](#).

On February 27th, members of the Senegalese Army and the U.S. Navy took a break from supporting Flintock 2016 to support a project sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Dakar aimed at teaching women in the coastal village of Nianing agricultural skills. Outside of the special operations training included as part of the Flintock exercise, the service members pitched in by standing up a chain-link fence around the project's farming land. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 29th, AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez spoke at the closing ceremony for Flintock 2016 in St. Louis, Senegal. Commander Rodriguez noted this year's training exercise for Special Operations Forces brought together more than 2,200 participants from 28 partner nations and said the value of the exercise

was the building of collective knowledge put to use in actual operations across a common enemy. Excerpts from his remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On March 1st-3rd, AFRICOM's Office of Legal Counsel conducted the annual Africa Accountability Colloquium, a legal engagement that brings together professionals from across Africa, Europe, and the U.S. AFRICOM's Fourth Africa Accountability Colloquium (ACIV) was themed "Responding to Gender Based Violence During Peace Operations." More information can be found [here](#).

Congress

On February 25th, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) met with dozens of families who have been waiting years for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Government to allow their legally adopted children to be united with their parents. During the town-hall-style meeting, families had an opportunity to hear from members of Congress about their efforts to resolve this problem and bring their children home. Photos from the event can be viewed [here](#).

On February 29th, Senators Chris Coons (D-DE) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA), co-chairs of the Senate Chicken Caucus, applauded the news that the first U.S. poultry in more than 15 years has arrived in South Africa. The news is the outcome of a June 2015 agreement reached between the U.S. and South Africa that required South Africa to eliminate longstanding barriers to U.S. poultry imports. A press release was issued [here](#).

On February 29th, following his return from a ten-day congressional delegation (CODEL) trip with Senators Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Thad Cochran (D-MS), and Congressman Adam Schiff (D-CA) to Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia, Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) recorded an interview with *Huffington Post Live* about why wildlife trafficking poses a risk to regional security in many African countries. Senator Coons warned sophisticated, international criminal gangs are increasingly involved in massacring thousands of elephants and dozens of rhinos all across Africa. A recording of the interview can be watched [here](#).

On March 3rd, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hosted a hearing on "The Path Forward in Libya." The Committee received testimony from Fred Wehrey of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Claude Gazzino of International Crisis Group. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

North Africa

On February 25th, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved \$70 million in financing for the Tertiary Education for Employability Project in Tunisia. The initiative aims to address high levels of unemployment among university graduates in the country by supporting ongoing reforms to improve the management of universities and the quality of teaching, and to ensure that students are graduating with the skills demanded by the labor market. A press release was issued [here](#).

On February 25th, the Government of Morocco suspended contact with European Union (EU) institutions over a court ruling invalidating the bloc's agricultural trade agreement, saying it should exclude the disputed territory of Western Sahara. The EU filed a completed last week against a December court decision to void the trade agreement in response to a suit filed by the separatist Polisario Front movement fighting for independence for the region. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 28th, Egyptian Member of Parliament (MP) Tawfik Okasha was attacked in parliament after inviting Israeli Ambassador to Egypt Haim Koren to dinner at his home last week. When he appeared in the chamber, one of MP Okasha's colleagues threw a shoe at him, while others demanded his suspension. While Israel has an ambassador stationed in Cairo, Egyptian officials generally keep their distance, especially as the Israeli Embassy is a site of frequent protest. Details can be accessed [here](#).

On March 2nd, U.S. intelligence officials revealed that documents seized in the 2011 raid on Osama bin Laden's Pakistani compound showed that Al Qaeda leaders discussed a plan in 2010 to arrange a peace deal with the Government of Mauritania. The plan suggested that Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) would not carry out any military activities in Mauritania for at least a year in exchange for Mauritania's release of all Al Qaeda prisoners

and the payment of an \$11 million - \$22 million annual fee to prevent the kidnapping of tourists. The Mauritanian Government denied engaging with Al Qaeda on any such deal. The proposal was reported [here](#).

On March 2nd, more than 30 Sudanese journalists launched a hunger strike to protest against the forced closure of the *El Tayar* newspaper by the Sudanese Government. *El Tayar's* Editor in Chief Osman Marghani is currently facing the death penalty over accusations he used the publication to incite the Arab Spring in the country. According to the newspaper's Managing Editor Khalid Fathi, the strike is intended not only to save *El Tayar*, but to call attention to the difficulties faced by journalists and the restrictions on freedom of the press in the country. The strike was described [here](#).

On March 2nd, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) held a discussion on "A New Era in Online Engagement: Uncovering Opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa," focused on internet engagement for political development and the launch of NDI's Arabic learning platform, TaalamSharek. Speakers included Katie Harbath of Facebook, Derek Caelin of PeaceTech Lab, and Lili Jaafar of NDI. More information was published [here](#).

On March 2nd, the Atlantic Council hosted a briefing titled, "Libya: What's Next?" The event featured a conversation with Claudia Gazzini of International Crisis Group, moderated by Karim Mezran of the Atlantic Council. The event was highlighted [here](#).

On March 3rd, Egypt's civil aviation ministry said it had reached an agreement with the central bank over paying foreign airlines who have complained in recent weeks of being unable to repatriate earnings. Authorities reported airlines will be paid what they are owed in foreign currency through payment programs over the coming period. Egypt has seen its currency decline in the wake of ongoing turmoil since the 2011 uprising and other security incidents that have negatively impacted tourism. The agreement was detailed [here](#).

East Africa

On February 25th, during an address to Kenyans delivered during a trip to Israel, President Uhuru Kenyatta expressed frustration with his government's inability to make progress, calling Kenyans expert thieves and nags who lack the focus to develop their county. Further, President Kenyatta said bad politics is to blame for the recent decline in the Kenya's economic growth. His comments were captured [here](#).

On February 26th, protestors in Ethiopia's Oromia state reiterated that demonstrations will continue as long as authorities continue killing, torturing, and arresting peaceful demonstrators. Oromo people, Ethiopia's largest Ethnic group, launched protests in November to oppose the government's draft plan aimed at expanding the boundaries of Addis Ababa. Demonstrators continue to argue the plan would forcibly evict Oromo farmers and capture their land. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 26th, Director-General of Eritrea's Department of Mines Alem Kibreab said Eritrea expects to have four mines in operation by 2018, producing gold, copper, zinc, and potash. Director-General Alem noted the government is looking to Eritrea's mining sector to help kick start the economy and boost economic growth. His remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On February 28th, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for suicide bombings at a busy junction and restaurant in Baidoa, Somalia. According to Al Shabaab's military spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, the attack had been planned to target government officials and forces at a nearby police station. Police responding to the attack reported 30 people were killed and 40 others injured. The scene of the bombing was described [here](#).

On February 29th, the World Bank called attention to its support for the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Program (LVEMP), implemented by East African Community (EAC) States including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. In its second phase, the project has set out to tackle the environmental challenges of the Lake Victoria Basin, while also improving the welfare of millions of inhabitants that depend on its resources. Lake Victoria is the largest freshwater body in Africa and the largest inland fishery in the world, supporting over 40 million people. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On February 29th, two lions were spotted near the Nairobi Southern Bypass road in Kenya's capital. This is the second time this month that lions have strayed from Nairobi National Park into the city. In response to the sighting,

the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) dispatched a team to find the animals, which could be dangerous and cause disruptions to traffic. Details can be seen [here](#).

On February 29th, the *Journal of Global Health* reported that a free national ambulance service offered to Ethiopians in rural areas has reduced the number of pregnancy-related deaths in the country by half. The ambulance program, which is run by the Ethiopian Government and started with an initial investment of \$50 million, operates 1,250 four-wheel drive ambulances 24 hours per day every day of the week. Given the success of the program in Ethiopia, researchers believe the model can be replicated in other sub-Saharan African countries. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 1st, a roadside bomb planted by Al Shabaab exploded near a commando convoy, killing at least five Somali soldiers and injuring eight others in the Alamada village outside of Mogadishu. An Al Shabaab spokesman confirmed the group had targeted the military convoy and claimed to have killed six commandos and injured seven others. Both accounts of the attack were reported [here](#).

On March 1st, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and Tanzanian President John Magufuli met in Kampala. The leaders were thought to have discussed plans to build a pipeline from Ugandan oil fields to the Tanzanian coast. Ugandan had previously been considering the construction of pipelines through Kenya, but those plans have been called into question due to the proposed pipeline's proximity to areas along the border with Somalia that have recently been targeted by Al Shabaab. Details were posted [here](#).

On March 2nd, the London School of Hygiene, in partnership with local Kenyan doctors, launched the Portable Eye Examination Kit (PEEK) in Trans-Nzoia. PEEK uses smartphone technology to look inside the eye and carry out various tests including visual acuity, color, and lens vision, as well as retinal imaging. The rollout of the technology is intended to help detect early signs of eye defects in school-age children. The initiative was discussed [here](#).

On March 3rd, the Somali military court sentenced Hassan Hanafi, a former media director for Al Shabaab, to death for the murder of six local journalists. Hanafi is thought to have joined Al Shabaab in 2008. He was arrested in Kenya last year and returned to Somalia to stand trial. Hanafi has confessed to killing one journalist and expressed indifference to receiving the death penalty. The case was outlined [here](#).

On March 3rd, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a conference titled, "Sustaining Ethiopia's Progress in Health." The conference included panels on the U.S.-Ethiopian bilateral relationship, infectious diseases in Ethiopia, and Ethiopia's progress towards universal health coverage. A full agenda was posted [here](#).

West Africa

On February 26th, the U.N. Security Council extended the mandate of the U.N. Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) for an additional 12 months. In renewing UNIOGBIS's mandate, the Security Council directed UNIOGBIS to continue to focus on supporting an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process to strengthen democratic governance, and to work towards consensus on key political issues. The Security Council vote was noted [here](#).

On February 26th, details emerged regarding the February 26th shootings at a U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) base in Kidal. A Chadian peacekeeper who was reportedly unhappy with working conditions opened fire at the base killing his commander and a doctor in his unit. Chadian soldiers working under MINUSMA have twice abandoned positions in northern Mali in the last year over unpaid salaries, and a dozen other Chadian soldiers accused of disobedience have also been arrested at the base. For more information, click [here](#).

On February 26th, during a working visit to Cote d'Ivoire, French Minister of Environment, Energy, and the Sea Segolene Royal met with African Development Bank (AfDB) President Akinwumi Adesina at the Bank's headquarters. Minister Royal, who was on a tour of Africa, has just taken over the role responsible for the implementation of commitments made during the 2015 U.N. Climate Conference (COP21) held in Paris. The leaders discussed the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI), launched at COP21. Details can be seen [here](#).

On February 26th, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mitsuhiro Furusawa issued a statement upon the conclusion of his visit to Cote d'Ivoire. Managing Director Furusawa thanked President Alassane Ouattara for meeting to discuss the country's economic achievements and outlook, as well as Prime Minister Kablan Duncan for his insights. Observing that Cote d'Ivoire has maintained high economic growth in recent years, Managing Director Furusawa noted maintaining this momentum will require transitioning to a more private sector-led model, while effecting reforms aimed at improving the business environment. His statement was posted [here](#).

On February 27th, Akwasi Agyeman, President of the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA), called for the government to launch an advertising standards agency to go after the recent proliferation of sub-standard and deceptive advertising across the country. According to President Agyeman, the new agency is needed to eliminate the deception in advertising in order to improve the overall health and development of the country. His position was detailed [here](#).

On February 28th, Nigerian Minister of Finance Kemi Adeosun announced that 23,846 ghost workers had been removed from the government's payroll, resulting in tremendous savings on the salaries paid by ministries, departments, and agencies. The ghost workers were uncovered as part of an ongoing bank verification number (BVN)-based staff audit and enrollment to the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS). The approach was described [here](#).

On February 29th, Gabonese President Ali Bongo said he will run for a second term in elections to be held later this year. President Bongo won a disputed election in 2009 after the death of his father Omar Bongo and is now nearing the end of his first, seven-year term. Gabon has not instituted presidential term limits. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 29th, the Africa Security Initiative at the Brookings Institution hosted a discussion "Examining the Current State of Nigeria," to examine low oil prices, human rights abuses, the armed forces, police, and Boko Haram. Speakers included Michael O'Hanlon of Foreign Policy, EJ Hogendoorn of International Crisis Group, Madeline Rose of MercyCorps, Mausi Segun of Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Amadou Sy of Brookings. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On March 1st, the ICC unveiled charges against Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi, an Al Qaeda-linked terrorist accused of destroying historical monuments in Timbuktu during the outbreak of extremist violence in Mali in 2012 and 2013. Faqi is not only the first jihadist to appear before the ICC, but his case is also the first involving war crimes charges for attacks against historic monuments. The case was discussed [here](#).

On March 1st, *Forbes* reported Nigerian cement tycoon Aliko Dangote remains the richest black person in the world, with an estimated fortune of \$14.4 billion. The second richest black person in the world this year, Mike Adenuga, is also a Nigerian businessman who has built a \$10 billion net worth on telecommunications, oil, and real estate investments. An article on this year's billionaires list was published [here](#).

On March 2nd, Nigerian Minister of Communications Adebayo Shittu said Nigeria will start talks with South African mobile phone operator MTN very soon to settle a dispute over a \$3.9 billion fine. Last week, MTN withdrew a lawsuit against Nigeria over the initial \$1.2 fine imposed for MTN's failure to disconnect unregistered sim cards, and paid \$250 million towards a settlement. Minister Shittu said final resolution of the dispute rests with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari. Developments were noted [here](#).

On March 2nd, during a two-day visit to Ghana, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said his government stands ready to help fight the growing threat of terrorism in West Africa. His visit to Ghana was focused on boosting trade and opening strategic economic relationships with other countries in the region. Following his stop in Ghana, President Erdogan was scheduled to travel on to Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Nigeria. His travel was outlined [here](#).

On March 2nd, the Bille and Ogale communities in Nigeria filed lawsuits against Shell's Nigerian subsidiary, the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC), over multiple spills in the oil-rich Niger Delta. Bille and Ogale are largely dependent upon fishing and farming for local livelihoods and are pushing for compensation for environmental damage in the region. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 3rd, Nigerian lawmakers speculated the country's parliament would pass the 2016 budget on March 17th. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari put forth his \$30 billion budget proposal in December, although the initial budget was withdrawn for revisions to accommodate falling oil prices. Votes on the budget were postponed last month over disagreements on the revised proposal for public spending. The status of the budget vote was noted [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On February 22nd-26th, the IMF's Regional Technical Assistance Center in Southern Africa (AFRITAC South) held a regional seminar at the Africa Training Institute in Mauritius on improving compliance with Risk Based Supervision (RBS) and Pillar 2 of Basel II. The event brought together senior and mid-level officials from the supervision departments of the Central Banks of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The seminar was summarized [here](#).

On February 26th, the World Bank highlighted a \$30 million grant it recently approved to support Southern African countries in the fight against tuberculosis (TB) in the mining sector. The grant will support potentially transformative TB interventions in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On February 26th, South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said he would take legal action to protect himself from attempts to discredit him and the integrity of the National Treasury. His comments came in response to a newspaper report alleging he had threatened to resign after receiving a letter from the elite Hawks police unit questioning his knowledge of a suspected rogue unit at the revenue service. In the wake of the allegations, South African President Jacob Zuma expressed his full confidence in Minister Gordhan and dismissed the rumors as conspiracy. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On February 27th, Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party criticized lavish celebrations held for President Robert Mugabe's 92nd birthday. The televised event, held at the Great Zimbabwe monument in the drought-stricken area of Masvingo, attracted thousands of people. MDC argued the \$800,000 spent on the celebrations should have instead been put towards resolving impending starvation in Masvingo and other parts of the country. MDC's stance on President Mugabe's birthday event was outlined [here](#).

On February 28th, following the National Independent Electoral Commission's (CENI) publication of the provisional results of the primary elections for Comoros' president, as well as the first round of gubernatorial elections for the Islands of Grand Comoros, Anjouan, and Moheli, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the candidates and all other actors and institutions involved in the electoral process to play by the rules and refrain from the use of violence. Secretary-General Ban's input is available [here](#).

On February 29th, suspected Ugandan rebels with the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) killed at least 12 civilians in the village of Mamabio in the eastern DRC. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in dozens of raids near Beni since October 2014, defying repeated offensives by Congolese and U.N. peacekeepers against the ADF. The most recent attack was reported [here](#).

On February 29th, Malawian Ministry of Agriculture Principal Secretary Erica Maganga reported Malawi will import 50,000 tons of maize from Tanzania to avert hunger as drought conditions continue to affect 2.8 million people. Malawi has also previously announced it will import 30,000 tons of maize from Zambia. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 29th, South Africa opened the continent's first solar-powered airport in Western Cape. George Airport, which serves over 600,000 passengers each year, launched the first phase of a clean energy project aimed at meeting 40 percent of the facility's energy needs with solar power. Once completed, the airport is expected to be entirely independent of the national grid. South African Minister of Transport Dipuo Peters said the project demonstrates the government's commitment to clean energy generation and stability and its role in addressing global climate change. The project was described [here](#).

On March 1st, U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator in the DRC Mamadou Diallo said the U.N. had initiated a conversation with the DRC Government on durable solutions to address widespread displacement in the country

and the safe return of displaced people into their areas of origin. The U.N. estimates more than 2.5 million people are internally displaced within the DRC. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 1st, the World Bank published its “Promoting Green Urban Development in African Cities” report, which provides an urban environmental profile of Durban, South Africa. The report notes that Durban has been put under severe pressure due to rapid urbanization and climate change and these changes have contributed to the degradation of the City’s environmental assets, such as rare and threatened ecosystems, rivers, and coastal wetlands, undermining the wellbeing of people and the economic prospects of the city. The report’s findings were summarized [here](#).

On March 1st, former Vice President of Zimbabwe Joice Mujuru launched the new Zimbabwe People First political party, which she said aimed to challenge President Robert Mugabe’s cling to power. Mujuru previously served under President Mugabe until 2014 when he fired her for allegedly leading a plot to oust him. In her first public address since then, Mujuru said the Zimbabwe People First Party will aim to revive the economy by creating jobs and reexamining black economic empowerment laws and to repair tense relations with the West. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 1st, London-based Barclays plc announced it will sell down its 62.3 percent stake in Barclays Africa over the next two to three years. The financial services provider indicated that although its Africa operations were well diversified and a high quality franchise, its investment presented challenges, such as the level of capital held in Barclays Africa. This is the bank’s second divestment from South Africa in 30 years. More information was posted [here](#).

On March 1st, Sagaci Research rolled out a new index to measure the overvaluation of currencies in Africa. The study, which is based on the cost of a bucket of fried chicken at KFC retail outlets in African countries, finds the Angolan Kwanza is Africa’s most overvalued currency, at a rate of 72 percent against the U.S. dollar. KFC has stores in 18 African countries. Details can be accessed [here](#).

On March 2nd, South Africa President Jacob Zuma survived a second vote of no confidence against his handling of the economy. The ruling African National Congress (ANC) party controls roughly two thirds of the assembly. This resulted in 225 lawmakers voting against the no confidence motion. Ninety-nine other lawmakers voted in favor and 22 abstained. The final vote count was similar to the previous vote of no confidence against President Zuma in March 2015. The vote was detailed [here](#).

On March 2nd, Malagasy Minister of Transport, Tourism, and Meteorology Ulrich Andriantiana announced the Government of Madagascar will disband a recently introduced regulation that levied a \$100 fee on the export of shipping containers after miners warned it was hurting the industry in an era of falling commodity prices. While the Advance Cargo Declaration (ACD) regulations were canceled, Minister Andriantiana noted the government will continue to work at improving security at Madagascar’s ports. An article on the lifting of the regulations was published [here](#).

On March 2nd, Grain SA, South Africa’s largest grain producing organization, said the Government’s forecasted 7.2 million ton maize harvest is optimistic and will almost certainly be revised down. South Africa continues to experience severe drought conditions that have impacted economic growth and farming. The weather conditions were discussed [here](#).

On March 2nd, Malaysian officials said debris from a Boeing 777 jet that washed up on the shores of Mozambique over the weekend could be part of the wreckage from the doomed Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, which remains missing after nearly two years. The debris was discovered on a sandbank of the Mozambique Channel, which separates Mozambique from Madagascar. If the parts are confirmed to be part of the missing plane, it would provide additional support for the theory that the plane went down in the southern Indian Ocean. More information was posted [here](#).

On March 3rd, Aspen Pharmacare said pharmaceutical companies operating in South Africa have asked the South African Government to approve an extra increase in medicine prices this year in light of the fact that the rand continues to fall against the dollar. The weakening of South Africa’s currency has resulted in increased costs for the

raw ingredients used to manufacture medicines. Typically, drug makers are allowed just one price increase per year. A four percent increase was granted in January. An article on the issue can be read [here](#).

On March 3rd, Zimbabwean police recovered the bodies of three illegal miners from a shaft in Marange owned by Diamond Mining Company. Police indicated they were searching for seven more missing people. The bodies were discovered just a week after the Mines Ministry ordered all nine companies operating in the region to stop mining because their licenses had expired. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 3rd, at least 24 people, many of them children, were reported dead and 30 others missing after flash flooding hit Lubango, Angola. After nearly 24 hours of torrential rainfall, the Capitaio River overcame its banks, flooding a nearby market where many young Angolans had congregated to wash cars and bicycles. Similar to other countries in the region, Angola has been suffering one of the worst droughts in memory caused by the El Nino weather pattern in the Pacific Ocean. The flooding was reported [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 1st, the U.N. joined the AU in hailing the inaugural Africa Day of School Feeding as part of a strategy to address the continent's development challenges through homegrown school meal programs. March 1st was established as the Africa Day of School Feeding during the 26th AU Summit held in January as part of a continental strategy to enhance retention and performance of children in schools and to boost income generation and entrepreneurship in local communities. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 1st, the Africa Legal Support Facility (ALSF) welcomed the announcement from the AfDB of the release of \$22 million to support legal advisory and capacity building initiatives in fragile states under the African Development Fund window. The ALSF's support to countries in fragile situations is anchored by its Medium Term Strategy and will be focused on providing technical assistance aimed at strengthening legal expertise in vulture fund litigation. For details, click [here](#).

On March 2nd, The Wharton Club of D.C. held a book discussion on "The Next Africa: An Emerging Continent Becomes a Global Powerhouse." The discussion was led by author Aubrey Hruby of the Africa Expert Network and Sara Haq of SH International LLC. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 3rd, Bloomberg Philanthropies, with support from the Ford Foundation, launched the Bloomberg Media Initiative Africa Executive Training Program, which targets mid-career journalists and financial professionals with an interest in financial journalism, government professionals responsible for public policy, communications, and finance portfolios, and development practitioners and civil society members with an interest in African development and financial economic data. The Program will provide scholarships to workshops at participating universities in South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. More information was posted [here](#).

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