



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Libya

On April 17th, the French Defense Audio-Visual Communication and Production Unit released radar images of a recent operation during which French paratroopers dropped into hostile territory near the Salvador Pass on the Libya-Niger border. The region has become of increasing concern as international jihadist groups in the area continue to engage in smuggling and trafficking. About 3,000 French troops are now positioned in Africa, primarily in North Africa and the Sahel region, as part of an effort to stamp out Islamist fighters. The images can be seen [here](#).

On April 18th, United Nations (U.N.) Special Representative for Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Bernardino Leon condemned the renewed outbreak of violence in Tripoli amid ongoing political dialogue aimed at resolving the crisis in the country. In particular, Special Representative Leon noted that violence in the Fashloum neighborhood has resulted in the deaths of three civilians, in addition to reports of abductions and the burning of houses. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 19th, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) released a video showing fighters from its branches in Libya executing dozens of Ethiopian Christians. The video showed ISIL fighters in what the group calls its Fezzan Province in the south and its Barqa Province in the east carrying out the executions, some by beheading and others by shooting. The video raises new concerns that Libyan groups claiming allegiance to ISIL may be linked to the group's leadership for the purposes of coordinating attacks. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 19th, U.S. National Security Council (NSC) Spokesperson Bernadette Meehan issued a statement condemning the brutal mass murder of Ethiopian Christians by ISIL-affiliated terrorists in Libya. The NSC expressed its condolences and noted the men were killed solely because of their faith. The NSC also said this atrocity underscores the urgent need for a political resolution to the conflict in Libya to empower a unified Libyan rejection of terrorist groups. The NSC's full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 20th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement condemning the killing of a number of Ethiopian nationals in Libya by extremists affiliated with ISIL. Secretary-General Ban deplored the killing of people on the basis of their religious affiliation and expressed his condolences to the families of those who lost their lives. He also reaffirmed the U.N.-backed political talks remain the best chance for Libyans to overcome their country's crisis and encouraged the parties to make all the necessary compromises to reach an agreement. Secretary-General Ban's sentiments were articulated [here](#).

On April 20th, the Ethiopian Government confirmed the 30 Christians executed in a video released by ISIL were, in fact, Ethiopian citizens. Ethiopian officials expressed sadness for the executions and indicated they were working to identify the victims. Starting on Tuesday, Ethiopia planned to observe three days of national mourning for those killed. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On April 22nd, U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon condemned the latest terrorist attack in Tripoli targeting the Spanish Embassy. According to reports, a bomb detonated outside the Spanish Embassy, damaging part of the compound's exterior wall. No casualties were reported. The attack follows a recent string of incidents in Tripoli, including attacks targeting the Embassies of South Korea and Morocco. The U.N. response to the attack was posted [here](#).

On April 22nd, a mass rally was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to commemorate the 30 Ethiopian men shot and beheaded by ISIL militants in Libya. Demonstrators began gathering in Meskel Square at Dawn to protest terrorism. Protestors who were angry the Ethiopian Government has not done more to help address joblessness, which leads many Ethiopians to travel to Libya, hurled stones and police responded with teargas. The rally was described [here](#).

African Migrant Crisis in the Mediterranean

On April 17th, Italian police arrested 15 African men from Ivory Coast, Mali, and Senegal suspected of throwing about a dozen Christians from Nigeria and Ghana from a migrant boat in the Mediterranean. An additional 41 deaths were reported in a separate incident. Those arrested have been charged with homicide motivated by religious hatred. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 19th, a smuggler's boat overturned off Libya's coast, causing one of the deadliest known migrant tragedies in the Mediterranean. While survivor accounts vary, European Union (EU) authorities believed as many as 950 people may have been on board. According to Italian officials, 18 ships joined the rescue effort, but only 28 survivors and 24 bodies had been pulled from the water by nightfall. While right-wing political parties in Europe have called for politicians to stop the rising tide of illegal immigration from Africa, EU officials pledged to do more to address the problem in the wake of the latest accident. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 20th, U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Ben Cardin (D-MD) issued a statement regarding the unfolding humanitarian disaster transpiring off the Libyan coast and in the Mediterranean Sea. Senator Cardin observed the majority of migrants making the crossing are fleeing conflict and persecution, seeking peace and a decent life. He said the U.S. must work with the EU to better address the challenges faced by the thousands of people risking their lives to flee their homelands by strengthening search-and-rescue operations and increasing safe avenues to resettlement and humanitarian visas. His statement was posted [here](#).

On April 21st, prosecutors blamed Mohammed Ali Malek, the Tunisian captain of a fishing boat, for causing the deaths of hundreds of migrants locked below decks when his vessel capsized in the Mediterranean. Arrested under suspicions of multiple homicide and people-smuggling, Malek, authorities believe, may have steered his severely overloaded boat into a collision with a merchant ship that was coming to its rescue. Details were provided [here](#).

On April 22nd, Libyan security officials noted they had stopped a number of boats thought to be headed to Italy and detained more than 600 immigrants. On Tuesday, around 70 Africans in Tripoli were detained as they waited to board a boat to Lampedusa. At least two other boats, including one packed with 250 people from Senegal, Ghana, and Ethiopia and another with Ethiopians and Eritreans on board were also stopped from leaving Libya. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 23rd, EU leaders held a summit to discuss tactics for ending the African migrant crisis in the Mediterranean. EU leaders reportedly agreed that only 5,000 resettlement places across Europe will be offered to refugees and the vast majority of African migrants who survive the journey will be sent back as irregular migrants under a new rapid return program coordinated by the EU's border agency, Frontex. Despite growing international pressure, the EU also failed to endorse a massive expansion of search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean. The summit's conclusions were highlighted [here](#).

On April 23rd, Italy projected as many as 5,000 migrants a week could arrive in Italy from north African ports in the next five months unless something is done to address the issue. At these rates, Italy forecasts as many as 200,000 migrants could arrive in Italy by the end of the year. Arrivals of migrants usually spike during months when there is better weather in the Mediterranean, but Italian officials also expressed concern the rates could become constant given growing instability in Libya. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 23rd, an imam and a bishop led an inter-faith funeral service on Malta for 24 of the victims whose bodies were recovered from the weekend shipwreck in the Mediterranean. The bodies of the victims were brought to Malta by Italian authorities. The ceremonies were attended by Maltese President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, as well as representatives of the EU, Italy, and Greece. News on the service was shared [here](#).

South Africa

On April 17th, at a meeting of African diplomats held in Pretoria, South Africa, to discuss recent violence against foreigners, South African Foreign Affairs Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane called for support from countries across the continent to deter anti-immigrant violence. The meeting was held as the Malawian Government hired buses to repatriate 500 of its nationals from South Africa and as other African governments, including Kenya, also offered to evacuate any of their citizens who feel threatened. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 20th, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) welcomed efforts by the South African Government to contain a recent wave of xenophobic violence that has killed six people in the past three weeks. While applauding authorities for offering support to refugees and asylum-seekers, UNHCR also urged the South African Government to accelerate enactment of legislation against hate crimes and to hold those responsible for acts of violence and violations of human rights accountable. UNHCR's position was articulated [here](#).

On April 20th, Kenmare Resources repatriated 62 South Africans working at its titanium mine in Mozambique, claiming it was the best move for their safety after a wave of anti-immigrant attacks in South Africa. Kenmare said in a statement it was sending the workers back home temporarily out of concern for reprisal attacks. Kenmare is the second firm to repatriate South African workers from Mozambique after Sasol sent 340 employees back home for their safety last week. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 20th, U.S. State Department Acting Spokesperson Marie Harf joined the South African Government and civil society leaders in condemning recent violence against foreigners in the country, the destruction of property, and the impact on families and communities. She expressed support for President Jacob Zuma's statements condemning the violence, as well as similar comments made by other African leaders. Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On April 21st, following an incident in which a Zimbabwean couple was shot and wounded near Johannesburg, South African Defense Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula announced the deployment of soldiers to Durban and Johannesburg to increase security in areas where anti-immigrant violence has killed at least seven people in the past three weeks. Developments in South Africa were noted [here](#).

On April 21st, Nigeria's Foreign Ministry summoned South Africa's Ambassador over anti-immigrant violence in South Africa over the past few weeks. Nigerian officials registered protest over the ongoing xenophobic attacks against fellow Africans in South Africa and called on South African authorities to quell the unrest and hold those involved accountable. Nigerian officials also urged citizens of other

African countries not to seek vengeance for the attacks. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 22nd, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the wave of xenophobic violence in South Africa that has resulted in the deaths of at least seven people in the past few weeks. Secretary-General Ban also recognized the actions and statements of South African officials to address the violence and welcomed the public expressions of many South Africans who have been calling for peaceful coexistence and harmony with foreign nationals. Secretary-General Ban's position was articulated [here](#).

Nigeria

On April 14th, Nigerian President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari authored an op-ed for *The New York Times* on the steps his administration will take to combat Boko Haram. President-Elect Buhari noted his approach will be significantly different from that of outgoing President Goodluck Jonathan. President-Elect Buhari pledged to do everything in his power to find the Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram and to return peace and normalcy back to all of the affected areas. The op-ed was published [here](#).

On April 16th, following meetings with U.N. Special Representative Mohammed Ibn Chambas and Abdoulaye Bathily, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan told the U.N. that Nigeria will not require the help of an international force in the fight against Boko Haram. Instead, President Jonathan urged the U.N. to focus on rebuilding communities and assisting those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. While the U.N. estimates 1.5 million people have been displaced by Boko Haram violence in northeast Nigeria, President Jonathan argued troops from Chad, Niger, and Cameroon have assisted the Nigerian military in regaining most areas seized by Boko Haram. President Jonathan's comments were captured [here](#).

On April 17th, Boko Haram fighters from Nigeria killed at least ten people in overnight attacks on the villages of Bia and Blaberi in Cameroon. By the time the army arrived to defend both villages, the Boko Haram militants had fled across the nearby border back into Nigeria. The consecutive attacks were reported [here](#).

On April 20th, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden spoke with Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan to commend him for his leadership in ensuring Nigeria's recent elections were peaceful and orderly. Vice President Biden noted President Jonathan's actions to accept the results and congratulate President-Elect Buhari, as well as his steps to date to ensure a successful transition, have strengthened Nigeria's democracy and set a strong example for Africa and the world. He also encouraged President Jonathan to remain engaged and play a leadership role in global issues after his presidency ends. The call was summarized [here](#).

Sudan

On April 20th, the Governments of Norway, the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the U.S. issued a joint statement on the elections in Sudan. The members of the Troika expressed regret for the Government of Sudan's failure to create a free, fair, and conducive elections environment. The leaders recognized restrictions on political rights and freedoms, the lack of a credible national dialogue, and the continuation of armed conflict in Sudan's peripheries led to low voter turnout. As a result, the Troika said the outcome of the elections cannot be considered a credible expression of the will of the Sudanese people. Further, the leaders condemned acts of violence during the election period and expressed support for those Sudanese who wish to peacefully advance a comprehensive and legitimate political process. The statement was published [here](#).

On April 21st, Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP) admitted to low voter turnout in the recent elections. Electoral observers estimated two-thirds of Sudan's 13.3 million registered voters did not cast ballots. The NCP attributed the small amount of ballots cast compared with the number of registered voters to Sudan's old electoral register, which still contains the names of deceased and former citizens. The election results are expected to be announced on April 27th. President Omar Hassan al-Bashir is expected to win reelection after the main opposition parties boycotted the vote by not fielding candidates. More information can be found [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On April 16th, U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan said intense efforts to control the Ebola outbreak in West Africa will continue, as will efforts to rebuild health systems and services to reduce risks that were inherent within weak systems. WHO Assistant Director-General Dr. Bruce Aylward agreed and noted it would be impossible for West African countries to recover completely if Ebola were not completely eradicated. The U.N. commitment to continuing the Ebola response was reiterated [here](#).

On April 16th, WHO leadership released a statement acknowledging the organization was ill-prepared to respond to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Recognizing criticism that the WHO was slow and ineffective in the crucial early months of the Ebola crisis, WHO leadership pledged to reverse trends that have led to a contraction in the organization's budget in recent years. In addition, the WHO committed to create new reserve force of certified staff members to tackle crises and make use of a new outbreak contingency fund and a new system for managing efforts in the field. Details were shared [here](#).

On April 16th, the World Bank highlighted its ongoing efforts to get the number of Ebola cases in West Africa down to zero. Since the Ebola crisis began in late 2013, the World Bank has been one of the leading financiers of the Ebola response, providing treatment and care, containing and preventing the spread of infections, helping communities cope with the economic impact of the crisis, and improving public health systems. The World Bank is also financing some of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO, U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), and World Food Programme's (WFP) social mobilization, contact tracing efforts, and food deliveries. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 16th, Guinean authorities confirmed at least nine new cases of Ebola in the southwest region of Forecariah near the border with Sierra Leone. The cases were discovered as Guinea launched a four-day door-to-door campaign in the region, one of the hardest hit in the country, to improve community participation in reporting suspected cases. Ten suspicious deaths were also detected, but it was immediately known that only one had tested positive for Ebola. For details, click [here](#).

On April 17th, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde addressed the High-Level Ebola Meeting, including World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Guinean President Alpha Conde, and Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma. Managing Director Lagarde congratulated the three Presidents on their leadership and the progress made in curbing the Ebola epidemic and also urged support for post-Ebola recovery to mitigate a second shock caused by the crisis. Her remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On April 17th, the World Bank Group announced it would provide at least \$650 million during the next 12-18 months to help Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone recover from the social and economic impacts of the Ebola crisis and advance their longer-term development needs. The new pledge brings the World Bank's total financing for Ebola response and recovery efforts to \$1.62 billion. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 17th, speaking at the High-Level Ebola meeting held in conjunction with the World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said while there has been important progress in fighting Ebola in West Africa over recent months, the last mile to eradicating the virus may be the toughest. Even after reaching zero cases of Ebola, Secretary-General Ban advocated maintaining global response capacity for at least a year. Secretary-General Ban's comments were captured [here](#).

On April 17th, as part of the World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings, African Development Bank (AfDB) President Donald Kaberuka announced \$300 million to support the national Post-Ebola Recovery program. AfDB's funding will provide support to the Governments of Ebola-affected countries by investing in health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture, and the financial services sector. The AfDB also pledged support for the establishment of the Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC) by the African Union (AU), as well as the Post-Ebola Livelihoods Restoration Project (PELREP), which aims to increase access to basic socioeconomic services and increase the productive capacity of the poor. For details, click [here](#).

On April 17th, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Guinean President Alpha Conde, and Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma recommended four steps the region can take to recover from the Ebola crisis. The leaders agreed on the need to create resilient public health systems and focus on infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and telecommunications networks. In addition, they noted the importance of encouraging confidence within the private sector and asked for a cancellation of foreign debt. The recommendations can be viewed [here](#).

On April 17th, Liberian Deputy Incident Manager of Ebola Response Miatta Gbanya said treating the trauma and the mental health issues of Ebola survivors is one of the many challenges facing Liberia as the country counts down the 42-day period until it can be declared Ebola free. The links between Ebola and mental health disorders is little understood, despite reported complaints from some survivors of nightmares and flashbacks. More information was posted [here](#).

On April 17th, Carol Han, a Press Officer with U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Ebola Disaster Response Team (DART) in West Africa authored a blog post on how the Redemption Hospital in Monrovia, one of Liberia's largest government-run facilities that became ground zero for the country's Ebola epidemic, is recovering from the crisis. At the hospital, USAID has partnered with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to renovate and reopen the hospital's emergency and pediatric wards and train health care staff on infection prevention and control measures. The blog post can be read [here](#).

On April 17th, The Stimson Center hosted an event titled, "Lessons Learned From The Ebola Response Enhancing Global Health Security." Speakers included U.N. Special Envoy on Ebola Dr. David Nabarro, Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Dr. Tom Frieden, Finland's Undersecretary of State for Development Cooperation and Development Policy Anne Sipilainen, Senior Director for the National Security Council (NSC) Laura Holgate, Senior Technical Advisor for Health for the International Rescue Committee Lara Ho, Economic Adviser for Health, Nutrition and Population at the World Bank Olga Jones, and Jackson Naimah of the Liberian Ministry of Health. Event details were posted [here](#).

On April 18th, USAID highlighted its efforts to extend its assistance in West Africa beyond just treating people who have fallen ill with Ebola, preventing the virus from spreading, and educating communities about the disease to also include broader health system improvements. USAID is also delivering food to devastated families, helping children get back to school, and ensuring that markets are up and running again. These efforts will be supported by an additional \$126 million commitment to Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea recently announced by USAID Associate Administrator Mark Feierstein. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 19th, the CDC revised its guidelines for Ebola transmission to encourage Ebola survivors to abstain from all forms of sex or use condoms every time until further information becomes available. Previously, the recommendations suggested that Ebola survivors should refrain from sex for three months. The new CDC guidelines now reflect similar updates issued by the WHO and the Government of Liberia after a man who recovered from Ebola is thought to have transmitted the virus to his female partner months later. The revision was noted [here](#).

On April 19th, *The Washington Post* outlined Guinea President Alpha Conde's recent visit to the U.S. to join Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Karoma in requesting \$8 billion in recovery assistance from the World Bank to rebuild from the West African Ebola crisis. While in Washington, President Conde also attended meetings at the White House and on Capitol Hill. The visiting delegation from Guinea was required to report their temperatures daily to the DC Health Department. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 20th, USAID published a blog post highlighting its work to keep the number of Ebola cases in Liberia at zero and help the country build back stronger than before the crisis. With the help of USAID, Liberia is providing vulnerable families with food to eat, getting children back to school, and helping reinvigorate markets and economies decimated by the Ebola crisis. The blog post can be read [here](#).

On April 20th, The Stimson Center hosted a briefing on "Operation United Assistance: The U.S. Military's Relief Efforts in West Africa." The event featured a presentation and discussion with U.S. Army Major

General Gary Volesky, the commander of the U.S. military's efforts to combat Ebola in West Africa. The briefing was described [here](#).

On April 20th, a Texas State District Judge Martin Hoffman paused efforts by Texas Health Resources to seek a worker's compensation claim for Ebola nurse Nina Pham. Pham's attorneys claim the pursuit of a worker's compensation claim is intended to kill her lawsuit seeking damages related to the health system's lack of training and provision of proper protective gear for treating patients infected with Ebola. Meanwhile, Texas Health Resources argues the case should be resolved with the worker's compensation claim and the lawsuit should be dismissed. Updates on the case were provided [here](#).

On April 21st, *Reuters* reported genetic sequence data on Ebola will soon be made available to researchers worldwide in real time as scientists try to increase their understanding of the virus. The project, led by British scientists with West African and Saudi Arabian collaboration, seeks to encourage laboratories around the world to use live data to find new ways to diagnose and treat Ebola. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 22nd, the WHO released updated data on the number of confirmed Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending on April 19th, a total of 33 confirmed cases were reported, compared with 37 and 30 cases in the preceding weeks. In the most recent week, Guinea reported 21 confirmed cases and Sierra Leone reported 12 new cases. Liberia reported no confirmed cases. The latest data was analyzed [here](#).

On April 22nd, researchers reported the TMK-Ebola-Makona drug has been proven effective in fighting the strain of Ebola in West Africa in a study conducted on monkeys. TMK-Ebola-Makona is already being tested in Ebola patients in Sierra Leone, but results are not yet available. An earlier version of the drug, designed to treat the Kikwit strain of the virus, has been given to some Ebola patients in the U.S., but it is unclear if it was effective because patients were often given several experimental treatments at the same time. More information can be found [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On April 16th, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Jeffrey Hawkins to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Central African Republic (CAR). Hawkins, a career member of the Foreign Service, currently serves as Consul General at the U.S. Consulate in Lagos, Nigeria. He has also previously served as the U.S. Embassy in Angola, among other countries, and as a Desk Officer with the International Trade Administration (ITA) at the Department of Commerce. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 20th, the White House announced President Barack Obama will host Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi at the White House on May 21st. The visit will underscore the longstanding friendship of the U.S. with Tunisia and its commitment to strengthening and expanding its strategic partnership with Tunisia's new government and support for the Tunisian people following the historic 2014 democratic elections. President Obama and President Caid Essebsi are expected to discuss a range of issues, including security cooperation and economic reforms, as well as other regional developments, such as events in Libya and terrorist threats in the region. For more information, click [here](#).

State Department

On April 14th-18th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield was on travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. On April 16th-18th, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman was also on travel to Ethiopia. Their travel was announced [here](#).

On April 16th, the State Department issued a statement expressed deep concern for the ongoing detention, without formal charges or regular access to legal counsel, of youth activists by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The State Department noted at least three youth members of the Filimbi movement detained during a peaceful civil society event in Kinshasa have been held since March 15th, while at least four members of the Luncha organization later detained during a peaceful protest in Goma also remain in custody. The U.S. called on the DRC Government to ensure

all detainees are afforded due process and released immediately if no charges are warranted. For details, click [here](#).

On April 17th, Secretary of State John Kerry congratulated the people of Zimbabwe on their celebration of 35 years of independence. Secretary Kerry said the U.S. is a steadfast friend of the Zimbabwean people and is proud to work with Zimbabwe toward a future that is healthy, prosperous, and democratic. Secretary Kerry's statement was posted [here](#).

On April 17th, the State Department expressed concern for the rising tensions in Burundi in advance of general elections beginning in May that has led over 8,000 Burundians to flee to neighboring countries to escape intimidation and violence, including by the youth militias of the ruling party. The U.S. called on all parties in Burundi to play a constructive and peaceful role in the electoral process and to refrain from any acts that could feed the climate of fear and instability. The State Department also called on the national police, the Burundian military, and all security force personnel to provide security in an impartial manner throughout the electoral process and to protect civilians from intimidation and other abuses. Additional feedback can be seen [here](#).

On April 20th, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Catherine Novelli met with CEO of Aelous Kenya Ltd. Richard Herbert and General Counsel Christopher Schulten at the Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On April 20th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, at the Department of State. She then delivered remarks to the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's schedule was outlined [here](#).

On April 21st, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Catherine Novelli met with parliamentarians from Arusha, Tanzania, at the Department of State. The meeting was listed [here](#).

On April 21st, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily schedule, which can be accessed [here](#).

On April 21st, the State Department designated Ahmed Diriye and Mahad Karate as terrorists, blocking and freezing their assets under U.S. jurisdiction. Diriye became the leader of Al Shabaab following the death of the group's former leader, Ahmed Abdi Godane, in September 2014. Karate, also known as Abdirahim Mohamed Warsame, has played a key role in the Amniyat, the wing of Al-Shabaab responsible for the recent attack on Garissa University College in Kenya. The terrorist designations were announced [here](#).

On April 21st, the joint Department of State – Department of Defense (DOD) Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) announced plans to implement a Multinational Regional Border Patrol Strategy Workshop in Yaounde, Cameroon, May 5th-7th. The workshop, hosted by the Embassy of Cameroon, will bring together senior-level officials from the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria to develop a regional border security strategy to address emerging border security challenges and help degrade Boko Haram's ability to penetrate borders and cause humanitarian suffering in the Lake Chad Basin. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 21st, State Department Acting Spokesperson Marie Harf expressed concern for the sentencing of deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and 14 others to 20 years in prison. She said all Egyptians regardless of political affiliation are entitled to equal and fair treatment before the law, including full respect for their rights to due process. Spokesperson Harf also noted the State Department planned to review the verdict when it is made publically available. Her comments can be seen [here](#).

On April 22nd, in celebration of Earth Day, the State Department's Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) announced the 30th Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified diplomatic facility in Abuja, Nigeria. The new Embassy Annex in Abuja received LEED Gold certification. It includes a photovoltaic array that provides clean power for electricity, fixtures that reduce water

consumption, and construction materials with recycled content. The U.S has other Gold-certified Embassies and Consulates in the Republic of Congo (ROC), Burundi, Senegal, Liberia, and Morocco. For more information, click [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On April 17th, USAID issued its quarterly newsletter on President Barack Obama's Power Africa program. The latest newsletter explains how the program is increasing new power generation in sub-Saharan Africa ahead of its two-year anniversary in June. The publication also recognizes Vestas as a new Power Africa private sector partner and details how Power Africa is building new relationships with African utility companies. The newsletter can be read [here](#).

On April 22nd, to recognize the 45th anniversary of Earth Day, USAID announced the Wildlife Crime Tech Challenge to combat illegal wildlife trade. USAID invited organizations and individuals to submit innovative science and technology solutions to help combat the illegal trade in marine and terrestrial wildlife. Successful applicants could win up to \$500,000, as well as technical assistance and networking opportunities to scale their solutions. The competition was announced [here](#).

On April 22nd, as part of its celebration of Earth Day, USAID shared highlights from the recent Global Citizen 2015 Earth Day event held on the National Mall. As part of the event, USAID Associate Administrator Mark Feierstein announced \$126 million in assistance for Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea to re-establish and strengthen health systems. USAID also noted Sierra Leonean Minister of Energy Henry Olufemi Macauley's participation and his pledge to mobilize additional budget resources to improve health care and education systems and create jobs for young people. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On April 14th-16th, the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Environmental Security Program, the Joaquim Chissano Foundation (FJC) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) hosted the Mozambique Oil Spill Response Symposium in Maputo. More than 25 stakeholders participated in the workshop, which was opened by U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique Douglas Griffiths and former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Dr. Leonardo Simao. The workshop included presentations about the properties of oil, environmental sensitivity mapping, response strategies, and cleanup methods. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 16th, 25 military officers from Saudi Arabia travelled to Stuttgart, Germany to learn more about AFRICOM. The officers participated in the year-long Saudi Arabia War Course, a professional development program designed for those with potential for high-level leadership opportunities within the Saudi Arabian military. This is the first time AFRICOM has been added to the agenda, at the request of Saudi Arabian leaders who expressed interest in learning more about the command's mission and programs in Africa. The course was detailed [here](#).

On April 17th, Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work visited AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. This represents Deputy Secretary Work's first visit to AFRICOM since his confirmation as Deputy Secretary of Defense in April 2014. Deputy Secretary Work's visit to AFRICOM headquarters was noted [here](#).

On April 20th, participants of the first African Partner Outbreak Response Alliance met in Ghana. The meeting brought together more than 60 military and civilian doctors and medical practitioners from 12 African partner nations to discuss the capabilities of African partner nations to respond to disease outbreaks. More information can be seen [here](#).

Central Intelligence Agency

On April 19th, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director John Brennan met with Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi during an unannounced visit to Cairo. The meeting was intended to underscore the strong ties between Egypt and the U.S. and the importance of the strategic bilateral relationship. The two agreed to continue consultation and coordination on issues of mutual interest, particularly with regard to

areas witnessing conflict in the Middle East and efforts to eradicate terrorism. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

On April 17th, the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank of the U.S. announced the first recipients of five of its annual export awards in advance of its 2015 Annual Conference, including the award for the Sub-Saharan Africa Exporter of the year. This year's recipient is W.S. Darley & Co. of Itasca, Illinois, which took advantage of a \$15.7 direct loan to the government of Lagos to explore 32 state-of-the-art, fully equipped firefighting vehicles, maintenance and support equipment, and services to Nigeria. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On April 17th, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) unveiled a new investment outlook for business opportunities in Ghana's power sector. The Ghana Power Compact between MCC and the Government of Ghana was signed in August 2014 and is expected to enter into force in mid-2015. This compact, which includes power infrastructure as well as significant policy and institutional reforms, is the largest U.S. Government-funded transaction to date in support of Power Africa. The investment outlook can be downloaded [here](#).

On April 17th, the MCC issued an investment outlook for business opportunities in Zambia's water sectors. The compact between the MCC and the Government of Zambia, signed in May 2012 and entered into force in November 2013, focuses on water supply, sanitation and drainage infrastructure, institutional strengthening, and innovation in water supply and sanitation. The MCC encouraged companies to explore opportunities in Zambia, including complementary investments in infrastructure, sanitation services, and solid waste management and recycling, partnerships for innovations in water, sanitation, and drainage, and other procurement opportunities. For more information, click [here](#).

Congress

On April 16th, Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) applauded the introduction of legislation by Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR) to reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and take strong steps to prevent countries from receiving benefits under the program while imposing unfair limits on American imports. Senators Coons and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) recently wrote to the South African Government to express concern about the lack of progress being made in negotiations between South African and American poultry industries. For details, click [here](#).

On April 17th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) applauded the bipartisan introduction of the AGOA Extension and Enhancement Act of 2015, of which she is a co-sponsor. The bill, which will extend AGOA for ten years, was introduced by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI) and also co-sponsored by Representatives Patrick Tiberi (R-OH), Sander Levin (D-MI), Charles Rangel (D-NY), Ed Royce (R-CA), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Chris Smith (R-NJ), Todd Young (R-IN), and Jim McDermott (D-WA). A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 18th, U.S. Senator and 2016 presidential candidate Rand Paul (R-KY) criticized the Obama Administration's strategy toward Libya during a campaign stop in New Hampshire. Senator Paul said the Obama Administration got too close to the conflict in Libya, resulting in the death of U.S. Ambassador to Libya Chris Stevens and three other Americans. The U.S. has since pulled all personnel out of Libya. Senator Paul's comments were recorded [here](#).

On April 22nd, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing on "Poaching and Terrorism: A National Security Challenge." Witnesses included Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International and Environmental and Scientific Affairs and Associate Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Robert Dreher. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

On April 22nd, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued her biweekly Africa Update. The latest edition highlights the AU's plans to launch an African Center for

Disease Control and Prevention (African CDC) in partnership with the U.S. CDC. It also includes a summary of President Barack Obama's meeting with leaders of countries affected by Ebola, including Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma, and Guinean President Alpha Conde. The newsletter can be downloaded [here](#).

On April 23rd, the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy held a hearing on AGOA. Witnesses included Tom Hart of ONE, Scott Eisner of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Walker Williams of Leadership Africa USA, William McRaith of PVH Corp, and Catherine Feingold of AFL-CIO. The hearing was webcast [here](#).

On April 23rd, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) hosted the April 2015 Africa Policy Breakfast on "African Elections and Governance in 2015 and Beyond." Speakers included Director of the Brookings Institution's Africa Growth Initiative Dr. Mwangi Kimenyi, National Democratic Institute Regional Director for West and Central Africa Chris Fomunyoh, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Eric Postel, National Endowment for Democracy Senior Program Officer Kamissa Kamara, and Omoyle Sowore of *Sahara Reports*. More information can be found [here](#).

North Africa

On April 14th, an Egyptian administrative court in Cairo upheld the power of the Interior Minister to deport people accused of homosexuality. The ruling is based on the arrest of a Libyan man in 2008 who police alleged was gay. It was unclear was he was arrested and the defendant sued authorities so he could return to Libya to finish his studies. Judge Yahia Dakrory rejected arguments made by the defense and said the Interior Ministry had lawfully used its authority to protect religious values and social morals. The case was outlined [here](#).

On April 15th, the African Carbon Forum 2015 concluded in Marrakech, Morocco. The meeting focused on programs designed to unleash private sector finance and scale up other forms of climate finance to strengthen the sustainable development of African countries. Participants agreed climate finance linked to results is essential to stimulate greater funding for mitigation and adaptation to climate change and that developing countries, including many in Africa, need tools like the Clean Development Mechanism to anchor carbon markets in the long-term climate agenda. The outcomes of the meeting were posted [here](#).

On April 16th, an Egyptian soldier was killed and five others wounded when roadside bombs hit two military armored vehicles in Sheikh Zuweid in the Northern Sinai region. In response, a military helicopter killed three terrorist elements in a car while they were fleeing the scene. Later in the day, two soldiers were wounded when a roadside bomb targeted an armored vehicle in a village in the area of Rafah. While there was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks, Sinai Province has been known to carry out similar attacks in the region. Both incidents were reported [here](#).

On April 17th, the Italian navy recaptured a Sicilian fishing boat hours after it was seized by the Libyan coast guard off the coast of Libya. According to Libyan officials, the vessel was seized in a peaceful operation because it did not have a fishing permit and had breached Libyan waters. The Italian navy reported military personnel in the area on migrant rescue duties responded to reports of the fishing boat seizure. The incident was detailed [here](#).

On April 19th, *Al Jazeera* reported on evidence suggesting gold mining in Sudan has become a catalyst for the ongoing conflict in Darfur as battles for control of mining areas between rival ethnic groups and occupying militias complicate government response efforts in the area. As a result, activists in Sudan have suggested the U.N. and the U.S. pursue new, targeted sanctions against key gold industry figures to deter the human costs associated with gold mining in the country. An article on gold mining in Sudan was published [here](#).

On April 20th, an Egyptian court sentenced 22 members of the Muslim Brotherhood to death over an attack on a police station in the town of Kerdasa after the army removed President Mohamed Morsi from power in 2013. One other defendant, a juvenile, was given a ten-year sentence. A lawyer for the defendants said they would appeal. The ruling was noted [here](#).

On April 21st, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir canceled a planned trip to Indonesia that would have been his first trip outside of Africa or the Middle East in almost four years. President Bashir had been scheduled to lead the Sudanese delegation to the Asia-African leaders conference in Jakarta, but his planned participation sparked protests among human rights groups. The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant for President Bashir's arrest in 2009 accusing him of war crimes in Darfur. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 21st, ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi was convicted on charges of violence and inciting violence and sentenced to 20 years in prison for the torture of protestors outside the presidential palace in December 2012. Standing trial with 14 other co-defendants, President Morsi was acquitted of murder charges. While President Morsi's supporters called the sentencing a travesty of justice, those representing the plaintiffs said the conviction was fair. The case was detailed [here](#).

On April 22nd, WFP Executive Director Ertharin Cousin expressed concern at the disappearance of three WFP staff members earlier this month when fighting erupted along their food distribution route near Malakal, South Sudan. According to WFP, their disappearance comes after another WFP staff member was abducted at gunpoint in October 2014 from the airport in Malakal. WFP also expressed broader fear that worsening insecurity in some parts of South Sudan will make it harder for humanitarian agencies to provide assistance to affected communities. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 22nd, as the U.S. prepared to distribute a draft resolution to members of the U.N. Security Council to renew the mandate of the U.N. Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the Polisario Front independence movement threatened to review cooperation with U.N. monitors if the U.N. alters MINURSO's mandate to coordinate a referendum on the status of the Western Sahara. Polisario expressed concern the U.N. may be under pressure from Morocco to abandon the referendum. An article on the situation was published [here](#).

East Africa

On April 17th, Reuters highlighted Kweka's Chocolate Mamas, a local Tanzanian chocolatier that is carving out a niche in the chocolate industry and seeking to reverse trends that have led to the foreign domination of Africa's growing chocolate economy. Unlike other African chocolate companies, Kweka's is using ingredients that are 100 percent African and packages their chocolate bars in recycled maize husks for extra authenticity. While Africa produces more than 70 percent of the world's cocoa, the \$110 billion chocolate industry is dominated by Western companies. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 20th, Al Shabaab militants killed seven people, including four UNICEF staff members, when they set off a bomb on a staff bus traveling in the northeastern town of Garowe. Four other UNICEF staff members were left in serious condition. Somali President Hassan Sheik Mohamud condemned the attack, as well as Al Shabaab's efforts to target children. The bombing was reported [here](#).

On April 20th, UNICEF Director Anthony Lake condemned the attack on a U.N. vehicle in northeastern Somalia that killed four UNICEF workers and seriously injured four others when a roadside bomb exploded alongside the minibus in which they were riding. Director Lake noted the victims of the attack had dedicated their lives to working for the children of Somalia and should be mourned as heroes. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced similar outrage at the attack, but said it would not erode the commitment of the whole U.N. to supporting the people and Government of Somalia. The U.N. response to the attack can be seen [here](#).

On April 21st, an Al Shabaab suicide bomber drove a car full of explosives into a busy restaurant in Mogadishu over lunch hour, killing at least ten people and wounding more than a dozen others. The explosion also destroyed a tea shop next door and set fire to nearby petrol drums. In claiming responsibility for the attack, Al Shabaab noted it had targeted officials from government ministries and the presidential palace who were eating at the restaurant. An article on the attack can be read [here](#).

On April 21st, the Committee to Protect Journalists issued a new report listing the ten countries where the news media are most restricted. The report finds that Eritrea is the country with the most media restrictions, where journalists are harassed and imprisoned and the Internet is frequently censored. The conditions for media in Eritrea were described [here](#).

On April 22nd, *The Telegraph* reported on Kenya's plans to construct a 440 mile wall along its border with Somalia as part of an effort to keep out Al Shabaab militants in response to the recent terrorist attack on Garissa University College. The wall is expected to stretch from the Indian Ocean to the city of Mandera where both countries converge with Ethiopia. Construction began as government officials announced that two civil servants and seven senior police officers in Garissa were suspended for ignoring intelligence suggesting an imminent attack on a Kenyan university. Developments in Kenya were noted [here](#).

On April 22nd, Somalia's Premier Bank struck a deal with Mastercard to install ATM machines and issue debit cards in Mogadishu. With Al Shabaab mostly driven from Somalia's capital, business and consumer demand has grown for banking services. It remains to be seen if banks will be successful in convincing the local population to sign up for debit cards, as most Somalis are already using mobile money to pay for goods and services. The launch of debit card and ATM services in Somalia was highlighted [here](#).

On April 23rd, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the shooting of military officer in Mogadishu. After killing the officer, the Al Shabaab fighters fled the scene. The attack occurred as Kenyan officials said they suspected Al Shabaab was also responsible for the abduction of a chief in Mandera County, which borders Somalia. More information was reported [here](#).

On April 23rd, tensions were high in Benin leading up to the parliamentary elections scheduled for Sunday. While Benin President Thomas Boni Yayi promised he would step down at the end of his second term next year, the opposition has been using the parliamentary elections to try to undermine President Boni Yayi's ruling alliance, the Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin (FCBE), in anticipation that he might run again. FCBE leaders are expecting to win between 35 and 50 of the 83 seats in parliament in Sunday's polls. The political situation in Benin was analyzed [here](#).

West Africa

On April 13th, the IMF's regional technical assistance center AFRITAC West 2 held its second Steering Committee meeting in Ghana. Chair of the Steering Committee and Ghanaian Minister of Finance Seth Terkper noted while the center's member countries have made strides over the last decade in terms of economic stability and growth, they continue to face important challenges in their quest to build capacity and implement much needed reforms. He also predicted increased demand for AFRITAC West 2 guidance over the coming year, as well as greater collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West Africa Institute for Financial and Economic Management (WAIFEM), and the West Africa Monetary Institute (WAMI). The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On April 20th, protestors clashed with Guinean security forces in response to the country's electoral commission announcing a new electoral timetable last month. The timetable sets the presidential poll for October and postpones local elections until 2016. While the electoral commission said it could not afford to hold two elections in 2015 due to the Ebola outbreak, the opposition argued that municipal elections were long overdue, as the last elections were held in 2005. According to the opposition, at least five people were wounded by gunfire, three people were killed, and as many as 50 others were injured in the protests. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 23rd, a court in Gambia charged leading import firm Shyben A. Madi & Sons and seven of its employees with drug trafficking after 45 kilograms (kg) of cocaine were discovered in a shipment of sugar arriving from Brazil. The defendants, who did not appear in court and did not enter into a plea, were charged with conspiracy and aggravated drug trafficking. The case was highlighted [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On April 15th, the Global Information Technology Report (GITR) 2015 was unveiled by the World Economic Forum (WEF), revealing that Rwanda has ranked first globally for using internet and communications technology (ICT) to drive social change and economic transformation. In response to the report's release, Rwandan Minister of Youth and ICT Jean Philbert Nsengimana stressed that Rwanda continues to be one of the fastest growing countries in ICT and there are additional

opportunities for growth of the ICT sector in the country. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

On April 17th, U.N. Special Representative for the DRC and head of the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) Martin Kobler condemned a deadly attack on civilians in North Kivu province and expressed condolences to the families of the victims. According to MONUSCO, assailants suspected to belong to the Ugandan-based Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group attacked the village of Matiba. In light of the attack, Special Representative Kobler called for the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) to resume collaboration with MONUSCO. For details, click [here](#).

On April 17th, Brian Molefe was appointed by South African authorities to serve as acting chief executive of Eskom, the state utility company. Molefe comes to the job after serving as chief executive of the state transport firm, Transnet, and will replace Tshediso Matona, who was suspending pending an inquiry into Eskom's struggles to meet electricity demand. His appointment was announced [here](#).

On April 17th, UNHCR reported the number of Burundians seeking refuge in neighboring countries has surged in recent weeks following an uptick in pre-election violence and intimidation throughout the country. According to UNHCR, more than 8,000 Burundians have sought refuge in Rwanda and the DRC over the past two weeks amid intensifying harassment and reported disappearances of people associated with the political opposition. The situation in Burundi was described [here](#).

On April 17th, police in Burundi fired tear gas and water cannons at hundreds of protestors opposed to President Pierre Nkurunziza running for a third term in the country's June presidential contest. President Nkurunziza's supporters argue his first term should not count because he was picked by lawmakers, rather than voted into office. Meanwhile, opponents believe that President Nkurunziza holding a third term would be a violation of Burundi's constitution. President Nkurunziza has yet to declare his intentions. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 20th, Burundian opposition presidential candidate Agathon Rwasa said he would call for peaceful protests if President Nkurunziza decided to run for a third five-year term in violation of the country's constitution and the Arusha deal that ended a 12-year civil war in 2005. While there have already been some protests around the upcoming elections, many expect President Nkurunziza will declare his candidacy in the coming days ahead of a May deadline to register. For details, click [here](#).

On April 22nd, the CAR's transitional government announced the postponement of a peace forum planned for next week. ROC President Denis Sassou Nguesso, who has served as a mediator in the CAR crisis, had a scheduling conflict, leading the forum to be rescheduled for May 4th-11th. The forum is expected to bring together roughly 700 representatives from armed groups, political parties, civil society, and religious communities to address divisions between Muslims and Christians ahead of elections to be held by the end of this year. The postponement of the forum was announced [here](#).

On April 22nd, Mozambican Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications Manuela Rebelo announced analogue television signals will not be switched off in June 2015 because completing the transition to digital will be impossible by then. Despite the International Telecommunications Union's universal digital migration deadline, Minister Rebelo said switching off the analogue signal was a sovereign decision for Mozambique. Details can be seen [here](#).

On April 22nd, police in Angola denied reports that 200 members of the Seventh Day Light of the World sect were killed when police raided a camp last week looking for sect leader Jose Julino Kalupeteka. Police did confirm 22 deaths resulting from the clashes, including nine officers, and said Kalupeteka was in police custody for inciting civil disorder. The incident was reported [here](#).

On April 22nd, Google Street View launched a comprehensive online tour of Robben Island. Robben Island previously served as the political prison that housed former South African Nelson Mandela. It has also been used as a hospital and a leper colony. Unlike other Street View projects, the Robben Island Prison Tour is annotated by former political prisoner Vusumisi Mcongo. The tour was launched [here](#).

General Africa News

On April 16th, as part of the World Bank Group-IMF Spring Meetings in Washington, DC, government

representatives, business leaders, and other members of the public and private sectors participated in an event called “Building African Participation in Global Value Chains.” As part of the event, business leaders, ministers of finance, entrepreneurs, and development practitioners discussed regional integration, infrastructure, corporate social responsibility, and investment, and agreed that both international support and homegrown solutions are key to developing stronger global value chains in Africa. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 17th, Director of the African Department at the IMF Antoinette Sayeh hosted a press briefing on recent economic developments and prospects for the sub-Saharan Africa region. She reported sub-Saharan Africa’s economic outlook remains favorable and the region is set to register another year of solid economic performance, with economic expansion of 4.5 percent in 2015. Dr. Sayeh also noted risks to economic growth, including global financial conditions, uneven global recovery in Europe and China, and security-related risks in a number of countries. The briefing was transcribed [here](#).

On April 19th, Chairman of the African Caucus Armando Manuel and Managing Director of the IMF Christine Lagarde co-hosted a meeting of the African Consultative Group at IMF headquarters. The group discussed the short- and medium-term prospects for Africa. They also discussed risks and how the IMF can help sub-Saharan Africa sustain a healthy growth rate. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 20th, the AfDB highlighted President Donald Kaberuka’s participation in his final World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings on behalf of the AfDB. Throughout the week, President Kaberuka delivered targeted messages on how the AfDB is posed to help advance sustainable development on the continent. While in Washington, President Kaberuka delivered keynote remarks at the Woodrow Wilson Center, the Brookings Institute, and the National Press Club, among other events. He was all awarded *AllAfrica*’s Champion Award and honored at a reception held by World Bank President Jim Yong Kim. President Kaberuka’s visit to Washington was outlined [here](#).

On April 20th, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a discussion on “Africa’s Changing Energy Landscape.” Presenters included U.S. Assistant Secretary of Energy for Fossil Energy Chris Smith, OPIC Renewable Energy Finance Managing Director Diana Jensen, USAID Clean Energy Program Lead Zephyr Taylor, President and CEO of the Global Environment Fund H. Jeffrey Leonard, President of Goldwyn Global Strategies David Goldwyn, and Ethan Zindler and Jennifer Cooke of CSIS. Event details were posted [here](#).

On April 20th, the Pew Research Center unveiled new data showing widespread cell phone utilization may be allowing some parts of Africa to skip landline development altogether. According to recent surveys, Pew found the majority of adults in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, and South Africa owned at least basic cell phones in 2014. The survey also uncovered that most adults use cellphones to send text messages and make or receive payments. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On April 20th, George Washington University’s Delta Phi Epsilon (DPE) Professional Foreign Service Sorority presented a conversation with Founding Director of the Enough Project John Prendergast titled, “Africa, U.S. Policy, and Making a Difference.” Event details were shared [here](#).

On April 23rd, the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) hosted an event titled, “The Path to Paris: National Perspectives on a New Global Climate Agreement.” Speakers included Gambian Minister of Environment, Climate Change, Water Resources, Parks, and Wildlife Pa Ousman Jarju and former South African Minister of Environment Valli Moosa. Details can be accessed [here](#).

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