



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Egypt

On March 27th, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf responded to General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi's resignation as Egyptian Defense Minister and the announcement of his candidacy in Egypt's upcoming presidential elections. Deputy Spokesperson Harf reiterated that the U.S. Government does not support individual candidates or political parties in foreign elections, but indicated that U.S. officials are pushing the Egyptian Government to ensure that elections are free, fair, and transparent, and that candidates are permitted to campaign freely without fear of harassment or intimidation. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On March 30th, *The Washington Post* Editorial Board published an op-ed criticizing the Obama Administration for its public comments that suggest General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi's regime is leading Egypt back to democracy. The article opines that the opposite is true, citing an increase in political violence, the imprisonment of Muslim Brotherhood supporters, and efforts to silence journalists. The full article can be accessed [here](#).

On April 1st, United Nations (U.N.) Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General Irina Bokova denounced the murder of Egyptian journalist Mayada Ashraf on March 28th. Mashraf, who worked for the Egyptian daily Al-Sustour, was fatally shot covering a clash between supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and Egyptian police in Cairo. The incident was reported [here](#).

On April 2nd, two bombs left among trees outside of Cairo University exploded, killing a police officer and wounding five other security officers who had been guarding the facility. A third blast occurred shortly after, killing another person. A fourth bomb was also found in the area. While no group claimed immediate responsibility for the attack, Islamic militants have been found responsible for similar attacks against Egyptian security forces in the area since the ousting of President Mohamed Morsi last year.

On April 2nd, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf started the State Department's daily press briefing by condemning the recent terrorist attacks that occurred in Egypt near Cairo University. She expressed condolences to the friends and families of those who were killed and the many others injured during the attack. She also reiterated the U.S. position that there is no justification for such violence. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments can be seen [here](#).

Central African Republic

On March 28th, Head of International Protection for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Volker Turk reported that security conditions in the Central African Republic's (CAR) capital city of Bangui have deteriorated significantly over the past year. He reported that hatred between Christians and Muslims in the country is growing and expressed concern that anti-Balaka factions in the capital have become more organized militarily. Insights from UNHCR were included [here](#).

On March 31st, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced concern for a new upsurge of violence in Bangui that has led to a growing number of fatalities and injuries and increased hardship for the population. Secretary-General Ban also issued a stern warning to the perpetrators of violence, indicating that they will be held accountable for their actions and brought to justice. Comments from Secretary-General Ban can be seen [here](#).

On April 1st, following increased fighting in Bangui between Christian militias and Muslims that has killed at least 60 people over the last ten days, the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) appealed to the global community for additional peacekeepers and police forces for the CAR. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has proposed a 12,000-strong U.N. peacekeeping mission to the CAR that will be tasked primarily with protecting civilians. OHCHR's appeal for additional resources for the CAR can be viewed [here](#).

On April 2nd, African and European leaders, including 15 heads of state from Africa and 15 heads of state from Europe, convened for a two-day summit in Brussels, Belgium, focused on addressing sectarian unrest in the CAR. The summit broadly addressed security concerns, as well as immigration, trade, and investment issues. During the summit, the European Union (EU) committed to deploying 1,000 troops to the CAR to support French and African forces already acting in the country. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, and in a show of solidarity South African President Jacob Zuma, boycotted the summit due to the EU's refusal to temporarily lift a visa ban on President Mugabe's wife. An overview of the summit was provided [here](#).

On April 2nd, addressing the High-Level Meeting of the EU and African Union (AU) on the crisis in the CAR, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the world has failed to stop the CAR from sliding into a grave political, economic, and humanitarian crisis. Once again, Secretary-General Ban called on European and African leaders to deploy his proposed U.N. peacekeeping force. Excerpts from Secretary-General Ban's remarks can be found [here](#).

South Sudan

On March 28th, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) launched an urgent operation using helicopters and air drops to deliver food, vaccines, nutrition supplements, and other relief supplies to approximately 30,000 people in South Sudan's Jonglei state. While the delivery of supplies to Akobo is the first operation of this kind, UNICEF and WFP are planning 14 similar missions over the next month that will expand humanitarian assistance to as many as 250,000 people in South Sudan. A press release on the operation was issued [here](#).

On March 31st, WFP Executive Director Ertharin Cousin and UNHCR Antonio Guterres arrived in South Sudan to review the humanitarian response and additional needs of people affected by the crisis that erupted in December 2013. Executive Director Cousin and UNHCR Guterres met with displaced people, partners, and local authorities in South Sudan before traveling to Ethiopia to meet some of the estimated 80,000 South Sudanese refugees that crossed the border. An overview of Executive Director Cousin and UNHCR Guterres' trip to South Sudan was provided [here](#).

On April 1st, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reported increasingly difficult conditions for relief operations as the U.N. mission continues to face restricted movement and other threats to peacekeepers and humanitarian partners, such as forcible searches of U.N. convoys. UNMISS called on the Government of South Sudan to ensure security and to help allow freedom of movement for peacekeepers and other relief personnel. An update from UNMISS was posted [here](#).

Kenya

On March 28th, UNHCR denounced the Kenyan Government's decision last week to order 50,000

refugees to return to refugees camps following a new spike in violence. The refugees, primarily from South Sudan, Sudan, and Somalia, have been asked to return to the Dadaab or Kakuma settlements following a deadly attack by unidentified gunmen in Mombasa. UNHCR said the order is discriminatory and encouraged the Kenyan Government to pursue other means for addressing security concerns and strengthening law enforcement. Feedback from UNHCR was shared [here](#).

On April 1st, at least six people were killed and 25 others injured when roadside bombs were detonated in the Eastleigh suburb of Nairobi, Kenya. Because the town is home to a number of Somali immigrants, it has come to be known as Little Mogadishu. While no group claimed responsibility for Monday's attacks, Somali militant group Al-Shabaab has carried out similar attacks in the region in the past. The incident was detailed [here](#).

On April 2nd, Kenyan officials announced that 657 people have been arrested and detained in security sweeps since the Government ordered all refugees living in urban areas to return to settlement camps. Approximately 200 of those arrested will be questioned for links to terrorism as Kenyan officials continue to believe that refugees are conspiring to carry out terrorist attacks in the country. Developments in Kenya were reported [here](#).

Guinea

On March 28th, in response to suspected cases of Ebola reported in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the World Health Organization (WHO) said the Ebola outbreak, which originated in Guinea, must be watched carefully. Because the suspected cases in Sierra Leone and Liberia have an epidemiological link with Guinea, at this time, WHO is not recommending any travel or trade restrictions. More information is available [here](#).

On April 1st, the WHO reported that the number of suspected and confirmed cases of Ebola in Guinea rose from 103 to 122 cases over the course of three days. The WHO also confirmed that seven people in Liberia have been infected with the disease, but previously suspected cases in Sierra Leone tested negative. Updates from the WHO can be seen [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On March 28th, President Barack Obama announced the designation of a Presidential Delegation to Kigali, Rwanda, to attend the 20th Commemoration of the Rwandan Genocide on April 7th. The delegation will be led by U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power. Additional members of the delegation will include U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Donald Koran, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA), Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for Global Criminal Justice Stephen Rapp, U.S. Special Representative for the African Great Lakes Region and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Russ Feingold, Senior Fellow at the ONE Campaign and Columnist for *The Washington Post* Michael Gerson, and former Program Coordinator for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Christine Hjelt. The delegation was announced [here](#).

Office of the United States Trade Representative

On March 31st, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for African Affairs Florie Lister chaired a roundtable discussion on U.S.-Africa services trade and investment as part of the Obama Administration's review of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The roundtable session was noticed [here](#).

On April 1st, USTR Ambassador Michael Froman held a bilateral meeting with Angolan Trade Minister Dr. Rosa Pacavira in Washington, DC. Ambassador Froman and Minister Pacavira then co-hosted a U.S.-Angola Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council Meeting. Ambassador Froman noted that Angola is one of the U.S.'s most important trading partners, with total trade valued at \$10.2 billion last year. A summary of the discussions were shared [here](#).

On April 3rd, USTR Ambassador Michael Froman met with Tunisian Minister of Economy and Finance

Hakim Ben Hammouda. The meeting was included on USTR's weekly public schedule, which is available [here](#).

State Department

On March 28th, Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Frederick Barton delivered remarks on "Beyond the Headlines: Security and Development in Africa," at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. Assistant Secretary Barton's remarks were part of the Africana Club's first annual conference on security and development in Africa. Additional information was posted [here](#).

On March 28th-29th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield was on travel to Chicago, Illinois. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield met with students and leadership at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as African and U.S. Fulbright Alumni and local high school students involved in the PEOPLE program. She also addressed the broader University of Wisconsin-Madison community on U.S. Africa Policy. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's activities in Chicago were detailed [here](#).

On March 30th-April 4th, State Department Counselor Tom Shannon was on overseas travel to Cairo, Egypt. Counselor Shannon was accompanied by Senior Advisor to Secretary of State John Kerry Ambassador David Thorne, as well as other officials from the Treasury Department and the National Security Council (NSC). While in Egypt, the U.S. delegation met with senior Egyptian officials and business leaders to discuss ways to support Egypt, to encourage a sustainable and nonviolent transition to democracy, and to explore ways to strengthen the Egyptian economy. Counselor Shannon's travel was noticed [here](#).

On April 1st, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom hosted a Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Private Sector Event at the Department of State. Through YALI, the U.S. has invested significant resources to enhance leadership skills, spur entrepreneurship, and connect young African leaders with one another and with Americans. Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel and U.S. Special Representative for Global Partnerships Drew O'Brien also participated in the event. Details were shared [here](#).

On April 1st, U.S. Special Representative for Global Partnerships Drew O'Brien met with U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator designate Dr. Deborah Bix at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be found [here](#).

On April 1st-2nd, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne Richard traveled to Ndjamena, Chad, for meetings with Chadian government officials and representatives of international organizations and NGOs. Assistant Secretary Richard's travel was announced [here](#).

On April 1st-3rd, Secretary of State John Kerry traveled to Algiers for meetings with senior Algerian officials and to co-chair the U.S. Algeria Strategic Dialogue with Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra. In addition, Secretary Kerry met with Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, participated in a Tree Planting Ceremony, participated in a U.S.-Algeria youth soccer event, and visited the U.S. Embassy in Algiers. Secretary Kerry was accompanied by Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism Tina Kaidanow, NSC Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa Prem Kumar and Vice Admiral Kurt Tidd of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Secretary Kerry's travel was detailed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks at the opening plenary sessions of the U.S.-Algeria Strategic Dialogue can be read [here](#). A transcript of Secretary Kerry's joint press availability with Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra was posted [here](#).

On April 3rd, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement on the occasion of Senegal's National Day. Secretary Kerry said the U.S.-Senegal bilateral relationship is based on a shared commitment to democratic values, rule of law, and economic development, especially as the country has emerged as a democratic leader in West Africa. He also noted the U.S. and Senegal will continue to work together to support peacekeeping efforts, and to promote human rights, trade, and maritime security. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be viewed [here](#).

On April 3rd, Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin, and Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Uzra Zeya participated in the U.S.-Tunisian Strategic Dialogue, hosted at the Department of State. Events related to the U.S.-Tunisian Strategic Dialogue were noted [here](#).

On April 3rd, Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns met separately with Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa and Tunisian Foreign Minister Mongi Hamdi. The meetings were listed on the State Department's public schedule, which can be accessed [here](#).

On April 3rd, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Catherine Novelli met with Tunisian Minister of Economy and Finance Hakim Ben Hammouda at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the Department's daily appointment schedule, which was posted [here](#).

On April 3-4th, Secretary of State John Kerry traveled to Rabat to meet with senior Moroccan officials and to co-chair the U.S.-Morocco Strategic Dialogue with Moroccan Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar. He also visited the U.S. Embassy in Rabat. Secretary of State John Kerry was again joined by Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator for Counterterrorism Tina Kaidanow, NSC Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa Prem Kumar and Vice Admiral Kurt Tidd of the JCS. More information on Secretary Kerry's visit to Morocco was shared [here](#).

On April 3rd-4th, following her visit to Ndjamena, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne Richard traveled to Sarh and Maro, Chad, to visit returnee centers and refugee camps. Assistant Secretary Richard's travel was detailed [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On April 3rd, USAID issued a press release applauding the confirmation of Dr. Deborah Birx as the New Global AIDS Coordinator. Addressing Coordinator Birx's role in implementing the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID noted that Coordinator Birx is well prepared to work with partner countries to transition their services into sustainable country-owned programs for HIV/AIDS response. The press release was issued [here](#).

Department of Defense

On March 25th, a recognition ceremony was held at Camp Lemmonier, Djibouti, for four Djiboutian soldiers who rescued two American survivors of a helicopter crash in 2006. The ceremony was presided over by Djiboutian Defense Minister Hassan Darar Houffaneh, U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti Geeta Pasi, and Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Commanding General Wayne Grigsby, Jr. A recording of the ceremony can be watched [here](#).

On March 27th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) headquarters hosted the 5th Annual Women's Leadership Forum. The event, which attracted an audience of 120 girls, women, and men, focused on equipping each participant with leadership skills and tools to advance their careers. The forum also featured several AFRICOM senior female leaders as keynote speakers and workshop leaders. The event was summarized [here](#).

On March 28th, African Partnership Flight (APF) Angola 2014 came to a close in Angola. Over a week of training exercises, more than 200 airmen from the U.S., Angola, and Zambia participated in group discussions on disaster relief operations, mission planning, and equipment preparation for airlift. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On March 28th, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) and U.S. Air Forces in Africa (AFAFRICA) reported that Air Forces in Europe rock band, Touch n' Go participated in African Partnership Flight Angola 2014. Throughout the week, the band played concerts at military ceremonies, local schools, and for broadcast radio stations while Angolan, Zambian, and U.S. air force personnel participated in the

exercise intended to build partnerships on air capabilities. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 28th, AFRICOM provided an update on the efforts of U.S. Marines from the Special-Purpose Air-ground Task Force Africa (SP-MAGTF-AF) to train Burundi National Defense Force (BNDF) soldiers as they prepare to deploy to Somalia in support for the AU Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). The ten-week training course covers a broad spectrum of logistics training, including troop movements, breaching and clearing buildings, engineering, countering improvised explosive devices (IEDs), convoy operations, communication skills, and self-aid buddy care. Details were provided [here](#).

On March 28th, *The Atlantic* published an opinion piece authored by Hilary Matfess of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) on the recent deployment of U.S. military personnel to Uganda. The article suggests that the U.S. deployed 150 additional special forces troops and CV-22 Osprey aircraft to Uganda not only to intensify the hunt for Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony, but also as an attempt to contain the ongoing crisis in the CAR. The full article can be read [here](#).

On March 31st, AFRICOM hosted its annual awards ceremony at Command headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, to recognize the service and achievements of all nominees over the course of the previous fiscal year. AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez, Command Sergeant Major Darrin Bohn, Senior Enlisted Leader Marine Corps Lieutenant General Steven Hummer, and Ambassador Phillip Carter presented each winner with an award certificate and a Malian djembe drum. A list of award winners can be viewed [here](#).

On April 1st, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa provided a report on the Intelligence Capacity Building Workshop (ICBW) recently held in Morocco as part of African Lion 14. The workshop, intended to strengthen proficiency and integration for intelligence operations, addressed topics including basic steps of the intelligence process, intelligence preparation of the environment (IPOE), systematic approaches to terrain, weather, and cultural considerations of importance, standard terminology and procedures, military grid-reference systems, and geospatial intelligence and relevance to operational planning. Details on the workshop were reported [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On March 27th, in conjunction with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation's (OPIC) participation in President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative, OPIC Executive Vice President Mimi Alemayehou authored a post for *The OPIC Blog* on her personal journey as an Ethiopian American Working for Power Africa. In the post, Executive Vice President Alemayehou recalls the obstacles to electricity that Africa experiences at a local level and the power that electricity provides at home and work. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

Congress

On March 27th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Committee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) hosted an Africa policy breakfast on the importance of youth leadership in Africa. The attendees included participants in President Barack Obama's YALI initiative, launched to support young African leaders as they spur growth and democratic governance and enhance peace and security across Africa. Video recordings of the discussion can be accessed [here](#).

On April 2nd, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence held a hearing on "The Benghazi talking points and Michael Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative." Morell, who served as Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the September 2012 attack, provided open testimony to the Committee on the talking points the Obama Administration used in the immediate response to the attack. An archived webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On April 3rd, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security and the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security held a joint hearing on "Overturning 30 Years of Precedent: Is the Administration Ignoring the Dangers of Training Libyan Pilots and Nuclear Scientists." Witnesses included Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for International Affairs and Chief Diplomatic Officer Alan Bersin, Janice Kephart of the Secure Identity and Biometrics Association, James Chaparro of Strategic Enterprise Solutions, and Frederic Wehrey of the Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace. More information can be viewed [here](#).

North Africa

On March 27th, the Head of the U.N.-AU Peacekeeping Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Joseph Mutaboba and U.N. Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan Ali Al-Za'tari released a joint statement detailing the new wave of violence in Sudan's Darfur region. Since the start of 2014, more than 215,000 people have been displaced by violence. U.N. officials also expressed concern that lack of access is impeding international organizations from providing humanitarian relief to those affected by violence. The joint statement was shared [here](#).

On March 27th, speaking at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) 28th Regional Conference for Africa in Tunis, Tunisia, FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva stressed the importance of getting more African youths involved in agriculture in order to promote social inclusion. Noting that Africa is the world's youngest continent, with half of its population under the age of 25, Director-General da Silva noted integrating youths into the agricultural economy will help the continent overcome water scarcity and conflicts that threaten food security. Themes of the conference were highlighted [here](#).

On March 27th, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced the approval of a Staff-Monitored Program (SMP) for Sudan from January-December 2014. The new SMP for 2014 includes a comprehensive framework for strengthening the policy mix to engineer an economic turnaround and promote sustainable economic growth since the July 2011 secession of South Sudan. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 27th, the World Bank published a post on its blog detailing the findings of a new study on crony capitalism in Tunisia. The report finds that by the end of 2010, family members and firms connected to former Tunisian President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali accounted for roughly 21% of private sector revenue, roughly \$233 million. The study notes that accountability in Tunisia has improved, but additional regulatory barriers may need to be removed to further address cronyism. The full study can be downloaded [here](#).

On March 27th the World Bank released an interview with Manager for Water Resources and Disaster Risk Management and Environment and Natural Resources Manager for the Africa Region Johnathan Kamkwala on his recent visit to Chad to explore ways the World Bank can assist the Chadian Government with efforts to restore Lake Chad. Since 1960, the lake's water level and size has decreased by 90%, due to a number of factors including overuse of water resources, climate change, poor enforcement of environmental legislation, and weak capacity for water resources management. Details were noted [here](#).

On March 28th, at the FAO Regional Conference for Africa held in Tunis, Tunisia, representatives of the CAR, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Niger, and South Sudan signed agreements with FAO to receive \$2 million each from the African Solidarity Trust Fund to improve food security, nutrition, agriculture, and rural development. The trust fund was launched last year with a \$30 million funding package from Equatorial Guinea. Additional contributions from Angola and the Republic of Congo (ROC) have increased the fund's worth to \$40 million. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 30th, Libyan state television aired footage of the son of former Libyan dictator Muammar Gadhafi, Saadi Gadhafi, from his jail cell in Tripoli, where he is being held without charge by the Libyan Government since being extradited from Niger. Gadhafi apologized for his and his family's actions, which he said have caused harm to Libya and disturbed the security and stability of the country. Gadhafi's remarks can be seen [here](#).

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

On April 2nd, the Government of Libya and rebels reached a tentative agreement to end rebels' oil terminal blockade in the country. While details of the agreement have yet to be finalized, initial reports

indicated that Libyan officials planned to release three fighters who boarded the tanker recently seized by rebels in Es Sider, consistent with rebel demands. The status of negotiations was summarized [here](#).

On April 2nd-4th, Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa traveled to Washington, DC. Prime Minister Jomaa met separately with U.S. President Barack Obama and Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns to discuss Tunisia's commitment to advancing democracy and U.S. economic, political, and security assistance to support Prime Minister Jomaa's reform agenda and Tunisian stability. Prime Minister Jomaa also met with senior members of the U.S. Congress, as well as officials from the IMF and the World Bank. Prime Minister Jomaa's visit to Washington was detailed [here](#).

East Africa

On March 27th, the World Bank-supported Ethiopia Climate Innovation Center (ECIC) was launched in Addis Ababa. The goal of the center is to support clean energy technology companies, while creating jobs and spurring economic development. The center is expected to serve more than 3.1 million Ethiopians in increasing climate change resiliency and to create more than 12,000 jobs in the clean technology sector over the next decade. The center's launch was announced [here](#).

On March 28th, the Steering Committee of the IMF's Regional Technical Assistance Center for East Africa (East AFRITAC) endorsed the Center's work plan for 2015. The 2015 work plan includes enhanced technical assistance and training activities. More specifically, the 2015 work plan is targeted on supporting the region's central banks as they modernize their monetary policy frameworks and helping to strengthen government finance statistics to improve the monitoring of macroeconomic convergence criteria for regional integration. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 3rd, members of the Ugandan parliament requested pay raises with an annual increment of \$4,486 on top of their existing salaries of \$6,100, which is approximately 60 times greater than most Ugandan state employees. The request drew significant criticism, especially as millions of dollars remain unaccounted for in government expenses and as MPs also receive significant travel benefits. The full story was reported [here](#).

West Africa

On March 27th, U.N. Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire Doudou Diene presented his latest report to the Human Rights Council. To ensure that the country's 2015 presidential elections are credible and consensual, Independent Expert Diene called for an overhaul of the Cote d'Ivoire's independent electoral commission. Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

On March 30th, Amnesty International reported new findings on Boko Haram's destruction in Nigeria over the past year. According to the human rights group, as many as 1,500 people may have been killed in Boko Haram attacks – half of them civilians. Amnesty International suggested that Boko Haram is not solely responsible for the deaths, as the Nigerian security forces have also responded to the attacks with acts that may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Amnesty International's findings on the situation in Nigeria were shared [here](#).

On March 30th, *Business Insider* reported that West Africa is benefitting from increased Western demand for shea fruit. The fruit is used to make chocolate, as well as products like margarine and cooking oil, and is increasingly being integrated into Western beauty products. Africa is currently producing approximately 600,000 tons of shea each year, and is currently exporting two thirds of its shea output to European countries. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On March 31st, the U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) closed, following the end of the U.N. civilian political mission to help disarm armed militants and advance political reconciliation at the end of Sierra Leone's civil war. Despite the drawdown of peacekeeping operations, U.N. officials noted the U.N. will continue to engage with Sierra Leone on security sector reforms and long term development goals. Details can be found [here](#).

On March 31st, the Executive Board of the IMF completed the second and third reviews of Niger's economic performance under the program supported by a three-year Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, enabling an immediate disbursement of \$34.9 million. While, the IMF observed that

Niger's recent economic performance has been negatively impacted by below average rainfall and the deterioration of security in the region, it also noted that future macroeconomic prospects appear favorable, especially with a number of oil and mining projects scheduled to enter the production phase in 2015. Additional analysis of Niger's economic was posted [here](#).

On April 1st, the Guinea-Bissau Configuration of the U.N. Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) issued a statement providing an update on preparations for the legislative and presidential elections scheduled for April 13th. While stating that funding and preparations for the polls are well on track, PBC expressed concern about recent episodes of political violence and warned against any attempt to use fear and intimidation to keep the elections from being free and fair. Developments in Guinea-Bissau were reported [here](#).

On April 1st, *Venture Burn* profiled the Nigerian online community Nairaland. The virtual platform, funded primarily through the sale of advertisements, allows Nigerians to connect with friends and family and to keep up with local gossip. The website boasts 1,198,439 registered accounts and is the seventh most frequently visited website in Nigeria. The full profile can be read [here](#).

On April 2nd, *Ventures* reported that rising demand for sugar is likely to increase investments in Nigeria's sugar industry by as much as \$2.6 billion. Investments made by Dangote Sugar and HoneyGold Group are expected to ramp up Nigeria's sugar production and reduce the need for Nigeria to import sugar. More information is available [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On March 27th, an IMF staff mission concluded a trip to Zimbabwe for meetings in Harare. The IMF team met with Zimbabwe's Chief Secretary in President Robert Mugabe's Office Misheck Sibanda, Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa, Mining Minister Walter Chidhakwa, Indigenization Minister Francis Nhema, and Acting Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Charity Dhillwayo. The discussions covered recent economic developments and the outlook for the Zimbabwean economy. Following a deceleration of economic growth in 2013, the IMF team noted that 2014 will be a challenging year for Zimbabwe's economy, as the transition to a new government has slowed the pace of reforms. Further analysis can be seen [here](#).

On March 28th, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to extend the mandate of the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and its intervention brigade for one year through March 2015. The Security Council also authorized MONUSCO to take all necessary measures to protect civilians, neutralize armed groups, monitor the implementation of the arms embargo, and provide support to national and international judicial processes in the DRC. The Security Council vote was reported [here](#).

On March 30th, *Yahoo! News* reported that the Kariba Dam, which straddles Zambia and Zimbabwe, is suffering from severe structural defects that could cause a humanitarian disaster if not addressed. A collapse of the dam could result in 180 billion tons of water flooding not only parts of Zambia and Zimbabwe, but also Mozambique and Malawi. In addition, there would likely be significant blackouts, as the dam currently generates more than 1,300 megawatts of hydropower. Zambian Energy and Water Development Minister Christopher Yaluma said at least \$220 million is needed to address the dam's structural challenges over the next three years. The situation was described [here](#).

On March 31st, the World Bank published an update on the Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) program in Malawi. The project, financed by the World Bank Group, encourages savings and investment as a key tool for members to withstand sudden losses of income and food security. The program has already mobilized 99,153 public works participants into 4,457 savings groups across Malawi's 28 District Councils. More information can be found [here](#).

On March 31st, *The Guardian* reported that development impact bonds (Dibs) will soon be issued to finance malaria control programs in Mozambique. In Dibs, donors commit to pay for the achievement of a particular development goal while private investors provide bridge funding to allow for the implementation of related interventions. The Mozambique Malaria Performance Bond (MMPB) is designed to finance programs that will strive to reduce malaria prevalence by 75% over the next decade. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 1st, Mozambique's Council of Ministers approved a bill that would criminalize text messages, emails, and online posts that are considered to insult or jeopardize the security of the state. By ordinance, the Government of Mozambique already requires prepaid mobile phone users to register their SIM cards and identifying information with mobile phone companies. The legislation must still pass the Mozambican parliament. Key provisions of the proposed law were highlighted [here](#).

On April 2nd, South African Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi announced plans to begin distributing colored and flavored condoms to South African students to address a decrease in condom utilization in the country, especially among South Africans ages 15 to 24. South Africa currently has the largest HIV-positive population at 6.4 million people. The Health Ministry's new campaign was described [here](#).

On April 2nd, in response to a recent *Economist* article on the implementation of fuel subsidies in sub-Saharan Africa, the *Africa.com Blog* published a post detailing how African fuel subsidies are not benefitting the poor or improving the inequality landscape. While the blog post suggests that a switch from fuel subsidies to direct transfers could better help to accomplish the intended policy goals, such a move could be a challenge in Africa because of the broad absence of bank accounts and the size of the informal economy. The full post can be accessed [here](#).

On April 3rd, McKinsey and the Gates Foundation unveiled the findings of a new study which suggests that digital payment revenue in sub-Saharan Africa could reach up to \$16 billion annually over the next few years if Kenya's experience with mobile payments is repeated across the continent. While acknowledging that the environment in Kenya was ripe for expanding the use of electronic payments, the study found that other African countries, including South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, have made substantial progress in developing their financial infrastructure in way that could support similar growth. Additional findings were addressed [here](#).

On April 3rd, *Bloomberg* reported on an \$18.8 billion rail overhaul project in South Africa that is aimed at increasing exports of coal, manganese, and other commodities. While South Africa has the biggest single-site terminal for fuel, the Richards Bay Coal Terminal, the site has not achieved its full capability because infrastructure challenges keep coal from reaching the terminal. The project was detailed [here](#).

On April 9th, the IMF will host a full-day online seminar on "Africa Rising: Building the Future." The webinar will provide a detailed examination of the policy challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa as it seeks to broaden its economic successes. The event will also serve as the foundation for a similar, two-day conference that will be held in Maputo, Mozambique, May 29th-30th. Logistics for the upcoming IMF online seminar were posted [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 28th, the *War is Boring* blog published a post detailing an increase in Africa's air forces' purchases of multirole fighter jets, helicopters, and sophisticated air defense systems with radars and surface-to-air missiles. The post observes that many African militaries, including Uganda, Angola, and Sudan are purchasing Russian Sukhoi Su-30 aircraft, while the DRC, the ROC, Nigeria, and Sudan invest in Russian Mil Mi-24 gunship helicopters. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

On March 31st, on the sidelines of the EU-Africa Business Forum, Microsoft hosted a roundtable discussion on the need for public and private partnerships (PPPs) to deliver solutions to promote e-learning on the continent. The roundtable brought together African Ministers of Education, multilateral organizations, IT and telecommunications specialists, and financial institutions, who agreed schools need the appropriate devices and connectivity to grow e-learning. More information is available [here](#).

On April 2nd, *Forbes* reported that Glaxo SmithKline is planning significant investments in Africa, with plans to build up to five plants on the continent, including in Ghana, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. With these investments, Glaxo SmithKline is poised to join other Western companies that have been tremendously successful in Africa, such as General Electric (GE) and Coca-Cola. The article was published [here](#).

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