



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### ***Burundi***

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, United Nations (U.N.) officials reported nearly 15,000 Burundians have fled into Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since mid-March due to a political crisis caused by expectations that President Pierre Nkurunziza would see a third term in office. Opposition leaders argued another presidential run would be a violation of the constitution and threatened to protest once President Nkurunziza confirmed his candidacy. Rwandan officials also reported 11,915 refugees had crossed the border since mid-March, up from 6,000 last week. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the State Department expressed regret for the decision of Burundi's ruling party, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) to disregard the term-limit provisions of the Arusha Agreement by naming President Pierre Nkurunziza as its candidate. Despite this decision, the State Department called for the work of building democratic practices and institutions in the country to continue and for legislative and national elections to be inclusive, transparent, and credible. U.S. officials called on the Government of Burundi to respect the rights of all political parties and their candidates to express their views and commended neighboring countries for their efforts to accept Burundian refugees. In addition, the State Department threatened to take targeted measures to hold accountable individuals involved in violence against the civilian population. Feedback from the State Department was shared [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that public protests resumed in Burundi, following civil unrest over the weekend after the ruling party overwhelmingly elected President Pierre Nkurunziza as its candidate for the June 26<sup>th</sup> presidential elections. In light of tensions in the country, OCHA appealed for \$11.6 million to plan a response for the influx of people seeking refuge in neighboring countries. According to OCHA, in a worst case scenario, 350,000 people could be in need of humanitarian assistance within six months. The appeal for assistance was noted [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, opposition activists in Burundi held a second day of protests against an announcement that President Pierre Nkurunziza will seek a third term in office. Following the announcement of President

Nkurunziza's reelection bid, the government banned all protests and halted nationwide broadcasts by three independent radio stations. Monday's demonstrations came after at least two protestors were shot dead in clashes with police in Bujumbura and after two further deaths were reported overnight in alleged attacks by the CNDD-FDD's militia. Police also broke up a march of roughly 1,000 young people in Cibitoke headed toward the capital. Developments were reported [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the outbreak of violence in Burundi following the nomination of President Pierre Nkurunziza as the presidential candidate of the country's ruling party. While appealing to all Burundians to safeguard the country's gains in peace and democracy, he also called on authorities to investigate deaths that have occurred during the recent demonstrations and to hold those responsible accountable. Secretary-General Ban's position was articulated [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Bujumbura saw a third day of protests in response to President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term in office. Crowds started gathering early in the morning, reportedly chanting that they would not accept a third term for President Nkurunziza. In response, a spokesperson for President Nkurunziza said the demonstrations represented an insurrection. Developments were shared [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, in addition to banning protests, the Government of Burundi blocked access to social media including Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, and Tango. The move comes as hundreds protest President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term in office. The messaging services had previously been used to coordinate protests. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Tom Malinowski was on travel to Bujumbura, Burundi, to meet with Burundi government officials and NGO members in advance of the 2015 elections. Assistant Secretary Malinowski was expected to reiterate U.S. disappointment with President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to disregard the Arusha Agreements to run for a third term in office. He also planned to use his visit to urge all actors to reject violence to safeguard the gains Burundi and its people have achieved since 2005 and to express concern for the government's decision to restrict freedom of assembly, association, and expression. His travel was noticed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, as about 100 protestors stood off police in Bujumbura, Burundi President Pierre Nkurunziza met with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Tom Malinowski. Assistant Secretary Malinowski urged the government to allow peaceful criticism and room for political opposition. While President Nkurunziza said the current protests against him are illegal, he also said political space would be respected without restrictions. The meeting was highlighted [here](#).

## **Sudan**

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir was officially declared the winner of Sudan's recent presidential election, winning 94 percent of the vote. President Bashir's landslide victory was widely anticipated, as the country's main opposition parties boycotted the elections because they did not believe they would be free and fair. Turnout in the elections was also below 50 percent. President Bashir's National Congress Party (NPC) also took 323 of the 426 parliamentary seats. The official election results were announced [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, following the announcement of election results in Sudan, U.S. Department of State Acting Deputy Spokesperson Jeff Rathke expressed regret for the Government of Sudan's failure to create a free, fair, and conducive elections environment. He said the restrictions on political rights and freedoms, the lack of a credible national dialogue, and the continuation of armed conflict in Sudan's periphery were among the reasons for the reported low participation and very low voter turnout. As a result, Deputy Spokesperson Rathke reiterated the U.S. does not consider the outcome of the elections a credible expression of the will of the Sudanese people. His comments were recorded [here](#).

## **Togo**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, on the eve of the presidential election in Togo, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for all national stakeholders to recommit themselves to ensuring the election would be conducted in a

peaceful, free, and transparent manner to reflect the will of the people of Togo. In addition to reiterating U.N. support for the electoral process and the efforts of the Togolese to strengthen democratic order, Secretary-General Ban urged that any disputes be resolved through constitutional and peaceful means. Secretary-General Ban's statement ahead of the elections can be read [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the peaceful conduct of Saturday's presidential elections in Togo. As the results were being determined, Secretary-General Ban encouraged all political leaders and segments of society to continue to maintain the peaceful atmosphere that prevailed throughout the electoral process. He also urged all candidates and their supporters to resolve any disputes through established legal procedures. Secretary-General Ban's comments were shared [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, early results were released for Togo's presidential election, showing incumbent candidate President Faure Gnassingbe with an early lead. According to the national election commission, results from 42 voting districts showed President Gnassingbe with 64 percent of the vote, ahead of opposition leader Jean-Pierre Fabre, who had won 33 percent of the vote. Observers reported voter turnout was between 53 and 55 percent, which is lower than the nearly two-thirds of voters who participated in the 2010 election. An update was provided [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, after the opposition in Togo complained of voting irregularities during last weekend's presidential vote, Ghanaian President and head of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) John Dramani Mahama arrived in Togo to mediate talks between political parties. The incumbent, President Faure Gnassingbe, was in the lead after 11 of the 42 districts in Togo reported results. However, the announcement of results was temporarily stopped after the opposition alleged voting irregularities. President Mahama was accompanied by Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara. An article on mediation efforts can be read [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Togo's election commission announced that President Faure Gnassingbe had won 58.75 percent of provisional votes with opposition candidate Jean-Pierre Fabre winning 34.95 percent of the vote, amid opposition complaints of widespread voting irregularities. Despite ongoing political mediation led by Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama, the official election results were revealed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Togo's main opposition coalition rejected the results of the April 25<sup>th</sup> presidential election in which President Faure Gnassingbe was declared the winner. While the most recent vote was relatively peaceful, the opposition's allegations of voting irregularities has raised concerns there may be unrest similar to that after the 2005 elections, which left hundreds dead. The opposition Combat for Political Change 2015 (CAP) coalition also indicated it planned to issue its own elections results. The full story is available [here](#).

## ***Nigeria***

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Boko Haram militants attacked the island of Karamga in Lake Chad after a failed attempt to capture the island in February. After hundreds of Boko Haram militants arrived on the island via motorized canoes, the Nigerien army deployed to the area to retake the island. According to the army, several Nigerian soldiers died in the counter-attack and a second offensive to clear the island of militants was ongoing. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of State condemned the attacks by Boko Haram on Karamga Island in Lake Chad, which killed 48 Nigerien security forces and wounded another 37, with others still missing. In addition to offering condolences to the Government and people of Niger and to the families of loved ones who lost their lives or remain missing, the State Department condemned the actions of Boko Haram and its continued disregard for human life. The State Department also expressed support for the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and its efforts to degrade and destroy Boko Haram. A statement was issued [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of people, including a number of women and children, were found dead in the northeastern Nigerian town of Damasak, believed to be victims of Boko Haram. A mass grave was discovered under a bridge and bodies were found in houses, streets, and the Damasak river. In response to reports of new fighting in the region, President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari denounced Boko

Haram as a bogus religious group and vowed a hard line against the insurgents when he assumes office on May 29<sup>th</sup>. For details, click [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Major General Chris Olukolade of Nigeria's army reported troops had rescued 200 girls and 93 women from Boko Haram during an operation in the Sambisa Forest. Sources indicated those rescued will be screened to determine if they were in fact abducted or married to Boko Haram militants. The women and girls freed from Boko Haram were not the schoolgirls abducted last year from Chibok. The operation was highlighted [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, at least four people were killed after an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated at a radio station. The attack in Nigeria's central state of Kogi occurred at Ta'o FM station. At press time, it was unclear if the attack was orchestrated by Boko Haram and it is still under investigation by state police. Accounts of the attack can be read [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, in advance of his meeting scheduled with Nigerian President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari, U.N. Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown welcomed the release of 200 schoolgirls from Boko Haram' captivity and called for the immediate release of all abducted girls. Special Envoy Brown and President-Elect Buhari were expected to discuss how the international community can provide air and military support to help free the girls who still remain in captivity. For details, click [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the Nigerian military noted the 200 girls and 93 women freed from four Boko Haram camps in Borno province had been transported to Gwoza for questioning in hopes they may have information on the whereabouts of other girls abducted by Boko Haram from Chibok last year. The rescued girls will ultimately be transported to Abuja or Maiduguri for additional questioning. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Nigerian troops rescued an additional 160 women and children from Boko Haram. While the army indicated the exact number of hostages rescued was still being determined, it was believed as many as 60 women and 100 children were freed in the second rescue operation carried out in the Sambisa Forest this week. It was not immediately clear if any of those rescued in the most recent operation were the missing schoolgirls from Chibok. In addition, the military reported a female hostage and soldier were killed during the most recent operation and noted troops were moving into other parts of the forest after destroying nine militant camps. An update on the situation was provided [here](#).

## ***Mali***

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced concern over a number of attacks targeting the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), resulting in numerous casualties. Secretary-General Ban said attacks against civilians and peacekeepers constitute a serious violation of international law and the attackers must be brought to justice. In addition, he resolved the recent attacks highlight the urgency of finding a political settlement and establishing security in northern Mali. Secretary-General Ban's position on the situation in Mali was articulated [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, pro-government armed groups in Mali, including Gatia and the Arab Azawad Movement (MAA), seized the northern town of Menaka from Tuareg separatists of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). The groups claimed the raid was carried out in retaliation for attacks on the group's supporters, including the lynching of several women. According to pro-government groups, ten MNLA fighters were killed in violent clashes and seven others were taken prisoner. The fighting was described [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. peacekeepers were targeted by northern Tuareg rebels in Mali. Several peacekeepers were shot at outside the town of Timbuktu, but no one was wounded in the attack. The clashes were reported [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Mali and head of MINUSMA Mongi Hamdi warned all parties in Mali of the consequences recent violence could have on the peace process. He urged all parties to immediately cease hostilities and for calm and reason to prevail. Special Representative Hamdi also expressed belief the crisis in Mali can only be resolved through dialogue. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, two soldiers and a civilian were killed when gunmen attacked the village of Goundham in northern Mali, the latest attack in rising tensions between pro-government and anti-government militias in the region. The attack came as the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) vowed to defend itself after the Gatia militia, which is aligned with the government, seized the town of Menaka earlier this week. Developments were noted [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for an immediate end to hostilities in northern Mali and expressed concern over ceasefire violations that have occurred in recent days. Secretary-General Ban urged the parties to demonstrate their commitment to the peace process and adhere to their obligations under a May 2014 ceasefire agreement, as well as declarations of cessations of hostilities reached in July 2014 and February 2015. He also noted MINUSMA was engaging with all parties to de-escalate tensions and encourage continued dialogue on a peace agreement. Secretary-General Ban's comments were captured [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of State condemned the recent violence in and around Menaka, Timbuktu, and Goundham, Mali and called on all parties to immediately cease hostilities and return to their previous positions in compliance with applicable ceasefire agreements. Noting the U.N. Security Council's recent expression of its willingness to impose sanctions on those who resume hostilities and violate the ceasefire, the State Department urged all parties to seize the opportunity offered by the peace process. Feedback from the State Department was posted [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, at least five Malian soldiers were killed in an attack by Tuareg separatist rebels in the town of Lere. As the latest incident in a string of violence between rebels and pro-government militias, there is growing concern rising tensions may endanger the prospects for the finalization of a peace deal due to be signed in Bamako on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The latest in Mali was detailed [here](#).

### ***African Migrant Crisis in the Mediterranean***

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) welcomed the European Union's (EU) plan to triple the size of its naval search mission in the Mediterranean, but also noted addressing the migrant crisis will require substantial alternative channels for people to reach safety and the chance for refugees to gain asylum. Following last week's incident in which 900 migrants drowned trying to reach Europe from Libya, EU leaders hosted an emergency summit and agreed to restore funding for naval search missions that had been scaled back six months ago. More information was reported [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, an Italian judge ordered that Tunisian citizen Mohammed Ali Malek, the presumed captain of a migrant boat that sank last week killing hundreds of migrants, should remain in custody. While prosecutors have asked that Malek be charged with homicide and people-trafficking, Malek claims he was a migrant like all of the others and paid his fare to go on the boat. Authorities are also holding 25-year-old Syrian Mahmud Bikhit, who is accused of being a crew member but also claims to have been a migrant. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Malian Ministry for Malians Abroad said at least 50 Malians from the impoverished Kayes region were among the migrants who drowned last week trying to cross from Libya to Europe. Of the 24 survivors pulled from the water, 12 were Malians. The Kayes region of western Mali has seen high levels of emigration for years, with many residents seeking refuge in France. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, EU foreign policy chief Frederic Mogherini said Libya should not perceive any actions under consideration by the EU to address the deadly flow of migrants across the Mediterranean as an attack on the Libyan people. Her remarks come in response to suggestions made by some members of the EU that a U.N. Security Council mandate may be needed for the EU to carry out naval search mission and anti-trafficking operations in the region in the absence of a viable Libyan Government. For more information, click [here](#).

### ***West Africa Ebola Outbreak***

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N. Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) launched a new effort aimed at engaging more women, who have been disproportionately affected by the Ebola crisis, as well as local traditional



healers, to encourage communities to become more involved in getting infection rates down to zero. In collaboration with U.N. Women and the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists, UNMEER is looking to increase women's participation in response efforts with messages targeted to community, youth, religious, and women leaders. The new initiative was detailed [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, for the first time since the start of the Ebola crisis, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched nationwide immunization campaigns in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to protect three million children against preventable but potentially deadly diseases, such as measles and polio. The campaigns are intended to step up immunization programs that were disrupted by the Ebola epidemic and to continue to further health gains in all three countries that were made before the outbreak. The immunization campaigns were described [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Peter Graaff of the Netherlands as Acting Special Representative and head of UNMEER. In his new role, Acting Special Representative Graaff will work closely with U.N. Special Envoy on Ebola Dr. David Nabarro, governments in West Africa, and other partners, to continue the Ebola response. He replaces Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania, who was appointed to serve as U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen. The appointment was announced [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, The Heritage Foundation hosted a panel discussion titled, "Ebola Outbreak and Response: Assessment of Initial U.S. Actions." Presenters included Charlotte Florance and John O'Shea of The Heritage Foundation, Daniel Kaniewski of The George Washington University, and J. Peter Pham of the Atlantic Council. Clips from the discussion can be watched [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) released updated data on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 33 confirmed cases of Ebola were reported. Guinea reported 22 confirmed cases, compared with 19 cases the previous week, while Sierra Leone reported 11 confirmed cases, compared with 12 cases the previous week. Liberia reported no new cases for the fifth consecutive week. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, new U.N. Special Representative for Ebola Response and head of UNMEER Peter Graaff joined outgoing Special Representative Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and Special Envoy on Ebola Dr. David Nabarro, on a visit to Freetown, Sierra Leone. The U.N. officials participated in a meeting with the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC), where they were briefed on efforts to achieve zero transmission. Sierra Leonean authorities acknowledged improvements that are needed in surveillance and monitoring and also noted efforts are underway to strengthen collaboration with Guinea. The meeting was outlined [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***White House***

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, National Security Advisor Susan Rice met with U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres. During the meeting, they discussed the humanitarian crises facing Africa and the Middle East and addressed the significant needs of refugees and other displaced and conflict-affected persons. Ambassador Rice and High Commissioner Guterres stressed the shared global responsibility for responding to these crises and discussed new approaches for supporting host countries in protracted refugee situations. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Gayle Smith as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Smith currently serves as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Development and Democracy on the National Security Council (NSC) staff. She has previously served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the NSC and also lived and worked in Africa for almost 20 years as a journalist and representative of non-governmental relief and development organizations. Smith's nomination was announced [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, National Security Advisor Susan Rice expressed support for President Barack Obama's decision to nominate Gayle Smith as USAID Administrator. Ambassador Rice highlighted Smith's

experience in Africa and noted her expertise and vision have been instrumental the Administration's success in promoting food security, global health, Power Africa, and the Ebola response. Ambassador Rice's full statement was published [here](#).

### **Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman delivered a statement on the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Extension and Enhancement Act of 2015. Ambassador Froman said AGOA is the cornerstone of our trade relationship with sub-Saharan Africa and that a long-term renewal of the program with updates will create the right environment for investment, development, and economic growth. He said USTR will work closely with Congress to get AGOA legislation passed. Ambassador Froman's full statement was posted [here](#).

### **State Department**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement congratulating the people of Tanzania on their celebration of the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Secretary Kerry noted the U.S. enjoys deep bonds of friendship with Tanzania. He also said Tanzania serves as a model in the region for good governance, democratic ideals, and individual freedoms and the U.S. remains committed to working with Tanzania to build on achievements in health care, access to electricity, gender equality, and safeguarding Tanzania's rich natural heritage for generations to come. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, while on travel to New York City, Secretary of State John Kerry met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry at the U.N. Secretary Kerry was accompanied by Special Representatives for Global Partnerships Andrew O'Brien. Their meeting was noticed [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the State Department announced Secretary of State John Kerry's upcoming travel to Kenya and Djibouti. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Secretary Kerry will visit Nairobi to reinforce the importance of the U.S.-Kenya bilateral relationship. In meetings with government officials, business leaders, opposition leaders, humanitarian aid organizations, and civil society representatives, Secretary Kerry will discuss a range of issues including security cooperation, refugee assistance, trade, and biodiversity. On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Secretary Kerry will travel to Djibouti to meet with high-level leaders to discuss bilateral cooperation and support for evacuation efforts from Yemen. As the first sitting Secretary of State to visit Djibouti, Secretary Kerry is also scheduled to meet with Djiboutian youth and religious leaders, as well as military personnel at Camp Lemonnier. Secretary Kerry's travel was announced [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the State Department announced the launch of the U.S.-Egypt Higher Education Initiative. Through this program, the State Department will aim to provide young Egyptians with the skills to obtain jobs that will both help Egypt meet the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, with a particular focus on science, technology, and entrepreneurship, and on women's education, and provide meaningful employment to the thousands of Egyptians who enter the workforce each year. The \$250 million initiative will provide Egyptians with up to 1,900 university scholarships and exchanges to study in the U.S. and Egypt and it will support up to 20 higher education partnerships to strengthen research and exchanges between Egyptian and U.S. universities. Details were shared [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry delivered remarks at a dinner in honor of the 10<sup>th</sup> annual *Fortune*/U.S. State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership. The program, conducted annually in coordination with Vital Voices Global Partnership, connects international women leaders with *Fortune's* Most Powerful Women to encourage the next generation of women to bring positive change to their companies and communities. This year's class of emerging leader mentees includes women from Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, among other countries. More information was provided [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry applauded President Barack Obama's decision to nominate Gayle Smith to serve as USAID Administrator for the remainder of his term. In expressing his support for the nomination, Secretary Kerry observed Smith spent several years living in the Horn of Africa where she saw the region's challenges and also recognized its potential. Secretary Kerry also applauded Smith's contributions in driving Power Africa and bolstering the global response to Ebola. Secretary

Kerry's comments were recorded [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield delivered remarks at the Ethiopian Community Development Council's 21<sup>st</sup> National Conference Banquet, held in Arlington, Virginia. Her participation was noted [here](#).

### ***U.S. Agency for International Development***

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, USAID promoted its Live, Learn, and Play initiative, launched in collaboration with the National Basketball Association (NBA). The project, which launched in Senegal, uses basketball to train youth ages 13-18 in leadership, gender awareness and equality, and community participation. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, USAID announced a commitment of more than \$16 million in new humanitarian assistance for nutrition, shelter, water, and health services for people suffering from the ongoing effects of the conflict that began in South Sudan in December 2013. With this additional pledge, U.S. emergency assistance for South Sudan now exceeds \$1 billion since the start of the crisis. Since South Sudan's independence in 2011, USAID has invested an additional \$700 million in long-term assistance helping the South Sudanese people in areas such as education, health, democracy and governance, agriculture, and conflict mitigation. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator retired Rear Admiral Tim Ziemer authored a blog post on the effectiveness of the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). Launched in 2007 by then President George Bush, PMI has now expanded to 19 countries, including several in sub-Saharan Africa. The goal of PMI is to work with partner countries to bring effective tools to the people who need them most, including use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, indoor spraying, accurate diagnosis, promote treatment of cases, and preventative treatment of women during pregnancy. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

### ***Department of Defense***

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Deputy Commanding General of U.S. Army Africa Brigadier General Peter Corey toured the Hospital Militaire D'Instruction with facility Commander Chadian Army Brigadier General Djetodjide Tetimian. Brigadier General Corey visited labs, patient wards and operating rooms, observed a surgery, and checked in with U.S. Army soldiers participating in Medical Readiness and Training Exercise 15-3. The exercise has allowed U.S. Army Africa soldiers to work alongside Chadian hospital staff to conduct consultations with patients, perform surgeries, and treat trauma patients. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, *The New York Times* reported on a number of places where U.S. Special Operations have deployed over the past year to train local troops to address regional challenges. For example, in Djibouti and Chad, U.S. special operators have taught local soldiers diplomatic skills to shield their countries against extremist ideologies and combat skills to fight militants who break through. In addition, U.S. special operators have deployed to the Central African Republic (CAR), where they are working alongside Ugandan troops hunting for Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony. Additional information can be found [here](#).

### ***U.S. Department of Agriculture***

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) unveiled new data showing Nigeria positioned to be the first African country with an economy larger than \$1 trillion. In 2014, Nigeria outpaced South Africa as the continent's largest economy, with gross domestic product (GDP) at \$496 billion. Between now and 2030, based on growth projections in the country's agricultural sector, USDA predicts Nigeria will achieve annual growth rates as high as 7.92 percent, resulting in a GDP of \$1.05 trillion. The data was analyzed [here](#).

### ***Overseas Private Investment Corporation***

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, in recognition of World Malaria Day, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) highlighted how health clinics in sub-Saharan Africa have been able to expand and purchase more equipment, such as malaria nets, with the help of the Medical Credit Fund (MCF). MCF provides



financing to small health clinics in Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya that often struggle to obtain bank loans to purchase diagnostic equipment and other basic medical materials. OPIC has provided financing to MCF to support its lending to small clinics and has recognized MCF with an Impact Award for its work supporting Africa's health care providers. For details, click [here](#).

## **Congress**

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Senate Finance Committee held a business to consider the AGOA Extension and Enhancement Act of 2015. After adopting amendments that would require the President to conduct an out-of-cycle review of South Africa and to promote the role of women in social and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa, the Committee reported the bill, as amended, by a voice vote. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Chairman Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) introduced a resolution condemning the April 2<sup>nd</sup> terrorist attack at Garissa University College in Kenya. Beyond condemning the attack, which killed 147 people, the resolution offers condolences to the friends, families, and loved ones of those who were killed and reaffirms U.S. support for the people and government of Kenya. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing to markup the AGOA Extension and Enhancement Act of 2015. The bill would extend AGOA for ten years. The Committee reported the legislation favorably to the full House of Representatives by a voice vote. The vote was noted [here](#).

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, House Select Committee on Benghazi Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) sent a letter to former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton's attorney, David Kendall, requesting that Secretary Clinton testify before the Committee the week of May 18<sup>th</sup>. Congressman Gowdy noted a first hearing would be held to assess Secretary Clinton's efforts to turn over all documentation relevant to the September 2012 attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi to the Committee. If satisfied, the Committee would then schedule a second public hearing on the attacks. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ben Cardin (D-MD) issued a statement recognizing World Malaria Day. Senator Cardin noted that globally 3.3 billion people are at risk of contracting malaria, and in 2013, an estimated 453,000 children died of malaria before their fifth birthday, including 437,000 children in Africa. In a time of austere budgets, Senator Cardin also encouraged the U.S. Government to find new and creative ways to leverage resources in the fight against malaria. His full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Senators Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Chris Coons (D-DE), co-chairs of the Senate Malaria and Neglected Tropical Disease Caucus, introduced a resolution commemorating World Malaria Day, celebrated on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The resolution recognized the importance of reducing malaria prevalence and deaths to improve overall child and material health, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Additional co-sponsors included Senators John Boozman (R-AR), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Mark Kirk (R-IL), and Marco Rubio (R-FL). A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a hearing on "Terrorism in Africa: The Imminent Threat to the U.S." Witnesses included J. Peter Pham of the Atlantic Council and Thomas Joscelyn of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, House Select Committee on Benghazi Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) announced the Committee had received more than 4,000 pages of documents and notes from the State Department Benghazi Accountability Review Board (ARB). While noting he is pleased with obtaining access to the information, Congressman Gowdy said the Committee is still waiting for the State Department to produce additional documents requested. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued her biweekly Africa Update. The most recent newsletter highlights the African migrant crisis and seeks to address the factors that have contributed to why so many more migrants from Africa are seeking asylum

in Europe by taking the risky voyage from Libya to Italy. The newsletter can be downloaded [here](#).

## **North Africa**

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) expressed deep regret at the continuation of hostilities and the resulting civilian displacement, noting the arrival of more internally displaced persons (IDPs) at its compound outside of Malakal. While calling on all belligerent forces to exercise restraint and immediately cease all hostilities, UNMISS noted it would provide shelter to combatants who surrender their weapons and remove military uniforms prior to entering protection sights. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) condemned a number of horrific events in Libya over the past week, including the death of hundreds of migrants off the coast in Libya and the execution of Christians and several members of a prominent family by the Islamic State in Libya. These condemnations came as the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) reported conditions of grave concern, including overcrowding, poor sanitation, lack of access to health care, and insufficient food. The situation in Libya was detailed [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Sudanese militants belonging to the Cobra Faction group handed over a final group of 283 children recruited as child soldiers to UNICEF. During the ceremony, 282 boys and one girl handed in their weapons and uniforms in exchange for civilian clothes. Those released will be cared for by UNICEF until their families are traced and they can return home. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, African Union (AU)-U.N. Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) peacekeepers repelled two attacks by unidentified men in the Kaas area of Darfur. The exchange of fire resulted in at least four attackers killed and six peacekeepers and one assailant injured. AU-U.N. Acting Joint Special Representative for Darfur Abiodun Bashua condemned the violence against peacekeepers and reiterated UNAMID's resolve to continue to respond to such incidents. UNAMID's feedback can be seen [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved two projects totaling \$248.95 million to support Morocco's national health strategy and promote clean energy and energy efficiency. Morocco's Health Sector Support Program for Results Project will build on Morocco's significant improvements in health outcomes by seeking to address inequality in access to health care and limited resources for the health sector. Meanwhile, the Clean and Efficient Energy Project is intended to help support Morocco's State-owned electricity and water company (ONEE) in developing its first of three, mid-size, decentralized solar photovoltaic (PV) plants. Both projects were summarized [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, at least 10 militants and two Tunisian soldiers were killed in two days of clashes in the central Kasserine region near the Tunisian border with Algeria. Tunisia's military has been carrying out operations in the areas since last month's attack on the Bardo Museum in Tunis. The clashes were reported [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, South Sudanese security forces surrounded the home of opposition figure and leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – Democratic Change (SPLM-DC) party Lam Akol. Akol has been an outspoken critic of President Salva Kiir, opposing the extension of his term in office by three years and the cancelation of elections planned for June. Akol challenged President Kiir in South Sudan's 2010 election. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Brookings Institution hosted a briefing titled, "An Overlooked Crisis: Humanitarian Consequences of the Conflict in Libya." Presenters included Charge d'Affairs for the Embassy of Tunisia in the U.S. Kais Darragi and regional representative for UNHCR Shelly Pitterman. Event details were posted [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, UNAMID continued to defend peacekeepers who responded to two attacks against them last week by armed men in Kass. AU-U.N. Acting Joint Special Representative for Darfur Abiodun Bashua reported troops returned fire, but did not initiate any shooting. According to UNAMID, these actions were carried out in self-defense. UNAMID's reaction, in response to media reporting on the attacks, can be viewed [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the first review of Chad's economic performance under the program support by an Extended Credit Facility (ECF), enabling the immediate disbursement of \$27.7 million. The Board agreed that Chad has taken the steps necessary to reach the completion point under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and granted waivers for the nonobservance of the performance criteria on net domestic government financing and on poverty-reducing social spending. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, five journalists belonging to a Libyan TV crew were found dead near Al Bayda eight months after they were kidnapped. The crew was abducted in August while traveling through territory largely controlled by extremist militants. A district army commander in eastern Libya reported militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) were responsible for the killings. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Libya's El Feel oil field remained closed due to a strike by security guards that started on Sunday. El Feel, which had been producing roughly 10,000 barrels of oil per day, is operated by a joint venture owned by state oil firm NOC and Italy's Eni. The oil field was also closed last year when a militant group in the Zintan region closed a pipeline. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, following two separate incidents late last week, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced deep concern about recent attacks on U.N. peacekeepers serving in Darfur, as well as limited cooperation from the Government of Sudan in addressing the attacks. Secretary-General Ban urged the Government of Sudan to ensure the perpetrators of the attacks are brought to justice and take all actions to avoid further attacks on peacekeepers. Further, he regretted the Government of Sudan's denial of a flight request for the emergency medical evacuation of an Ethiopian peacekeeper, who ultimately succumbed to his injuries. Secretary-General Ban's feedback was captured [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council voted to extend the mandate of the U.N. Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for one year. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has recently reiterated his call for a mutually acceptable political solution that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. In its resolution, the Security Council called on all parties to fully cooperate with MINURSO and show the political will to engage in more intensive and substantive negotiations. The vote was reported [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for South Sudan and head of the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Elle Margrethe Loj traveled to Pibor town to meet with around 500 recently released child soldiers and to urge the release of additional children still held by militia groups in the region. Beyond securing the children's release, Special Representative Loj also encouraged local authorities to help ensure their access to education and health care and to protect them from any future attempt to enlist them again in any military organization. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Sudan's Foreign Ministry accused UNAMID peacekeepers of killing seven civilians in three separate incidents last week. UNAMID denied the accusation, saying the peacekeepers acted in self-defense during two attacks on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> that left four attackers dead and six peacekeepers wounded. An article on the allegations can be read [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Libya and head of UNSMIL Bernardino Leon announced he had outlined a first draft of a proposal for a political agreement among Libya's opposing factions. While he argued the draft proposal seeks to create and develop middle ground on sensitive issues and to lay out a vision for a transitional period, Special Representative Leon also noted Libyan parties have already begun to react to the proposal with some criticism. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the IMF and the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) decided to support \$1.1 billion in total debt relief for Chad, of which \$1 billion is expected to be delivered by multilateral creditors and the remainder by bilateral and commercial creditors. In making this decision, both institutions determined that Chad has made satisfactory progress to reach a point where debt relief becomes irrevocable and the country will benefit from the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). A press release was published [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, an Egyptian court sentenced 69 suspected Muslim Brotherhood supporters to 25 years in prison for attacking and burning a church in Kafr Hakim in August 2013 after the ouster of President Mohamed Morsi. The defendants were also fined approximately \$2,623 each. Two other juvenile defendants were each sentenced to ten years in jail without parole. The sentences were handed down as another court sentenced 63 people to jail terms ranging from one to seven years for violence inside Al Azhar University's campus in December 2013. All of the sentences were noted [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan officials reported the Governors of Garissa, Mandera, and Wajir, located along the border with Somalia, have held several meetings with elders, religious leaders, and women's groups to encourage them to report local Islamist cells and sympathizers to government officials. Kenya set up country governments for the first time two years ago and reports constituents tend to be more comfortable reporting security concerns to local leaders than security forces. Since the Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University College, there have been multiple arrests. The meetings were noted [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Kenya authorities noted they were questioning Ali Abdulmajid, a long-serving legislative employee, about a suspected plot to attack the parliament in Nairobi. Abdulmajid was arrested on Sunday after intelligence reports linked him to the alleged plot. Kenyan officials are believed to be acting on additional intelligence suggesting that Al Shabaab had dispatched spies to Kenya to launch more high-scale attacks in the country on unspecified dates. More information was posted [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported that Somalia exported a record of five million livestock to the Gulf of Arabia in 2014, the highest number of animals exported from Somalia in the last 20 years. For the past year, the EU, the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the FAO have been supporting farmers with investments in animal disease prevention to help improve the economy and enhance food security. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Ugandan authorities said they were trying to verify whether a man arrested in Tanzania was Jamil Mukulu, the leader of Islamist rebel group, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU), which has been blamed for various deadly attacks in Uganda and the DRC. ADF-NALU was forced out of Uganda in the mid-2000s and now operates in the eastern Congo. The U.N. estimates the group is comprised of 1,400 fighters. More information can be found [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$500 million IDA credit to help Nigeria achieve its Saving One Million Lives (SOML) Initiative. The project was first launched by the Nigerian Ministry of Health in October 2012 to save the lives of more than 900,000 women and children who die every year in Nigeria from largely preventable causes. The funding was announced [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Ivory Coast's Sports Ministry shared insights on the construction of a new 60,000-seat stadium in Abidjan, financed by the Chinese. Calling the stadium a gift from China, officials said construction will begin in January 2016 and the project will be completed in 2018, well before 2021 when Ivory Coast will host the African Cup of Nations (AFCON). Details were shared [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a total of \$5 million in new financing for The Gambia's Maternal and Child Nutrition Health Results Project. The project, initially launched in the country's three poorest regions, including the Upper River, the Central River, and the North Bank West Regions, was designed to deliver community-based nutrition and primary health care services to women and children. The additional financing will expand coverage to the North Bank East and Lower River Regions, providing access to care for approximately 477,000 direct beneficiaries by 2019. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a briefing on "Partnerships for Family Planning in Senegal: Lessons for U.S. Policy." Speakers included Senegalese Minister of Health and Social Action Dr. Awa Coll Seck, Director of the Senegalese Ministry of Health and Social Action's Reproductive Health and Child Survival Division Dr. Bocar Mamadou Daff, President and CEO of IntraHealth International Pape Gaye, Sahel Strategic Lead for Marie Stopes International Maaïke Van

Min, Deputy Assistant USAID Administrator and Deputy Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator Katie Taylor, Director of the Coordination Unit for Ouagadougou Partnership Fatimata Sy, Deputy Director of the Family Planning Program and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Nomi Fuchs-Montgomery, Program Officer for The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Margot Fahnestock, and Janet Felischman of CSIS. A video of the discussion can be watched [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, an audit of Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Nigeria's state oil firm, was published. While NNPC has been accused of corruption, the report indicated NNPC had overpaid the state by \$750 million between January 2012 and July 2013. The audit also noted that NNPC should still pay the government an additional \$1.5 billion. Details on the audit, performed by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, can be viewed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, following a meeting in Beijing between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Equatorial Guinea President Teodor Obiang Nguema, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China signed a \$2 billion infrastructure deal with Equatorial Guinea. The deal is intended to provide support to Equatorial Guinea, as well as Chinese enterprises operating in the country. The deal was announced [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Guinean President Alpha Conde appointed Boubacar Barry, opposition leader, former minister, and 2010 presidential candidate, to lead the Ministry of Mines, Industry, and Energy as part of a cabinet reshuffle. The announcement came amid protests by the opposition over the organization of presidential elections this year. The protests are intended to push President Conde to hold local elections before a presidential election anticipated in October. The full story is available [here](#).

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$23.2 million credit and an \$11.6 million grant to help expand access to reproductive, child, and maternal health services in Burkina Faso. The additional financing will build on the original Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Regional Project and add Burkina Faso as the sixth country supported by the project. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) reported three people contracted to clear landmines for a peacekeeping mission had been kidnapped. The abductions occurred in the eastern part of the country where the DRC army has been operating since February against the Rwandan Hutu rebel group, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). The kidnappings were noted [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, oil firm Chevron offered to supply South African state utility company Eskom with excess diesel from its Cape Town refinery to help run some of its generators. Steve Hegarty, Chevron's General Manager for Strategy and its Cape Town facility, said the company has informed the parliament's trade and industry committee that it would be willing to produce and store diesel for the power utility, which has been struggling to meet electricity demand. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's Department of International Cooperation released a statement condemning Nigeria's decisions to withdraw its diplomats from Pretoria following the recent spate of attacks on foreign nationals in the country. The statement went further to criticize Nigeria for its inability to reign in Boko Haram and notes that South Africa did not blame the Nigerian government for mishandling the aftermath of the collapse of a church building last year that killed 84 South Africans. The diplomatic tensions between South Africa and Nigeria were detailed [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, UNHCR warned the CAR is quickly becoming the largest forgotten humanitarian crisis as assistance programs remain dramatically underfunded. According to the U.N., 60 percent of the population is in need of aid, including close to 900,000 people displaced by conflict, both inside the CAR and in neighboring countries. Humanitarian programs for IDPs are just 24 percent funded, while programs for CAR refugees in neighboring countries are only funded at 9 percent. Details can be seen [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Angolan opposition party UNITA said more than 1,000 civilians were killed when Angolan police clashed with members of a Christian religious sect known as Light of the World led by Jose



Kalupeteka. The religious group, which believes the world will end on December 31<sup>st</sup> and encourages its members to live in seclusion, has been labeled an illegal organization by the government. Angolan police say 13 members of the sect were killed during the raid and that nine police were also killed. Various accounts of the incident were shared [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, South Africa celebrated Freedom Day, commemorating the country's first democratic elections held in 1994 that saw Nelson Mandela elected president. The day is also used to mark the fall of the apartheid system and the start of a South Africa free from racial segregation. The celebration was recognized [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous completed a four-day visit to the CAR to coincide with the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization in the CAR (MINUSCA) achieving full operational capacity. Under-Secretary-General Ladsous said he was optimistic about the situation in the CAR given that MINUSCA is determined to meet security challenges, in addition to supporting the holding of elections in a secure and timely manner before August. Notes on Under-Secretary-General Ladsous' visit to the CAR can be viewed [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the FAO projected South Africa's maize harvest will shrink this year by 26 percent and expressed concern this could increase food prices and adversely affect recent food security gains. The fall in production is mostly due to the impact of erratic weather conditions, including the start of seasonal rains in November, followed by heavy rains that cause flooding, and then a long dry spell in February and march. Additional factors were addressed [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the IMF introduced the April 2015 IMF Regional Economic Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa. Director of the IMF's African Department Antoinette Sayeh observed sub-Saharan Africa's economy is set to register another year of solid economic performance, with growth expected to expand 4.5 percent in 2015. She said the region will continue to be among the fastest growing in the world, but noted a slowdown in economic expansion could be projected due to the sharp decline of oil and commodity prices over the last six months. Dr. Sayeh's comments on the release of the outlook were transcribed [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, in response to a criticism from Mozambican writer Mia Couto over the recent xenophobic violence in South Africa, South African President Jacob Zuma published an open letter. President Zuma argued the actions of a small minority should not be used to wrongfully label and stereotype more than 50 million people in South Africa. He also highlighted the progressiveness of South Africa's migration policy, as well as ongoing efforts to build a society free of discrimination. The letter can be read [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, two commuter trains collided in South Africa, killing at least one person and wounding 241 others. The wreck occurred in a suburb of Johannesburg. Metrorail spokeswoman, Lillian Mofokeng, told press an investigation into the cause of the collision is ongoing. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$69 million credit to help improve Malawi's road and border post infrastructure connecting the country to regional trade corridors in southern Africa. The IDA funds are being allocated to the Southern Africa Trade and Transport Facilitation Program, which aims to ease the movement of goods and people along the North-South Corridor (NSC) and at the key border crossings in Malawi, while also improving road safety and health services. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the French Justice Ministry announced the French prosecutor is carrying out a preliminary investigation into allegations of child abuse by French soldiers stationed in the CAR. The investigation was launched in response to a U.N. report received in July 2014 that indicated French soldiers may have been involved in the sexual abuse of minors. French President Francois Hollande has vowed to punish and make an example of any French troops found guilty of sex abuse in the CAR. The investigation was announced [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, following a summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) during which South African President Jacob Zuma presented on recent violence in his country, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe said other African nations should stop their citizens from migrating to South Africa to prevent violence against foreigners. An estimated one million Zimbabweans live in South Africa after

fleeing economic crisis and political violence at home. President Mugabe's comments were captured [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, three weeks after xenophobic attacks broke out in Durban, South Africa, over 600 Malawi left on buses for their home country. More than 1,500 people have already returned to Malawi in the wake of attacks against foreigners. While the violence in South Africa has waned, verbal abuse and intimidation remains, causing fearful Malawians to head home to grim job prospects. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, CEO of South African Tourism Thulani Nzima expressed concern South Africa's tourism industry will be negatively impacted by the wave of xenophobic attacks earlier this month. South Africa's tourism sector currently supports one in 12 jobs. While the violence has only affected a small part of the country, tourism operators in Cape Town, which has largely escaped the unrest, reported a dip in business. The full story is available [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On April 20<sup>th</sup>, in advance of World Malaria Day, Malaria No More presented the Global Leadership Award to former U.S. President George W. Bush for his commitment to the fight against Malaria. The organization recognized President Bush for the role he played in founding the President's Malaria Initiative and supporting the Global Fund. Malaria No More also honored ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson and Kimberly-Clark CEO Tom Falk for their contributions to the global malaria effort. The awards were announced [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, to coincide with World Malaria Day, the one billionth mosquito net was distributed in Africa since 2002. Combined with other malaria interventions, it is estimated that mosquito nets have averted over 670 million cases of malaria on the continent between 2001 and 2013 and saved over four million lives. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank released a new report on Enhancing the Climate Resilience of Africa's Infrastructure. The report finds the impact of climate change on Africa's water and energy infrastructure will be costly and immediate action is needed to reduce risks. Additionally, the report suggests actionable steps to increase resilience in Africa's infrastructure and provides technical guidelines for factoring climate change into infrastructure planning and design. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

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