



## ML Strategies Update

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## AFRICA UPDATE

### Leading the News

#### ***Central African Republic***

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations (U.N.) said the security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) capital of Bangui was less tense than when the Seleka rebel group first entered the city on March 24<sup>th</sup>. The U.N. noted that humanitarian problems remain a major concern, and U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator Zakaria Maiga urged all parties to protect civilians in the area. A statement from the U.N. on conditions in Bangui is available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the State Department issued a statement expressing continued concern for the security situation in the CAR. In particular, the State Department condemned the illegitimate seizure of power by the Seleka rebel alliance, Michel Djotodia's self-appointment as president, and the suspension of the CAR's constitution and National Assembly. The statement also indicated that the U.S. will continue to recognize only the national unity government led by Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye as the legitimate government of the CAR. The full State Department release can be read [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, CAR Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, who was permitted to keep his post by newly self-declared CAR President Michael Djotodia, announced a new 34-member cabinet. The new cabinet includes nine members of the Seleka rebel coalition who will oversee the ministries of petroleum, security, water and forestry, and communications, among others. The new government also includes eight members from the former opposition and one close to CAR President Francois Bozize, who fled the country when rebels moved into Bangui. More information on the new cabinet is available [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, during a late night state radio address, Michel Djotodia announced that he will serve as both President and Defense Minister of the CAR until elections in 2016. Djotodia also used his remarks to reiterate that his Seleka allies will control various CAR government ministries focused on mines, commercial, communication, security, and public order. An article on Djotodia's radio address is available [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the nine main opposition parties in the CAR said they were suspending participation in the newly announced government. Edouard Koyambounou, a spokesman for the nine parties, said his group cannot accept that 16 posts meant for civil society members will undoubtedly be given to Seleka insiders. Information on the boycott can be found [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the regional headquarters of the Bank of Central African States reopened in Bangui following days of violence in the city. Businesses and residents had resorted to bartering due to a lack of cash flow. Clement Gueremondongou, Deputy Director of the bank, encouraged commercial banks in the area to also reopen their branches following some stabilization in the security situation. An article on the reopening of the bank is available [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Chadian President Idriss Deby, Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) hosted a summit in N'Djamena to discuss the ongoing situation in the CAR, as well as proposed responses. South African President Jacob Zuma also attended the summit in Chad, following the death of 13 South African soldiers who fought with CAR troops in unsuccessful attempts to prevent Seleka rebels from gaining control of Bangui and ousting CAR President Francois Bozize from power. Details on the ECCAS Summit can be viewed [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, during the summit on the situation in the CAR held in N'Djamena, Chad, South African President Jacob Zuma announced the withdrawal of South African forces that have recently been active in Bangui. President Zuma indicated that South Africa would be ready to provide troops to the effort in the CAR in the future, if necessary. More information on President Zuma's announcement can be found [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, former CAR President Francois Bozize accused Chadian special forces of aiding Seleka in the group's takeover of Bangui. President Bozize said Chad helped with several operations, including the one that killed 13 South African soldiers. The positive relationship between the CAR and Chad has deteriorated over the past year. An article with additional comments from President Bozize, who has fled to Cameroon, is available [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Colonel Felix Kulayigye, a Ugandan Army Spokesman, announced Uganda is suspending search efforts in the CAR for suspected war criminal Joseph Kony. The spokesman said Seleka rebels are not recognized by the African Union (AU) and that they are not cooperating with the Ugandan Army. An article on the suspended search can be read [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, following the announcement that Uganda would halt its search for Joseph Kony, U.S. State Department officials indicated the U.S. will also pause operations in the CAR. Pentagon Spokesman Major Robert Firman indicated that approximately 40 U.S. Special Forces troops are currently deployed in the CAR where they have been advising more than 3,000 African troops on the search for Kony in the jungle. Despite the pause in the search, the Pentagon indicated U.S. Special Forces will remain in the CAR, in addition to U.S. troops stationed in Uganda, South Sudan, and Congo. Details on the latest developments in the search for Kony in the CAR can be viewed [here](#).

## **Kenya**

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan Supreme Court Chief Justice Willy Mutunga announced the six justices had unanimously decided that Uhuru Kenyatta had been validly elected as president in the March 4<sup>th</sup> elections. In a televised address following the announcement, Kenyatta pledged to serve all Kenyans without discrimination. Defeated presidential candidate Prime Minister Raila Odinga also issued a televised statement accepting the court's decision. An article on the ruling of the Kenyan Supreme Court can be found [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, following the Supreme Court's ruling on the Kenyan presidential election, Uhuru Kenyatta updated his @UKenyatta Twitter handle to read President-Elect, The Republic of Kenya. President-Elect Kenyatta will become Kenya's first tweeting President and East Africa's third Head of State, after Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, to have a verified Twitter account. Details on President-Elect Kenyatta's use of Twitter are available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated Uhuru Kenyatta on his victory in Kenya's presidential election. Secretary-General Ban offered his best wishes to the new government, and he commended Prime Minister Raila Odinga for participating in the process and accepting the decision of the Kenyan Supreme Court. The release from the U.N. can be found [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the Office of the White House Press Secretary issued a statement congratulating Uhuru Kenyatta on his election as President of Kenya and encouraging Kenyans to peacefully accept the final elections results. The statement was issued following the Kenyan Supreme Court's announcement that it would uphold Kenyatta's victory, despite runner-up, Prime Minister Raila Odinga's accusations of ballot rigging. The full White House statement has been posted [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Hilary Renner, the State Department Spokeswoman for African Affairs, said the U.S. will closely examine past actions of President-elect Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, Kenya's recently elected Deputy President. Both men face charges from the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their actions following Kenya's elections in 2007. Additional comments from Spokeswoman Renner are available [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mwangi Kim, Director of the Africa Growth Initiative and a fellow at the Brookings Institution, wrote an opinion piece about the peaceful elections in Kenya. According to Kim reforms made following violence during the 2007 elections helped contribute to a free and fair process in 2013 and Kenya has redeemed itself regarding the past violence. Kim's article can be read [here](#).

## ***Mali***

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, French President Francois Hollande said France will begin a military draw-down in Mali, leaving only 2,000 troops in the country by July. President Hollande said 1,000 soldiers will remain in Mali at the end of 2013, primarily to support a U.N. peacekeeping force in the country. Comments from President Hollande can be found [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, several Islamist radicals conducted an attack in Timbuktu that started with a suicide attack at a military checkpoint. French military spokesman Colonel Thierry Burkhard said around a dozen fighters slipped past the checkpoint and into the city, where they began attacking French and Malian forces. Six of the radicals were confirmed killed. An article on the fighting in Timbuktu can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, European Union (EU) troops began training Malian forces as part of a 15-month effort at the Koulikoro base located approximately 40 miles from the capital of Bamako. Twenty-two EU nations are contributing 550 troops to the training effort. A Malian battalion is expected to be fully trained and operational by July. An article on the training can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.S. Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) arrived in Bamako, Mali, to assess the security situation following French efforts to eliminate terrorist influence from northern portions of the country. While in Mali, Senators McCain and Whitehouse visited with acting President Dioncounda Traore and interim Prime Minister Diango Cissoko. Senator McCain said the U.S. will continue to offer military assistance to French efforts in Mali, and Senator Whitehouse said he wants to promote successful elections in the country. An article on the visit can be read [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mali's Ambassador to the U.N. Oumar Daou and Ivory Coast Ambassador to the U.N. Youssoufou Bamba, speaking on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), gave consent to the U.N. Security Council to deploy a U.N. stabilization mission to Mali. Both ambassadors expressed support for U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's proposal for a U.N. stabilization mission of approximately 11,200 troops with a parallel counterterrorism force. U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice expressed support for the U.N. mission in Mali and argued the transition to the U.N. force should only occur when security conditions permit. Additional information on the U.N. stabilization mission in Mali can be viewed [here](#).

## ***Democratic Republic of Congo***

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a resolution creating the first-ever

offensive U.N. peacekeeping brigade, which will assist the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo (MONUSCO) in battling rebel groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The intervention brigade, established for a period of one year, will consist of more than 2,500 troops tasked with neutralizing and disarming M23 rebels and other rebel forces. The new brigade will also monitor the movement of arms, military personnel, and equipment along the border between Congo and the DRC. Additional information on the recently passed resolution is available [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, DRC Prime Minister Augustin Matata Ponyo welcomed the vote from the U.N. Security Council to provide an offensive force to address the M23 rebel group. Prime Minister Ponyo said the decision marks the beginning of the end for armed groups in the region. The U.N. force of more than 2,500 troops is expected to arrive in the DRC by July. Additional comments from Prime Minister Ponyo can be found [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Bertrand Bisimwa, the political leader of M23, said the U.N. chose a path of war by giving a military mission to the region the authority to neutralize and disarm rebel groups through offensive methods. More details on the U.N.'s authorization of force are available [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***White House***

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama met with President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone, President Macky Sall of Senegal, President Joyce Banda of Malawi, and Prime Minister José Maria Pereira Neves of Cape Verde at the White House. During the meeting the leaders discussed strategies for strengthening democratic institutions and economic opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa, preservation of human rights, and progress made on food security. A White House blog post on the meeting can be viewed [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, following a meeting at the White House with four African leaders, President Barack Obama wished former South African President Nelson Mandela a speedy recovery after being hospitalized for a recurring lung infection. President Obama referred to President Mandela as a strong character in leadership who has given everything to his people. An article on President Obama's well wishes for President Mandela can be read [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, White House Deputy Press Secretary Josh Earnest said the Administration is deeply concerned about reports that women at an anti-government protest in Egypt had been sexually assaulted. In addition to condemning the violence, Deputy Press Secretary Earnest called on the Egyptian Government to take legal measures to prevent sexual violence and to prosecute those involved in the sexual assaults. More information on the White House's response to reports of sexual violence in Egypt is available [here](#).

### ***State Department***

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. embassy in Ghana announced a \$1.2 million investment to build a National Marine Police Training Academy. The academy will help Ghana's law enforcement officials develop the skills necessary to defend the country's coastline. A release on the investment is available [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland provided reporters with the latest details on reports related to the arrests of political activists in Egypt. Spokesperson Nuland said the U.S. government remains concerned about the issuance of arrest warrants and is actively urging the Egyptian authorities to put forward information on the charges and evidence of offenses. Spokesperson Nuland's full remarks can be read [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland was asked to assess the spread of Al Qaeda from places, such as Mali, to Libya and Tunisia. Spokesperson Nuland responded that the U.S. Government is concerned that new democratic governments in North Africa are lacking the security capabilities to maintain complete control of their borders. The U.S. is continuing to provide security support to Libya and Tunisia. A transcript of Spokesperson Nuland's full exchange with reporters has been posted [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Robert Hormats participated in an African Leaders Economic Growth Roundtable hosted by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The roundtable event created opportunities for President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone, President Macky Sall of Senegal, President Joyce Banda of Malawi, and Prime Minister José Maria Pereira Neves of Cape Verde to discuss growing economic trade, growth, and investment with U.S. Government officials. Details on the roundtable can be found [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson led a panel discussion on promoting African prosperity and democratic gains at the U.S. Institute of Peace. The panel included Presidents Koroma, Banda, Sall, and Prime Minister Neves. A video recording and a transcript of the panel discussion can be found [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson hosted a luncheon at the State Department to honor the visit of the four African leaders to the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns and Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine also attended the luncheon. The luncheon was highlighted on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be viewed [here](#). Deputy Secretary Burns' remarks delivered over lunch can be read [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson formally retired, ending a 44-year career focused on Africa policy. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs Donald Yamamoto will serve as the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs in an acting capacity. The alleged front runner to replace Assistant Secretary Carson is Gayle Smith, who currently serves at the White House as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director at the National Security Council (NSC). An article on Assistant Secretary Carson's retirement can be viewed [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Stuart Crampton, an anti-corruption advisor at the State Department, offered his reflections on a March workshop in Ghana that sought to address the challenges of corruption in Africa. Crampton noted that Africa loses more than \$148 billion to corruption every year and he said the U.S. is committed to preventing corruption in order to promote development and increase global security. The article authored by Crampton can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland indicated that State Department officials are working on a response to Representative Frank Wolf's (R-VA) letter regarding survivors of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack at the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, undergoing treatment at Walter Reed Medical Center. Representative Wolf's letter to Secretary of State John Kerry can be seen [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Tom Countryman met with Libyan Ambassador to the U.S. Ali Aujali. The meeting was listed on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be viewed [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.S. embassy in Cairo tweeted a link to a Jon Stewart monologue that defended Egyptian satirist Bassem Youssef, who was recently questioned by Egyptian authorities for offending Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi. After posting a link to the Daily Show clip, the embassy deleted its entire Twitter account before restoring it without the tweet containing a link to the video. In response to questions, State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland indicated the State Department did not provide the embassy with any instructions regarding the tweet. An *NPR* blog post on the incident is available [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Donald Yamamoto, and ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda hosted a special briefing at the State Department on the expansion of the War Crimes Rewards Program. Ambassador Rapp announced up to \$5 million in rewards for information leading to the arrests, transfer, or conviction of Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leaders Joseph Kony, Okot Odhiambo, and Dominic Ongwen, as well as the leader of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) Sylvestre Mudacumura. A transcript from the briefing can be read [here](#). Remarks from Secretary of State John Kerry on the expansion of the War Crimes Rewards Program have been

posted [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement recognizing Senegal's 53<sup>rd</sup> independence day. In the statement, Secretary Kerry commended Senegal for conducting free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections and asserted that Senegal serves as an example of democracy to the rest of the continent. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be found [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Tara Sonenshine gave remarks at the Brookings Institution on the challenges of Arab women in the Middle East and North Africa. The event included a discussion on how the U.S. can help advance women and girls in their societies. Details on the event are available [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, Special Advisor for Global Youth Issues Zeenat Rahman hosted young innovators from Ghana, Egypt, and the U.S. in a Google+ Hangout focused on fostering entrepreneurship and innovation among youth worldwide. Additional information on the event can be viewed [here](#).

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

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel met with Prime Minister Jose Maria Pereira Neves of Cape Verde, President Joyce Banda of Malawi, President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone, and Senegal's Ambassador to the U.S. Cheikh Niang. In addition to discussing extremist networks, illicit trafficking, and maritime security, the leaders also discussed regional security alliances and peacekeeping operations throughout Africa. A Department of Defense (DOD) news release on the meeting can be read [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, 250 officials from 20 African nations attended the opening ceremony of the Maritime Safety and Security Conference for ECCAS and ECOWAS, the Economic Communities of Central and West African States. The conference was held to discuss methods of combating piracy and robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. Additional details on the meeting are available [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, a U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) MV-22B Osprey and its crew visited U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, for a capabilities demonstration and static display. The goal of the visit was to introduce senior AFRICOM leaders to the helicopter-like aircraft and its capabilities. An article on the display of the Osprey aircraft at AFRICOM headquarters has been posted [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Army Africa Public Affairs reported on two U.S. chaplains' travel to Lilongwe, Malawi, March 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> to train 28 Malawi Defense Force (MDF) chaplains and chaplain assistants in solution focused-therapy concepts to help Malawian soldiers face redeployment challenges. Chaplain (Colonel) Augustine Matchumbuza, MDF chief of chaplains, noted that training is especially timely as the MDF prepares to deploy soldiers to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Ivory Coast to support peace keeping missions. Details on the chaplain training exercise can be found [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the African Center for Strategic Studies reported that 41 mid-level African security officers from 36 African nations recently completed the Next Generation of African Security Leaders Course, in Washington, DC. The three-week program was focused on enhancing professionalism, ethics, and leadership in the security sector and issues pertaining to civil-military relations, national security, transnational threats, and defense economics. The program's closing ceremony was keynoted by AFRICOM Director of Strategy, Plans, and Programs Major General Charles Hooper. Additional information on the security leadership course can be viewed [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command reported that Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4 and members of Cameroon's Battalion d'Intervention Rapide (BIR) recently completed two community health outposts located in Beskoul and Youhme, Cameroon. The outposts are intended to strengthen the partnership between the U.S. and Cameroon with a focus on military-to-military professional exchange. An article on the new health outposts can be seen [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa reported on a maritime law enforcement engagement

that took place between the U.S., Cape Verde, and the U.K. March 16<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. During the exercise, U.S. and U.K. forces mentored Cape Verdean naval personnel on maritime security, including drills focused on boarding merchant vessels to detect potential illegal fishing and smuggling activities. More information on the joint exercises can be read [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, AFRICOM announced the conclusion of 10-weeks of joint pre-deployment training for Burundi National Defense Force (BNDF) soldiers and USMC and Navy personnel assigned to the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Africa 13. The purpose of the training was to enhance Burundian security capabilities for an upcoming deployment to Somalia. More specifically, the training covered medical care, infantry, marksmanship, and combat engineering. An article on the training exercise can be read [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, *TPC News* reported that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey arrived in Stuttgart, Germany, to preside over the change of command at AFRICOM headquarters. Current AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham, who has served as head of AFRICOM since 2011, is retiring and will be replaced by General David Rodriguez. A video clip of the *TPC News* report can be watched [here](#).

### ***U.S. Trade Representative***

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Acting U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Demetrios Marantis led a roundtable discussion on U.S.-sub-Saharan African trade and investment with President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone, President Macky Sall of Senegal, President Joyce Banda of Malawi, and Prime Minister José Maria Pereira Neves of Cape Verde. In addition to the African leaders, representatives of the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Export-Import Bank, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), also participated in the discussions. A USTR blog post on the roundtable is available [here](#).

### ***U.S. Congress***

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Representative Karen Bass (D-CA) published an op-ed in *Roll Call* calling for the U.S. to develop a deeper strategic partnership with Africa, especially in light of Chinese President Xi Jinping's recent visit to the continent. In addition to calling for increasing U.S. investment in Africa, Representative Bass also called on Congress to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the largest trade agreement between the U.S. and Africa, before it expires in 2015. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

### **North Africa**

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank approved a \$203 million loan to help Morocco modernize its agriculture sector. The loan is expected to generate 1.5 million jobs in the country by 2020 and increase the competitiveness of small and large-scale farmers. More information on the loan is available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, an arrest warrant was issued for Bassem Youssef, an Egyptian satirist who has been widely called the country's version of Jon Stewart. Youssef made himself available for questions on March 31<sup>st</sup>, and was released on bail of \$2,200, according to the prosecutor's office. Despite being questioned by Egyptian authorities, Youssef said he will not back down in his criticisms of the government and President Mohammed Morsi. An article on the arrest and interrogation of Youssef is available [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Russia's sixth largest oil company, Tatneft, said it will resume operations in Libya. Tatneft had halted operations during the uprising to overthrow Muammar Gaddafi. Russians have been discussing security concerns in the region for several months with Libya. An article on the reinstatement of Tatneft operations in Libya can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, following Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's announcement in his opening speech before the new session of parliament that all political prisoners would be freed in light of broad political dialogue, Sudanese authorities released six political prisoners from Kober prison in Khartoum

North. The released detainees are believed to have spent more than two months in jail for participation in a conference held in Uganda in January that produced a charter advocating for the end of President Bashir's regime. The latest developments on the release of political prisoners in Sudan can be seen [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tunisia's new Prime Minister Ali Laarayedh said he seeks to govern through consensus and that there will be no effort by the Islamist Ennahda party to monopolize power. Political tensions have risen in Tunisia following the February death of opposition leader Chokri Belaid, which some Tunisians blame on Ennahda. Additional comments from Prime Minister Laarayedh can be found [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, following Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Tanzania, Chinese Ambassador to Tanzania Lu Youqing finalized an agreement that would allow Tanzania to directly export products derived from plants and animals, including leather, to China. The new trade agreement is anticipated to increase the current trade volume beyond \$2.5 billion. More on the new agreement between China and Tanzania can be found [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, a building nearing completion in Tanzania collapsed, causing at least 36 deaths. The building did not have any tenants; the injured and killed included construction workers and people passing by along the streets in Dar es Salaam. A strong economy has led to a rapid increase in construction in Tanzania, although the quick building has led to concerns about structural safety. The latest details on the building collapse are available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, the *East African* reported that tea farmers in East Africa reported higher export earnings from 2012 due to an increase in international prices for tea. While tea farmers in Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, and Rwanda were impacted by drought in early 2012, the increase in global prices, as well as a slight increase in tea export volumes in some countries, allowed for greater earnings. Details on tea exports from East Africa are available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Tanzania, prompted by widespread failure among its students in recent national exams, announced a plan to give local government greater control over the country's schools. Localities will be provided with funds to pay for student meals and tuition. The plan is part of the budget for the next fiscal year, and its proponents hope it will reduce red tape and increase efficiency in the education sector. Details on the changes are available [here](#).

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Kenya's Coast Provincial Commissioner Samuel Kilele said the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), a secessionist organization in Kenya, may be linked with the terrorist organization al-Shabaab. Commissioner Kilele said both groups will be given seven days to surrender before they face the full force of law. A statement from Commissioner Kilele can be found [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the *Washington Post* reported on new apps that are changing the way of life in Kenya. For example, apps such as iCow are now being used to inform Kenyan farmers when cows are in heat, which feeds can boost their milk output, and their market price. Apps are also being used in Kenya to monitor elections and to expand mobile banking. The *Washington Post* article on the increasing use of apps in Kenya can be read [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, at least 10 people were confirmed dead due to heavy flooding in the Mauritius capital of Port Louis. Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam said climate change is a key contributor to the disaster in the small island country that lies east of Madagascar and the Seychelles. More details and video of the flooding are available [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Finnish mobile phone company Nokia Corp. and India's Bharti Airtel Ltd. announced a new partnership to sell mobile phone software and Internet browsers in East Africa. The Nokia software has already been successful in the Nigerian market and new sales are expected to build on the telecommunications services already provided by Bharti on the continent. A *Wall Street Journal* report on the new partnership can be found [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released a report with Investment One Financial Services Limited revealing that Nigeria has the highest interest rate (12%) and the lowest external debt (\$6.5 billion) among MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Turkey) countries. The report also finds that Nigeria has the worst sovereignty rating and the highest inflation rate among the MINT nations. More data from the IMF report can be viewed [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Western Union and Virtual Terminal Network (VTN) announced the launch of a new service in Nigeria that allows customers to use mobile phones to transfer funds in Western Union accounts directly to electronic VTN VCASH accounts. Following the transfer, funds can be used for transactions, bill payments, bank deposits, or transfer to other VCASH users. An article on the new mobile payment initiative in Nigeria can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Turkish Deputy Minister of Economy Mustafa Server announced that bilateral trade between Turkey and Nigeria will exceed \$560 billion in the coming years. Speaking at the ECOWAS-Turkish export fair, Deputy Minister Server explained that both countries have the potential to meet optimistic trade targets. He also indicated that Turkish investment in Nigeria will exceed \$100 million once free trade zones are in place in Abuja and Lagos. More on Deputy Minister Server's announcement can be found [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama promoted Henry Kofi Wampah to Governor of the country's central bank. Wampah has previously served as the deputy at the bank, and he will replace Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, who is currently Ghana's Vice-President. No official announcement has been released by the government, but an article on the appointment can be found [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, France Telecom announced a deal to give control of 2,000 of its transmitter towers in Cameroon and the Ivory Coast to Nigerian infrastructure company IHS. France Telecom says the partnership will lower overall costs. More information on the agreement is available [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, USAID/ADVANCE and the University of Ghana launched an interactive website providing access to agricultural data in Ghana. The goals of the online tool are to improve spatial management in Ghana, provide a tool for sharing information, and create opportunities to improve the quality of data on crop farms, production volumes, agricultural facilities, soil characteristics, and climate conditions. The Ghana Agricultural GIS Platform can be visited [here](#).

## **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* published a National Science Foundation study finding that diarrheal disease in Botswana could worsen with climate change. Diarrheal disease is the second leading cause of childhood death in Botswana and the disease is especially prevalent during the country's dry season. Additional information on the study is available [here](#).

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, *The Guardian* reported that cassava could become a leading cash crop in sub-Saharan Africa, potentially competing with maize, rice, and wheat. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Africa is already producing more cassava than any other crop. While cassava has many benefits, including its ability to thrive in poor soil and seasonal drought, the plant has relatively low nutritional value. Details on growth of cassava in sub-Saharan Africa can be found [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, South African Presidential Spokesman Mac Maharaj provided an updated on former President Nelson Mandela's condition. According to the update, President Mandela, who was admitted to the hospital on March 28<sup>th</sup> for a recurring lung infection, was responding positively to treatment, but remained in the hospital under observation. Updates on President Mandela's hospitalization can be viewed [here](#).

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, outgoing Anglo American CEO Cynthia Carroll announced intentions to abandon a plan to purchase a \$555 million metallurgical coal project in Mozambique. The deal would have given

Anglo a majority stake in Minas de Revuboe, granting the company access to steelmaking coal located between a Vale Mine and a Rio Tinto project. An article on Anglo's decision to abandon the project can be read [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, scientists from Michigan State University (MSU), the University of Malawi, and Malawian health care workers and farmers announced the success of research on the benefits of legume mixtures in crops soil. Following field trials, researchers announced the experiment successfully yielded crops with added nutrition to contribute to weight and height gains in children. Due to the success of the experiment other African nations, such as Tanzania and Mali, have also expressed interest in using legumes to increase soil fertility. More information on the experiment can be found [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the South African Institute of Race Relations released a report on wage earnings in the country. According to the report, white male Gautengers are the highest wage earners, while young African women in Limpopo are the lowest. Following analyses of earnings data, researchers found the median wages of white workers are roughly four times the wages of African workers, the wages of skilled employees are approximately six times those of unskilled employees, and the wages of unionized workers are twice as high as those not in unions. Further details on the report are available [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, reports surfaced that Saudi Arabia is planning to purchase Seeker 400 armed drones from South Africa after refusal of the Obama Administration to sell Saudi Arabia armed Predator or Reaper drones. Allegedly, South African defense company Denel Dynamics will work with the Saudi government to develop the Seeker 400 into an armed combat system for the Saudi military. An article on the South African arms sale to Saudi Arabia can be viewed [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, South Africa's Standard Bank Group said it will partner with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China to provide over \$2 billion in funding to green energy projects across South Africa. South Africa hopes to make renewable energy 8% of the country's total energy output, compared to the current 1%. Details on the agreement are available [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, South African President Jacob Zuma attended a memorial service for the 13 South African soldiers killed during violence in the CAR. President Zuma said the soldiers were in the CAR to promote South Africa foreign policy and defend military trainers in the country. President Zuma rejected suggestions that the troops were in the CAR to defend the mining interests of his political party. The killings represent the largest military disaster for the country since the end of apartheid in 1994. Additional comments from President Zuma are available [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, following a meeting between South African Mineral Resources Minister Susan Shabangu and Russian Natural Resources Minister Sergei Donskoi at the recent BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Summit in Durban, South Africa, Russia and South Africa revealed plans to launch a trading bloc for precious metals. The agreement is intended to lessen volatility in the price of platinum and is anticipated to encourage the development of the platinum market in South Africa. More information on the Russian-South African agreement can be found [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, *Reuters* reported that commodity trading houses are expanding rapidly in Africa. While merchant traders have traditionally focused on oil resources on the continent, there has been new interest in Africa as a market for fuels and investments in Africa's storage and retail networks. The *Reuters* article on commodities trading in Africa can be read [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) unveiled its *Africa Economic Report 2013*. According to the report, economic growth in East Africa is expected to remain steady at a rate of 6%, due to discoveries of natural resources, improved practices in agriculture, and economic diversification. The West African region is likely to achieve the fastest economic growth on the continent in 2013 at a rate of 6.6%, which is anticipated to be influenced by commodities trading, including in the oil and minerals sectors. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.N. General Assembly approved a global arms treaty to regulate the international trade of conventional arms. The treaty was supported by 154 nations. North Korea, Iran, and Syria voted against the measure, and 23 nations abstained. Details on the vote and the treaty are available [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim issued a call to end extreme poverty worldwide by 2030. Kim said the World Bank will focus on reducing the number of people living on less than \$1.25 per day to 3%, and he announced a goal to raise per capita incomes of the bottom 40% of people in every developing country. An article on Kim's goals is available [here](#).

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