



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### **Kenya**

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, armed Al Shabaab militants strapped with explosives stormed the dormitories of Garissa University College in eastern Kenya. The siege lasted more than 15 hours and left four Somali gunmen dead. According to Kenya's National Disaster Operation Center, at least 147 people were killed, making this the worst terror attack in the country in more than two decades. While more than 500 students were rescued, at least 79 others were injured. The attack was detailed [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, United Nations (U.N.) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and head of the U.N. Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) Irina Bokova condemned the terrorist attack on Kenya's Garissa University College and expressed solidarity with the Kenya people. U.N. officials voiced hope the situation would quickly be brought under control and urged swift justice for those responsible for the deadly attack. The U.N. response to the attack was articulated [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.S. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama expressed horror and sadness at breaking news of the terrorist attack in Garissa, Kenya. The President and the First Lady joined the world in mourning the loss of students who were pursuing an education in the pursuit of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. They also commended the heroism of the responders who lost their lives in the selfless protection of students and faculty. President Obama said he plans to convey the message that Kenya's future will be shaped by young people like those at Garissa University College when he visits Kenya in July. President Obama's remarks were captured [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the White House issued a statement condemning the terrorist attack against the innocent men and women of Garissa University College in eastern Kenya. The White House extended condolences to those killed, including the targeting of Christian students, as well as prayers to those injured. Also, the White House noted the U.S. is providing assistance to the Kenyan Government and will continue to partner with them, as well as others in the region, to take on Al Shabaab. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry condemned Al Shabaab's terrorist attack on Garissa University College. He extended condolences to the families and loved ones of the innocent victims who

were killed and directed thoughts to the many who sustained injuries. Further, Secretary Kerry reiterated the U.S. stands resolutely with the government and people of Kenya in the effort to end the scourge of terrorism. He said the attack reinforces the need for all countries and communities to unite in the effort to combat violent extremism. Secretary Kerry's statement was published [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya Robert Godec issued a statement condemning Al Shabaab's attack at Garissa University College. In addition to offering condolences, Ambassador Godec expressed profound appreciation and gratitude to the members of the Kenyan security services who risked their lives to end the cowardly attack. He said the U.S. continues to stand with the government and people of Kenya in their effort to end the scourge of terrorism. Ambassador Godec's statement can be viewed [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Eliot Engel (D-NY) issued a statement condemning the brutal terrorist attack at Kenya's Garissa University College. Less than two years after the bloody siege at the Westgate Mall, Congressman Engel said this attack is a stark reminder of Al Shabaab's disregard for human life and the threat the group poses to Kenya and the Horn of Africa. Congressman Engel's full statement was transcribed [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, following the Al Shabaab attack in Kenya, *PRI* highlighted Al Shabaab's jihadi media and propaganda strategy. Al Shabaab has a history of reaching out directly to Western media outlets, such as *BBC*, as part of its effort to shape its perception in the media and to influence certain viewers. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke by phone with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta to express his and the First Lady's condolences and those of the American people for the lives lost during the terrorist attack in Garissa, Kenya. President Obama emphasized his support for the government and the people of Kenya as they stand united in the face of the attack. He also said he looks forward to meeting with President Kenyatta again in Nairobi in July, when the two leaders will discuss how to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation and continue to work together to build a safer and more prosperous future for Kenya and the broader region. Their call was summarized [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, following the terrorist attack on Garissa University College, White House officials defended the Obama Administration's counter-terrorism strategy against Al Shabaab in Somalia. Senior U.S. officials, who labeled the recent attack in Kenya as an act of desperation, noted the strategy has been effective, as Al Shabaab, which once controlled virtually all of southern Somalia, has lost more than 75 percent of its territory in recent years. In addition, Al Shabaab has lost control of the Somali port city of Kismayo, which has drained the group's resources. Feedback from the White House was cited [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.S. State Department Acting Spokesperson Marie Harf noted the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi has been in touch with Kenyan officials, including security services, in the wake of the terrorist attack on Garissa University College and is providing assistance. She said Kenya is a partner in the fight against terrorism and the U.S. has been working with Kenya to improve its counter-terrorism capabilities through security assistance, including training and equipment for key Kenyan military and law enforcement units. Her comments were transcribed [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) joined leaders around the world in condemning Al Shabaab's terrorist attack at Garissa University College. Congresswoman Bass offered condolences for the victims and commended the brave members of the Kenyan security services who risked their lives to save innocent people. In addition, she pledged to work with her colleagues in Congress to support the Kenyan Government and its people in fighting extremism and terrorism. Congresswoman Bass's statement can be found [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council condemned the terrorist attack carried out by Al Shabaab in Garissa, Kenya, stressing outrage at the heinous attack. In its statement on the attack, the Security Council paid tribute to Kenya's role in the fight against terrorism, in particular the role played by the country in the fight against Al Shabaab as part of the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The Security Council also underlined the need to bring the perpetrators, organizers, financiers, and sponsors of terrorist acts to justice. The Security Council's reaction to the attack was outlined [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, in a nationally televised address, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta vowed harsh repercussions for Al Shabaab militants who carried out the terrorist attack on the Garissa University College. In addition to announcing three days of mourning, President Kenyatta also said there would be a reward for the capture of the chief planner of the Garissa attack. President Kenyatta warned that Al Shabaab extremists are deeply embedded in Kenyan communities as Al Shabaab raised its threat level, saying it would continue their assault on Kenya to retaliate for Somali rebels killed by Kenyan troops. An update on the situation in Kenya was provided [here](#).

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan authorities identified one of the Al Shabaab gunmen responsible for the terrorist attack on Garissa University College as Abdirahim Mohammed Abdullahi, the son of a government official in Mandera County. Abdullahi, who graduated from the University of Nairobi with a law degree in 2013, was reported missing last year amidst fears he had gone to Somalia to join Al Shabaab. Abdullahi was killed by Kenyan security forces responding to the attack. For details, click [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Kenya's Interior Ministry identified Mohamed Mohamud, also known by aliases Dulyadin and Gamadhere, as the mastermind of the terrorist attack on Garissa University College. According to the Interior Ministry, Mohamud is credited with having an extensive terrorist network within Kenya and has been tasked with leading external Al Shabaab operations in the country. A "Most Wanted" ad has been issued for Mohamud's capture, offering a \$215,000 reward. More information on the mastermind of the attack can be viewed [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the Kenyan military launched airstrikes against Al Shabaab militants in Somalia in response to the terrorist attack on Garissa University College as funeral services for the victims begun in Nairobi. The Kenyan warplanes targeted the Gedo region of Somalia, which is directly across Kenya's border in western Somalia. The airstrikes began late Sunday and continued into Monday when movement was observed at two targeted Al Shabaab camps. The camps were believed to be used to store arms and for logistical support. More information was reported [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan authorities noted they had started compiling a list of people suspected to have joined Somali militant group Al Shabaab or been radicalized by Islamists. The list is expected to consist primarily of Kenyan youths who have been reported missing. Regional governors, members of parliament, and security officials are all expected to participate in drawing up the list. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, while the Kenyan air force claimed it had destroyed two Al Shabaab camps in the Gedo region of Somalia, Al Shabaab denied the camps were hit, saying the air force bombs fell on farmland. While Kenyan Defense Forces spokesman David Obonyo said Kenyan forces had successfully carried out the mission intended to stop fighters from Al Shabaab camps in Somalia from carrying out cross-border raids into Kenya, Al Shabaab spokesman Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab insisted none of the group's bases were targeted. Both accounts of the airstrikes were presented [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan university students organized a march on Nairobi to demand more security from the government on campuses following the Garissa University College attack. The march was followed by a vigil to mourn the victims of the terrorist attack. Those who attended the event at Uhuru Park wrote notes honoring the victims and lit candles in their memory. As the country mourned the victims, some also took to social media to humanize them by sharing their stories. The march and the vigil were described [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, *Traveller24* speculated the Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University College, despite its remote location, is likely to spark further decline of Kenya's tourism industry. In the days immediately after the attack, hotels and game park reserves reported that tourists had started canceling upcoming trips. A vital part of the economy, Kenya's tourism industry has been in decline since 2013 when Al Shabaab attacked the Westgate Mall in Nairobi. Since then, repeat Al Shabaab attacks and travel warnings issued by the U.S., Britain, and Australia have forced hotels to lay off staff. Additional analysis can be seen [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan Interior Minister Joseph Nkaissery announced the government had ordered the closure of 13 money transfer firms to prevent militant Islamists from using them to finance attacks. According to Minister Nkaissery, the bank accounts of 86 individuals and entities have also been frozen. While government officials said the move was intended to prevent Somalis in Kenya from colluding with

Al Shabaab militants in Somalia, the large Somali population in the country has condemned the government's crackdown as blanket punishment of the community. For details, click [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, media outlets in Kenya ran a series of editorials expressing anger at the seven hour delay in the deployment of a special forces unit that eventually ended the Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University College. In addition, the press is upping the political pressure on the Kenyan Government to enhance its counterterrorism efforts, as Al Shabaab has now killed more than 400 people in Kenya since President Kenyatta took office in April 2013. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

## **Nigeria**

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan called General Muhammadu Buhari to concede defeat in Nigeria's presidential election. With results from all of Nigeria's 36 states counted, Buhari won roughly 55 percent of the vote to President Jonathan's 45 percent. Since the end of military rule in 1999, Nigeria has been governed by President Jonathan's Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Analysts believe the rise of Buhari's All Progressives Caucus (APC) could mean the beginning of a competitive two-party system in Nigeria. The outcome of the presidential race was analyzed [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Eliot Engel (D-NY) congratulated Nigerian President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari on his victory, and the people of Nigeria on their historic elections. Congressman Engel also commended President Goodluck Jonathan for taking the important step of graciously and swiftly handing power to his opponent, which will set the tone for a peaceful transition. Congressman Engel also praised Nigeria for setting a strong example for other countries across the continent that are facing close and contentious elections. Congressman Engel's statement is available [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called Nigerian President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari to congratulate him. In addition, Secretary-General Ban spoke with President Goodluck Jonathan to commend him for his leadership throughout the electoral process and his statesmanship in upholding the democratic process. Secretary-General Ban also thanked the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for organizing and carrying out the elections in a professional manner and called on all Nigerians to accept the outcome. Secretary-General Ban's calls were summarized [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein presented to the Human Rights Council on the threat posed by Nigerian militant group Boko Haram. In his opening remarks, High Commissioner Hussein warned that increasingly appalling atrocities perpetrated by the terrorist group have spawned a critical human rights situation in northern Nigeria and the Lake Chad region. He also suggested expansive economic, social, and political opportunities are key to reducing ethnic and sectarian tensions in the region. Excerpts from High Commissioner Hussein's presentation were highlighted [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke separately with Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari to commend them for their leadership during Nigeria's recent election. President Obama applauded President Jonathan for putting Nigeria and its people before politics by conceding the election and calling on his supporters to accept the outcome peacefully. President Obama congratulated President-Elect Buhari on his victory and thanked him for repeatedly urging his supporters to help ensure the election process remained calm and peaceful. Further, President Obama encouraged both leaders to work together to unify the country and sustain Nigeria's strong partnership with the U.S. to address challenges in the region, including the threat posed by Boko Haram. Both calls were noted [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Vice President Joe Biden congratulated the Nigerian people and their leaders on the conduct of a peaceful democratic election. He noted he had spoken recently with both Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari and commended them on their statesmanship in leading their supporters through the historic vote and putting their country on a more peaceful path forward. He noted the presidential contest will set the tone for gubernatorial elections on April 11<sup>th</sup> and for the days ahead as Nigerians unite to ensure a successful transition. In addition, Vice President Biden said he looks forward to working closely with President-Elect Buhari to advance shared interests in Nigeria's success. Vice President Biden's feedback can be seen [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the White House issued a statement on the Nigerian elections. The White House noted Nigeria has shown its commitment to democratic principles by turning out in large numbers and sometimes waiting all day to cast their votes to decide the future of their country peacefully. The White House commended both Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari for their public commitments to non-violence throughout the campaign and congratulated President-Elect Buhari on his victory. In addition, the White House applauded the efforts of the Independent National Election Commission (INEC) and called for isolated logistical challenges to be addressed ahead of the gubernatorial elections on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry congratulated the people of Nigeria and the Nigerian Government on historic and largely peaceful elections the weekend of March 28<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Kerry applauded all voters who showed patience and demonstrated their commitment to participate in the democratic process and commended Nigeria's INEC on the orderly nature of the vote and its use of technology in the electoral process. Additionally, Secretary Kerry lauded both Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and General Muhammadu Buhari for respecting the election results and encouraging their supporters to do the same. He thanked President Jonathan for his service and congratulated President-Elect Buhari on his victory. Secretary Kerry's statement was issued [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Robert Menendez (D-NJ) applauded the Nigerian people and political leaders on both sides for their commitment and dedication to the democratic process. Senator Menendez commended President-Elect Buhari on his victory and commended incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan for graciously conceding defeat and endorsing a peaceful transition of leadership. He also commended the INEC and expressed optimism the governorship and State Assembly elections on April 11<sup>th</sup> will proceed in the same peaceful and orderly manner. Senator Menendez's statement was posted [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) issued a statement on the Nigerian presidential election results. He congratulated President-Elect Buhari on his victory and urged him and President Goodluck Jonathan to affirm the results and move forward for the good of Nigeria. Senator Coons also noted Nigeria still faces considerable challenges that make it critical that all parties commit to a peaceful transition of power and recognize the importance of a government with broad democratic legitimacy. Senator Coons' statement can be viewed [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) congratulated the people of Nigeria on their recent presidential election, noting that millions turned out in a largely peaceful way to cast ballots, disregarding Boko Haram's threats to disrupt the elections. Congressman Royce urged that disputes surrounding the elections be settled in the courts and commended Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan for conceding defeat. He also called on President-Elect Buhari to uphold his campaign pledged to root out rampant corruption and address the security and economic challenges facing Nigeria, particularly combating Boko Haram. Feedback from Congressman Royce was shared [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Axa SA, the largest foreign insurer in Nigeria, said the peaceful manner in which the country is handling its first transition in political power in decades can support economic growth in both Nigeria and the larger region. The largely peaceful election has bolstered investor confidence. Nigeria's insurance penetration is about a fifth of the average on the continent and less than a 20<sup>th</sup> of the level in South Africa, underscoring the opportunity in a country with 177 million people. More information can be found [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, violence erupted in Nigeria's delta region. In the town of Obrikom and the nearby village of Obor in Rivers state, unidentified gunmen went on a shooting spree, killing nine people and injuring two others. The house of a parliamentary opposition candidate, Vincent Ogbagu, was also set on fire. Meanwhile, in Delta state, militants from the Urhobo ethnic minority group blew up a gas pipeline to draw attention to their exclusion from lucrative pipeline protection contracts with the state oil company. Both incidents were highlighted [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Boko Haram militants disguised as preachers killed at least 24 people and wounded several others in an attack near a mosque in Borno state, Nigeria. The attackers gathered people at the mosque in Kwajafa and pretended to preach Islam until opening fire. The attack was reported [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council condemned the recent spate of terrorist attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria and Chad. The Security Council extended its condolences to the families of the victims and their sympathy to all those injured in the attacks in Kwajafa, Nigeria, and Tchoukou Telia, Chad and reminded States that they must ensure that measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law. Details were posted [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the Woodrow Wilson Center hosted a discussion titled, "Nigeria in Focus: An Assessment of the 2015 Elections." Presenters included Femi Vaughan of Bowdoin College, Carl LeVan of American University, Johnnie Carson of the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), Chris Fomunyoh of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and Elizabeth Ramey of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. A webcast of the event can be watched [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Central and West African leaders met in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, for a summit on drawing up a joint strategy to fight Nigeria's Boko Haram militants. Convened by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the purpose of the meeting was to build on the regional offensive being led by Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon against Boko Haram strongholds. The summit was announced [here](#).

### **West Africa Ebola Outbreak**

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, *Military Times* reported just 100 U.S. personnel remain in Liberia supporting Ebola-related contingences, down from a peak of 2,800 Americans fighting Ebola in the country at the height of the response. The sole mission of the remaining members of Operation United Assistance is to monitor cases as they tick down to zero and stay there. An article on the current status of Operation United Assistance can be read [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, researchers at the U.S. Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) reported the experimental Ebola vaccine known as VSV-EBOV has been proven safe and effective in clinical trials that began in October. Two independent studies found the vaccine worked fast enough and strong enough that it could be deployed to future Ebola hotspots on short notice to quickly defuse outbreaks. The clinical trials were detailed [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Texas Health Resources filed a response to the March 2<sup>nd</sup> lawsuit filed by nurse Nina Pham who was infected with Ebola while caring for the first Ebola patient in the U.S., Thomas Eric Duncan. In response to Pham's lawsuit, Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital denied allegations of poor training and improper preparation, arguing the company and the hospital acted responsibly to protect their employees, basing their responses on the most up-to-date federal guidelines and with leading experts on Ebola. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, officials in Kailahun, Sierra Leone announced the first case of Ebola recorded in the eastern district in nearly four months, threatening progress towards reaching zero cases. A nine-month-old boy tested positive for the virus after death. Once the test results were received, experts from the World Health Organization (WHO) were deployed to the area to investigate the case. Health officials believe the boy may have been infected with Ebola during a blood transfusion or there may have been a problem with the sample that was tested. The situation was described [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Kelly Dale of Jhpiego, a nonprofit organization associated with Johns Hopkins University that is partnering the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on the West Africa Ebola response, authored a blog post on rebuilding Liberia's health care system. While Liberia had experienced a period of weeks with no new cases, there has been at least one recent diagnosis and the possibility of future cases exists. In the interim USAID and its partners are training frontline health workers as part of broader efforts to rebuild and improve Liberia's health care system. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank highlighted the International Development Association's (IDA) support for health care workers fighting Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Since the start of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, almost 900 health care workers have been infected with Ebola. The World Bank has provided personal protective equipment (PPE) and hazard payments to health care workers in the

region, including those who remain on the frontlines of the Ebola crisis helping their countries get to zero cases. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Director of Social Affairs for the AU Commission Dr. Olawale Maiyegun said Africa's efforts to tackle the Ebola crisis have been largely overlooked even though Africans have taken the lead in providing frontline staff and shown themselves better placed to fight infectious diseases on the continent than outsiders. Dr. Maiyegun argued because Africans do not have the international voice of *CNN*, *BBC*, and *France 24*, much of their work was overlooked in the western media, which favored the work of international agencies and those with the greatest media clout. His comments were captured [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the WHO released an updated situation report with new statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending on April 5<sup>th</sup>, a total of 30 confirmed cases were reported, with 21 new cases in Guinea and 9 new cases in Sierra Leone. Liberia reported no new confirmed cases. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, U.S. President Barack Obama met with his national security team to receive an update on efforts to get to zero Ebola cases in West Africa. The President's advisors updated him on the situation in the region and briefed him on measures currently underway to end the epidemic in Sierra Leone and Guinea. President Obama emphasized the urgency of getting to zero cases and directed his team to stay engaged to prevent future outbreaks from becoming epidemics. A readout of the meeting was provided [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, researchers reported two new Ebola vaccines have been found to protect monkeys from the virus, with just one dose and no apparent side effects. The two new vaccines are improved versions of an older vaccine licensed to Merck that is now being tested for efficacy in people in Liberia, but is thought to cause side effects such as fever and joint pain. The next step will be to test the vaccines in healthy volunteers and safety trials are expected to start this summer. More information can be seen [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***White House***

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, President Barack Obama called Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi to notify him of the White House's decision to lift a hold on the shipment of American weapons and other assistance to Egypt in place since October 2013. President Obama told President Sisi the U.S. will send Egypt F-16s, Harpoon missiles, and M1A1 Abrams tank kits. President Obama also noted he will continue to ask Congress for \$1.3 million in annual military assistance for Egypt. Their conversation was summarized [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, President Barack Obama spoke with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) President Joseph Kabila. President Obama emphasized the importance of timely, credible, and peaceful elections that respect the DRC's constitution and protect the rights of all DRC citizens. President Obama assured President Kabila the U.S. will remain engaged in the electoral process, including through the appointment of a new U.S. Special Envoy to the African Great Lakes Region and the DRC. The two leaders also reaffirmed their shared commitment to ending the threat of armed groups, including the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). They also discussed pending adoptions in the DRC by American families. A readout of the call was shared [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his decision to extend the national emergency with respect to South Sudan beyond April 3, 2015. President Obama said the situation in South Sudan, which has been marked by activities that threaten the peace, security, or stability of South Sudan and the surrounding region, including widespread violence and atrocities, human rights abuses, recruitment and use of child soldiers, attacks on peacekeepers, and obstruction of humanitarian operations, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the U.S. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the White House issued a statement on the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. The White House noted the genocide claimed the lives of more than 800,000 Rwandan men, women,

and children and marked the beginning of one hundred days of horror for Rwanda's people. While we remain haunted by the genocide, the White House observed we also draw hope and inspiration from the people of Rwanda and commend their determination to continue to make important progress toward healing old wounds and lifting people out of poverty. Additionally, the White House pledged to continue to work in partnership with Rwanda and other nations to help prevent such atrocities and advance dignity and peace for all. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his decision to extend the national emergency with respect to Somalia beyond April 12, 2015. While noting progress in the U.S. relationship with Somalia, including the U.S. Government announcing its recognition of the Government of Somalia on January 2013, and nominating the first U.S. Ambassador to Somalia in over two decades this February 2015, President Obama said U.S. sanctions against persons undermining the stability of Somalia continue to be important. The extension of the national emergency with respect to Somalia was noticed [here](#).

### ***State Department***

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the State Department issued a press statement expressing concern for reports of detentions and restrictions on movement of Equatoguinean citizens for political reasons. In particular, the State Department noted the detainment of Republican Democratic Force (FDR) opposition party leader Guillermo Nguema Ela and the confinement of FDR member Nzo Ondo. The U.S. called on the Government of Equatorial Guinea to release both, consistent with the Constitution of Equatorial Guinea, and to allow political parties to register and participate freely in peaceful political activities. The full statement was published [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the State Department condemned the terrorist attacks in Egypt's North Sinai Governorate in which at least 17 Egyptian soldiers and civilians were killed and dozens others wounded and offered condolences to the victims, their families, and the government and people of Egypt. Additionally, the State Department reiterated its steadfast support of Egypt's efforts to combat terrorism in the Sinai and throughout the country and pledged to continue to work with Egypt to address shared threats to regional security. Feedback from the State Department can be seen [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the State Department issued a statement congratulating the people of Senegal on the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their independence. The State Department noted the U.S. and Senegal are united in the core principles of democracy, respect for rule of law, and individual liberties. In addition, the State Department applauded Senegal's ongoing role in promoting democracy, justice, and security throughout the region, as evidenced by Senegal's support for Operation United Assistance. The statement was posted [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the State Department announced the U.S. colleges and universities that have been selected to host the 2015 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders this summer. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of the President's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). The Fellowship empowers young African leaders through academic coursework, leadership training, mentoring, networking, professional opportunities, and support for activities in their communities. Details on the program, as well as a list of the 2015 Host University Partners, can be accessed [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman met with Ambassador of Egypt to the U.S. Mohamed Tawfik at the Department of State. Their meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, found [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with South African Ambassador to the U.S. Miniwa Johannes Mahlangu at the Department of State. Their meeting was listed [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp participated in the commemoration of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, "Kwibuka 21," at the Rwandan Embassy in Washington, DC. Ambassador Rapp's participation was noted [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Governments of the U.S., the United Kingdom (U.K.), and Norway issued a joint statement on the National Dialogue in Sudan. The members of the Troika expressed great disappointment that a genuine National Dialogue has not begun in Sudan and that an environment conducive to participatory and credible elections does not exist. The leaders reiterated a comprehensive and inclusive National Dialogue is a necessary process for Sudan to develop a truly representative political system and to confront fundamental issues of governance, political inclusiveness, resource sharing, national identity, and social equality. The joint statement can be read [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry participated in the U.S.-Algeria Strategic Dialogue and met with Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra at the Department of State. A joint communique issued by the Governments of Algeria and the U.S. following the Strategic dialogue can be viewed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks with Minister Lamamra were transcribed [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, State Department Acting Spokesperson Marie Harf confirmed that U.S. Government personnel supported a Ugandan operation that successfully apprehended several individuals suspected of being involved in the assassination of the principal state attorney. This support was provided at the request of Ugandan authorities. In addition, Spokesperson Harf confirmed that one of those was a former Guantanamo detainee who was released in 2006. Her comments were recorded [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry met with Moroccan Foreign Minister Salaheddine Mezouar and participated in the U.S.-Morocco Strategic Dialogue at the Department of State. The U.S.-Morocco Strategic Dialogue was noticed [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with Congolese Ambassador to the U.S. Serge Mombouli at the Department of State. The meeting was noted [here](#).

On April 10<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken will travel to Tunis, Tunisia to meet with senior Tunisian Government officials and civil society representatives. Deputy Secretary Blinken's visit to Tunisia is intended to reinforce U.S. support for Tunisia's democracy in the face of the recent Bardo Museum attack. Deputy Secretary Blinken's travel was outlined [here](#).

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

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), in partnership with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 77<sup>th</sup> Armored Regiment of the Djiboutian Gendarmerie, kicked off a two-day training event to share medical treatment best practices in Cheik Moussa. The event consisted of classroom and hands-on exercises, discussing the best practices for both forces in the basic care of a patient, covering medical techniques such as splints, arterial bleeding, amputations, and abdominal injuries. The training event was detailed [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, joint high-speed vessel USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) and its embarked detachment of U.S. Navy sailors, civil service mariners, and U.S., Spanish, and British mariners conducted the Gabon phase of Spearhead's support to African Partnership Station in Port Gentil, Gabon. While in port, Spearhead's embarked military detachment conducted bilateral training with Gabon military forces to enhance interoperability and partnership. The crew also painted and repaired a local orphanage while in port. An article on the exercise was published [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) noted that while many U.S. Navy sailors traveled to Ghana for the first time to support Exercise Obangame Express 2015, for some Ghanaian-American sailors, it was also an opportunity to return to their birth place. Exercise Obangame Express brought together 23 nations, including all Gulf of Guinea countries, to increase maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea. Given that this year's exercise was hosted by Ghana, many sailors with Ghanaian roots were involved in planning this year's exercise. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified Congress that Egypt is seeking to buy 356 Hellfire II Missiles worth \$57 million from Lockheed Martin, along with associated equipment, spare parts, training, and logistical support. Congress now has 30 days to review the deal, which has

already been approved by the State Department as part of the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. Details can be seen [here](#).

### ***Department of Commerce***

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa held its first meeting. Established by Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker in November 2014, the Council is tasked with advising the President on strengthening commercial engagement between the U.S. and Africa, with a focus on advancing the President's Doing Business in Africa Campaign as described in the U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa. As part of its first meeting, the Council discussed recommendations related to investment and access to capital, trade and supply chain development, infrastructure, and marketing and outreach. The meeting agenda can be downloaded [here](#).

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

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) unveiled its annual report for 2014, which takes an in-depth look at the impacts of OPIC-funded projects around the globe. This year's report highlights an OPIC-supported private equity fund invested in an equipment leasing business in Malawi that provides equipment to smallholder farmers, as well as OPIC's support for a private equity fund investing in affordable housing in Nigeria that has leveraged \$63.3 million in additional private sector investment. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

### ***Congress***

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Senators Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Chris Coons (D-DE), John Boozman (R-AR), Bob Casey (D-PA), David Perdue (R-GA), Tom Carper (D-DE), Dan Coats (R-IN), Mark Warner (D-VA), John Cornyn (R-TX), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), and Tim Kaine (D-VA) sent a letter to South African Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davies and Special Envoy for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Faizel Ismail expressing their concern about the lack of progress being made in negotiations over antidumping duties that have effectively blocked the import of American chicken for the last 15 years. The Senators noted the importance of an agreement being reached by the nations' respective trade groups before the Senate considers reauthorization of AGOA this spring. The letter can be viewed [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry (R-TX) made a statement on renewed U.S. military support for Egypt. Congressman Thornberry encouraged the Government of Egypt to continue its democratic process and noted Egypt is a strong regional ally. Given the priority of the U.S. bilateral relationship with Egypt, Congressman Thornberry said providing Egypt with the means to protect Egyptians and Americans from the threat of terrorism is the right thing to do. Congressman Thornberry's statement can be read [here](#).

### **North Africa**

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) strongly condemned repeated airstrikes on an airport in the western town of Zintan that it said have endangered civilians and seriously undermined attempts at securing a solution to the Libyan crisis. UNSMIL reminded all parties that under international humanitarian law, the repeated attacks on civilian facilities in recent days may constitute war crimes. Feedback from UNSMIL was posted [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, militants in North Sinai simultaneously attacked two army checkpoints, killing at least 13 Egyptian soldiers and two civilians and wounding 18 other soldiers and one police officer. Both assaults involved the use of car bombs followed by gunfire. The region is home to a number of militant groups, including Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, which has pledged its allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and newer groups such as the Popular Resistance Movement and Revolutionary Punishment. The situation in the Sinai was described [here](#).

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed his disappointment at the failure to hold the Sudanese pre-dialogue meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, because of the decision by the ruling National Congress Party and its allies not to attend the meeting. Secretary-General Ban stressed that a fully

inclusive, free, and transparent dialogue is critical to addressing the root causes of the recurrent crisis in Sudan and achieving sustainable peace. He also urged all stakeholders to continue to engage constructively towards the early convening of a credible and inclusive National Dialogue. Secretary-General Ban's concern was articulated [here](#).

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, Islamist militants launched two attacks in Egypt. In Cairo, a bomb explosion on a bridge in Zamalek, which hosts many embassies, killed one policeman and injured two more officers and a civilian. The militant group Afnad Misr, which emerged in January 2014 and has perpetrated a number of attacks in Cairo, claimed responsibility for the bombing. In Alexandria, militants in a microbus shot at the Church of the Angel Rafael, wounding one police officer and three civilians before fleeing. Both incidents were reported [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, following his visit to Tunisia last week, World Bank Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa Hafez Ghanem authored an op-ed on the need to unite to support Tunisia so it can break the cycle of violence and conflict feeding economic stagnation. Vice President Ghanem noted the March 18<sup>th</sup> attack on the Bardo Museum was a tragic event for Tunisia that demonstrated the fragility hampering growth in the region and threatening global stability and prosperity. He also praised Tunisians for demonstrating the political courage and determination to achieve a more democratic and inclusive society. The op-ed can be accessed [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the Joint AU-U.N. Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) confirmed the dropping of ten bombs, which killed 14 civilians and wounded 18 others in Rowata, Central Darfur, on April 1<sup>st</sup>. U.N. officials reported a verification patrol dispatched to Rowata witnesses another aerial bombardment during their deployment. UNAMID condemned such aerial bombings, which it said cause widespread death, destruction, and displacement of populations. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reported around 4,500 people have recently sought shelter on UNMISS premises in Malakal. The new arrivals bring the total number of civilians at the site close to 26,000, with a total of 115,000 sheltering in U.N. compounds elsewhere in the country. The new statistics bring the number of displaced people being sheltered in U.N. compounds to its highest level since the start of the conflict in South Sudan since December 2013. An updated was provided [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) sent a letter to Moroccan Ambassador Rachad Bouhal voicing its objection to an agreement between the European Union (EU) and Morocco to recognize a slew of one another's geographic names for food and beverage marketing, arguing that an overly broad set of names could lock out third-market suppliers. The CCFN has also raised concerns about the proliferation of controversial labeling policies in other trade negotiations, including those between the EU and Morocco. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank highlighted the recent visit of a delegation of Moroccan parliamentarians to the World Bank for a workshop on the impact of the country's new constitution on the parliament. Participants included Deputy Speaker of the Moroccan House of Representatives Dr. Chafik Rachadi, Member of the Board of the Parliament of Morocco Abdellatif Berrho, and Chairman of the Finance and Economic Development Committee of the Moroccan Parliament Said Khairoun. Details were shared [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, AU Commission Chairwoman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma sent a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urging the U.N. to add human rights monitoring to the mandate of the U.N. Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). The U.N. Security Council is expected to vote on renewing MINURSO's mission later this month. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Libyan government based in Tripoli warned the internationally recognized government led by Prime Minister Abdullah Al-Thinni that any attempts to export oil independently would be met with military action to seize oil ports and facilities. Prime Minister Thinni's forces hold the key oil ports of Ras Lanuf and Es Sider and he has recently said he will seek oil sales and open a bank account overseas to hold revenues. Both positions were addressed [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Egypt's public prosecutor referred 379 alleged members of the Muslim Brotherhood to court for charges related to sit-ins in August 2013 that were broken up by security forces. The defendants are accused of causing the deaths of two policemen at al-Nahda Square in Giza, one of two sites where supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi gathered following his overthrow by the military. Additional charges of murder and vandalism are also reportedly under consideration. The case was described [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, *Reuters* reported that since the ousting of President Mohamed Morsi, some former Egyptian army officers have joined Islamist militant groups, such as Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which is based in the Sinai. Advisors to current President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi have expressed concern this trend is increasing the threat posed by the insurgency, especially as former army officers bring knowledge of the world's biggest army, as well as training and strategic direction. Details can be seen [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said Egypt should free ousted Islamist President Mohamed Morsi from jail and lift death sentences against his supporters before Turkey will consider improving its bilateral relationship with Egypt. President Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood has close ties with Turkey's ruling Justice and Development (AK) party, which President Erdogan co-founded. Relations between the two countries have been strained since the toppling of President Morsi and the Egyptian military's crackdown on protests during the transition. President Erdogan's comments were captured [here](#).

### **East Africa**

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the Steering Committee of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Africa Regional Technical Assistance Center East (East AFRITAC) met in Kampala, Uganda, to assess activities since May 2014, discuss the program of operations for 2015-2020, and review the work plan for FY16. The meeting was attended by six of the seven member countries and donor representatives, including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the U.K., the EU, Germany, and the Netherlands. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) called on Tanzania to take steps to revise or repeal laws, customs, and practices that discriminate against women. The CEDAW was reacting to its consideration of a complaint from two widows who were prevented from inheriting their late husbands' property and were left homeless. Details can be found [here](#).

### **West Africa**

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Government of Mali and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched a new project aimed at restoring the livelihoods of some 33,000 households affected by armed conflict and climate change in northern Mali. The project is anticipated to help 25,000 households restart food and horticultural production and provide 8,000 pastoralist families with feed and veterinary products for cattle. Beneficiaries will also receive training in farming and nutritional practices, with a focus on engaging women. The project was launched [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution authorizing the third phase of a drawdown of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Liberia to 3,590 military personnel and 1,515 police personnel, and deciding the U.N. Mission in Liberia's (UNMIL) mandate will no longer include electoral support. The U.N. expects the Government of Liberia will fully assume security responsibilities from UNMIL no later than June 30, 2016. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, an inquiry launched in February to determine the facts surrounding a violent demonstration in Gao, Mali submitted its final report. The inquiry into the violence, which took place on January 27<sup>th</sup>, determined that members of the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) used unauthorized and excessive force on civilian protestors during the demonstration, resulting in the death by gunfire of three protestors and the wounding of four others. The inquiry's findings were noted [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Executive Board of the IMF approved emergency financial assistance under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF) in the amount of \$10.8 million for The Gambia to enable authorities to meet their urgent balance of payment and fiscal needs. In announcing the decision, the IMF noted while The Gambia remains Ebola free, the crisis has caused a deep decline in tourism related activities of roughly 60 percent. A press release was published [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, an IMF team concluded a visit to Abidjan to conduct discussions on the seventh review of Cote d'Ivoire's economic and financial program supported by an arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF). By the end of its trip, the IMF mission reached agreement with officials in Cote d'Ivoire, subject to approval by IMF management and the Executive Board, on an additional disbursement of \$67.5 million. Board consideration is expected in June. Additional information on the IMF trip to Cote d'Ivoire can be found [here](#).

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the World Bank highlighted the National Fadama Development Project, which has been supporting Nigerian farmers since 1993 by helping to empower communities and strengthen agriculture development. The project recently received \$200 million in additional World Bank financing for its third phase, which will help Nigerian farmers turn their agriculture skills into income-generating businesses and also support the country's Agricultural Transformation Agenda. The project was highlighted [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Executive Board of the IMF approved a three-year arrangement under the ECF for Ghana in the amount of \$918 million to support authorities' medium-term economic reform program. The program aims to restore debt sustainability and macroeconomic stability to foster a return to high growth and job creation, while protecting social spending. Additional analysis of Ghana's economy was provided [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, lawmakers in Burkina Faso modified the electoral code to prevent people from standing for office if they had supported a failed move last year to allow then-President Blaise Compaore to seek another term. The new law applies to elections in 2015 and 2016, including the October 2015 presidential contest, and effectively bars members of President Compaore's government and the leaders of his Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP) party from running. Current ministers are also not authorized to run for president. The revisions to the electoral code were explained [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Ghana's oil refinery was shut down due to a mechanical fault caused by a lack of maintenance and unreliable power supply. The refinery is expected to be closed for the next month for repairs. Ghana produces around 100,000 barrels per day of crude oil at its offshore Jubilee field and also imports oil for domestic consumption. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Nigerian authorities identified a suspected outbreak of avian flu on a chicken farm in Maradi. As a result, authorities decided to isolate the farm and ban the transport of all poultry out of the town. The suspected cases of bird flu in Niger come a week after Burkina Faso also confirmed an outbreak of bird flu. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, all of Togo's presidential candidates agreed on an updated voter roll of roughly 3.5 million potential voters, allowing the election to proceed on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The vote was initially scheduled for April 15<sup>th</sup>, but was delayed when ECOWAS requested the lists be revised. Current President Faure Gnassingbe, who was widely encouraged to step down although Togo has no law on term limits, will face four rivals in the election. More information can be seen [here](#).

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, following initial discussions in December 2014, an IMF team concluded a visit to Zambia to complete discussions for the 2015 Article IV consultation. The IMF team noted the Zambian economy is experiencing strong headwinds, with policy uncertainties at home and external shocks dampening economic activity. IMF officials also urged Zambian authorities to take action to contain the fiscal deficit in order to alleviate financing pressures that are keeping interest rates high and crowding out lending to the private sector. Additional insights on the Zambian economy were offered [here](#).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved additional financing in the amount of \$73.6 million to support the implementation of the Government of Mozambique's Second

Phase of the Roads and Bridges Management and Maintenance Program. The new funding will fill a financing gap for flood-related road rehabilitation work in southern Gaza province following severe flooding in the lower Limpopo River basin in 2013. The financing decision was announced [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the IMF announced plans to lend Burundi \$6.9 million to bolster the country's economy leading up to the June 26<sup>th</sup> presidential election. The IMF has also pledged to lend Burundi another \$13.9 million in 2016 to help strengthen the management of public finances and consolidate the country's economic reform program. Burundi continues to face economic challenges as it emerges from more than a decade of civil war and as tensions rise over whether current President Pierre Nkurunziza can run for another term. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Board of Directors of the AfDB approved a \$123.77 million loan to Angola to finance the country's Institutional and Sustainability Support to Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Service Delivery Project. The project is intended to improve water sector governance, strengthen institutional capacity and efficiency in the water and sanitation sector institutions at central and provincial levels, and improve access to sustainable water supply and sanitation services. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the AfDB Board approved \$25.995 million in grants and loans to finance the Mahe Sustainable Water Augmentation Project (MSWAP) in Seychelles. The project aims at achieving the Seychelles 2008-2030 Water Development Plan (SWDP). Currently, Seychelles can only meet about 60 percent of its potable water needs due to limited storage capacity, increased demand for housing construction, and water losses along the network. The project was outlined [here](#).

On April 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>, the Steering Committee of the IMF's Regional Technical Assistance center for Southern Africa (AFRITAC South) met in Johannesburg, South Africa. Members of the Committee noted good progress toward FY15 work program implementation, and in particular, in the areas of public financial management, revenue administration, and real sector statistics. The Committee also endorsed a work program for FY16 and welcomed a further increase in the share of resources allocated to low-income countries. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Rwanda to conduct the third review of the economic program supported by the Policy Support Instrument (PSI). Following meetings with Rwandan officials, the IMF team observed Rwanda's recent economic performance has been favorable, with a 7 percent growth rate in 2014. In addition, IMF staff reported Rwanda's near term economic output is stable. Economic data was analyzed [here](#).

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, a 15-year-old South African girl was taken off a Cape Town flight destined for Johannesburg by authorities who suspected she was going to board an international flight to join ISIL. Minister of State Security David Mahlobo confirmed the girl was taken off a British Airways flight and ultimately admitted she was trying to join ISIL. Her disappearance was reported earlier by family and evidence found in her bedroom later revealed she had been in touch with ISIL recruiters. For more information, click [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Human Rights Watch called on the DRC Government to investigate the late night burial of at least 421 bodies in Maluku last month. While the Government claims the bodies were those of dead fetuses, still-born babies, and unclaimed corpses, the human rights groups suspects the bodies might belong to people killed in anti-government protests in January or a crackdown on Kinshasa criminals. The full story can be accessed [here](#).

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace hosted a briefing titled, "The Fate of South Africa's Nuclear Material." Speakers included Douglas Birch and R. Jeffrey Smith of the Center for Public Integrity, Matthew Bunn of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Thomas Wheeler of the South African Institute of International Affairs, and Togzhan Kassenova of Carnegie's Nuclear Policy Program. Event details were posted [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and said the world should use the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda to look back on the past and to confront the challenges of the present to prevent such atrocities from happening again. Secretary-General Ban added that conflicts and atrocity crimes in many parts of the world are continuing to divide communities, kill and displace people, undermine economies, and destroy

cultural heritage and the international community's first duty is always to prevent these situations and protect vulnerable human beings in distress. Secretary-General Ban's comments were captured [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, France announced plans to declassify documents relating to Rwanda's 1994 killings. The Government of Rwanda has welcomed the release of the papers, which include documents from diplomatic and military advisors and minutes from ministerial and defense meetings, as Rwanda has repeatedly accusing France of complicity in the genocide because of its support of the Hutu nationalist government that carried out the mass slaughter of ethnic Tutsis. France has repeatedly denied the accusations, insisting that French forces had been working to support civilians. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, police in Goma arrested five members of a pro-democracy youth group Lucha in the eastern DRC as they protested against the illegal detention of activists in Kinshasa. Roughly 40 demonstrators were detained in the capital on March 15<sup>th</sup> during a news conference organized by Congolese and West African pro-democracy advocates intended to promote youth participation in politics. The youth activists in Goma has been encouraging residents to participate in five minutes of protest by whistling, honking horns, and banging on pots and pans at the time of their arrest. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa to meeting with President Jacob Zuma. During his visit to South Africa, President Mugabe was expected to participate in a business forum to review two-way trade, which is heavily weighted about 12-to-one in South Africa's favor. The trip marks President Mugabe's first official state visit to South Africa in 21 years. His visit was outlined [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, DRC military leaders said FDLR rebels from Rwanda had killed ten soldiers in an ambush on Monday, representing the deadliest attack since the start of a military campaign against armed groups in February. According to reports, two colonels were among those killed and several other soldiers were injured in the attack in North Kivu province. The ambush was reported [here](#).

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Germany's KfW Group announced a \$338 million loan for South African power utility Eskom to make the country's power grid fit for an increasing share of renewable generators. The loan will help connect solar and wind power plants by modernizing transmission and distribution networks. Eskom currently provides 95 percent of South Africa's electricity. The loan was announced [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the University of Cape Town in South Africa removed a statue of British imperialist Cecil Rhodes, which has been covered for the past several weeks following student demonstrations in support of its removal. Students have argued the statue served as a symbol of racism on the campus. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, police in Malawi were ordered to shoot anyone attacking albinos as part of the latest bid to crack down on a rising wave of violence in East Africa whose body parts are prized in black magic. The latest order came from Malawi's Inspector General of Police Lexan Kacham, who authorized police to shoot anyone caught abducting albinos. The policy order was noted [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, Amnesty International released its annual Death Sentences and Executions 2014 report. The report finds terrorism is responsible for an increase in the number of death sentences imposed in Africa over the past year, as the number of people sentenced to death in Africa more than doubled since 2013. At least 1,444 death sentences were imposed on the continent in 2014, up from 605 in 2013. The report's findings were highlighted [here](#).

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