



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### ***Egypt***

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, an Egyptian Court sentenced Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohammed Badie and 682 supporters to death in a mass trial. Following the announcement of the death sentences, Islamist groups in Egypt aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood issued a call for Egyptians to protest the sentences in the streets of Cairo. Developments in Egypt's crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood were described [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Office of the White House Press Secretary issued a press statement on mass trials and sentencing in Egypt. The White House expressed deep concern for the continued use of mass trials, and in particular the issuing of the death sentence against 683 defendants. Noting that a fair and transparent criminal justice system free of intimidation and political retribution is an important part of any democracy, the White House called on the Egyptian Government to end the use of mass trials, reverse this and previous mass sentences, and to ensure that every citizen is afforded due process. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of State issued a press statement expressing concerns with an Egyptian Court announcing preliminary death sentences against 683 defendants in a mass trial and upholding the death sentences against 37 defendants from a March court decision. The State Department also opposed the court's decision to ban the activities of The April 6 Youth Movement. In light of the decision, U.S. officials called on Egyptian authorities to remedy these rulings, suspend future mass trials, and ensure due process for the accused on the merits of individual cases. The full statement was shared [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Pentagon Spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said that U.S Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez, head of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Admiral William McRaven, and head of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) General Lloyd Austin III are scheduled to meet this week with Egyptian defense leaders in Cairo. No details were provided on the agenda for the meeting. The meeting was noted [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a discussion on the role of Egypt in the Middle East. Participants included Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs Nabil Fahmy and Jon Alterman of CSIS. A video recording of the discussion can be watched [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy at the Department of State. Prior to their meeting, Secretary Kerry indicated the leaders would candidly discuss Egypt's democratic transition. While commending Egypt's adoption of a new constitution and preparations for elections, Secretary Kerry expressed concern with disturbing decisions that have recently been issued by the Egyptian judicial system. Minister Fahmy reported that the people of Egypt want democracy and acknowledged institutional challenges, especially as the country's judicial system operates independent of government. Remarks delivered before Secretary Kerry and Minister Fahmy's meeting were transcribed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Patrick Leahy (D-VT) delivered a speech on the Senate floor indicating that he plans to hold up the delivery of \$650 million in U.S. assistance to the Egyptian military, announced last week. Senator Leahy noted his decision was influenced by the recent trial in Egypt that led to the mass sentencing of 683 people to death. Excerpts from Senator Leahy's speech can be seen [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel hosted an honor cordon to welcome Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs Nabil Fahmy to the Pentagon for a meeting. Secretary Hagel and Minister Fahmy discussed recent events in Egypt and the Middle East, as well as the bilateral defense relationship. The leaders also addressed counterterrorism, border security, and security in the Sinai, political developments in Egypt's democratic transition, the release of activists and journalists who have been detained, and Egypt's judicial process and recent mass sentences. A readout of the meeting was shared [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. National Security Advisor Susan Rice met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy to discuss Egypt's political transition and regional security issues. Ambassador Rice and Minister Fahmy addressed cooperation on shared security interests, as well as U.S. concerns about mass trials and death sentences issued by Egyptian courts, the continued detention of journalists and activists, and ongoing restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the *Washington Post* Editorial Board published an op-ed arguing that the Obama Administration should not send any further aid to Egypt until U.S. officials certify that Egypt is successfully transitioning to democracy. The article suggests that providing Egypt with assistance now would send the signal that the U.S. has issued a vote of confidence in General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, even though the current military government is one of the most repressive Egyptian regimes in at least a half century. The full editorial can be read [here](#).

### **South Sudan**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council issued a statement requesting that U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Simonovic return to South Sudan as soon as possible to investigate the recent massacre in Bentiu spurred by ethnic differences. In addition, the Security Council indicated it would take additional measures regarding the situation in South Sudan should attacks on civilians and violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement continue. More information can be seen [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) condemned the attack launched against a convoy of four barges en route to deliver food and fuel supplies to the U.N. base in Malakal. Four crew members and U.N. peacekeepers were injured when the convoy came under small arms fire and was later targeted by rocket-propelled grenades. The attackers have not yet been identified. The incident was reported [here](#).

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) posted a video clip of USAID Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Nancy Lindborg's conversation with Khalid Medani of McGill University on the escalating violence and humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. Following her recent visit to the country, Assistant Administrator Lindborg expressed concern for the recent attacks on civilians in Bor and Bentiu and called on leaders in South Sudan to help create an environment that allows international assistance to reach those impacted by the conflict. The video can be watched [here](#).

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called South Sudanese President Salva Kiir to express grave concern about continuing violence in South Sudan, and in particular recent incidents in Bor and Bentiu. In addition, Secretary Kerry reported calls for both government and opposition forces to stop military offenses and adhere to the cessation of hostilities agreement. Secretary Kerry also encouraged President Kiir to provide access for UNMISS personnel throughout the country, as well as the African Union (AU) Commission of Inquiry and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Monitoring and Verification Mechanism. Secretary Kerry and President Kiir's conversation was summarized [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay arrived in South Sudan to meet with U.N. Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide Adama Dieng on the worsening human rights situation in Unity and Jonglei states. The meeting follows clashes over the weekend between South Sudanese Government and opposition forces reported by UNMISS personnel in Mapel in Western Bahr el Ghazal state. Takeaways from the meeting were noted [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. announced preparations to airlift relief supplies, including blankets, sleeping mats, and water buckets, to Juba for distribution to roughly 100,000 displaced people in South Sudan's Unity, Upper Nile, and Jonglei states. The delivery is intended to ensure the provision of humanitarian supplies in advance of the approaching rainy season. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, at the end of her three-day visit to South Sudan, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay warned that the country is on the verge of catastrophe, with increasing frequency of recrimination, use of hate speech, and revenge killings. High Commissioner Pillay called on South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar to end their personal power struggle and move South Sudan toward stability. High Commissioner Pillay's comments were posted [here](#).

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

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) announced that the number of children in the Central African Republic (CAR) being treated for malnutrition has tripled from 214 to 680 since the start of the year, as violence has disrupted activities that allow Central African families access to safe water, sanitation services, and health care. UNICEF also warned that malnutrition will only become a bigger challenge as the rainy season approaches. The situation in the CAR was detailed [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, U.N. peacekeeping forces escorted roughly 1,300 remaining Muslims out of Bangui in the CAR, as violence between Muslims and Christians continued. As Muslims exited the city, Christian militias launched an attack that killed 22 people, including 15 local chiefs and three charity workers, and engaged in widespread looting and destruction of the Muslim neighborhoods around the capital. Developments in the CAR were reported [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) condemned the attack on a humanitarian convoy perpetrated by a Christian armed group that was helping to move Muslim's out of the capital to safer areas in the northern part of the country. Following the attack, the convoy continued its journey on to Kaga Bandoro, where those who were injured received medical assistance. Details can be viewed [here](#).

### **United States – Africa Relations**

#### ***White House***

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, conservative group Judicial Watch published an email from Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes to senior Obama Administration officials on what they should say in the immediate aftermath of the September 2012 terrorist attack against the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya. According the email, which was just shared with the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee two weeks ago, the White House encouraged messaging to indicate that protests were rooted in reactions to an anti-Muslim video and not a broader failure of U.S. policy. The email was posted [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney responded to the release of an email written by Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes that congressional investigators say was directly related to the terrorist attack in Benghazi. Press Secretary Carney said the email was not just about Benghazi,

but more broadly about the overall situation in the region and protests that occurred outside of U.S. embassies in a number of Muslim countries, including Egypt, Sudan, and Tunisia. Press Secretary Carney's comments can be seen [here](#).

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

On April 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for Africa Florie Liser traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to participate in the AU Ministerial Meeting. At the meeting, Assistant USTR Liser discussed the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) with African trade ministers. Assistant USTR Liser's travel was noticed [here](#).

### ***State Department***

On April 24<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Rick Barton traveled to Nigeria to attend the premiere of "Dawn in the Creeks," a Nigerian-led television program, funded by the State Department's Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations, that showcases nonviolent problem-solving in communities throughout the Niger Delta. Assistant Secretary Barton was also scheduled to meet with Nigerian Government officials, as well as the Niger Delta Legacy Board of Directors and local communities in Lagos and the Niger Delta. Assistant Secretary Barton's travel was detailed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the State Department announced that Secretary of State John Kerry will be on overseas travel April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup>, making stops in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Luanda, Angola, to encourage democratic development, promote respect for human rights, advance peace and security, engage with civil society and young African leaders, promote trade, investment, and development partnerships and to highlight U.S. investments in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). In Ethiopia, Secretary Kerry was scheduled to participate in the Fourth Session of the U.S.-AU High-Level Dialogue and to meet with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn and Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom. In the DRC, Secretary Kerry will meet with President Joseph Kabila to discuss the DRC's democratization and progress in neutralizing armed groups. In Angola, Secretary Kerry will meet with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Foreign Minister Georges Chikoti to discuss Angola's engagement in the Great Lakes peace process. Secretary Kerry was accompanied by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and the DRC Russ Feingold, U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan Donald Booth, Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell, Vice Admiral Kurt Tidd of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) President Elizabeth Littlefield. Secretary Kerry's travel was announced [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry hosted a swearing-in ceremony for Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator of U.S. Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Deborah Bix. In his remarks at the ceremony, Secretary Kerry noted Ambassador Bix's extensive work on HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Ambassador Bix also addressed the need to promote greater accountability and transparency through new Country Health Partnerships, including with South Africa, Rwanda, and Namibia. A transcript of the event was provided [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement on the occasion of Sierra Leone's national day. Secretary Kerry said that Sierra Leone has become one of Africa's greatest success stories and is a model post-conflict country following its civil war. In addition, he noted that the U.S. remains committed helping Sierra Leone continue to advance its efforts to build democratic institutions, provide public services, and improve governance. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry provided remarks in recognition of Togo's Independence Day. Noting that the U.S. and Togo enjoy a strong partnership, Secretary Kerry expressed appreciation for Togo's efforts to promote regional peace, expand economic opportunity, and fight transnational crime. The Secretary's statement on Togo's national day is available [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry provided a statement on South Africa's Freedom Day, noting that this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of South Africa's first democratic elections, as well as the first elections since the passing of former South African President Nelson Mandela. Secretary Kerry said the past 20 years have been a period of transformation, reconciliation, forgiveness, and hope. He

also encouraged goodwill in South Africa's upcoming general elections. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be viewed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued remarks congratulating Tanzania on the occasion marking 50 years since the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar to become Tanzania. He noted the U.S. and Tanzania continue to work together to fight malaria and HIV/AIDS and to advance shared achievements in agriculture, education, and the environment. Secretary Kerry's remarks can be seen [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Anne Patterson was on foreign travel to Tunisia for official meetings. Assistant Secretary Patterson's trip to Tunisia was noted [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Dean Pittman met with U.N. Special Representative to Mali and Head of the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) at the Department of State. The meeting was listed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the State Department shared a press statement welcoming the formation of a new government in Madagascar following the presidential and National Assembly elections held in late 2013. U.S. officials expressed optimism that President Hery Rajaonarimampianina's appointment of Roger Kolo as Prime Minister and the selection of a new cabinet will rehabilitate Madagascar's economy, strengthen democratic institutions, and restore respect for human rights. The statement was shared [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki noted that State Department officials are aware that six independent bloggers and three independent journalists were recently detained by Ethiopian police. She urged the Government of Ethiopia to expeditiously review the cases of these detainees and promptly release them. More broadly, Spokesperson Psaki said the U.S. would like to see Ethiopia fully adhere to its constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press, and noted that Secretary Kerry will likely raise this issue with Ethiopian officials during his upcoming visit to the country. Spokesperson Psaki's comments are available [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki addressed several issues related to Africa in her daily press briefing. First, on Secretary of State John Kerry's upcoming travel to the DRC, Spokesperson Psaki said that Secretary Kerry is prepared to address the disarmament of the M23 rebel group. Spokesperson Psaki also provided a readout of Secretary Kerry's meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy, noting the leaders discussed Egypt's transition and U.S. concerns for mass sentences and the detention of journalists in Egypt. A transcript was provided [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall met with Deputy to the Commander for Civil-Military Engagement (DCME) of AFRICOM Ambassador Phillip Carter at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be accessed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the State Department submitted its annual assessment of trends and events and international terrorism for 2013 to Congress, as required by law. This year's report finds that while core of Al Qaeda leadership has been degraded, 2013 still saw the rise of increasingly aggressive and autonomous Al Qaeda affiliates and like-minded groups in Africa, who took advantage of weak governance and instability in the region to broaden and deepen their operations. The full Country Reports on Terrorism 2013 can be downloaded [here](#). A transcript of an off-the-record State Department briefing on the report was published [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry was on travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he met with regional foreign ministers on South Sudan, toured the Gandhi Memorial Hospital and met with AU Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha and Commissioners. In addition, Secretary Kerry visited the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia, met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, and met with local economic and security experts. Secretary Kerry's remarks with Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom, Kenyan Foreign Minister Amina Chawahir Mohamed, and Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa were transcribed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's speech at Gandhi Memorial Hospital can be viewed [here](#). A transcript of Secretary Kerry's solo press availability can be found [here](#). Lastly, Secretary Kerry's remarks at the US-AU High-Level Dialogue were posted [here](#).

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

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the USAID Impact Blog shared a blog post and a video detailing community engagement in Ghana to combat malaria. In a country where the entire population of 25 million people is at risk for malaria, a grassroots campaign has been effective in promoting spraying homes in the areas where infected mosquitos live with an insecticide, consistent with the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). The blog can be accessed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, USAID pushed out a blog post authored by U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator Rear Admiral Tim Ziemer on the gains made by sub-Saharan African countries in fighting the prevalence of malaria. Over the past decade, Coordinator Ziemer noted that 3.3 million lives have been saved with the deployment of more malaria control interventions, while child mortality rates due to the disease were reduced by 54%. He also noted that ten years ago 45% of all hospital admissions in Africa were related to malaria infections. Coordinator Ziemer's post can be read [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah attended the Malaria No More Reception on Capitol Hill. The event was held in conjunction with the observance of World Malaria Day. Administrator Shah's participation was noted [here](#).

## ***Department of Defense***

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, AFRICOM observed World Malaria Day by helping to spread awareness of Malaria to members of the AFRICOM community. A tent of displays was set up at the Kelley Barracks, where information was provided on the dangers of malaria and how to stay safe from mosquito bites. Details on AFRICOM's participation in World Malaria Day can be seen [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, AFRICOM Public Affairs reported that the East African Response Force (EARF) has returned to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, following a four-month deployment to Juba to help secure the U.S. Embassy in South Sudan. While in Juba, the EARF helped to evacuate 700 U.S. and foreign national noncombatants and ultimately had their deployment extended to provide additional security as needed. U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan Susan Page applauded the EARF for making embassy operations possible and for helping to facilitate U.S. Government efforts toward humanitarian relief and ending South Sudan's conflict. More information on the EARF's deployment to South Sudan can be found [here](#).

## ***Department of Commerce***

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Commerce issued details on the Energy Business Development trade mission that Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker will lead to Ghana and Nigeria May 18<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. The goal of the trade mission is to promote U.S. exports and expand U.S. companies' presence in Africa's energy sector, while leveraging U.S. expertise to help African partners develop and manage energy resources and systems, and build out power generation, transmission, and distribution. Twenty U.S. companies will join Secretary Pritzker on the trip, including ABB Inc., Acorn Energy, Alpha Energy and Electric, Inc., Canary, LLC, Candies Shipbuilders, Cargill, ECC, Elicott Dredges, LLC, Electric Knowledge Interchange, GE, Hightowers Petroleum Co., HPI, Intermarine, LLC, MacLean Power Systems, PW Power Systems, Scimitar Global Markets, LLC, SEWW Energy, Inc., Solar Reserve, Symbion Power, LLC, and Unified Electrics, LLC. In addition, the Department of Commerce announced the International Trade Administration (ITA) will open offices in Angola, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Mozambique in the coming months, and expand existing offices in Kenya, Ghana, Morocco, and Libya. More information is available [here](#).

## ***Export-Import Bank of the U.S.***

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank's annual conference, The Connell Company was recognized as the Sub-Saharan Africa Exporter of the Year. Ex-Im Bank Chairman and President Fred Hochberg said that Connell is bringing new economic opportunity to sub-Saharan Africa, while creating jobs in the U.S. The company's business in Africa includes exports of equipment and services to the mining industry, the leasing of equipment, rolling stock, locomotives, barges, mining equipment, and machinery, the leasing of forklift trucks and other material handling equipment, and the acquisition,

development, and ownership of real estate. Details can be viewed [here](#).

### ***Securities and Exchange Commission***

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Republican Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Commissioners Dan Gallagher and Michael Piowowar issued a joint statement articulating their position that the SEC should put a hold on the implementation of the conflict minerals reporting rule in light of a recent court decision. Within the coming weeks, companies would otherwise be required to begin reporting on their use of conflict minerals from the DRC. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, testifying before the House Financial Services Committee on Oversight on the SEC's agenda, operations, and FY15 budget request, SEC Chair Mary Jo White said the SEC will continue to implement significant portions of the conflict minerals rule that comes from a provision in the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, requiring publically traded manufactures to disclose to investors whether any materials in their products may have originated from the DRC. A recording of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, following SEC Chair Mary Jo White's testimony on the conflict minerals rule, Director of the SEC Division of Corporation Finance Keith Higgins issued a statement on the effect of the recent DC Court of Appeals hearing on the rule. Director Higgins explained that companies that must file a conflict minerals report should proceed in filing a description of the due diligence they undertook to determine the origin of minerals in their products by a June 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline. However, he noted that companies will not be required to declare publically whether or not their products are DRC conflict free. The full statement can be accessed [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Business Roundtable, and the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) released a joint statement, opposing the SEC's decision to move forward with implementing parts of the conflict minerals rule. While acknowledging the seriousness of the humanitarian situation in the DRC, the business groups suggested it would be best to stay the rule until the outstanding issues with its constitutionality can be fully analyzed and addressed. More information can be found [here](#).

### ***Congress***

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing on U.S. assistance in Africa. The Subcommittee received testimony from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Acting Chief Executive of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Sheila Herrling, and USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Earl Gast. A recording of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing on the Administration's FY15 budget request and priorities for the Middle East and North Africa. Witnesses included Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Anne Patterson and USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Middle East Alina Romanowski. Excerpts from the hearing can be viewed [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), and John McCain (R-AZ) sent letters to the Chairmen of the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees requesting that they hold additional hearings to examine the White House's public response to the September 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya. While noting that the Committees have previously addressed the attack in Benghazi, the Senators argued that many questions about the incident and the Administration's response remain unanswered. Details are available [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) said he is planning to introduce legislation next week during the House Armed Services Committee markup of the FY15 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would change the Authorization of Use of Military Force (AUMF), allowing the Department of Defense (DOD) the authority to directly target the attackers in the September 2012 targeting of the U.S. facility in Benghazi. Information on the forthcoming legislation was shared [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa held a hearing entitled, "The CAR: From

Pre-genocide to Genocide.” Witnesses included Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Robert Jackson, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Anne Richard, Sean Callahan of Catholic Relief Services, Madeline Rose of Mercy Corps, Kasper Agger of The Enough project, and Robin Sanders of FEEEDS Advocacy institute. Hearing details can be seen [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the House Oversight and Government Affairs Committee held a hearing on “Benghazi, Instability and a New Government: Successes and Failures of U.S. Intervention in Libya.” The Committee received testimony from Brigadier General Robert Lovell, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Kori Schake of the Hoover Institution, and Frederic Wehry of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The hearing was detailed [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-CA) released a statement on Brigadier General Robert Lovell’s testimony before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee on Benghazi. Representative McKeon said that Brigadier General Lovell’s testimony confirmed the House Armed Services Committee’s understanding that military believed the attack on the U.S. compound in Benghazi was not result of a protest gone bad and that the Administration had failed to posture U.S. forces to respond to such an emergency. The full statement can be read [here](#).

### **North Africa**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous briefed the U.N. Security Council on the AU-U.N. Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Under-Secretary-General Ladsous reported that Darfur is once again at a crossroads, with renewed violence after a relative lull that has increased the movement of displaced persons. In addition, he reported that rebel groups, and notably the Rapid Support Force (RSF), continue to endanger civilians, particularly in North and South Darfur. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the third review of Tunisia’s economic performance under a 24-month program supported by a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA), allowing for the disbursement of an additional \$225 million. While the IMF review concluded that Tunisia has made progress on their Fund-supported economic programs and increased political and economic confidence by adopting a new constitution and forming a new government, the IMF cautioned that slow progress on structural reforms has kept economic growth moderate, unemployment high, and fiscal and external imbalances elevated. More information was shared [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the IMF issued a press release on the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Sudan’s external debt, which convened during recent IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings. The meeting, which was attended by delegations from Sudan and South Sudan and a representative of former South African President Thabo Mbeki, who serves as Chair of the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), addressed the new Staff Monitored Program (SMP) for Sudan for 2014, as well as Sudan’s progress in implementing policy reforms to address poverty. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, unidentified gunmen stormed the Libyan parliament as MPs began voting to select the country’s next prime minister to replace Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni, who recently resigned. Libyan General National Congress (GNC) Spokesman Omar Hmeidan reported that the shootings were random and a motive was unknown. As a result, the vote to select either Ahmed Maiteeq or Omar al-Hassi as the next prime minister has been postponed to next week. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council voted to extend the mandate of the U.N. Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), which has been in effect since 1991, through April 30, 2015. With the ongoing dispute in the region, MINURSO is tasked with monitoring the ceasefire in the Western Sahara and helping to organize a referendum on self-determination for the people of the territory. MINURSO’s mission was further defined [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank renewed its Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) with Morocco for 2014-2017 and announced new projects to help strengthen the country’s financial sector and increase access to clean water. A \$300 million Capital Market Development Policy Loan was announced to assist in Morocco’s implementation of capital market development measures and policies to ease financing for



new small firms. \$158.6 million was also approved for the Rural Water Supply project, which is intended to bring clean drinking water to 420,000 people in underserved rural areas. Details were provided [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, a ceremony was held to recognize the closing of the Sudan National Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), initially launched in 2006. The event was attended by Sudanese Minister of Finance and Economy Magdi Yassin, World Bank Country Director for Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia Bella Bird, and representatives of bilateral and multilateral agencies, the private sector, and Sudanese civil society. While in operation, the MDTF was used to fund development projects focused on enhancing economic growth, public financial management, health care services, agricultural production, access to clean water, and enrollment in education programs. A press release was issued [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank approved an \$11.3 million International Development Association (IDA) grant for the Mauritania Skills Development Support Project, which is seeking to double the number of youths enrolled in skills development programs to 16,000 over the next two years. The grant will be used to help reduce the costs youths in Mauritania often face in pursuing technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The grant was announced [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the American Security Project will host a conference on “21<sup>st</sup> Century U.S.-Egypt Strategic Relations.” The conference will address bilateral strategic relations moving forward, counterterrorism and regional security, and the investment climate and entrepreneurship. The keynote addressed will be delivered by Amr Moussa, who previously served as Secretary-General of the Arab League and as Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Event logistics were posted [here](#).

### **East Africa**

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, following the success of a \$103 million pilot project funded by Kenya, the U.S., Canada, France, and the Netherlands, the Kenya Wildlife Service announced plans to begin using drones in all 52 of its national parks to monitor elephants and rhinos and to combat poaching. Under the pilot program, poaching was reduced by 96% in the areas under drone surveillance. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the IMF concluded the third and final review of an arrangement under the Standby Credit Facility (SCF) with Tanzania. The IMF team commended Tanzanian authorities for their implementation of prudent macroeconomic policies under the SCF, which have led to economic growth and disinflation. IMF officials noted that improved public financial management will be needed to sustain Tanzania's economic growth. Further analysis was provided [here](#).

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Leadership Africa USA announced it will host a special briefing on investment opportunities for U.S. companies in Ethiopia's energy sector on the sidelines of the U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial (AEM), which will be held in Addis Ababa, on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Government of Ethiopia's 2010-2015 five-year plan envisions the expansion of current power generation capabilities to 10,000 megawatts (MW) and initiatives to position the country as an energy exporter to neighbors. Additional information on the upcoming briefing can be found [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Seychelles police announced that a toxicology analysis found that a mixture of heroin and alcohol caused the deaths of two former U.S. Navy SEALs whose bodies were discovered in a cabin aboard the Maersk Alabama while it was in Seychelles in February. Officials indicated the men likely died of respiratory failure and were suspected to have had heart attacks. More information was provided [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta signed into law new legislation amending the marriage bill passed by parliament last month to legalize polygamy for men. While supporters argue that the new law codifies customary marriage practices in Kenya, both religious groups and women's organizations have objected to the new policy. The full story can be seen [here](#).

### **West Africa**

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution lifting the ban on importing rough diamonds from Cote d'Ivoire imposed in 2005 as part of an effort to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the global market. In addition, the Security Council adopted a provision continuing the embargo

on lethal arms through April 30, 2015. The measure, however, exempts the embargo on supplies to the U.N. Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNCOI) and their French partners, as well as the restriction on non-lethal arms. More information was reported [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Abdoulaye Bathily of Senegal to succeed Abou Moussa of Chad as U.N. Special Representative for Central Africa and head of the U.N. Regional Office in Central Africa (UNOCA), headquartered in Libreville, Gabon. Special Representative Bathily has previously served as Deputy Special Representative for MINUSMA. Special Representative Bathily's appointment was announced [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Senegal to conduct the seventh review under the three-year Policy Support Instrument (PSI) that was approved in December 2010. The group met with Senegalese President Macky Sall, as well as Senegal's ministers of economy, finance, and energy, representatives of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), and other development partners. While the IMF team observed that GDP growth was weaker than expected, the telecommunications and construction sectors of the economy grew significantly. Furthermore, the IMF predicted the agricultural and extractive industries sectors of the economy will improve consistent with improvements in the global economy and the regional environment. More analysis was shared [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, protests continued in Lagos and Abuja, with Nigerians demanding that the Government do more to locate and rescue students from the Government Girls Secondary School in Chibok who were abducted by Boko Haram militants. While figures differ for the number of victims who may still be missing, as many as 200 girls may still be unaccounted for. As demonstrations continued, Borno state Education Commissioner Mussa Inuwa Kiba said that authorities are doing whatever it takes to secure the girls' release. An update on the situation in Nigeria was provided [here](#).

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) issued a report on the prevalence of binge drinking in various countries, with binge drinking defined as drinking about 4.3 servings or more of pure alcohol at least once in the past week. According to WHO statistics, women are most likely to binge drink in Zambia, where 41.2% of all women binge drink at least once a week. All of the data can be accessed [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the IMF Africa Regional Technical Assistance Center South (AFRITAC South) concluded a workshop on improving cash management in developing countries, held in Mauritius. The workshop was attended by finance ministers and central bank representatives from Botswana, Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Details on the workshop were provided [here](#).

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, telecommunications tycoon and Zimbabwe's richest man Strive Masiyiwa announced that he plans to hold an annual contest to recognize African innovators and inventors with an undisclosed cash prize. In launching the competition, Masiyiwa is seeking to attract business leaders and social entrepreneurs who create new technologies and successfully register patents. The full announcement was posted [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, a faction of Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition movement led by Secretary-General Tendai Biti suspended party leader former Prime Minister Tsvangirai. Secretary-General Biti accused Prime Minister Tsvangirai of resisting a change in MDC leadership following Prime Minister Tsvangirai's loss to Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in last year's presidential elections. Members of the MDC dismissed the suspension, arguing it was unconstitutional and meaningless. The full story is available [here](#).

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, ceremonies were held across South Africa to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the country's first all-race, democratic election that officially marked the end of the apartheid system. South African President Jacob Zuma delivered a speech in Pretoria noting the achievements of the African National Congress (ANC) since the end of apartheid, while in other cities parades, prayers, salutes, and displays were offered to mark the occasion. The festivities were described [here](#).

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's National Treasury unveiled a set of proposals recommending how the

country's businesses can participate in a carbon offset scheme to lower their carbon tax liabilities and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) as South Africa prepares to introduce a carbon tax in 2016. The carbon tax and offset scheme are tactics South Africa is pursuing to help reduce GHG emissions to 34% below 2009 levels by 2020. The white paper released by the National Treasury was detailed [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Congolese President Denis Sassou Nguesso said the Republic of Congo (ROC) is planning to attract infrastructure investment from Russia. President Sassou Nguesso, who is serving his fifth term as president, previously identified as a Marxist and had a strong relationship with the former Soviet Union. He also indicated that an intergovernmental Russia-ROC commission will begin meeting in the coming months to identify projects for Russian investment. President Sassou Nguesso's comments were noted [here](#).

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank approved \$8.97 million in additional financing credit for the Second Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project (SEDRP) in Rwanda. The project is geared towards demobilizing members of armed groups of Rwandan origin and the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) and to providing support for efforts to reintegrate ex-combatants into Rwandan society. An initial grant of \$8 million was provided to the project for these purposes in August 2009. More information can be found [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, *Nature* published research finding that trees in the Congo River Basin are being affected by consecutive years of drier than usual conditions. In particular, drier weather has limited the trees' abilities to photosynthesize. Should the climate further shift from a rainforest to more of a savanna-like environment, the area's biodiversity and carbon storing capabilities could be more broadly impacted. The research was published [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Envoy for Malaria Ray Chambers delivered remarks marking the sixth annual World Malaria Day. While he noted that mortality rates for children in Africa are down by half from one million in 2008 to less than 500,000, due in large part to more widespread use of mosquito nets, Special Envoy Chambers also cautioned that a stronger surveillance system is needed to prevent new outbreaks and resurgences. U.N. Secretary-General Ban also discussed the importance of malaria testing, registration, and treatment, as well as continued investment and political commitment to improving malaria prevention and control. Additional information distributed by the U.N. on World Malaria Day is available [here](#).

On August 25<sup>th</sup>, *USA Today* reported on the increasing use of virtual currency bitcoin in Africa and a growing number of African banks, including banks in Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, which have tested bitcoin trading systems. It has been widely suggested that bitcoin could be an ideal solution for the 326 million Africans who lack access to basic banking services and to the expanding African diaspora wanting to send money to family at home via mobile payments. The full article can be read [here](#).

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