



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### ***Burundi***

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, United Nations (U.N.) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed ongoing concern about the potential for escalating violence in Burundi and reiterated his call for calm and restraint as the political tensions around President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term continued. Secretary-General Ban called on Burundian authorities to ensure security forces avoid the use of excessive force in handling demonstrations and stressed those responsible for ordering or committing human rights abuses would be held accountable. He also called for the resumption of the political dialogue facilitated by U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Said Djinnit. Secretary-General Ban's comments were captured [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Senators Chris Coons (D-DE), Dick Durbin (D-IL), John Boozman (D-AR), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Ed Markey (D-MA), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Marco Rubio (R-FL) sent a letter to Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza urging him not to seek a third term in office. The Senators said President Nkurunziza's bid for a third term would be a violation of Burundi's constitution and the Arusha Accords, and pushed President Nkurunziza to work with opposition leaders towards national reconciliation and a future free from political violence. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 7<sup>th</sup>, Burundian opposition leader Agathon Rwaswa said a presidential election must be held by August at the latest, but expressed concern a fair vote was unlikely without security and a free media. Rwaswa's comments came as a planned June 26<sup>th</sup> election appeared increasingly unlikely as protests continued. Rwaswa also called for the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of the ruling National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), to be disarmed. His comments were reported [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the Burundian Government said the country's presidential election would proceed ahead of the end of President Pierre Nkurunziza's current term on August 26<sup>th</sup>. The Government noted it had received donations from citizens to help fund the presidential and other polls and expressed hope Western donors would reverse decisions to halt additional elections assistance as political tensions continue. The European Union (EU), Belgium, and the Netherlands decided last month to suspend some

aid to support the elections, which have since been delayed. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had received accounts from 47 Burundian refugees who fled to Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) about serious violations committed by the militia attached to the pro-government Imbonerakure. High Commissioner Zeid warned State collusion with such a violent and lawless militia could tip the already tense situation in Burundi over the edge. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, in a public radio broadcast, Philippe Nzobonariba, a spokesperson for Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza said President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term is non-negotiable. Following the electoral commission's announcement of a proposal to delay the presidential poll until July 15<sup>th</sup>, the Government also said this is the final time the polls would be postponed. Further, Nzobonariba denied that more than 100,000 Burundians have left the country due to the political tensions and instead argued they had left because of terrorist rumors spread by politicians who do not want elections. Excerpts from the broadcast were highlighted [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, President Pierre Nkurunziza approved a proposal from Burundi's election commission to delay the presidential election scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> to July 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition, President Nkurunziza's office indicated the parliamentary elections, which were already delayed once, will be held on June 29<sup>th</sup>, about a month later than originally planned. The updated elections schedule was noted [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Said Djinnit stepped down as the mediator of talks between the Government of Burundi and opposition groups who oppose President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term. According to Special Envoy Djinnit, the move was influenced by concerns raised by some parties to the talks about his role as a facilitator. While Special Envoy Djinnit said the talks did not achieve any agreement on President Nkurunziza's candidacy, he noted progress had been made in other areas. For more information, click [here](#).

## **Libya**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) announced the next round of political dialogue sessions in Skhirat, Morocco, that were scheduled to begin on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The next round of talks aimed to focus on a new draft of the political agreement to form a unity government based on input from both governmental administrations in Libya. UNSMIL urged all Libyan stakeholders to engage in the discussions in the spirit of reconciliation and compromise, as well as a determination to reach a political agreement to bring peace and stability to Libya. Feedback from UNSMIL was posted [here](#).

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, *The Washington Post* highlighted gains made by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Libya. While ISIL militants do not occupy large amounts of territory, in the past few months the group, estimated at roughly 3,000 fighters in Libya, has seized Sirte and coordinated a bomb attack on Misurata. The ISIL affiliate in Libya has capitalized on political tensions between two rival governments and threatens to further destabilize the country and the region. An article on ISIL's gains in Libya was published [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative and head of UNSMIL Bernardino Leon opened a new round of discussions in Libya's political dialogue by presenting a draft political agreement. The draft provides a vision of the interim institutional architecture and security arrangements for a transition period in Libya. While Special Representative Leon acknowledged no agreement could ever meet all of the expectations of the different parties in Libya, he expressed his belief the current draft represents a fair and reasonable agreement that is based on consensus, balance and inclusion, and can pave the way for a resumption of Libya's democratic process. The opening of the latest round of talks was described [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Libya's elected parliament rejected a fourth U.N. draft proposal to form a unity government and withdrew from the U.N.-facilitated political dialogue. The proposal was presented to Libyan stakeholders on Monday by U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon after months of negotiations between factions. The U.N. proposal called for a one-year-long government of national accord, where a council of ministers headed by a prime minister with two deputies will have executive authority. The lawmakers objected to including the self-declared parliament in Tripoli in the proposal and

argued this would not reflect the legitimacy of the elected parliament. An update on the peace process was published [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of State welcomed the presentation of the fourth and final draft of a political agreement for Libya by U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon. The State Department observed the agreement represents more than six months of intensive consultations by the U.N. across Libyan society with the support of the international community. In addition, the State Department articulated its belief the document was balanced, representative of fair compromise, and a solid basis for national reconciliation. Comments from State Department Press Office Director Jeff Rathke can be read [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, ISIL militants took control of a power plant in Sirte that provides western and central Libya with electricity and claimed they had driven their enemies out of the entire city. Forces loyal to the self-declared Libyan government in control of Tripoli pulled out as ISIL militants launched the attack on Tuesday morning. According to the military, three soldiers were killed in the attack. The incident was reported [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon encouraged participants in the Libyan political dialogue to reach an agreement before or at the beginning of Ramadan, which begins on June 17<sup>th</sup>. Special Representative Leon's comments came as delegations from the Libyan political talks met in Germany with representatives of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, who expressed their support for a unified Libya. Details were shared [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, senior officials of the Governments of China, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom (U.K.), the U.S., and the European Union (EU) met in Berlin with the Libyan delegates to the U.N.-led political dialogue and U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon. The leaders expressed support for the political dialogue and reminded participants that armed conflicts lead to severe suffering of the civilian population, a deteriorating humanitarian situation, violations of human rights and international law, internal displacement, and economic breakdown. They also noted that terrorist groups are taking advantage of a divided Libya and the crisis is causing refugees to risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean. Additional feedback can be viewed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, at least 20 fighters were killed in Derna, Libya when fighting erupted between ISIL militants and rival Islamic group Majlis al-Shura. Residents reported the fighting broke out when Salem Derbi, a leader of Majlis al-Shura, was killed after refusing to swear allegiance to ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Following the clashes, Majlis al-Shura officially declared jihad against ISIL. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, ISIL militants in Libya claimed to have blown up two warplanes at an air base the group had seized near Sirte. To substantiate its claims, ISIL posted pictures of the two destroyed military aircraft on social media. The ISIL propaganda was described [here](#).

## **Nigeria**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said the human rights situation in Boko Haram-held parts of northeastern Nigeria is one of absolute terror and grave violations, citing reports of children suspected of theft having their hands amputated, a man being stoned to death on accusations of fornication, and mass executions of captives whose hands and legs were bound and who were dumped into rivers and wells. In addition, High Commissioner Zeid called for investigations into additional reports of Boko Haram's use of children to detonate bombs, forced labor, forced marriage, and rape. His comments were captured [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the Nigerian armed forces reported the official relocation of the command center for operations against Boko Haram from Abuja to Maiduguri, as announced by Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari in his inauguration speech. The move follows a string of bombings in recent days that have left more than 80 people dead in Borno State. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, ahead of a broader summit scheduled for Thursday, defense chiefs from Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, and Benin met in Abuja to discuss the foundation for establishing a joint task force to

combat Boko Haram. Nigeria's neighbors have been urging closer coordination and the deployment of a multinational task force, headquartered in N'Djamena, Chad. However, the process has been slow-moving due to Nigeria's reservations about the role of foreign troops in operations against Boko Haram and the transition following the presidential election in March. An article on the joint task force can be read [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari hosted talks with regional leaders on establishing a new force to stomp out the Boko Haram insurgency. Heads of state and other senior officials from Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin participated in the meeting in Abuja, following two days of preparatory discussions between military leaders. President Buhari campaigned on the issue of making the fight against Boko Haram a top priority. He also appealed to G7 leaders during last week's summit for more assistance in taking on the Islamist insurgency. More information can be viewed [here](#).

### ***South Sudan***

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Acting Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Tom Staal and Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa Linda Etim authored a blog post on the significance of the Government of South Sudan expelling top U.N. aid official Toby Lanzer. The post describes how after 18 months of fighting, the manmade crisis in South Sudan is worsening with renewed fighting and displacement putting the country on the brink of economic collapse. USAID also commended Lanzer for his advocacy on behalf of the South Sudanese people and called for the Government of South Sudan to act responsibly to end the cycle of violence. To access the blog post, click [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said hundreds of thousands of people are at risk of starvation in South Sudan as fighting between forces loyal to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar continue, worsening food shortages. ICRC expressed concern the violence has recently intensified without the prospect for the resumption of peace talks any time soon. According to ICRC, more than 100,000 people have fled during the most recent wave of fighting, bringing the number of people displaced by the conflict to more than two million since December 2013. An update was provided [here](#).

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

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Greece needs help in coping with a six-fold rise in migrants arriving since last year as it faces its own economic crisis. According to UNHCR, 42,000 migrants arrived in Greece from North Africa since the start of 2015. The U.N. called for assistance from other European countries, noting Greece does not have the economic resources to respond to another humanitarian crisis. The situation was described [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the Italian coast guard reported nearly 5,900 migrants who departed North Africa for Europe were rescued from the Mediterranean over the weekend. Italian authorities noted British, Swedish, Spanish, and Italian ships were all included in rescue efforts. The latest rescues are a sign that the tide of migrants risking the journey from Africa to Europe is continuing to increase as the EU debates how to handle the refugees once they are ashore. An article on the latest developments can be read [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, following a meeting with International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, Gambian President Yahya Jammeh called for the ICC to investigate the deaths of African migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean by boat to Europe. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), nearly 2,000 migrants drowned by early May, with close to 800 killed in a single shipwreck in April. In addition, President Jammeh criticized the rescue efforts of European countries, questioning the number of people who have drowned. President Jammeh's input was posted [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Tunisia's navy said it has rescued more than 350 illegal migrants off its coast and was searching for an estimated 300 more who were attempting to sail from Libya to the Italian island of Lampedusa. The search continues off the coast of Ben Guerdane. The rescues and the ongoing search efforts were summarized [here](#).

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

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found 171 pre-approved compounds have some proven antiviral activity against Ebola. Of those drugs, 30 were prioritized for additional testing in mice, with a number of drugs having a positive effect against the virus and two drugs, Zolofit and Vasacor, stopping the mice from getting sick at all. According to researchers, using an approved drug to treat Ebola could make it easier to stockpile effective therapeutics and eliminate regulatory burdens in getting the drugs to patients. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) began distributing the first batches of 700,000 teaching and learning kits to 4,460 schools across Liberia, where last year's Ebola outbreak disrupted schooling for more than one million children. When schools reopened in February, UNICEF provided infection prevention and control kits. The latest distributions include basic educational resources to help teachers assist students in learning. UNICEF's efforts to support the reopening of schools in Liberia were noted [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, following a meeting with Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) Peter Graaff announced UNMEER headquarters in Accra will close at the end of June as the Ebola outbreak slows. Special Representative Graaff thanked Ghanaian authorities for their leadership and noted most of UNMEER's staff and assets have now been moved to Sierra Leone and Guinea. For details, click [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 31 confirmed cases of Ebola were reported, including 16 cases in Guinea and 15 in Sierra Leone. The WHO noted this is the second consecutive weekly increase in case incidence, and the highest weekly total number of cases reported from Sierra Leone since late March. In addition, cases were reported from a widening geographical area in both countries. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, conservative think tank The Goldwater Institute sued the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for denying a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking information about the FDA's internal approval process that allowed Americans being treated for Ebola to receive ZMapp while the drug was still in approval stages. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the FDA said the FOIA request was denied because the release of information would violate Mapp Biopharmaceuticals' trade secrets. The full story is available [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***White House***

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Carolyn Patricia Alsup to serve as U.S. Ambassador to The Gambia and Daniel Rubinstein to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia. Alsup currently serves as Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana, and has previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Banjul, The Gambia. Rubinstein currently serves as U.S. Special Envoy for Syria and has previously held positions in Egypt, Angola, and Tunisia. Both nominations were announced [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the White House issued a fact sheet on "Launching a Public-Private Partnership to Empower Climate-Resilient Developing Nations" to coincide with the launch of the Climate Services for Resilient Development partnership. The initiative, an international public-private partnership launched by the U.S. Government and seven other founding-partner institutions from around the world, will provide actionable science, data, information, tools, and training to developing countries that are working to strengthen their national resilience to the impacts of climate change. The fact sheet notes the partnership will deliver tailored and targeted services to countries in East Africa and the Sahel, with an initial pilot planned in Ethiopia. The fact sheet can be downloaded [here](#).

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

On June 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, U.S. and South African industry and government officials met in Paris, France for two

days of talks on agricultural and broader trade issues related to South Africa's African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) eligibility. In the meetings, the industries agreed on a framework to provide for renewed market access for U.S. bone-in chicken into the South African market. The Governments also agreed to a firm set of actions to resolve the remaining sanitary issues related to poultry, pork, and beef. A joint statement on the meetings was issued [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for Textiles and Apparel Gail Strickler said Africa's textile and apparel exports to the U.S. could quadruple to \$4 billion over the next decade should Congress pass an extension of AGOA. If exports were to rise to these levels, Assistant USTR Strickler predicted Africa could create 500,000 new jobs. Her comments were recorded [here](#).

### **State Department**

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Tom Malinowski delivered remarks at the African Center for Justice Conference in the DRC. The event brought together U.S. Ambassadors to the DRC, the Republic of Congo (ROC), and Rwanda, as well as other African and foreign dignitaries to launch a new initiative focused on helping African citizens build more just societies under the rule of law. Assistant Secretary Malinowski's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Tom Malinowski concluded a trip to the DRC and the ROC. During his trip, Assistant Secretary Malinowski met with government officials from both countries and raised the importance of credible, timely elections that respect existing constitutional provisions, including those on term limits. In the DRC, Assistant Secretary Malinowski discussed the importance of conducting transparent government investigations when security forces are accused of human rights abuses, as well as the need to differentiate between peaceful expression and violent action. His trip was summarized [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson John Kirby noted the U.S. is closely following ongoing developments in Madagascar and noted the country has made tremendous progress since its 2013 elections and return to a democracy. He expressed hope recent developments will not jeopardize these gains. Spokesperson Kirby called on all parties to resolve the current political impasse with respect for rule of law and through national dialogue in order to maintain the political stability needed to grow the economy, attract investment, create employment, and improve the lives of the Malagasy people. A full statement was posted [here](#).

On June 6<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, women who are leading efforts to combat violent extremism in their communities in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia visited the U.S. to participate in the International Visitor Leadership Program, "Women Preventing Violence Extremism." Participants were scheduled to meet with local leaders, think tanks, U.S. officials, and leading technology and communications companies to examine ways to strengthen counterterrorism activities. The group included women from Egypt and Morocco. Additional details were shared [here](#).

On June 7<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield was on travel to Tanzania and South Africa. In Dar es Salaam, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield participated in high-level bilateral meetings and met with Tanzania's 2015 Mandela Washington Fellows from President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), as well as current Peace Corps volunteers. In Johannesburg, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield was scheduled to lead the U.S. delegation to the 25<sup>th</sup> African Union (AU) Summit centered on the theme, "Year of Women Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063. She was also scheduled to participate in high-level bilateral meetings, attend the opening of a new U.S. mission facility, and visit a President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) project site. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's travel was announced [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken hosted a working lunch for Chairman of the Nigerian Independent National Election Commissioner Attahiru Muhammadu Jega, at the Department of State. The lunch meeting was listed [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Sheba Crocker met with U.N. Special Representative and head of the Regional Office for Central Africa Abdoulaye Bathily, at the

Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp was on travel to Stuttgart, Germany to discuss issues related to international justice and accountability with the German Chief Federal Prosecutor and German federal war crimes prosecutors. He was also scheduled to meet with representatives from U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). Ambassador Rapp's meetings were outlined [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken met with Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, posted [here](#).

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

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, USAID highlighted its collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) on a range of international development projects. For example, USAID's West Africa Regional Mission has partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build a new school in Atome, Togo. USAID has also worked with AFRICOM to host roundtables on improving civil-military relations. Joint efforts in Africa were detailed [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, USAID called attention to the U.S. Global Development Lab's 2014 Data2Action award, which supported innovations around the world that proposed using information to accelerate progress. As a result of the competition, family farmers in Senegal are increasing their crop yields by using technology to share information, negotiate fertilizer purchases, share local market prices, and check weather forecasts in real time. In addition, a mobile phone hotline in Mali has been used to demonstrate the importance of traditional song and dance as part of national reconciliation efforts. For more information, click [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Acting USAID Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt met with Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke at USAID. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be found [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, USAID announced a \$10 million commitment to the recently announced Climate Services for Resilient Development public-private partnership. In total, the partnership has raised \$34 million from the U.S. Government, the U.K. Government, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, Esri, Google, the American Red Cross and the Skoll Global Threats Fund to help bring tailored climate resilience tools and services to developing regions, including East Africa. A press release was issued [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Acting USAID Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt participated in the swearing-in ceremony for USAID Zimbabwe Mission Director Stephanie Funk at USAID. Administrator Lenhardt's participation was noted [here](#).

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

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter visited AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. During his visit to AFRICOM, Secretary Carter stressed the importance of the mission, which is the newest combatant command. In particular, Secretary Carter commended AFRICOM personnel for helping to curb the Ebola crisis and to address ISIL, narcotics, corruption, and organized crime on the continent. Excerpts from Secretary Carter's remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Special Operations Command Forward – West Africa Public Affairs highlighted the support of AFRICOM's Humanitarian and Civic Assistance Program for a recent humanitarian assistance operation launched by Cameroonian soldiers from the Battalion d'Intervention Rapode (BIR) to help people displaced by Boko Haram violence. As part of the event, more than 1,250 internally displaced persons (IDPs) received medical screening, prevention education, and treatment from the BIR and local medical personnel. The event was described [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work met with Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid

Ali Sharmarke and Minister of Defense General Abdulkadir Sheikh Ali Dini at the Pentagon. The leaders discussed the importance of the U.S.-Somali security assistance and counterterrorism operations and Deputy Secretary Work praised Somali forces successes in degrading Al Shabaab in the past two years. They also discussed how taking the fight to Al Shabaab requires integrating regional militia forces into the Somali National Army (SNA) deliberately and without delay. In addition, Deputy Secretary Work expressed it is important that Somalia completed the state formation process in advance of holding elections next year in line with the agreed timeline. A readout of the meeting was posted [here](#).

### ***National Institutes of Health***

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins authored a blog post highlighting how NIH-supported teams working in Central Africa have turned an iPhone into a low-cost video microscope capable of quickly testing to see if people infected with the parasitic Loa-Loa worm can safely receive a drug intended to protect them from a different, potentially blinding parasitic disease. The goal of the testing is to measure the body's total worm load, which is associated with the risk of developing serious side effects from a drug treatment for river blindness. The blog can be accessed [here](#).

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

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) highlighted Root Capital, which was awarded the Impact Award for non-energy renewable resources. Root Capital is a longstanding OPIC partner that has supported thousands of farmers in sub-Saharan Africa by providing small loans when commercial finance is not available, along with training and support to help farmers produce more food and connect with larger markets. For example, Root has supported producers of bird's eye chili peppers in eastern Uganda, women coffee producers in Rwanda, and shea nut farmers in Ghana. More information was shared [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, OPIC called attention to the Ghana National Medical Equipment project, which is intended to update the country's medical network by introducing advanced technology, expanding training, and using mobile clinics equipped with backup generators to reach remote regions where access to electricity is limited. The lead investor in the project is Miami-based Belstar Development LCC, which is using OPIC political risk insurance to support its work in Ghana. Last month, OPIC recognized Belstar with an Impact Award for excellence in development. Details can be seen [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, OPIC detailed its partnership with Bridge International Academies, a winner of OPIC's 2015 Impact Award in the development impact category. Bridge International Academies is a network of low-cost, high-quality schools operating in underserved communities throughout rural and urban Kenya. Through the help of an OPIC loan, Bridge's founders were able to quickly expand to serve over 100,000 children in Kenya and now plan to scale their model into other African nations. The partnership was described [here](#).

### ***Congress***

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Senators Tom Carper (D-DE) and Chris Coons (D-DE) and Congressman John Carney (D-DE) applauded American and South African negotiators for reaching an agreement to end South Africa's tariffs on U.S. poultry. In Delaware, the poultry industry supports 13,000 jobs. American poultry products are expected to enter the South African market before the end of 2015. Feedback on the agreement can be seen [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, *Defense One* published an op-ed authored by Neil Hicks of Human Rights First advocating for Congress to reattach human rights conditions to Egypt's \$1.3 billion military assistance package. Last week, the House Appropriations Committee approved legislation removing human rights conditions on foreign assistance to Egypt. However, Hicks argued that even when such conditions have been placed on Egyptian aid, the Administration has overridden them, citing the needs of national security. The full article can be read [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the House Rules Committee released a fact sheet on the Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015, which was expected to receive floor consideration this week. The bill includes a ten-year extension for AGOA, including for the third-country fabric provisions, as well as some reforms to the



nonreciprocal trade agreement. The fact sheet can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued her biweekly Africa newsletter. The latest edition of the Africa Update highlights the efforts of Nigerian religious and secular leaders to promote peace in the wake of the Boko Haram insurgency, Kenya's celebration of 52 years of independence, and the Akon Lighting Africa initiative. The newsletter can be accessed [here](#).

### **North Africa**

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, a team from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed a visit to Nouakchott, Mauritania to review recent macroeconomic developments and the outlook for the Mauritanian economy, following the Article IV Consultation that concluded in January. While IMF staff observed that heightened uncertainty about the global economic outlook and negative developments in global iron ore markets are altering Mauritania's economic outlook, the team predicted 4.5 percent economic growth for 2015. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, UNHCR reported an armed group opened fire on a convoy transporting Eritrean asylum-seekers in eastern Sudan and kidnapped 14 of them, including six boys and one girl. According to UNHCR, six of the 49 asylum-seekers suffered from minor injuries when they jumped from the truck in an attempt to escape. UNHCR called on the Sudanese Government to spare no effort in apprehending those responsible and bringing them to account. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, an IMF team concluded a visit to Morocco to conduct discussions with authorities on the second review of economic performance under the Precautionary and Liquidity Line (PLL) arrangement approved in July 2014. Moroccan authorities have not drawn on the PLL and intend to keep the arrangement as precautionary, unless Morocco experiences actual balance of payments needs from a significant deterioration of external conditions. The IMF team observed the Moroccan economy is recovering and macroeconomics are favorable but remain subject to external risks. More information was shared [here](#).

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the release of two U.N.-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) contractors who were abducted in Central Darfur on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Secretary-General Ban commended the efforts made by UNAMID and expressed his appreciation to the Governments of Sudan and Russia in securing their release. He also underscored the importance of UNAMID's work for the people of Darfur and called on the Sudanese Government to launch a full investigation. Secretary-General Ban's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, at an event held to launch army-backed infrastructure projects, Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi reproached police and security forces in response to criticism that his government has allowed for human rights abuses. President Sisi apologized to every Egyptian citizen who has been subjected to abuse and said he should be held accountable for the violations. Excerpts from President Sisi's remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank highlighted Egypt's efforts to reform its social protection system to maximize State investments in social programs and achieve a reduction in poverty. As part of these efforts, Egyptian authorities are developing a national database to consolidate social safety net programs and help ensure State support reaches the most vulnerable Egyptian citizens. An article on the ongoing reforms can be read [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, an Egyptian court sentenced 11 men to death for their role in the violence at the Port Said soccer stadium in 2012 that killed more than 70 people and injured more than 1,000 others. One man was sentenced to death in absentia, ten men got 15 years in jail, 14 were sentenced to ten years, and 15 received five-year sentences on charges that included murder and attempted murder. The verdicts can be appealed. The case was detailed [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Egyptian Housing Minister Mustafa Madbouly acknowledged complications in contract negotiations with Capital City Partners (CCP), the investment fund that signed a preliminary agreement in March to help lead the development of a new administrative capital east of Cairo. President Abdul

Fattah Al-Sisi announced the project at an economic summit in March as part of a strategy to attract foreign investment and create jobs. Additional information can be found [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim made his first trip to Egypt to reaffirm the World Bank's commitment to supporting the country's development goals. During his visit, President Kim was scheduled to meet with Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, Prime Minister Ibrahim Mahlab, cabinet members, government leaders, and private sector and civil society representatives to discuss how the World Bank can best continue supporting Egypt in promoting sustainable growth and shared prosperity. President Kim also delivered keynote remarks at the Tripartite Heads of State and Governments Summit in Sharm El Sheikh and toured World Bank projects in Luxor. His trip was outlined [here](#). President Kim's speech at the Tripartite Summit was transcribed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet briefed the U.N. Security Council on the situation in Darfur. Assistant Secretary-General Mulet noted a concerning increase in violent attacks by armed assailants against U.N. peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel, warning such attacks limit civilian protection and access to humanitarian assistance. He also reported the second phase of the Government's military offensive, Operation Decisive Summer, has resulted in higher numbers of newly displaced people. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, a suicide bomber blew himself up near the ancient Egyptian Karnak Temple near Luxor, a popular tourist attraction. There were 604 tourists at the complex at the time of the attack. Two accomplices and a police officer were killed during the incident, but security officials said a larger massacre was averted when a suspicious taxi thought to be carrying additional ammunition was stopped. Although there was no immediate claim of responsibility, the attack was thought to be executed by Sinai Province. The attack was reported [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim issued a statement on the attack on the Karnak Temple in Luxor, which occurred while he was visiting Luxor to learn more about World Bank projects in the region helping the poor. President Kim said the World Bank abhors violence of all types, which he said counters the World Bank's work to end extreme poverty. He called for the international community to confront extremism in the Middle East and North Africa by investing in education, women's empowerment, and jobs for young people. The full statement can be viewed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, a Tunisian court annulled a 2011 decree confiscating the assets of ousted President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, 114 members and aids of the Ben Ali family, and President Ben Ali's wife, Leila Trabelsi. Following President Ben Ali's fall from power in January 2011, authorities seized hundreds of businesses, properties, cars, and jewelry worth billions of dollars. Tunisian Minister of State Property and Land Affairs Hatem Eluchi criticized the court's decision and called for a reversal when it comes to an appeal. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, a Cairo court adjourned the retrial of *Al Jazeera* journalists Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste to June 25<sup>th</sup>, when the court is expected to hear further closing statements from the defense team. The men are charged with aiding the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been labeled a terrorist organization. The journalists were originally sentenced to 7-10 years in prison. An update on the case was provided [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Africa's richest man Aliko Dangote commissioned a \$500 million cement plant in Ethiopia. The cement plant, located in Muger with an installed capacity of 2.5 million metric tons per annum (mmtpa), was inaugurated at a ceremony in Addis Ababa hosted by Ethiopian Prime Minister Haile Mariam Desalegne and attended by several Nigerian business leaders and government officials. At the ceremony, Dangote said his company is looking to build more cement plants across Africa and to achieve annual production of 62 mmtpa by 2017. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea concluded its investigation and issued a report detailing its findings on human rights violations in Eritrea. The report describes how the Eritrean Government has limited progress on democracy and rule of law under the pretext of national defense by curtailing rights and freedoms and perpetrating violations in the areas of extrajudicial

executions, torture, national service, and forced labor. These widespread abuses have promoted hundreds of Eritreans to flee their homes in search of asylum in Europe. The report's findings were presented [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Nicholas Kay lauded Somalia's progress on military and political gains and the development of partnerships between international and national stakeholders. Special Representative Kay said the gains recently made against Al Shabaab have demonstrated the successes of a cohesive military operation. Additionally, he highlighted political progress in the country as evidenced by dialogue and reconciliation among federal, regional, and local leaders. An update on the situation in Somalia was provided [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan police charged five men, four Somalis and one Tanzanian, in connection with the April 2<sup>nd</sup> Al Shabaab attack on Garissa University College. The prosecution, which urged the court to deny the suspects bail, alleged the five suspects colluded to carry out the attack, but provided further detail on their roles. Magistrate Daniel Ochenja directed they be imprisoned until June 11<sup>th</sup>, when the court will determine whether or not to grant bail. Meanwhile, the suspects complained they were tortured by anti-terrorism police seeking confessions. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, *Defense One* published a piece authored by Jessica Anderson of the Council on Foreign Relations detailing how Somalia-based militant group Al Shabaab finances its activities. While several reports have suggested Al Shabaab collects \$200,000 to \$6,000 per month from the illegal ivory trade, Anderson argues these claims are unfounded. Instead, Anderson reports Al Shabaab brings in between \$38 and \$56 million by selling Somali charcoal, in addition to profits from trading sugar and taxing small businesses. The full article can be read [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the World Food Programme (WFP) called attention to its efforts in Uganda that are helping smallholder farmers make progress on grain harvest and storage. The WFP is providing over 1,000 farmer groups with critical information, skills, and modern tools to enable them to access the quality grain market. The WFP has also assisted in building warehouses and establishing local storage facilities that have increased storage capacity in Uganda by more than 25,000 metric tons. For details, click [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the East African Community (EAC) and the World Bank hosted a convention to address the challenges and opportunities in improving connectivity along key trading corridors to facilitate regional integration in East Africa. The event brought together representatives from major bilateral and multilateral donor organizations to discuss solutions to facilitating the funding of corridor development in land-locked countries, such as Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. The discussion was summarized [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, following field observations in Ghana's western, central, and Ashanti regions, Human Rights Watch expressed concern that Ghana's mining industry has been benefitting from child labor in unlicensed mines. The human rights organization estimates thousands of children, most between the ages of 15 and 17, have been working in dangerous conditions pulling ore out of shafts and processing it with mercury in violation of Ghanaian and international law. Details can be seen [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, the WFP announced it will have to cut food rations for half a million Somali and South Sudanese refugees living at the Dadaab and Kakuma camps in northern Kenya because of a shortfall in donor funding. The WFP said food rations will be cut by about a third, with additional cuts expected without the influx of more resources. According to WFP officials, \$12.4 million is needed to avoid a critical food gap in August and September. The situation was described [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Kenyan Director of Public Prosecutions Keriaki Tobiko dropped corruption charges against Agriculture Minister Felix Koskei and Transport Minister Michael Kamau, citing lack of evidence. While the two cases were closed, the prosecutor indicated investigations into alleged graft committed by Energy and Petroleum cabinet Secretary David Chirchir would continue. More information was reported [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Board of the IMF completed the seventh review under the Extended Credit Facility Arrangement (ECF) for Cote d'Ivoire, enabling the immediate release of \$68.36 million. The

Executive Board also approved authorities' request for the modification of the performance criteria. In making its determinations, the Executive Board noted Cote d'Ivoire's performance under the IMF-supported program was strong, with real gross domestic product (GDP) growth reaching 20 percent between 2012 and 2014. Further, the IMF encouraged authorities to focus on maintain both high growth rates and macroeconomic stability. A press release was issued [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Tuareg-led rebels in Mali agreed to a local ceasefire and more political guarantees as part of a U.N.-facilitated peace deal. The rebel alliance known as the Coordination of Azawad Movements delayed the signing of a peace agreement in March, with separatists demanding more autonomy in the Azawad region. U.N. Special Representative for Mali Mongi Hamdi said rebels are expected to sign security and political agreements on June 20<sup>th</sup> in Bamako. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Fatoumata Ndiaye of Senegal as Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. Ndiaye currently serves as UNICEF's Director of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) and has previously help other positions within the U.N. systems and the Senegalese private sector. Her appointment was announced [here](#).

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) Aichatou Mindaoudou briefed the U.N. Security Council on the situation in the country. Special Representative Mindaoudou advocated for a continuing U.N. presence in Cote d'Ivoire ahead of the October presidential election, which she said will be an important milestone since the last election, which was marred by violence. While she noted progress has been made in facilitating dialogue between the Government and opposition parties, Special Representative Mindaoudou expressed concern regarding the capabilities of Ivorian law enforcement and security institutions to maintain public order. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, following last week's severe flooding in Accra, Ghanaian Vice President Kwesi Amissah-Arthur said Ghana will require \$15 billion over the next decade to address its infrastructure gap. Speaking to a forum of financial sector operators and private entrepreneurs, Vice President Amissah-Arthur noted this will be a huge challenge because the public sector budget will not be able to generate the funds required and the government will be forced to look and public-private partnerships. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, *Al Jazeera* profiled the eGranary Digital Library project in Nigeria, also known as the Internet in a Box. Developed by U.S.-based nonprofit WiderNet Project, the collective of digital documents, websites, multimedia, and academic texts has been made available to millions of students in Nigeria who are still not connected to the Internet because of poor infrastructure and lacking fiber and mobile networks. The project was highlighted [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, dozens of armed men suspected of being Islamist militants attacked a police base in the Sikasso region of Mali. According to witnesses, the attackers were waving the same flag used by Islamist fighters during their 2012 uprising in northern Mali. The Malian army reported a gendarme was killed in the attack, the base was burned down, and reinforcements have been deployed to the area. The situation was described [here](#).

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) welcomed the latest military operation by Congolese forces against members of an independent militia group following the collapse of political negotiations. On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the FARDC launched an attack against Front de Resistance Patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI) militants in order to protect civilians and neutralize the threat posed to peace in the country. The FRPI is believed to have more than 300 child soldiers in its ranks and is tied to human rights violations and illegal trafficking of natural resources. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, and IMF team concluded a visit to Antananarivo, Madagascar to continue discussions with government officials on the near-term economic situation and reforms to accelerate growth and improve development outcomes. The team met with President Hery Rajaonarimampianina, Prime Minister Jean Raveloharison, Central Bank Governor Alain Rasolofondaribe, and other senior officials. The IMF team found Madagascar's current economic situation challenging, noting that weak global commodity prices

and severe weather have adversely impacted growth prospects for this year. Additional observations were noted [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the South African parliament, largely controlled by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party, approved a five percent pay increase for President Jacob Zuma, bringing his annual salary to about \$240,000. Opposition parties opposed the pay hike, arguing President Zuma had already unduly benefited from state-funded upgrades to his home worth more than \$20 million. The pay increase will also be applied to the salaries of the deputy president, government ministers, and members of parliament. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Board of the IMF completed the second and third reviews of Burkina Faso's economic performance under a three-year program supported by an ECF, enabling a disbursement of roughly \$32.28 million. The Executive Board noted Burkina Faso's economy has faced severe challenges over the past year as a result of worsened terms of trade, spillovers from the Ebola crisis in the region, and internal political upheaval. Despite these conditions, the Executive Board expressed satisfaction with the Burkinabe authorities' commitment to boosting revenues and containing public wages. More feedback can be viewed [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Rwanda's opposition Democratic Green Party filed a lawsuit demanding the Supreme Court block any move by parliament to change the constitution to allow President Paul Kagame to run for a third term. President Kagame's second term will come to an end in 2017. While he has said he would oppose lifting the two-term limit, President Kagame caused some confusion when he said he would also be open to staying in power if people convinced him. President Kagame was elected in landslide victories in 2003 and 2010, but has more recently been criticized by human rights groups for suppressing political freedoms. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's rand fell to a 13.5 year low against the U.S. dollar in advance of an expected Fitch credit rating review on South Africa. The rand fell to a low of 12.6600, its weakest since December 2001. While the weakening of the rand may be due in part to accelerated U.S. job growth in May, some analysts also believe the possibility of an interest rate hike from the U.S. Federal Reserve in September may also be putting pressure on the rand. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, South African power utility Eskom postponed plans to interrupt the power supply at municipalities that owed dues. While Eskom did not specify which two municipalities were at risk, it noted both municipalities are in a legal process to address the money owed. The situation was noted [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Zambia announced it will cut mineral royalties for underground mines to six percent. An earlier proposal had put the mining royalty tax at nine percent, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. The Government clarified, however, the tax rate for open pit mines will remain at nine percent. Zambia is Africa's second largest copper producer and home to the operations of a number of multinational mining companies, including Glencore, Barrick Gold Corp, Vedanta Resources, and First Quantum Minerals. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Botswana Central Bank Governor Linah Mohohlo downplayed the potential effects of a severe drought in southern Africa. According to Governor Mohohlo, economists are predicting the short and medium term impacts on prices will not be too disastrous because of a generally low inflationary environment. Meanwhile, the drought is expected to result in other challenges, such as food shortages. For details, click [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's Department of Correctional Services (DCS) announced Oscar Pistorius, the Paralympic athlete who shot and killed his girlfriend, Reva Steenkamp, after mistaking her for a burglar, will be released under house arrest after ten months in prison. Pistorius will be released from Kgosi Mampuru II Prison in Pretoria on August 21<sup>st</sup>. During his parole, Pistorius must abstain from alcohol, drugs, and gun use, and is also likely to be instructed to take anger management courses and participate in community service. Developments in the case were noted [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, families in the DRC sent a letter to national prosecutor Floribert Kabange Numbi calling on the Government to exhume a mass grave they say may contain the bodies of 34 of their relatives feared detained and executed by security forces. While provincial authorities say the grave near Kinshasa

contains the remains of still-born babies and unclaimed corpses, human rights groups have raised suspicion the graves contain the bodies of people killed during January protests against an election law designed to keep President Joseph Kabila in office beyond 2016 and Operation Likofi, which the government launched to crackdown on street gangs. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Zambian police arrested singer Fumba Chama and accused him of mocking President Edgar Lungu in a way that could provoke public clashes. Singing in a local language, Chama told the story of a man named Lungu who has no ideas, but carries a suitcase full of whiskey. If convicted, Chama could face up to six months in prison or a fine. His arrest was reported [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank commended Rwanda's forward-looking policies that have led to transformation in the country's agricultural sector. According to the World Bank, strong agricultural performance is powering Rwanda's economic growth, rising from 4.7 percent in 2013 to seven percent in 2014. Rwanda's efforts have also been supported by World Bank investments in projects to promote land husbandry, water harvesting and hillside irrigation, rural sector support, and value chain development in the agriculture and livestock sectors. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos traveled to Beijing, China for a bilateral meeting with President Xi Jinping. The trip was organized as part of Angola's efforts to identify financing for priority infrastructure projects, including a \$4.5 billion hydropower dam, in the wake of lower revenue as a result of declining crude prices. Angola is the largest recipient of Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa. President dos Santos' visit to China was outlined [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, the Joint U.N. Programme on HIV/AIDS and the AU issued a jointed report called "Empower Young Women and Adolescent Girls: Fast-Tracking the End of the AIDS Epidemic in Africa." The report finds that despite considerable advances made in the global response to the AIDS epidemic over the last several decades, in sub-Saharan Africa AIDS-related illnesses remain the leading cause of death among girls and women of the reproductive age. According to the report, in 2013, 74 percent of new HIV infections among African adolescents were among adolescent girls. The report was published [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, documents leaked by human rights group Global Witness indicated Major Burimbi Feruzi, a Congolese military officer, was paid \$42,000 by British oil company Soco International as a bribe to allow the company to explore for oil in Virunga National Park. Soco has not denied using the DRC's army for security reasons or having a relationship with Major Feruzi, but refuted any suggestion the alleged exchange of money was a bribe. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party was declared the winner of all 16 parliamentary by-elections held on June 10<sup>th</sup>. ZANU-PF candidates won by huge margins in many constituencies, although electoral officials reported low voter turnout. The main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), boycotted the polls. For details, click [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank published a paper titled, "Elephant Crime Intelligence System Assessment." The paper notes nearly 50,000 elephants were killed across Africa in 2011 for illegal harvesting and trade of ivory. The annual elephant reproduction rate is not enough to compensate for this level of illegal killing, posing a threat to the species and to the livelihoods of rural communities that depend on thriving wildlife for sustainable incomes through tourism and associated industries. As a result, the World Bank recommended developing national, regional, and transnational strategies to help prevent the illegal poaching of African elephants. The paper can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the African Development Bank (AfDB) launched a new report titled, "Payment for Environmental Services: A Promising Tool for Natural Resources Management in Africa." The report details the potential to improve natural resources management efficiency, ensure the flow of environmental services for the businesses and infrastructure that rely upon them, and establish new sustainable finance for conservation efforts. The report can be accessed [here](#).

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, ahead of the AU Summit planned for this weekend, *BBC* reported that African leaders will unveil the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) agreement at the summit. Under the agreement, officials from 26 African countries have reached a deal to merge the three existing trade blocs on the continent, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), EAC, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) into a single free trade zone. Details were shared [here](#).

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