



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Burundi

On June 15th, Africa leaders convened in Johannesburg, South Africa for a summit on the political tensions in Burundi. After assessing the weeks of violence following Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza's announcement that he would seek a third term, participants agreed to deploy at least 50 military experts from the African Union (AU) to Burundi to observe the situation on the ground and provide council to local police when needed. More information was shared [here](#).

On June 16th, Deputy Chairperson of the AU Erastus Mwencha called for further postponement of Burundi's presidential election, which was most recently postponed from June 26th to July 15th. Deputy Chairperson Mwencha said the date was changed by presidential decree following an electoral commission proposal and instead advocated for selecting a new date through negotiations between the government and the opposition. The AU's position on the election date was articulated [here](#).

On June 18th, the Government of Burundi said it had agreed in principle to the deployment of AU military observers and human rights experts to monitor elections following weeks of political unrest in the country, but indicated they would only be allowed to enter the country following an agreement on conditions through consultations with the AU. The Government rejected the AU's calls to further delay the presidential election, noting the parliamentary and presidential contests had already been delayed and a new administration will need to be elected to avoid a constitutional vacuum when the current administration's term ends on August 26th. Developments were noted [here](#).

On June 18th, at least three people were wounded when a grenade exploded in Bujumbura, Burundi. A police officer at the scene said no suspect had been arrested. Grenade blasts have become frequent in and around the capital as protests continue against President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term in office. The grenade attack was described [here](#).

Libya

On June 12th, at least nine fighters were killed in new clashes between Islamic State of Iraq and the

Levant (ISIL) fighters and rival jihadist group Majlis al-Shura. The latest violence comes after an incident last week in which ISIL militants killed four Majlis al-Shura leaders in Derna, Libya. Following last week's attack, Majlis al-Shura declared jihad on ISIL. Developments were reported [here](#).

On June 14th, U.N. Special Representative for Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Bernardino Leon condemned the June 12th storming of the Tunisian consulate in Tripoli by unidentified assailants. Special Representative Leon called for the immediate and unconditional release of ten captured consulate staff members and said the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises must be respected. His reaction to the attack was articulated [here](#).

On June 14th, Libya's internationally recognized government based in the eastern part of the country confirmed that U.S. air strikes on Ajdabiya, carried out on Sunday evening, killed militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar. While the U.S. confirmed Belmokhtar had been the target of the airstrikes, U.S. officials were not able to immediately verify that Belmokhtar had been killed. Belmokhtar is believed to be responsible for orchestrating the 2013 attack on Algeria's In Amenas gas field that killed 38 hostages, including three Americans. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 15th, contrary to reports from Libya's internationally recognized government, a Libyan Islamist with ties to Libyan militant groups said Sunday's U.S. air strikes did not kill Mokhtar Belmokhtar, but instead four members of Libyan extremist group Ansar al-Shariah. In past strikes, authorities have claimed that Belmokhtar was killed, but his death was never independently verified. Some experts are waiting to judge the effectiveness of the most recent airstrikes until there is DNA evidence or else an announcement from Belmokhtar's group, an offshoot of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 16th, Al Qaeda-linked militant group Ansar al-Shariah released a list of seven names of those they say were killed in an American strike on the town of Ajdabiya over the weekend. The list did not include the target of the air strike, Mokhtar Belmokhtar. A second statement issued by an umbrella group for Libyan militias known as the Shura Council of Ajdabiya and its Surroundings also did not list Belmokhtar among those who died in the attack. While neither group directly denied Belmokhtar was killed, U.S. officials indicated assessments on the success of the air strike were still underway. An update was provided [here](#).

On June 17th, the U.N. Security Council encouraged all participants of the Libyan Political Dialogue to consider the proposals contained in the fourth draft of the political agreement that emerged from the most recent round of talks held in Morocco from June 8th-9th. The Security Council also noted it was prepared to sanction those who continue to threaten Libya's peace and stability while reaffirming a strong commitment to Libya's sovereignty and territorial integrity. U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon said he was pleased to see the Tripoli government respond favorably to the agreement and he expects the same from the Tobruk government in the coming days. For more information, click [here](#).

On June 18th, French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said it is very likely Algerian Islamist Mokhtar Belmokhtar was killed by the U.S. air strike recently conducted in Libya. Minister Le Drian echoed U.S. sentiments, noting that Belmokhtar was the intended target of the raid, although French authorities could not confirm the operation's success. Minister Le Drian's comments were captured [here](#).

Nigeria

On June 11th, *Defense One* published an op-ed written by Bobby Ghosh encouraging Nigeria to focus not just on the military campaign against Boko Haram, but also a post-war strategy for reintegrating Islamist fighters into Nigerian society. Ghosh highlights many of Boko Haram's fighters are actually victims of terrorism themselves, especially as 40 percent of the group's fighters are thought to be child soldiers. The article can be read [here](#).

On June 12th, the World Food Programme (WFP) expressed concern about the security situation in Nigeria, which it noted has displaced 200,000 people, including many who have sought refuge in Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. The WFP said the crisis has resulted in malnutrition rates among the Nigerian refugee population in Niger and Cameroon that have surpassed emergency thresholds, which acute

malnutrition rates among children under the age of five at a high of 36 percent. The WFP also reported the continuation of the rainy season is making it increasingly difficult to provide access to food. Comments from the WFP were recorded [here](#).

On June 12th, following a regional summit hosted by Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari on collaborative efforts to fight Boko Haram, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger agreed to launch a new multinational force, based in Ndjamena, Chad, to take on the Islamist group. The force is expected to launch by July 30th with a permanent Nigerian commander. Chad and Cameroon will contribute deputy commanders. The outcomes of the summit were summarized [here](#).

On June 12th, suspected Boko Haram gunmen killed 37 people in raids on five villages around Maiduguri, Nigeria. Witnesses reported the Islamist militants arrived on motorcycles and vehicles, firing into houses at locals throughout the evening and into the early morning. Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, has recently become the site for Nigeria's command center for the offensive against Boko Haram. The attacks were detailed [here](#).

On June 15th, suspected Boko Haram fighters carried out two suicide bombings in Chad, killing at least 27 people and wounding 101 others. One of the bombings occurred at the central police station in N'Djamena, while the second blast hit a police academy in the capital's Diguél district. In January, Boko Haram threatened to attack Chad for joining a multinational force to fight the extremist group and the suicide bombings are thought to be retaliation for Chad's involvement in regional counterterrorism operations. The full story is available [here](#).

On Jun 15th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the series of deadly bombings in N'Djamena, Chad, offering condolences to the Chadian Government and the families of victims and wishing those injured a speedy recovery. In light of reports the attacks had been executed by Boko Haram militants, Secretary-General Ban commended Chad for its role in the fight against Boko Haram as part of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) and stressed the importance of enhanced collaboration among countries of West and Central Africa to more effectively combat the Boko Haram threat. Secretary-General Ban's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On June 16th, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the U.S. will contribute \$5 million towards the multinational task force being set up to fight Boko Haram. This represents a shift in U.S. relations with Nigeria since the transition of power from former President Goodluck Jonathan to newly inaugurated President Muhammadu Buhari. President Jonathan had been hesitant to establish a regional joint task force out of fear it would undermine Nigeria's sovereignty. His administration was also hesitant to accept U.S. assistance with the military campaign, but issued a request for U.S. weapons, which was ultimately denied. Under President Buhari's leadership, the formation of the new multinational task force is gaining momentum. For details, click [here](#).

On June 16th, the Nigerian organizers of the #BringBackOurGirls campaign said Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari had accepted a request to meet with them. According to campaigner Hadiza Bala Usman, the meeting will focus on the status and rescue of 219 schoolgirls who were captured last year, the strategy for ending the Boko Haram insurgency, and government accountability for security spending. News of the meeting follows a meeting President Buhari held last week with ten parents of the missing Chibok schoolgirls. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 16th, bombs found at an abandoned Boko Haram camp exploded in Monguno, Nigeria, killing at least 13 people and injuring 45 others. The bombs were found along the roadside and exploded as those who discovered them were walking past a market on their way to a military base to have the explosives defused. An article on the incident can be read [here](#).

On June 17th, the U.S. Department of State condemned Monday's terrorist attacks in the Chadian capital of N'Djamena and in Nigeria. The U.S. Government extended condolences to the families and loved ones of the innocent victims who were killed in the attack and to those who sustained injuries. The State Department also reiterated its dedication to supporting Chad, Nigeria, and their regional partners engaged in the fight against Boko Haram. A statement was issued [here](#).

On June 17th, Chad arrested at least five suspects and banned religious burqas following two Boko

Haram suicide bombings in the capital earlier this week. Prime Minister Kalzeube Pahimi Deubet met with religious leaders on Wednesday to discuss the new security measures and said burqas and religious turbans would be banned from Chadian marketplaces. Chad's response to the Boko Haram bombings was discussed [here](#).

On June 18th, Boko Haram militants in cars and on motorbikes attacked two villages in Niger's Diffa region, killing at least 30 civilians. In addition to firing at villagers, the militants set fire to straw thatched houses where others were hiding. The overnight attacks represent the second major cross-border attack by Boko Haram this week, following twin suicide bombings in Chad. Developments were noted [here](#).

On June 18th, the Chadian military carried out air strikes in Nigeria on suspected Boko Haram positions. The strikes were carried out in response to the Boko Haram bombing in N'Djamena earlier in the week. According to Chadian military officials, Boko Haram suffered heavy casualties and six of its bases were destroyed. The air strikes were reported [here](#).

South Sudan

On June 12th, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) urgently demanded more financial support to continue relief work in South Sudan as the political conflict in the country continues. UNICEF Representative to Sudan Geert Cappelaere said UNICEF and its partners have been providing water and sanitation, treatment of malnutrition, and immunization, but the gaps remain critical with funds only available through the end of this month. Further, he noted growing demand for new educational facilities in South Sudanese refugee camps and said over 3.2 million children in the country are in need of humanitarian assistance. An update was provided [here](#).

On June 15th, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) reported roughly 14,000 new South Sudanese refugees, mainly women and children, fled into Sudan over the weekend. UNHCR has registered close to 160,000 refugees in Sudan since fighting broke out in South Sudan in December 2013. Given the influx of refugees, UNHCR pressed the need to scale up water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions as the rainy season approaches and heightens the risk of water-borne diseases, such as dysentery and cholera. Feedback from UNHCR was posted [here](#).

On June 16th, during a high-level conference on the situation in South Sudan organized by the European Union (EU) and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the EU and the U.N. announced more than \$275 million had been pledged in support of the victims of the conflict in South Sudan. At the conference, OCHA reported the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan has deteriorated relentlessly, with more than two million people internally displaced and another half million refugees thought to have fled into Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda. In addition, an estimated 4.6 million people are facing severe food insecurity. The high-level conference on South Sudan was summarized [here](#).

On June 16th, the U.S. delegation in Geneva, Switzerland attending the international conference on the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan announced more than \$133 million in additional humanitarian assistance in response to a surge in conflict and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian conditions in South Sudan over the last two months. The delegation included U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Donald Booth, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration Catherine Wiesner, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Director Jeremy Konyndyk. The new funding will allow U.S.-funded organizations to provide food and livelihood support and prevent the spread of diseases by providing emergency health services, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene education. The contribution was announced [here](#).

On June 17th, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched an emergency airlift operation in South Sudan, making the first delivery of survival kits including nutritional biscuits, mosquito nets, vegetable seeds, water purification tablets, and oral rehydration salts. The first distribution reached an estimated 28,000 people displaced by fighting. A recent uptick in violence in South Sudan has affected an estimated 750,000 people in Greater Upper Nile and forced approximately 150,000 people to flee their homes and farms. The situation was described [here](#).

On June 18th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous criticized South Sudanese President Salva Kiir for hindering efforts to protect civilians by blocking U.N. attack helicopters and surveillance drones and declaring that U.N. personnel caught taking photos would be deemed spies. In addition, Under-Secretary-General Ladsous said the movements of some 12,000 U.N. troops, peacekeepers, and police had also been restricted. His comments were transcribed [here](#).

Sudan

On June 14th, the U.S. Department of State expressed concern for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's travel to South Africa for the AU summit. The State Department noted President Bashir has been indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of crimes against humanity and genocide and warrants for his arrest remain outstanding. While not a party to the Rome Statute, the U.S. articulated support for international efforts to hold accountable those for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes and called on the Government of South Africa to support the international community's efforts to provide justice for the victims of these crimes. A statement was issued [here](#).

On June 15th, despite an order from the Pretoria High Court barring him from leaving South Africa, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir departed Johannesburg, where he had attended the AU summit, to return to Kartoum, Sudan. At this time of President Bashir's departure, the court had been meeting to decide whether or not to arrest him on charges issued by the ICC for war crimes. An arrest warrant was ultimately issued hours after President Bashir left the country. In response, the ICC said South Africa's failure to arrest President Bashir was disappointing. Developments were noted [here](#).

On June 15th, following Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's travel to and from South Africa for the AU summit, *Mail & Guardian* highlighted how the incident could be evidence of the strained relationship between the ICC and the continent. Since he was indicted for war crimes in 2009, President Bashir has traveled to numerous African countries, including Chad, Kenya, and Nigeria, where calls for his arrest were similarly ignored. Meanwhile, several African leaders, such as Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, and Rwandan President Paul Kagame have previously suggested the ICC has unfairly targeted Africa and implemented selective justice. Their views were analyzed [here](#).

On June 17th, the U.N. denied a media report that Sudanese troops held South African peacekeepers in Darfur hostage so Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir could leave South Africa and avoid being arrested for crimes against humanity. U.N. Spokesman Farhan Haq said South Africa currently has 802 members of an infantry battalion deployed to North Darfur and confirmed none of those troops were held hostage or under any threat as suggested by the media. The U.N. response was articulated [here](#).

African Migrant Crisis in the Mediterranean

On June 15th, French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said Italy must comply with the Dublin rules, which assign asylum seekers to the EU country they enter first. As a result, he pledged that France will continue to send African migrants back to Italy if they have registered there first. Minister Cazeneuve's comments come in response to Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's call for a change in current regulations. Prime Minister Renzi has argued since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the international community should help take responsibility for the thousands of migrants who have since crossed the Mediterranean. Both positions were outlined [here](#).

On June 16th, as EU ministers met in Luxembourg to discuss the African migrant crisis in the Mediterranean, Italian police removed close to 300 African migrants, mainly from Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia, who were living in makeshift camps on rocks by the seaside along the Italy-France border. Many of the migrants said they were rebuffed from seeking refuge in France. Italian police officers said the migrants would be taken to a train station and provided with food and medical assistance. The situation was described [here](#).

On June 16th, the Government of Niger said at least 33 migrants have died in the Sahara desert in Niger en route to Europe this year, including 18 who were found dehydrated last week near the border with Algeria. Meanwhile, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said 30 migrants had been found dead in the Sarah near Dirkou this week alone, bringing the total to 48 bodies recovered in the country

so far this year. Details were posted [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On June 10th, USAID published an interview with Kama Garrison, a senior public health advisor for USAID's Neglected Tropical Disease Program who has been working with other agencies and partners on social mobilization as part of the Ebola response in West Africa. In the interview, Garrison discussed how communications strategies, including mass media, community-level activities, face-to-face communication, and technologies have been incorporated into the Ebola response strategy to influence behaviors that affect people's health. The interview was transcribed [here](#).

On June 11th, *The New York Times* highlighted potential patent infringement concerns surrounding the Ebola drug, MIL77 produced by Chinese company Beijing Mabworks. Because MIL77 could be considered a close copy of Mapp Biopharmaceutical's ZMapp drug, U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) Director Robin Robinson suggested Chinese scientists may have infringed on patents if they tried to sell MIL77 outside China without an agreement with Mapp Biopharmaceutical. Meanwhile, Beijing Mabworks Chief Executive Feng Li said his company made a licensing agreement with ZMapp's intellectual property rights holder as the supply of ZMapp dwindled. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 12th, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded a \$1.8 million contract to OraSure Technologies to develop a low-cost Ebola test that can deliver results within 20 minutes. OraSure's technology is a diagnostic stripe that can detect Ebola in bodily fluids, such as blood or saliva. The company is also expected to test whether the strip can diagnose Ebola in a deceased patient. The agreement supports clinical and non-clinical work necessary to apply for approval of the test by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). A press release was published [here](#).

On June 15th, the World Bank highlighted its collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), and USAID to provide planting seeds and fertilizers to Ebola hit countries. In April, the World Bank delivered a record 10,500 tons of maize and rice seeds to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, where as many as 75 percent of households have expressed concern about food shortages due to the Ebola epidemic. Up to 200,000 farmers across all three countries are expected to benefit from the seed distribution project. An article on the project can be read [here](#).

On June 15th, the World Bank released the findings of a new round of mobile phone surveys regarding the impacts of the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone. This third round of surveys found employment in Sierra Leone has rebounded to the levels seen in July-August 2014. However, although people are returning to work, their hours and earnings are still low. The survey also found agriculture is showing positive signs as the new planting season begins, the use of basic social services is continuing to increase, and a majority of school-aged children have returned to school. The survey's findings were summarized [here](#).

On June 17th, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending June 14th, there were 24 confirmed cases of Ebola, compared with 27 cases of Ebola the previous week. In Guinea, ten cases were reported from four prefectures, while a total of 14 cases were reported from two districts in Sierra Leone. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On June 11th, President Barack Obama issued a routine update to Congress on the deployment of U.S. armed forces around the world equipped for combat. In addition to the more robust U.S. military operations in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, President Obama highlighted the presence of U.S. troops in Somalia, Djibouti, and Niger, as well as the 300 American troops that continue to support the search for Joseph Kony and other leaders of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Central Africa. President Obama's full report can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 16th, President Barack Obama reappointed Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda

Thomas-Greenfield to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation. Her nomination was noticed [here](#).

On June 16th, while visiting the United Kingdom (U.K.), First Lady Michelle Obama announced a new, nearly \$200 million partnership between the U.S. and the U.K. to continue both countries' collective support for adolescent girls' education. The new partnership will target assistance to countries affected by conflict and crisis, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Details were released [here](#).

State Department

On June 7th-15th, 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 25th 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 18th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement on World Refugee Day, celebrated on June 20th. Secretary Kerry said nearly 60 million men, women, and children are now displaced inside and outside of their countries, the largest number UNHCR has ever counted and eight million more than the record set just one year ago. Additionally, Secretary Kerry reflected on his recent meetings with Somali refugees in the Dadaab complex during his recent visit to Kenya. Secretary Kerry's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On June 16th, in partnership with First Lady Michelle Obama, USAID and the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) announced an expanded partnership to advance girls' education around the world as part of the Let Girls Learn initiative. As part of the commitment, USAID and DFID will provide up to \$180 million over five years in the DRC to enable girls who are not in school to access accelerated and alternative learning programs in the North Kivu, South Kivu, and Katanga provinces. The program is expected to reach more than 755,000 girls. A press release was issued [here](#).

Department of Defense

On June 12th, the Lewis B. Puller, the Marine Corps' first Afloat Forward Staging Base (AFSB), was delivered to the Navy in San Diego. The AFSB, which includes berthing for 250 troops, a flight deck, fuel and equipment storage, and repair spaces, is envisioned to be a key asset for special Marine air-ground task forces and special operations units. Marine Commandant General Joseph Dunford has previously said the AFSB will help improve the gap in Marines' abilities to perform crisis response activities from the sea in Africa. An article on the delivery of the AFSB can be read [here](#).

On June 16th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) highlighted the completion of two projects in Togo resulting from collaboration between AFRICOM's Humanitarian and Civic Assistance Program, the U.S. Embassy in Lome, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. First, a ribbon cutting ceremony was recently held at a regional health center for women in Amoutive that includes rooms for exams, labor, delivery, recovery, and a pharmacy. In addition, a separate opening ceremony was held for a primary school in Atome featuring four classrooms, two verandas, administration and supply rooms, and a rainwater collection system. Both projects were profiled [here](#).

On June 17th, the U.S. and Spain signed a defense agreement giving U.S. Marines permanent use of the Moron air base. According to the Pentagon, the purpose of the 850 Marines in the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force based at Moron is to intervene in crises in Africa, including humanitarian disasters. The base played a key role in the crisis response unit created to focus on embassy security

after the September 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya. The signing of the agreement was reported [here](#).

Department of Transportation

On June 18th-26th, Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx and Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Global Markets Arun Kumar led a delegation of 14 U.S. companies on a multi-sector trade mission to sub-Saharan Africa. The trade mission, which visited Mozambique, South Africa, and Kenya, was designed to introduce U.S. firms in the transportation, energy equipment and services, and the agricultural equipment sectors to the sub-Saharan African region while also promoting the importance of exports of these U.S. goods and services. This is the first trade mission led by a U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Prior to the start of the trade mission, Secretary Foxx also visited Ghana, where he met with government officials about the Safe Skies for Africa program, which helps African countries with technical assistance, training courses, and workshops on travel safety. Secretary Foxx's travel was outlined [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On June 16th, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) recognized Belstar Development, the winner of a 2015 OPIC Impact Award for excellence in development in the innovation category. Belstar is serving as the lead investor in Ghana's National Medical Equipment Modernization project, which aims to improve the quality of health care in 100 hospitals across all ten of Ghana's administrative regions. The project is supported by OPIC political risk insurance. Belstar's investment in Ghana was detailed [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On June 18th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) announced a USTDA grant to Rwandan energy developer DC HydroPower Ltd is funding technical assistance to support the company's plans to develop two small run-of-the-river hydropower plants on the Mukungwa River in Rwanda's northwest Musanze district. The project includes two hydropower plants, Rwaza I and Rwaza II, which will generate 2.6 megawatts (MW) and 1 MW, respectively. The equipment and services needed for project implementation were listed [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On June 15th, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) highlighted the recent trade and investment mission it led to Tanzania and Malawi with the Department of Commerce. The mission, which was announced at last year's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and concluded on June 5th, brought ten American countries to Africa to promote U.S. exports and expand U.S. companies' presence in Africa by introducing American firms to opportunities in the energy sector. Photos from the trade and investment mission were posted [here](#).

On June 16th, the MCC published a blog post detailing MCC Deputy CEO Nancy Lee's recent visit to Morocco to explore deploying payments for results in vocational and secondary school training programs as part of the development of a second compact with the Government of Morocco. In addition to giving a set of pilot schools increased training, capacity, and budget and providing bonus payments to schools that achieve targets in student competencies, the MCC is also exploring launching a Social Impact Bond (SIB) to support employment programs for Morocco's vulnerable populations. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On June 17th, the MCC released a fact sheet on its new \$375 million Benin Power Compact. The grant aims to strengthen Benin's national utility, attract private sector investment, and fund infrastructure investments in electric generation and distribution, as well as off-grid electrification for poor and unserved households. The Benin Power Compact represents the MCC's latest contribution to the U.S. Government's Power Africa initiative, which was designed to double access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa. The fact sheet can be downloaded [here](#).

Congress

On June 11th, the House of Representatives passed the Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015, which included a ten-year extension of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The legislation advanced by a vote of 397-32. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 11th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued a statement applauding House passage of a ten-year extension of AGOA. Congresswoman Bass said the vote was the result of years of work from the African Diplomatic Corps, African heads of state, members of African governments, and countless members of the African Diaspora who advocated for AGOA reauthorization. She encouraged the Senate to quickly take up the legislation and send it to President Barack Obama for his signature. Congresswoman Bass' statement can be read [here](#).

On June 16th, the House Select Committee on Benghazi said it had received roughly 120 new pages of email between former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Sidney Blumenthal, a friend and advisor. Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) said the new emails regarding Libya and Benghazi had not been previously produced to the Committee or released to the public and announced his intent to work with Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-MS) toward their release. The Committee was also scheduled to receive a closed deposition from Sidney Blumenthal on June 16th. More information was shared [here](#).

On June 17th, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to consider the nomination of Gayle Smith to serve as Administrator of USAID. Smith was nominated by President Barack Obama on April 30th. She currently serves as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Development and Democracy on the National Security Council (NSC) staff. Smith has previously served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the NSC and also lived and worked in Africa for almost 20 years as a journalist and representative of non-governmental relief and development organizations. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

On June 17th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) published the latest edition of her biweekly Africa Update. The latest newsletter highlights the use of mobile technology for health care on the continent, as well as the recent push in Nigeria to end female genital mutilation (FGM). The Africa Update can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 18th, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Ben Cardin (D-MD), Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Committee Members Chris Coons (D-DE) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) introduced the Millennium Compacts for Regional Economic Integration (M-CORE) Act. Like the version of the bill introduced in the House, the M-CORE Act would allow the MCC to establish concurrent compacts in eligible developing countries, allowing the MCC to promote economic growth and cross-border engagement between nations. The majority of the MCC's compacts are in Africa, with roughly 65 percent of the MCC's portfolio invested on the continent. The bill was posted [here](#).

North Africa

On June 14th, Egypt announced a new plan to reduce FGM by 10-15 percent over the next five years by training doctors on how to deal with the practice, mobilizing prosecutors, and launching a media campaign to change public perceptions. While FGM was made illegal in Egypt in 2008, there has been only one successful prosecution under that law. More than 90 percent of women in the country are thought to be affected by FGM. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 16th, the World Bank highlighted its support for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Network of Procurement Experts, which was designed to promote collaboration among regional governments to achieve efficient procurement and good government. In May, members of the Network convened in Cairo to exchange knowledge and experience on the importance of open government and public contracting. The effort was highlighted [here](#).

On June 16th an Egyptian court sentenced ousted President Mohamed Morsi, five Muslim Brotherhood leaders, including Mohamed Badie, and more than 80 others to death on charges of killing, kidnapping, and other offenses during a 2011 mass jail break. Earlier in the day, the court also sentenced President

Morsi to life in prison in a separate case on charges related to conspiring with foreign groups. Judge Shaaban el-Shami indicated the court acted on guidance from Egypt's top religious authority, the Grand Mufti, who said the death sentence was permissible for the defendants. The sentencing was detailed [here](#).

On June 16th, at least 17 Tunisians were killed and 65 more injured when a passenger train collided with a truck in Fahs, Tunisia. Tunisian Minister of Health Said Aydi said the accident was one of the worst rail incidents in the country's history. Authorities noted a preliminary investigation found the train collided with the truck after the truck drove through a red light. The accident was reported [here](#).

On June 17th, Egypt's army said it foiled an attack against security forces in the North Sinai, killing seven suspected militants and destroying two weapon caches. The army said it has received intelligence that terrorist elements were transferring weapons from Rafah to Sheik Zuweid with the goal of carrying out attacks on security forces. The disruption of the plot was announced by an army spokesman on Facebook hours after a police officer was killed and four others wounded when their armored vehicle hit a roadside bomb in El-Arish. Details can be accessed [here](#).

On June 18th, the British Government defended its decision to invite Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi to visit for bilateral meetings, just a day after an Egyptian court sentenced deposed President Mohammed Morsi to death. On Wednesday, British Prime Minister David Cameron invited President Sisi to visit Egypt later this year to engage on mutual matters of concern. Details can be accessed [here](#).

East Africa

On June 12th, Kenyans attacked China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) Chinese workers developing a railway line project in Mombasa. Local Kenyan residents have been protesting the project claiming they have not been appropriately compensated for land earmarked for the rail line. Mombasa Governor Hassan Ali Joho has publically sided with the Kenyan residents and said work on the project must stop until the issue is resolved. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 12th, in response to last week's release of the report of the U.N. Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea, the Eritrean Foreign Ministry denied that the Government subjects its citizens to indefinite national service or kills people trying to flee the country. More generally, Eritrean officials said they did not cooperate with the Commission because they found it to be biased against Eritrea even before looking at evidence. Eritrea's response to the report was detailed [here](#).

On June 14th, the Kenyan military reported killing 11 suspected Al Shabaab fighters in a firefight outside of military camp in Lamu County near the Somali border. Military spokesman Colonel David Obonyo said the fighters who were killed included two militants of Caucasian origin and several other militants fled with injuries. He also reported two Kenyan soldiers were lost in the clashes. The fighting was described [here](#).

On June 15th, former Ugandan Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, who was sacked by President Yoweri Museveni in September, announced his plans to seek the nomination from the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party. If elected, Mbabazi said his administration would focus on rebuilding public institutions, tackling corruption, attracting foreign investment, and creating jobs. President Museveni is also expected to seek the NRM nomination. Last week, Uganda's main opposition party, the Forum for Democratic Change, announced it would merge with four smaller opposition groups to launch a coalition that is expected to field a single candidate. For details, click [here](#).

On June 16th, Uganda's central bank raised its key lending rate one percentage point to 13 percent, a move it said was intended to stem inflationary pressures caused by a weakening shilling and expanding economic activity. Bank of Uganda Governor Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile said he expects core inflation, a prime target for the bank, is set to reach 8-10 percent by the end of the fiscal year. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 17th, members of Ethiopia's opposition Semayawi Party claimed parliamentary candidate Samuel Awoke's recent murder was politically motivated. Awoke, a candidate in Ethiopia's May 24th elections, was beaten to death on Monday evening in Debre Markos by unidentified attackers. While the

ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front coalition acknowledges the incident, they deny the government was in any way involved. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 17th, Chairman of Tanzania's parliamentary energy and minerals committee Richard Ndassa said he expects passage of the Petroleum Bill of 2015 in this work session. The legislation would cap royalties for the production of oil and gas at 12.5 percent for onshore and shelf areas and at 7.5 percent for offshore output. Tanzania estimates it has more than 55 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves and several oil and gas companies, including BG, Statoil, Exxon Mobil, Ophir, and Petrobras are in the country and engaged in exploration activities. An article on the proposed law can be read [here](#).

On June 18th, Somali security forces prevented a suicide attack against a political conference in Adado, killing three gunmen and the driver of a car parked with explosives. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the raid in Adado and said it had also attacked African peacekeepers and Somali troops in the southern Gedo region. While Al Shabaab claimed to have killed 15 people in the second assault, the Somali army reported that 10 rebels were killed and only three soldiers died in the Gedo raid. Al Shabaab also threatened to continue to carry out attacks during Ramadan. Both incidents were detailed [here](#).

On June 18th, Tanzanian Natural Resources and Tourism Minister Lazaro Nyalandu described elephant poaching as a national disaster and called on the international community, and in particular China, to end its appetite for illegal ivory. Tanzania's elephant population decreased from 110,000 in 2009 to just over 43,000 in 2014. Minister Nyalandu's comments were recorded [here](#).

West Africa

On June 11th, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the third review of Mali's performance under an economic program supported by a three-year Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, enabling a disbursement of \$5.6 million. While acknowledging a still fragile security environment in Mali, the IMF observed the economic recovery is gaining strength. Additionally, the IMF encouraged continued and accelerated implementation of reforms, especially related to tax and customs procedures, to strengthen public financial management. Additional analysis was posted [here](#).

On June 11th, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$121 million credit and grant to support the Sahel Malaria and Neglected Diseases Project, which aims to increase access to community-level health services to prevent and treat cases of malaria and other neglected tropical diseases such as trachoma, lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, and onchocerciasis, which are strongly associated with the climatic environment of the Sahel. The project will be implemented in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, and is expected to benefit an estimated 3.7 million people. A press release was issued [here](#).

On June 11th, the World Bank promoted its West Africa Regional Fisheries Program (WARFP), which is helping to curtail illegal trawling and its impacts on small-scale fishers and their livelihoods in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The program has become especially important as recent increase in local fish catches have helped both countries meet nutritional needs and improve food security as agriculture and livestock production continue to decline in the wake of the Ebola outbreak. The program was described [here](#).

On June 16th, the IMF issued a mission report on Ivory Coast. The IMF predicted Ivory Coast's economy will expand by 7.9 percent in 2016 and 2017, while acknowledging the country's economy growth forecasts could be impacted by the October presidential election, which sitting President Alassane Ouattara is favored to win. President Ouattara is thought to have had a positive influence on the economy by championing programs seeking to attract private sector investors for infrastructure projects. Additional economic data was analyzed [here](#).

On June 16th, the World Bank reported on Nigeria's participation in the Pollution Management and Environmental Health (PMEH) program, a new multi-donor Trust Fund administered by the World Bank and focused on air quality management in major urban areas. Data for Nigeria indicates 94 percent of the population is exposed to air pollution levels that exceed WHO guidelines, compared to the average of 72 percent on the continent. Research also suggests pollution damage costs Nigeria about one percentage point of Gross National Income. Details can be accessed [here](#).

On June 16th, the U.S. defeated Nigeria in the Women's World Cup, winning the "Group of Death" round of the competition. The Nigerians were defeated by a score of 1-0, following a 3-1 win over Australia and a 0-0 tie with Sweden. Highlights from the game were listed [here](#).

On June 17th, Malian troops killed five gunmen during a clash with an armed group in the central Mopti region. Defense Ministry Spokesman Colonel Diaran Kone did not identify the militant group involved, but noted that one Malian soldier was also injured in the fighting. Some suspect the new ethnic Peuhl armed group known as the Massina Liberation Front may have been involved in the fighting. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 17th, *How We Made It In Africa* called attention to the rise of e-commerce in Africa. The recent growth in e-commerce is attributed to a growing middle class, a relatively young population, and the demand for products that store-based retail cannot meet due to a lack of shopping malls and gridlocked cities. For example, in Nigeria, where smartphone growth and telecommunications investments have surged fastest, the country boasts the largest online market for apparel in footwear, led by electronic retailers, such as Jumia and Konga. The full story is available [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On June 11th, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Abdoulaye Bathily briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in the region. Special Representative Bathily warned of several persisting challenges in Central Africa, including the crises in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Burundi, as well as the economic crisis worsened by declining fuel prices, rising youth unemployment, and terrorist activities. The briefing was summarized [here](#).

On June 11th, in advance of next month's planned parliamentary elections in the CAR, the U.N. Peacebuilding Commission called on all stakeholders in the country to promote an environment conducive to elections. While applauding the progress the CAR has made on elections preparations, as well as the commitment demonstrated at the recent Bangui Forum, the U.N. Peacebuilding Commission expressed concern with the financial gap of \$21 million toward the electoral budget. For details, click [here](#).

On June 12th, the World Bank Group issued a new report titled, "Doing Business in South Africa 2015." The report examines the business and regulatory environment for domestic firms in South Africa's largest urban areas and ports, finding that local entrepreneurs face a wide array of business obstacles depending on where they establish their companies. In addition, the report describes how local officials can improve their business climate by replicating best practices deployed in other South African cities. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 12th, speaking at a conference on monetary policy and tax reform, South African Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene said South Africa's Treasury is considering a number of tax reforms to help boost government revenues. Without specifying the reforms under consideration, Minister Nene argued reforms are necessary due to fiscal pressures, growth inequality, and tax avoidance. His comments were captured [here](#).

On June 12th, South African utility Eskom's Sere Wind Farm achieved its full commercial operational capacity of 100 megawatts (MW). Financed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the French Development Agency, the Sere Wind Farm is Eskom's first large-scale renewable energy project. According to Eskom Acting Chief Executive Brian Molefe, the plant will save nearly six million tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over its 20-year operating life, producing enough energy to supply 124,000 standard homes annually. The project was highlighted [here](#).

On June 12th, doctors in Cape Town, South Africa announced a young South African man who had the first successful penis transplant last December had impregnated his girlfriend. The news represents a tremendous step in a pilot study at the Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town and supported by the University of Stellenbosch. Each year, hundreds of young South African men, mainly from the Xhosa tribe, lose their penises after coming-of-age rituals go wrong. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 15th, following a weekend retreat in Kigali, senior members of the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) party issued a communique backing a change to Rwanda's constitution that would allow President Kagame to seek a third term in office. Currently, Rwanda's constitution limits presidents to two, seven-year terms. It is unclear whether or not President Kagame supports the constitutional change. For more information, click [here](#).

On June 15th, a South African court dismissed an application filed by the families of the victims of the August 2012 Marikana mine massacre to have the investigation of the police shooting that resulted in the deaths of 24 striking miners released immediately. Last month, South African President Jacob Zuma said the report would be released before the end of June. The court ruling was announced [here](#).

On June 15th, more than 200 domestic and international NGOs called on the Government of the DRC to release two young activists held in prison on charges of plotting against President Joseph Kabila. Fred Bauma, an activist with Struggle for Change, and Yves Makwambala, a web designer for Filimbi, were both arrested on suspicion of promoting armed insurrection during a March 15th pro-democracy meeting in Kinshasa. Details were shared [here](#).

On June 15th, the French Foreign Ministry called on all parties in Madagascar to respect the constitutional court's decision to throw out parliament's impeachment of President Hery Rajaonarimampianina and open a new political dialogue to avoid further political crisis. President Rajaonarimampianina challenged last month's parliamentary decision citing irregularities in the procedure associated with the vote. Additional feedback on the situation in Madagascar was posted [here](#).

On June 16th, the ICC decided to hold the opening of the trial for Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda at ICC headquarters in The Hague and not in Bunia near the site of his alleged atrocities in the DRC. Ntaganda surrendered to the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda last March and was transferred to the ICC. He faces 18 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity tied to his days as a fighter in the DRC insurgency more than a decade ago. The logistics for the proceedings were discussed [here](#).

On June 17th, the Executive Board of the IMF completed the second review of the arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with Seychelles, allowing for the disbursement of \$2.3 million. Following the Executive Board's discussion, Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair Min Zhu observed sound macroeconomic management has strengthened Seychelles' economy significantly and the near-term growth outlook is favorable, with strong prospects in the tourism sector, as well as noticeable gains in traditional and non-traditional markets. Additional analysis can be seen [here](#).

On June 17th, Angola's capital of Luanda was found to be the world's most expensive city for expatriates as Mercer released the findings of its 2015 annual survey. This is the third year Luanda has been the most expensive city, primarily because of the high cost of rent, imported goods, and security. For details, click [here](#).

General Africa News

On June 16th, in recognition of the Day of the African Child, human rights activists called for an end to child marriage on the continent. The AU said it's a scandal that families on a continent that is so rich with natural resources have to sell their daughters to survive. Across Africa, two in five girls are married as children. According to African campaigners, child marriage deprives girls of education and opportunities, jeopardizes their health, and increases the risks of exploitation and sexual and domestic abuse. An article on the issue can be read [here](#).

On June 17th, the New World Wealth Africa Report for 2015 was released, finding the continent has the fastest growing high net worth (HNW) individual market in the world. Analysts found the number of African individuals classified as HNW has increased by 145 percent over the past 14 years, compared to worldwide HNW growth of just 73 percent over the same period. The report's findings were summarized [here](#).

On June 17th, Swiss food and drink company Nestle revealed plans to cut 15 percent of its workforce in 21 African countries. According to Chief Executive for Africa Cornel Krummenacher, the decision was

made because Nestle has found Africa's middle class is extremely small and not really growing. He also said Nestle would be lucky to reach annual 10 percent growth in Africa in future years, and with the cuts, the company hopes to break even next year. Details can be viewed [here](#).

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