



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### ***Burundi***

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, United Nations (U.N.) Children's Fund (UNICEF) Spokesman Christophe Boulierac reported children are increasingly put at risk due to the violent clashes and demonstrations taking place in Burundi. Five children have been killed and 200 injured since the start of the violence in late April. Meanwhile, Elisabeth Byrs, spokesperson for the World Food Programme (WFP), said the political instability could lead to a hunger crisis. The WFP is currently providing food assistance to over 60,000 Burundian refugees who have fled to neighboring countries. Full coverage is available [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, an explosion rocked Bujumbura, although according to police no one was injured, as protests against Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term continued. Pictures on social media showed three charred vehicles in front of a KCB bank branch in downtown Bujumbura, an area that has been largely free from demonstrations. The explosion was reported [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Department of State condemned a grenade attack in Bujumbura and the continued violence in Burundi. The State Department expressed concern recent grenade attacks, violence perpetrated by the ruling party Imbonerakure youth militia, and continued restrictions on peaceful assembly and the media are undermining efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Reiterating that President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term has destabilized the country, the U.S. joined the international community in urging Burundi to postpone the June 5<sup>th</sup> legislative elections. The State Department also called on all Burundian stakeholders and regional actors to continue to support ongoing efforts to find a peaceful solution. A statement was issued [here](#).

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Adama Dieng, U.N. Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, concluded a two-day visit to Burundi. During his trip, he urged the Government to allow for free expression from voices independent of the state media. He expressed concern for potential attacks based on ethnicity, given historical ethnic violence, and urged political parties to use their influence to prevent such actions. Special Adviser Dieng also warned the Burundian Government it will be held accountable for all human rights violations. Special Adviser Dieng's visit to Burundi was summarized [here](#).

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, following a meeting of the East African Community (EAC), held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, Kenyan

President Uhuru Kenyatta, and South African President Jacob Zuma called on Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza to postpone the elections due in June by at least a month and a half. The leaders also called for the disarmament of all armed youth groups and urged the Government of Burundi to create the conditions for the return of refugees. A spokesperson for the Burundian Government said officials were open to the idea of delaying elections. However, because the summit did not address the legitimacy of President Nkurunziza running for a third term, the Government noted it considered the matter closed. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) released funding from the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to provide assistance to thousands of Burundian refugees dispersed between Rwanda and Tanzania. The CERF funds will deliver \$15 million in relief efforts to refugees, with \$7.5 million destined for relief agencies in Tanzania that are battling a cholera epidemic and nearly \$8 million aimed at supporting the scaling up of relief operations in Rwanda. The funding was announced [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Said Djinnit returned to Burundi after attending the EAC summit in Tanzania. Upon his return, Special Envoy Djinnit was expected to continue his efforts to facilitate a dialogue among Burundian stakeholders in the face of ongoing political deadlock and a worsening humanitarian crisis. Additionally, the U.N. reported Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman had met with First Vice President of Burundi Prosper Bazombanza to lay out the steps the country must take to achieve peaceful and credible elections. U.N. engagement on Burundi was summarized [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.S. Department of State Spokesperson John Kirby called for East African countries to send representatives to Burundi to reiterate opposition to President Pierre Nkurunziza seeking a third term and to press for free and fair elections. Spokesperson Kirby restated the U.S. views President Nkurunziza's decision to run again as a violation of the Arusha agreement, which brought an end to Burundi's 2005 civil war. He also expressed support for the outcomes of the recent EAC summit, during which leaders from Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and South Africa called for elections in Burundi to be delayed. Spokesperson Kirby's comments were recorded [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) issued a statement following reports that Burundi was seriously considering postponing elections. To hold free and fair elections, Congressman Royce said there must be freedom of the press, an active civil society, and a basic sense of security, none of which are currently present in Burundi. He expressed support for the EAC's decision to call for an election postponement and expressed concern that forcing a flawed election will only further destabilize Burundi and lead to more deaths. Congressman Royce also called on President Pierre Nkurunziza to respect the principles of the Arusha Accord. His full statement can be read [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the head of Burundi's electoral body announced local and parliamentary elections will be delayed for at least a month and a half due to the prolonged protests against President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term. The protests have resulted in 30 deaths so far. The full story is available [here](#).

## **Nigeria**

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in as President of Nigeria. At a ceremony held in Abuja's Eagle Square and attended by foreign dignitaries, outgoing President Goodluck Jonathan handed over the constitution and national flags as President-Elect Buhari took the oath of office. In his first official speech, President Buhari reiterated his commitment to taking on Boko Haram and tackling corruption. President Buhari also announced plans to move Nigeria's military command center from Abuja to Maiduguri, which is closer to Boko Haram strongholds, as part of the effort to rescue the more than 200 Chibok schoolgirls captured last April who remain missing. President Buhari also called the recent power supply crisis in Nigeria a national shame. The inauguration was highlighted [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry led the U.S. delegation to Abuja, Nigeria to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Nigerian President-Elect Muhammadu Buhari. Secretary Kerry was accompanied by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, National

Security Council (NSC) Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs Grant Harris, Deputy Chief of Staff Tom Sullivan, State Department Spokesperson John Kirby, and State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf. Additional participants included U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria James Entwistle, and Olympic Gold Medalist Hakeem Olajuwon. Secretary Kerry also held a separate meeting with President Buhari, during which the leaders discussed increased U.S. military support for Nigeria, as well as the need to rehabilitate the young women captured by Boko Haram. Secretary Kerry's visit to Nigeria was outlined [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, Chad said its army had killed at least 33 Nigerian Boko Haram militants and lost three soldiers in heavy fighting on Choua Island in Lake Chad. The island is located within proximity to the borders of Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon. News of the fighting in Lake Chad broke as Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in as Nigeria's new President. Details were shared [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, a bomb blast at a meat market in Maiduguri, Nigeria killed an estimated 50 people. During the attack, which bore resemblances to earlier Boko Haram incidents in the region, a bomb concealed under a butcher's table exploded, killing and injuring many shoppers. According to local medics, charred bodies and other injured victims were transported to a teaching hospital in Maiduguri. The bombing was noted [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari said the country's army will take a bigger role in the fight against Boko Haram. President Buhari plans to replace Nigerian military forces in Nigerian cities with Nigerian forces within four weeks. President Buhari's remarks follow Nigerian President Mahamadou Issoufou's announcement of a new, 8,700-strong, multinational force due to begin operations against Boko Haram in the coming weeks. Details can be found [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, speculation rose around who newly inaugurated Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari will appoint to his cabinet. It is widely anticipated President Buhari will opt to directly oversee the country's oil portfolio, rather than trusting an appointee with Nigeria's main source of revenue and traditional front for corruption. While President Buhari sent a list of 15 special advisors to the outgoing national assembly for approval earlier this week, the cabinet is unlikely to be revealed until late July or early August. For details, click [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Boko Haram released a new propaganda video in which an unidentified, masked speaker denies the Nigerian army's claims that it has retaken much of Boko Haram's territory in northeastern Nigeria, brandishes the identification cards of government soldiers Boko Haram has killed, and points to the wreckage of a warplane the group claims to have taken down. Notably, the latest broadcast neither features nor mentions Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau, raising questions about his absence. The new video was discussed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Amnesty International released a report finding more than 8,000 people have died in the captivity of Nigeria's armed forces since the country began its campaign against Boko Haram. According to the report, more than 1,200 people were executed since March 2011 and over 7,000 have died as a result of the conditions associated with military detention, including starvation, overcrowding, torture, and denial of medical assistance. As a result, Amnesty International called for the investigation of senior military officials. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

### **South Sudan**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution extending the mandate of the U.N. Mission South Sudan (UNMISS) until November 30, 2015. The resolution authorizes UNMISS to use all necessary means to protect civilians, monitor human rights, and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid. Additionally, the resolution calls for 12,500 troops, 1,323 police, a zero tolerance policy on sexual abuse, and for all parties to initiate a dialogue. The resolution was detailed [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the Government of South Sudan's decision to expel U.N. Deputy Representative for South Sudan and Humanitarian Coordinator Tony Lanzer. While Deputy Special Representative Lanzer was nearing the end of his term and Eugene Owusu has already been appointed as his successor, Secretary-General Ban noted Deputy Special

Representative Lanzer plays a key role in ensuring life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable. He called on the Government of Sudan to immediately reverse its decision. Secretary-General Ban's feedback was shared [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported heavy fighting in South Sudan's Unity and Upper Nile states has displaced more than 100,000 people in the last two months and blocked humanitarian aid deliveries for 650,000 people. Since the beginning of this year, an estimated 60,000 South Sudanese have fled the country to Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda, bringing the number of people who have fled the country since December 2013 to 555,000. An additional 1.5 million people are believed to be displaced internally. UNHCR's data was reported [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, South Sudan rejected the U.N. appeal to halt the planned expulsion of Deputy head of UNMISS Toby Lanzer. According to presidential spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny, the government said it was impossible to reverse the decision on expelling Deputy Special Representative Lanzer because the cabinet had reached its decision after he made comments that were completely against the government. Developments were described [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.S. Department of State condemned the Government of South Sudan's decision to expel U.N. Deputy Special Representative for South Sudan and Humanitarian Coordinator of UNMISS Toby Lanzer. According to the State Department, the expulsion of Deputy Special Representative Lanzer is an affront to the international community working to bring peace and stability to South Sudan and demonstrates a callous disregard for the suffering of the South Sudanese people. The State Department expressed support for UNMISS and joined U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and other governments in calling on the Government of South Sudan to reverse its decision and cooperate fully with all U.N. entities in the country. A statement was posted [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N Security Council reiterated its support for UNMISS and expressed concern regarding the Government of Sudan's commitment to expelling Deputy Special Representative for South Sudan and Humanitarian Coordinator Tony Lanzer. The Security Council argued the Government's decision comes at a time when South Sudan is facing high levels of food insecurity and a deepening economic crisis, showing disregard for the plight of the South Sudanese people. The Security Council's feedback can be seen [here](#).

## **Libya**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Bernardino Leon said the U.N. was preparing a new draft of a political deal for the future of Libya. He stressed all parties would have to be flexible and concede on some issues in order for the country to move forward from continuing conflict. Special Representative Leon's comments came ahead of a new round of peace talks focused on forming a unity government. Special Representative Leon's statement can be read [here](#).

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, U.S. State Department Press Office Director, U.S. Jeff Rathke condemned the May 26<sup>th</sup> attack against Libyan Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni in Tobruk, which he said was a further effort to destabilize Libya and undermine the ongoing U.N.-facilitated Libyan political dialogue. Director Rathke reiterated the State Department's position that the U.N.-led process remains the best hope for Libyans to establish a national unity government and to confront the violence and instability that impedes Libya's transition and development. Noting that a political solution is the only way to bring the country together, Director Rathke welcomed the efforts by Libyan stakeholders to promote dialogue. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, five people were killed and eight wounded in a suicide bombing claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) outside of Misrata, Libya. According to security officials, a suicide bomber rammed a car laden with explosives into the main security checkpoint, leaving several cars and nearby shops damaged by the blast. ISIL quickly took to Twitter to claim responsibility for the attack, which it said was carried out by a Tunisian citizen. For more information, click [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, *Reuters* reported Libya is on the verge of economic collapse as authorities in Tripoli, who control much of western Libya, plan to cut petrol subsidies, delay public salary payments, and ban



imports. As the power struggle between two rival governments continues, the Central Bank, which has attempted to remain independent, has exhausted foreign reserves. Further complicating things, Libya relies heavily on oil revenues to fund its budget, but oil production is down due to fighting between rival factions and ISIL attacks that have shutdown oilfields and ports. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Libyan politicians and activists gathered in Algeria to resume U.N.-brokered talks aimed at forming a unity government to end the political struggle between two rival administrations. The latest round of dialogue is intended to allow stakeholders to work through issues of contention in a draft proposal before a broader meeting expected in Morocco next week. Following the close of the last round of negotiations, representatives of the rival governments indicated they were in agreement on roughly 80 percent of the proposed accord. The resumption of the peace talks was noted [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, in opening of a new round of Libyan peace talks, U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon encouraged Libya stakeholders to strive to reach a political agreement before the start of Ramadan. In addition, he warned the Central Bank of Libya and the administrations will likely not be able to pay salaries beyond the next month, further stressing the urgency of reaching an agreement. Special Representative Bernardino's comments were captured [here](#).

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

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, Germany and France raised concerns over the European Commission's proposal to redistribute African migrants arriving in Italy and Greece, which continue to struggle with addressing the thousands of immigrants crossing the Mediterranean from Libya. Under the proposal, Germany and France would together take nearly 40 percent of the 40,000 migrants. According to Germany and France, the proposal must take better account of the efforts both countries have already made to help asylum seekers. The German and French positions were articulated [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, following a visit to Egypt to meet with religious and political leaders, Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far right National Front party said her visit to North Africa had not changed her anti-immigration position. Le Pen said France cannot continue to welcome immigrants and instead advocated for France engaging in efforts to help keep potential immigrants safe in their own countries. According to the polls, Le Pen is expected to fare well in the first round of French presidential elections in 2017, but is unlikely to advance in the second-round ballot. An article on her visit to Egypt can be read [here](#).

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

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, Paloma Clohossey, an Information Officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, authored a blog post on USAID's collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Medair, and Lifeline to deliver life-saving interim care kits to families across Sierra Leone who are dealing with Ebola. The kits contain critical supplies like bleach, oral rehydration salts, chlorine, soap, and gloves, which can help family members serve as caregivers for loved ones who may be suffering from Ebola until an ambulance and health workers arrive. The blog post can be read [here](#).

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Eric King, an Innovation Specialist with the U.S. Global Development Lab's Digital Development Team who recently deployed as part of USAID's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in Liberia, provided insights on USAID-funded training events aimed at teaching Liberians to use social media tools to educate people on protecting themselves from Ebola. USAID has observed information communication technologies, such as mobile phones, are empowering local and international human responders by tightening the feedback loops between those who need help and those who can offer it. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced he will convene an international Ebola recovery conference on July 10<sup>th</sup> at U.N. headquarters in New York City. Secretary-General Ban said the goal of the conference will be to mobilize the resources needed for the last mile of the response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa, which will include getting to zero cases and facilitating recovery. The upcoming international conference on Ebola was announced [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending May 31<sup>st</sup>, a total of 25 confirmed cases were reported, with 13 cases present in four prefectures in Guinea and 12 cases in three districts of Sierra Leone. The WHO expressed concern several cases in both Guinea and Sierra Leone arose from unknown sources of infection in areas that have not reported confirmed cases for several weeks, indicating that chains of transmission continue to go undetected. Additional data was shared [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***State Department***

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the State Department expressed disappointment with the conviction of Rafael Marques for libel and expressed concern about the negative impact the decision will have on the freedoms of expression and press in Angola. The State Department urged the Government of Angola to respect its citizens' constitutional right to freedom of expression and end prosecutions against those exercising their rights. Further, the State Department pledged to continue to raise concerns on human rights, press freedoms, governance, and corruption with the Angolan Government as part of the ongoing bilateral dialogue. Feedback from the State Department can be seen [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the State Department released the first of its 2015 Investment Climate Statements, providing country-specific information and assessments on investment-related laws and other pertinent factors for doing business abroad. The documents include examples of countries' expanding openness to foreign investment and investor protections and identify relevant market barriers that may deter investment. They also address countries' legal and regulatory systems, dispute resolution, transparency, intellectual property rights, state-owned enterprises, and labor-related issues. The first 52 Investment Climate Statements, including those for Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal, can be accessed [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Tom Malinowski was on official travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo (ROC). Assistant Secretary Malinowski's travel was noticed [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Director of the Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Affairs and Senior Advisor on Population Issues Margaret Pollack delivered the U.S. national statement at the U.N. Population Fund (UNFOA) Segment of the U.N. Executive Board Meeting. Director Pollack highlighted opportunities to make an impact on the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for generations to come and to advance sustainable development. In particular, she addressed the need to ensure Nigerian girls receive psychosocial services after their release from Boko Haram. Director Pollack's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, in response to the House Appropriations Committee's release of its FY16 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, which proposed withholding hundreds of millions of dollars from the State Department budget until delays in handing over Benghazi documents are addressed, Senior Advisor for Strategic Communications Marie Harf said the State Department is committed to openness and transparency in government and will continue to be forthcoming with Congress on the Benghazi investigation. However, she said it is counterproductive to threaten to cut funding for the people who are working to provide the requested information. Harf's comments were captured [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield participated in a panel discussion on "Fragility, Conflict, and Humanitarianism," hosted by the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). Additional speakers included Editor of *Foreign Affairs* Gideon Rose, Deputy CEO of the U.N. Foundation Elizabeth Cousens, USIP President Nancy Lindborg, and President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) David Miliband. Assistant Secretary Greenfield's participation was highlighted [here](#).

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

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, USAID's Office of Food for Peace delivered another 47,500 metric tons of sorghum to Sudan in support of the WFP's efforts to feed millions of Sudanese children and displaced persons

suffering from hunger and malnutrition. In Sudan, the WFP provides 3.7 million people with emergency food and nutrition assistance. The most recent USAID food delivery will enable the WFP to continue providing critical assistance to those in need, including 1.8 million displaced persons in Darfur. The food delivery was described [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, USAID and its public and private sector partners announced the launch of ORM, a new comprehensive online library of resources for training health workers across the globe. This first-ever resource will be freely available and accessible through internet-enabled mobile devices and has the potential to support 100,000 frontline health workers by 2017 who are delivering services to more than 10 million women and children around the world. With over 200 resources, in 13 languages, USAID reported ORM is already attracting interest from leading content developers working in sub-Saharan Africa. A press release was issued [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, USAID launched the latest edition of its “FrontLines” publication, which seeks to promote how USAID is tackling challenges such as poverty, disease, and climate change, by applying science, technology, innovation, and partnerships. The most recent edition highlights how mobile banking is spreading across sub-Saharan Africa, especially in regions where banks are scarce, but cell phones are plentiful. In addition, it details how USAID-supported schools have enabled Egyptian girls to compete in international competitions in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). “FrontLines” can be accessed [here](#).

### ***Department of Homeland Security***

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued notice of its intention to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalia for an additional 18 months until March 2017. The extension will allow currently eligible TPS beneficiaries to retain their status as long as they continue to meet the eligibility requirements. According to DHS, the decision was made to extend the TPS because there continues to be a substantial, but temporary, disruption of living conditions in Somalia due to ongoing armed conflict that would pose a threat to the personal safety of returning Somali nationals, as well as extraordinary and temporary conditions in the country that prevent Somali nationals from returning to Somalia in safety. More information can be found [here](#).

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

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, in advance of the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield authored an op-ed titled, “Africa at a Crossroads.” President Littlefield said the WEF on Africa is likely to show that Africa will not only meet economists’ forecasts for the coming year, but exceed those expectations. She also encouraged participants to discuss the spread of communications and energy technologies in Africa, the continent’s infrastructure needs, and the importance of mitigating corruption. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

### ***U.S. Trade and Development Agency***

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) announced the Rwandan company COCA Ltd is seeking quotations from U.S. companies for the supply and installation of electrical and mechanical equipment for two mini hydropower sites in southern Rwanda. In October 2014, COCA Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Rwanda’s Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) regarding the development of the two proposed power plants totaling 1.08 megawatts (MW) of capacity. The Nyirabugoyi plant, located in the Nyamagabe District would have 731 kilowatts (KW) of generation capacity and the Gacumu plant in the Nyaruguru district would have a capacity of 350 KW. The trade lead can be found [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, USTDA announced plans to highlight trade and development opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa throughout the month of June. USTDA noted sub-Saharan Africa is one of the fastest developing regions in the world, with an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5.2 percent. Almost 31,000 U.S. businesses exported to Africa in 2013, of which approximately 92 percent were small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). USTDA’s focus on sub-Saharan Africa was announced [here](#).

## **Congress**

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, *Bloomberg* published an editorial on the need for Congress to act to renew the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the nonreciprocal trade agreement between the U.S. and 39 sub-Saharan countries due to expire on September 30<sup>th</sup>, and adopt reforms to broaden the agreement to cover more goods, including agricultural products and textiles. The Senate recently passed a ten-year extension of AGOA, but action is still required in the House. The editorial was published [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the House Appropriations Committee released its FY16 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, in advance of a June 3<sup>rd</sup> markup. The bill includes language that would withhold 15 percent of the State Department's operational funds until State Department officials speed up their response to document requests from the House Select Committee on Benghazi. The provision was highlighted [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee held a hearing on "The Future of U.S.-Zimbabwe Relations." Witnesses included Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Shannon Smith, Executive Director of the Mike Campbell Foundation Ben Freeth, and Regional Program Director for Africa of The Solidarity Center Imani Countess. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued the latest edition of her biweekly Africa Update. The most recent newsletter highlights the unrest in Burundi around President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term and the inauguration of Muhammadu Buhari as President of Nigeria. The Africa Update can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Foreign Relations Africa Subcommittee held a hearing on "Security Assistance in Africa." The Committee received testimony from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Puneet Talwar, and Congressional Research Service (CRS) Specialist in African Affairs Lauren Ploch Blanchard. A webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

## **North Africa**

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank highlighted the implementation of a new law in Chad on the establishment and regulation of lease financing for small and medium enterprises and industries (SMEs and SMIs). At the end of 2014, the Chadian Parliament passed legislation that will allow SMEs and SMIs to finance their equipment without systematic recourse to traditional collateral in a potential leading market estimated at \$220 million. More than 5,000 people are expected to benefit from the new legislation by achieving easier access to financing. An article on the new law was published [here](#).

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Egypt began the demolition of the National Democratic Party (NDP) building in Cairo, which previously housed the headquarters of ousted President Hosni Mubarak's political party. Successive governments had discussed plans to knock down the building since the NDP was dissolved in April 2011. Meanwhile, some activities have called for the building to be preserved as a monument to the uprising in Egypt. Efforts to destroy the building were highlighted [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, a Cairo court adjourned the trial of *Al Jazeera* journalists Peter Greste, Mohamed Fahmy, and Baher Mohamed for four days after hearing the prosecution's closing argument that their reporting had endangered Egypt's national security. The three were arrested in December 2013 on accusations their meetings with members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood and labeling of the army's July 2013 seizure of power a coup had harmed the country. Originally sentenced to seven to ten years in prison Egypt's high court ordered a retrial for the journalists in January. Developments were reported [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir was sworn in for a new presidential term. President Bashir took the oath of office at a parliamentary session held in Khartoum and attended by regional African and Arab leaders. President Bashir won 94 percent of the vote in national elections in April that were boycotted by Sudan's opposition parties. His inauguration was highlighted [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, an Egyptian court postponed issuing a final ruling over the death sentence recommendation for former President Mohamed Morsi and other top Muslim Brotherhood leaders until



June 16<sup>th</sup>. Last month, the court sought the death penalty after the defendants were convicted for killing and kidnapping policemen, attacking police facilities, and breaking out of jail in 2011. The ruling was referred to the Grand-Mufti for a non-binding opinion now under review by the court. The court also postponed to June 16<sup>th</sup> a final ruling in a separate case related to Muslim Brotherhood leaders accused of conspiring with Hamas and Hezbollah against Egypt. An update from the court was provided [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, prominent members of Morocco's ruling Justice and Development Party (PJD) called for the resignation of Communication Minister Mustapha Khalfi after a Jennifer Lopez performance that aired on public television was criticized as a breach of public decency. Following criticism from local media that Lopez was scantily dressed and struck a number of suggestive poses, Minister Khalifa promised to discuss the issue with the television network's ethics committee. The Education, Culture, and Communications Committee of the Moroccan parliament is also planning a meeting to discuss why the performance was broadcast. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle shot and killed two members of Egypt's tourism and antiquities police force on a road near the Giza pyramids. While no group claimed responsibility for the shooting, Islamist militants have been ramping up attacks on police and soldiers, usually at security checkpoints, barracks, and police stations. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Egyptian high court said it would retry former President Hosni Mubarak beginning November 5<sup>th</sup>. President Mubarak will be tried for a second time for the killing of protesters during the 2011 Arab Spring uprising in Tahrir Square. President Mubarak has spent three years in prison for other crimes, including corruption. Details were reported [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, a Cairo court adjourned the retrial of three *Al Jazeera* journalists until June 11<sup>th</sup>. Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste are charged with aiding a terrorist organization, namely the Muslim Brotherhood. The latest details on the case can be viewed [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, U.N. independent expert on human rights in Somalia Bahame Tom Mukirya Nyanduga completed his second mission to the country, during which he called attention to weaknesses in Somalia's security and justice institutions, including the failure by police to provide adequate security for the civilian population, including in camps for internally displaced people (IDPs). Independent expert Nyanduga also called for Somali authorities to implement a legal framework to guarantee freedom of expression in the country. His observations were summarized [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tanzanian Deputy Home Affairs Minister Pereira Silima urged politicians to steer clear of witchcraft ahead of elections later this year after the country's parliament heard lawmakers could be involved in a wave of attacks on albinos whose body parts are prized in black magic rituals. Deputy Minister Silima warned politicians to be wary of promises from witchdoctors to help them secure victory in the October general election. Tanzania imposed a ban on witchcraft earlier this year to try to stop the trade of albino body parts in response to U.N. reports of an increasing number of attacks against albinos. For details, click [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), Uganda's largest opposition party, threatened to prevent presidential elections from being held in early 2016 if the Ugandan Government rejects its demand for an independent electoral commission. President Yoweri Museveni, who will have been in power for 30 years come next year, is widely expected to stand for another five-year term, despite criticism of his failure to root out corruption. The political tensions in Uganda were outlined [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tanzanian Tourism Minister Lazaro Nyalandu reported Tanzania's elephant population fell 60 percent over the last five years, but the reason could be migration. According to government data, the number of elephants in Tanzania fell from 110,000 in 2009 to 43,529 in 2014. While Minister Nyalandu said the government is seeking to track down elephants that may have migrated, wildlife monitoring groups raised concern it was poachers and not migration that led to the decline in the country's elephant population. Both arguments were detailed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, during a speech marking the Madaraka Day national holiday in Kenya, President Uhuru Kenyatta outlined a new strategy intended to stop people from joining radical groups, such as Al Shabaab. President Kenyatta acknowledged conventional policing methods would not be enough to tackle the threat of radicalization and described a new campaign to be launched in partnership with civil society and religious groups to prevent radicalization further upstream. Excerpts from President Kenyatta's speech were highlighted [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, UNHCR reported a flare-up in clashes between armed groups has produced a new wave of people fleeing violence in Mali. According to UNHCR, the increasingly challenging security situation is limiting displaced people's access to humanitarian aid. Currently there are over 100,000 IDPs in Mali. UNHCR's concern was highlighted [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the 41<sup>st</sup> meetings of the African Development Fund (ADF) closed in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. During the meetings, the Governors, usually Finance and Economic Ministers representing 54 regional and 26 non-regional countries of the Bank Group, adopted the AfDB's 2014 annual report and 2015 work program, as well as a number of other initiatives. Organized on the theme, "Africa and the New Global Landscape," the meetings included a series of high-level seminars and side events on the continent's economic, social, and political situations, and how the AfDB can leverage resources to improve living conditions on the continent. Highlights from the meetings were noted [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, activists expressed support for Nigeria's new law banning female genital mutilation (FGM), but also cautioned that legislation alone will not be enough to eradicate the practice. In addition to imposing a nationwide ban on FGM, the law also prohibits men from abandoning their wives or children without economic support. According to the U.N., a quarter of Nigerian women have undergone FGM. The new law was detailed [here](#).

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, up to 70 people were killed in Onitsha, Nigeria when a speeding fuel tanker crashed into a bus station. Dozens of others were injured, including passengers in 13 nearby vehicles that were incinerated. According to the local Red Cross, many of the victims were burned beyond recognition and their remains will be sent to a local hospital for DNA testing and identification. Details on the accident were shared [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) prepared to charge six Central Bank officials and 16 commercial bank staff for their connection to an alleged \$40 million currency fraud scheme. The defendants, who appeared in court on Tuesday, have been accused of currency theft and recirculating naira notes intended for destruction. The case was described [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the WHO reported an epidemic of meningitis in Niger has killed 545 people in a total of 8,234 cases. According to the WHO, the epidemic is unprecedented because it is a strain not normally found in Africa and the appropriate vaccine is in short supply. However, the WHO now believes the meningitis outbreak has peaked. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, there were 2,189 cases and 132 deaths, but in the last week of May, there were just 264 cases and eight deaths. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention accused Senegalese authorities of arbitrarily detaining Karim Wade, the son of former President Abdoulaye Wade, former head of four ministries, and presidential candidate for the opposition Senegalese Democratic Party (SDP), and called for the government to provide compensation. Wade was sentenced to six years in prison for illicit enrichment and ordered to pay a \$234 million fine. According to President Macky Sall, the trial was part of a government crackdown on corruption. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Ghana National Fire Service reported at least 75 people died at the Goil Filling Station in Accra when it caught fire during torrential rains. Officials warned the death toll could rise as rescue operations continue. It is unclear what sparked the fire, but the incident caused power outages throughout the city, with hundreds of workers stranded at their offices due to flooding. A full report can be seen [here](#).

## **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. highlighted the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic's (CAR) (MINUSCA) efforts related to prison reform. The goal is to train 2,000 corrections officers by 2018 so detention centers in the CAR can be managed by a corps of professionals rather than the military. This is part of an effort to ensure basic rights of detainees. An article on the effort can be read [here](#).

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank published an interview with DRC Country Director Ahmadou Moustapha Ndiaye to share his views on the way forward and the DRC's path to becoming an emerging economy. Director Ndiaye highlighted challenges in the DRC related to health, the environment, and the need to reform the business climate. He also called on the DRC Government to establish greater linkages between sectoral and geographic interventions to address these challenges. The interview was transcribed [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the third review of Rwanda's economic performance under a three-year program supported by the Policy Support Instrument (PSI). The decision was taken without an Executive Board Meeting. The Executive Board found Rwanda's performance under the PSI, which was approved in December 2013, has been satisfactory and commended authorities for meeting all quantitative assessment criteria. More information can be found [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, Mauritian President Rajkeswar Purryag resigned from his ceremonial position in accordance with a January agreement reached with Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth stipulating a commitment to step down in May. During last December's election campaign, Prime Minister Jugnauth's party said it would nominate Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, a researcher and scientist to the post. The situation was reported [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, *Al Jazeera* reported at least 23 South African citizens have traveled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIL, raising concerns about ISIL recruitment efforts targeting Muslim communities in South Africa. At least eight families are believed to be among the recruits. As part of an effort to combat ISIL propaganda, the umbrella organization for Muslim groups in the country, the United Ulema Council of South Africa (UCSA) has delivered a national sermon encouraging Muslims to be wary of ISIL recruitment activities. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, Clive Derby-Lewis, the ultra-right wing South African politician who masterminded the 1993 assassination of anti-apartheid leader Chris Hani, was granted immediate medical parole, setting aside an earlier decision by the Justice Minister to block his release. Derby-Lewis has been serving a life sentence for murder. The decision was noted [here](#).

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein urged several countries to intensify their investigations of alleged sexual abuse of children in the CAR. According to the U.N., there have been documented cases of child abuse perpetrated by troops from France, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea between December 2013 and June 2014 at a center for displaced persons at M'Poko airport in Bangui. France has launched an investigation of the French soldiers suspected of involvement, but it remains unclear how Chad and Equatorial Guinea are responding to the allegations. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Brazzaville, ROC to conduct discussions for the 2015 Article IV review of the Congolese economy. The mission met State Mission of Economy, Finance, Planning, Public Portfolio, and Integration Gilbert Ondongo, National Director of the Central Bank Ebaub Ondaye, and other representatives of parliament, the private sector, and development partners. Discussions focused on addressing macroeconomic policy challenges associated with the recent decline in oil prices and the medium-term reform agenda aimed at achieving the authorities' strategic objectives of macroeconomic stability, sustained inclusive growth, and reducing poverty and inequality. The discussions were summarized [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the World Meteorological Organization, the AfDB, and the World Bank launched the Strengthening Climate and Disaster Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa initiative to support the strengthening of sub-Saharan African meteorological and hydrological services. The goal of the initiative is to strengthen resilience to extreme weather events and enable economic development while anticipating the adverse impacts from climate change, including food insecurity. The new initiative was launched [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, President of Madagascar Hery Rajaonarimampianina launched a legal challenge to a parliamentary impeachment vote alleging he violated the constitution and failed to deliver on promises since his election in late 2013. While officials in parliament reported 121 of 151 lawmakers supported impeachment, President Rajaonarimampianina argues the votes exceeded the number of lawmakers present. The vote is now under review by Madagascar's constitutional court. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the U.S. Smithsonian's National Museum of African-American History and Culture and the Iziko Museums of South Africa announced the discovery of the wreckage of the San Jose, a Portuguese slave ship that sank off the coast of Cape Town in 1794 as it was traveling from Mozambique to Brazil. According to researchers, this is the first time the wreckage of ship with slaves aboard has been recovered. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, FIFA reported it paid \$10 million to a Caribbean football body led by Jack Warner at South Africa's request. The U.S. has charged Warner with corruption, citing evidence the \$10 million was a bribe in exchange for Warner supporting South Africa's 2010 World Cup bid. However, FIFA said South Africa's instruction was that the money was for the Diaspora Legacy Program, led by Warner. Both Warner and South African officials continue to deny any wrongdoing. Developments were shared [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, South African police reported a 22-year-old American tourist was mauled to death after a lion jumped into her vehicle through an open window at a park on the outskirts of Johannesburg. She had been driving with a South African companion at the time of the incident. The woman died while paramedics tried to save her, while her male companion sustained some injuries fighting off the lion inside the car. The incident was reported [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the media questioned Wal-Mart's \$2.4 billion investment in South Africa's Massmart, as the chain has added fewer than ten stores to the existing 25 outside of its home market since 2010. Meanwhile, Massmart's rival, Shoprite, has doubled its stores in Africa to 300 over the same period. Many credit Shoprite's success to the company's recognition of a shortage of shopping infrastructure and a strategy that has been based on setting up warehouses and partnering with local developers to build shopping centers. Additional insights were provided [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the creation of an independent review panel to investigate the body's handling of sexual abuse allegations involving foreign troops in the CAR. The panel will be tasked with examining specific reports of abuse in the CAR, as well as a broad range of systemic issues related to how the U.N. responds to such information. Panel members are expected to be appointed in the coming days. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, an IMF mission completed a visit to the DRC to conduct discussions on the 2015 Article IV consultations. The discussions covered economic and financial developments in 2014 and 2015 and the policies needed to preserve macroeconomic stability, build resilience, and foster inclusive growth as well as financial stability and inclusion. Upon concluding the discussions, the IMF team observed the DRC continues to enjoy one of the highest economic growth rates in the world, with the economy estimated to grow by 9.2 percent in 2015. Additional economic data was analyzed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, former Zimbabwean Vice President Joice Mujuru issued a public statement apologizing for her role in President Robert Mugabe's government and calling her dismissal inevitable because her vision diverged from that of President Mugabe and Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) leadership. In December, Vice President Mujuru was accused of plotting a coup and dismissed from the ruling party. Her statement comes as Vice President Mujuru is being increasingly encouraged to form a new political party ahead of Zimbabwe's 2018 presidential election. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, the WEF on Africa convened in Cape Town, South Africa. Under the theme, “Then and Now: Reimagining Africa’s Future,” the 25<sup>th</sup> WEF on Africa convened global leaders from business, government, and civil society to take stock of progress over the last 25 years, share insights on the present landscape, and identify innovative approaches to accelerate inclusive growth while bringing about sustainable development in the future. Additional information was posted [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, as anticipated, the Mauritian parliament appointed Ameenah Gurib-Fakim as the first woman President of Mauritius. Her appointment came after President Rajkeswar Purryag stepped down from the ceremonial position in line with an agreement he made with the Prime Minister. President Gurib-Fakim’s appointment was announced [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, South Africa’s elite police unit known as the Hawks opened a preliminary investigation into the alleged \$10 million bribe to FIFA executive Jack Warner from local officials. South African sports officials admit to authorizing the payment, but continue to argue it was a donation for development projects and not a bribe to secure the 2010 World Cup. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, at the WEF on Africa in Cape Town, South Africa, General Electric (GE) President for Transportation for Africa and South Africa Thomas Konditi said GE is seeking to more than double revenue from Africa to as much as \$10 billion in the next five years. In the near term, GE is planning to boost its revenue from Africa by targeting power, health, and locomotive opportunities, primarily in Nigeria and Ethiopia. President Konditi’s comments were captured [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, following the officials closing of the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual AfDB Meetings, outgoing AfDB President Donald Kaberuka pledged to continue working for Africa after serving the bank for more than a decade. President Kaberuka will step down on August 31<sup>st</sup> and hand over his role to President-Elect Akinwumi Adesina of Nigeria who will assume office on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Elected on May 28<sup>th</sup>, President-Elect Adesina has promised to work with all African governments to deliver more inclusive economic growth across the continent. The transition in leadership at the AfDB was discussed [here](#).

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Oxfam International said multinational companies deprive African governments of \$11 billion in taxes each year, primarily by shifting profits overseas to lower tax regimes. Because these revenues would otherwise be used to advance development goals on the continent, Oxfam called on G7 leaders to discuss how to support economic growth in Africa and consider setting up a new global body to regulate corporate taxation. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Africa Director for GSMA Mortimer Hope said 80 percent of sub-Saharan Africa’s 800 million people should have access to mobile phones by the end of the decade, the equivalent of double the current rate. While mobile phone use is growing, Director Hope warned the growth of mobile data hinges on African governments allocating sufficient spectrum. He also encouraged governments to consider cutting taxes on web-enabled headsets to make them more affordable for consumers. Director Hope’s comments were recorded [here](#).

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank published the “African Competitiveness Report 2015: Transforming Africa’s Economies.” The report finds that despite high economic growth, competitiveness in Africa is stagnating, with few signs that productivity is rising, threatening the prospects for inclusive and sustained growth. In addition, researchers found that poor-quality public institutions, infrastructure, health care, and education systems hold competitiveness down, although efficiency in the goods and labor markets is improving. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

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