



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

****Editor's Note: The next edition of the Africa Update will be published on August 6th, as your editor will be traveling in sub-Saharan Africa next week.***

Leading the News

Burundi

On July 19th, representatives of the Burundian Government failed to appear for talks backed by the East African Community (EAC) aimed at ending the unrest caused by President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial bid for a third term. Ugandan Defense Minister Crispus Kiyonga, who was acting as mediator, reported the Government's failure to participate forced the mediation to be adjourned before the presidential election scheduled for July 21st, but stopped short of saying the talks had collapsed. Meanwhile, Burundian Interior Minister Edouard Nduwimana said the Burundian Government skipped the meeting because of statements made by the opposition about the need for democratic institutions, which led government representatives to become skeptical of a coup. The pause in the talks was noted [here](#).

On July 20th, following the Government of Burundi's decision to proceed with holding the country's presidential election on July 21st, United Nations (U.N.) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on authorities to do all in their power to ensure security and a peaceful atmosphere during the polls. In light of the indefinite suspension of the inter-Burundian dialogue started on July 14th, Secretary-General Ban also repeated his appeal for the resumption of a frank dialogue and urged parties to avoid undermining the progress achieved in building democracy since the signing of the Arusha Agreement. Secretary-General Ban's comments can be read [here](#).

On July 21st, the polls opened and closed in Burundi's controversial presidential elections. Shortly before voting started, a policeman and a civilian were killed among a string of explosions and gunfire in Bujumbura, while one member of the opposition was also killed overnight in the Nyakabiga neighborhood, prompting protests. At the closing of the polls, incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza was widely expected to win a third term, especially as opposition and civil society groups boycotted the vote, claiming President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term was unconstitutional. For details, click [here](#).

On July 21st, the U.S. Department of State warned that elections held under the current conditions in Burundi will not be credible and will further discredit the government. The State Department recognized the legitimacy of the electoral process in Burundi over the past few months has been tainted by the government's harassment of opposition and civil society members, closing down of media outlets and political space, and intimidation of voters.

Additionally, the State Department reported dozens have been killed and as many as 167,000 Burundians are now refugees in neighboring nations. The State Department also expressed concern that Foreign Minister Alain Aime Nyamitwe failed to approve entry for African Union (AU) human rights monitors in advance of the elections and again urged all parties to recommit themselves to upholding the Arusha Agreement. A full statement was shared [here](#).

On July 22nd, the vote count began in Burundi's controversial presidential elections. Vote tallying was expected to continue throughout the day, with an announcement of the final results anticipated on Thursday. Incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza was widely expected to win a third consecutive term, especially as the polls were boycotted by the opposition. The beginning of the vote count was reported [here](#).

On July 22nd, Agathon Rwaswa, a former rebel leader in Burundi's civil war and a leading opposition politician, called on President Pierre Nkurunziza to hold talks with his rivals and form a national unity government. Rwaswa warned that dialogue is needed to prevent generals behind a foiled coup attempt in May from taking up arms against President Nkurunziza again. Rwaswa's comments were recorded [here](#).

On July 22nd, a spokesperson for Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza said he would not oppose forming a national unity government following this week's presidential elections. While President Nkurunziza indicated he would be open to forming a unity government after the political opposition demanded such consideration, he rejected the idea of cutting short any new five-year mandate resulting from the election. The full story is available [here](#).

Nigeria

On July 16th, at least 49 people were killed and 71 injured when twin blasts struck a market in Gombe, Nigeria. The first explosion took place outside a crowded footwear shop, followed by a second explosion a few minutes later. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blasts, but a market, bus station, and stadium in the city have all been targeted by Boko Haram suicide bombings in recent months. The scene was described [here](#).

On July 17th, Nigerian security officials reported killing 30 suspected Boko Haram fighters in villages just across the border in Nigeria between the towns of Malam Fatori and Damasak. The operation was launched by the Nigerian army on July 16th after suspected Boko Haram militants crossed the border from Nigeria into Niger and killed at least a dozen Nigeriens. The Nigerian operation was announced as two Boko Haram suicide bombers killed at least nine people in the Nigerian city of Damaturu as worshippers gathered to mark the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. More information can be found [here](#).

On July 17th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the terrorist attacks that killed over 60 people in the towns of Gombe and Damaturu in northeastern Nigeria. Secretary-General Ban acknowledged the attacks occurred as Nigerians were conducting Eid prayers. Secretary-General Ban reaffirmed solidarity with the people of Nigeria and reiterated U.N. support for the Nigerian Government in its fight against terrorism. Secretary-General Ban's comments were recorded [here](#).

On July 17th, the U.S. Department of State condemned bombings in Nigeria at a market in Gombe and prayer grounds in Damaturu that killed at least 60 people and injured dozens more. The State Department reiterated its commitment to helping Nigeria and its neighbors counter Boko Haram, both through bilateral assistance and through support to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF), which Nigeria and other Lake Chad Basin countries are establishing to facilitate a coordinated regional response to combat the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram. A full statement was released [here](#).

On July 20th, at least two people were killed after a car suicide bomb detonated at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Damaturu, Nigeria. The checkpoint is located along a major highway that connects the capital of Yobe state with the Borno state capital of Maiduguri. The road and villages along it have been frequently attacked by suspected Boko Haram fighters. The bombing was reported [here](#).

On July 20th, U.S. President Barack Obama hosted Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the White House for a meeting. President Obama praised President Buhari's democratic election and his vowed commitment to fighting

corruption and extremist group Boko Haram. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also joined the discussion. President Obama's remarks with President Buhari following their meeting were transcribed [here](#).

On July 20th, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden hosted Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari for a meeting at the Naval Observatory. Vice President Biden underscored the importance the U.S. places on its relationship with Nigeria. Vice President Biden and President Buhari discussed the challenges and opportunities facing the Nigerian people and the ways in which the U.S. and Nigeria can partner to overcome the challenges and seize the opportunities. President Buhari and Vice President Biden agreed on the importance of rooting out corruption in order to unlock the full potential of the Nigerian economy and ensure stability. Additionally, Vice President Biden reiterated U.S. support for Nigeria's efforts to not only defeat Boko Haram militarily, but also to invest in development and create the conditions for lasting security, stability, and economic prosperity in northern Nigeria. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On July 20th, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman met with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari. U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker also joined the meeting. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On July 20th, timed with his visit to the U.S., Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari authored an article for *The Washington Post* outlining his policy priorities. In the article, President Buhari indicated he does not plan to appoint his cabinet until September. He also discussed his decision to replace the heads of Nigeria's army, navy, and air force and the relocation of military leadership to bolster the fight against Boko Haram. The full article was published [here](#).

On July 21st, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) warned that ongoing violence and attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram are continuing to drive Nigerians out of the country. According to UNHCR, on average, some 100 people daily are registering at the Minawao camp in Cameroon, causing a surge in the refugee population. Further, UNHCR estimated the number of unregistered refugees in the area to be some 12,000. An update on the refugee situation was provided [here](#).

On July 21st, following meetings between World Bank officials and Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari during his visit to Washington, the World Bank pledged \$2.1 billion in aid to help rebuild the northeastern parts of the country that have been most impacted by the Boko Haram militancy. President Buhari urged the World Bank to send a team to Nigeria to assess how to spend the funds. President Buhari also secured a \$300 million commitment from the World Health Organization (WHO) to help immunize Nigerians against malaria, as well as a pledge from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to reach zero cases of polio in Nigeria in the next year. The commitments were detailed [here](#).

On July 21st, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry hosted a lunch for Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the Department of State. U.S. Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Chief of Protocol Peter Selfridge also attended the lunch. Topics discussed included economic development, opportunities in Nigeria's energy sector, and the threat posed by Boko Haram. Secretary Kerry's remarks with President Buhari were transcribed [here](#).

On July 21st, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work met with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at Blair House. Deputy Secretary Work expressed condolences for the Nigerians killed in recent attacks against civilians by Boko Haram. Additionally, he applauded President Buhari's leadership and resolve in addressing the threat posed by Boko Haram to Nigeria and its neighbors and highlighted that the U.S. seeks a true partnership with Nigeria and is open to providing expertise and support as Nigeria's new service chiefs conduct and complete initial assessments of their requirements within each service. Both leaders expressed the importance of regional mobilization to fight Boko Haram, while President Buhari expressed support for the Lake Chad Basin's MJTF. They also noted the importance of working together on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. A readout of the meeting was shared [here](#).

On July 21st, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew met with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari. Secretary Lew underscored the importance of the recent steps taken by the Nigerian Government to increase transparency in the oil and gas sector and to combat corruption. He also discussed the importance of implementing key reforms to tackle Nigeria's pressing economic challenges and support economic growth. Secretary Lew also highlighted ways

in which the U.S. Treasury Department could support Nigeria's economic reform program. For more information, click [here](#).

On July 21st, in conjunction with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's visit to Washington, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) provided a grant to Quaint Global Energy Solutions for a solar power project the company is developing in northern Nigeria. Quaint is a Nigerian company specifically organized to develop renewable power projects. This particular effort is anticipated to bring 50 megawatts (MW) of clean, affordable energy to Kaduna state, Nigeria. It also has the potential to leverage over \$160 million in public and private capital. A press release was issued [here](#).

On July 22nd, Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken met with Nigerian Minister of Defense Karidjo Mahamadou at the Department of State. Their meeting was noticed [here](#).

On July 22nd, during his official visit to the U.S., Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari said the MJTF established to fight Boko Haram will launch within ten days. With the launch of the MJTF, President Buhari speculated that Boko Haram could be defeated in 18 months or less. However, he also conceded Nigerian authorities lack intelligence about the Chibok schoolgirls who remain missing after they were kidnapped by Boko Haram last April. In addition, President Buhari indicated he would be open to freeing detained militants in exchange for the girls' freedom, but only if he finds credible Boko Haram leaders to negotiate with. President Buhari's remarks were captured [here](#).

On July 22nd, speaking from the U.S., Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari pledged that his government will recover sums of money stolen from Nigeria's oil sector. President Buhari said 250,000 barrels per day of Nigerian crude are being stolen, with people selling money and putting it into individual accounts. He also indicated the U.S. Government has agreed to help Nigeria track down stolen assets. More information can be found [here](#).

On July 22nd, twin suicide bomb attacks in Cameroon's northern Maroua region killed at least 13 people. These attacks were the second this month and the furthest south that Cameroon has been struck since it deployed thousands of troops to the region to combat Nigerian Boko Haram insurgents. The first explosion hit a market, while the second detonated in a densely populated neighborhood. Both bombings were reported [here](#).

Libya

On July 16th, the U.N. Security Council welcomed the initialing of the Libyan political agreement in Skhirat, Morocco on July 11th as the latest step towards resolving the country's political crisis. The members of the Security Council called on all parties to engage with the Libyan political dialogue and unite in support of the agreement for the purposes of moving the political transition process forward through the formation of a Government of National Accord. The Security Council's response to the initialing of the agreement was posted [here](#).

On July 20th, the European Union (EU) warned it is considering sanctions against Libya's warring factions who fail to agree to a U.N.-sponsored peace deal. Noting that one group controlling Tripoli had refused to sign the deal, the EU reiterated its position that a U.N.-backed agreement is the only way to end the war between the two rival governments in the country. The sanctions reportedly under consideration include asset freezes and travel bans targeting individuals in Libya. An article on the EU sanctions under consideration can be read [here](#).

On July 21st, following reports that the EU may sanction individuals in Libya, such as General Khalifa Hiftar, U.S. Department of State Spokesperson John Kirby said the U.S. shares the EU's concern about the threatening statements and actions by some Libyans that are meant to undermine peace and stability. Spokesperson Kirby also reiterated support for U.N. Special Representative for Libya Bernardino Leon's efforts to achieve an inclusive political agreement in Libya. He also noted the U.S. will continue to consider targeted sanctions under the U.N. Security Council resolution against those engaging in or providing support for acts that threaten Libya's peace and stability. Spokesperson Kirby's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On July 21st, dozens were reported killed as the result of days of clashes between the Tuareg and Tebu tribes in a suburb of Sabha, Libya. A Tebu official said the clashes started after a Tebu was killed at a checkpoint. Tribal elders had tried to negotiate a truce, but talks ultimately failed. The city had also asked military officials in Tripoli for assistance in restoring order, but received no response. For more information, click [here](#).

Chad

On July 20th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein welcomed the opening of the trial against former Chadian President Hissene Habre for crimes against humanity before the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal. High Commissioner Zeid said the trial is a milestone for justice in Africa, as the victims' tireless quest for justice and accountability for the gross human rights violations committed during Habre's eight-year rule made it possible for the trial to take place. For more information, click [here](#).

On June 20th, the State Department commended the Government of Senegal and the AU for bringing former Chadian President Hissene Habre before the Extraordinary African Chambers. As a signal of U.S. support for the proceedings, U.S. Ambassador to Senegal James Zumwalt and Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp attended the opening of the trial in Dakar. The State Department said the trial is an important step toward justice for the victims of atrocities committed under Habre's rule from 1982 to 1990, and should serve as yet another warning that perpetrators of atrocities will be held accountable. Details can be seen [here](#).

On July 20th, a lawyer for victims of former Chadian President Hissene Habre welcomed the start of his trial at the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal for crimes committed during his rule. Habre, who is blamed by rights groups for widespread torture and the killing of up to 40,000 political opponents and ethnic rivals, refused to recognize the authority of the Extraordinary African Chambers and was ultimately escorted from the courtroom by security. An article on the case can be read [here](#).

On July 21st, the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal adjourned the trial of former Chadian President Hissene Habre for war crimes charges until September 7th. Habre was brought to court by force for the second day of the hearing, but his lawyers did not show, prompting the court to appoint a new legal team to represent him. Developments were reported [here](#).

Central African Republic

On July 21st, the highest court in the Central African Republic (CAR) overturned a decision by the transitional parliament that would have barred tens of thousands of Central African refugees in neighboring countries from voting in the October presidential election. The court ruled the decision to exclude refugees, who fled the religious violence that erupted between Muslim Seleka rebels and Christian anti-balaka militants, was a violation of the 2013 constitution. The court's ruling was noted [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On July 17th, an herbalist who treated the patient who started Liberia's latest wave of Ebola infections escaped quarantine and fled to Nimba County in the northern part of the country along the border with Guinea. He was one of 120 people placed under quarantine for coming into contact with the deceased. Local officials said they are not taking Ebola's recurrence lightly because the county suffered severely during the earlier outbreak of the virus. The situation was explained [here](#).

On July 20th, the last four patients treated for Ebola in Liberia were discharged from a treatment clinic in Monrovia marking once again no more confirmed carriers of Ebola in the country. The four men, released from the ELWA treatment unit to cheers and applause, were part of an outbreak of the virus in Margibi County discovered in late June. Two other confirmed cases have since died. An update on the situation in Liberia was provided [here](#).

On July 20th, Maryland-based biopharmaceutical company Emergent BioSolutions announced it has been awarded a contract by the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) valued at \$19.7 million to develop a new Ebola drug. The new experimental drug uses a combination of the same three monoclonal antibodies as ZMapp, but is produced using mammalian cells instead of tobacco leaves. A press release was issued [here](#).

On July 22nd, the WHO updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. In the week ending July 19th, there were 26 confirmed cases of Ebola, including 22 in Guinea and four in Sierra Leone. No new cases were reported in Liberia. For the second consecutive week, more than half of all cases were reported from the capitals of

Guinea and Sierra Leone, while other recent hot spots of transmission reached zero cases. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

African Migrant Crisis in the Mediterranean

On July 20th, EU leaders met in Brussels, Belgium to try to reach an agreement to tackle the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean. Following the sinking of a fishing boat traveling from Libya to Italy in April that killed hundreds of migrants, the European Commission proposed a relocation plan. The proposal was met with opposition from Spain and Poland, which are opposed to the number of primarily African asylum seekers they are expected to take in from Italy and Greece. The meeting concluded without an agreement. The discussion was summarized [here](#).

On July 20th, *The New York Times* reported more than 200 people, including Eritreans, Ethiopians, and Sudanese, are living in camps in tents at Ventimiglia and other places near the French-Italian border because they are often stopped before crossing the French border. The situation is evidence of the divisions between Italy and France in managing the influx of migrants crossing the Mediterranean from Africa. The full article was published [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On July 17th, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his intent to extend the national emergency with respect to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor beyond July 22nd. Although Liberia has made significant advances to promote democracy and the Special Court for Sierra Leone convicted Taylor for war crimes and crimes against humanity, President Obama said the actions and policies Taylor and other persons, and in particular their unlawful depletion of Liberian resources and their removal from Liberia and secreting of Liberian funds and property, still challenge Liberia's efforts to strengthen its democracy and the orderly development of its political, administrative, and economic institutions and resources. President Obama's message to Congress can be seen [here](#).

On July 22nd, President Barack Obama delivered remarks at an evening reception celebrating the signing into law of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The reception was held at the White House. President Obama's participation was noted [here](#).

On July 23rd-26th, President Barack Obama will travel to Kenya, where he will hold bilateral meetings and participate in the 2015 Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES). President Obama's trip will build on the success of the August 2014 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and continue U.S. efforts to work with countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Kenya, to accelerate economic growth, strengthen democratic institutions, and improve security. Following his visit to Kenya, on July 26th-29th, President Obama will travel to Ethiopia for bilateral meetings with the Government of Ethiopia and the leadership of the AU. This will be the first visit of a sitting U.S. President to Ethiopia and to the AU headquarters. It is also President Obama's fourth trip to sub-Saharan Africa during his presidency. His travel was announced [here](#).

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On July 21st, USTR officially opened a standalone review of South Africa's eligibility to receive tariff benefits under the newly reinstated AGOA. The review comes as the two countries inch closer to resolving tensions over poultry duties. USTR will be accepting public comments on South Africa's AGOA eligibility until August 5th. A hearing on the matter will be convened on August 7th. The process was outlined [here](#).

State Department

On June 16th, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs released a fact sheet on the Eighteenth Plenary of the Contact Group Off the Coast of Somalia, held at the U.N. in New York on July 8th. In a communique following the meeting, the Contact Group called for a renewed international commitment to countering piracy, both at sea and on land in Somalia, through robust and integrated military, law enforcement, and development activities. The Contact Group also endorsed Seychelles as its new chair, taking over from the EU. More information can be found [here](#).

On July 17th-31st, U.S. Science Envoy Dr. Jane Lubchenco was on foreign travel to South Africa, Mauritius, and Seychelles in support of President Barack Obama's initiative to strengthen U.S. science and education relationships overseas. During her travels, Dr. Lubchenco will engage with local leaders, scientists, representatives from the academic and business communities, and ocean users to build and strengthen opportunities to understand the ocean and use its resources sustainably. Her trip was outlined [here](#).

On July 19th-August 4th, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa Thomas Perriello will be on foreign travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, France, and the United Kingdom (U.K.). In the DRC, Special Envoy Perriello will visit Kinshasa and Goma to meet with government officials, opposition members, U.N. officials, and civil society representatives to discuss upcoming elections and continued security challenges. He will then travel to Burundi, where the U.S. continues to stress the importance of preserving the Arusha Accords and reaching a political resolution to the crisis. In Rwanda and Uganda, Special Envoy Perriello will meet with government officials to discuss a range of regional and bilateral issues, including electoral processes, regional security threats, and the ongoing crisis in Burundi. His trip will conclude with stops in London and Paris to meet with partners about donor coordination and engagement. Special Envoy Perriello's travel was detailed [here](#).

On July 20th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with Nigerien Minister of Defense Karidjo Mahamadou at the Department of State. Their meeting was listed [here](#).

On July 21st, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin met with U.S. Ambassador to Morocco Dwight Bush in Washington, DC. Their meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be accessed [here](#).

On July 21st-August 12th, 27 tech-savvy teens from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, and Tunisia will participate in the fourth annual TechGirls exchange program. While visiting the U.S., participants will develop the knowledge, resources, peer networks, and mentor relationships necessary to pursue higher education and careers in technology. The program was described [here](#).

On July 22nd, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin met with U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique Douglas Griffiths at the Department of State. Their meeting was noticed [here](#).

On July 22nd, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp was on travel to Kinshasa, DRC to discuss international justice issues with justice authorities, U.N. officials, and human rights organizations. Ambassador Rapp's travel was detailed [here](#).

On July 23rd-25th, Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell will visit Kenya. In Kenya, Ambassador Russell will participate in the Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES), which will include a day focused on youth and women entrepreneurs. She will also meet with entrepreneurs, investors, and members of civil society to discuss how to economically empower women and address the unique challenges women face in growing and starting a business. Following her visit to Kenya, Ambassador Russell will travel on to Rwanda where she will visit the State Department sponsored WiSci Camp for girls that focuses on science, technology, engineering, art and design, and math. Ambassador Russell's travel was announced [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On July 17th, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Assistant Administrator for Global Health and Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator Dr. Ariel Pablos-Mendez highlighted the recent launch of the Global Financing Facility (GFF) at the Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The GFF is a country-driven financing partnership to accelerate efforts to end preventable maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent deaths by 2030. The launch of the GFF brings together \$12 billion from public and private partners, both domestic and international, to scale up national strategies in the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. The GFF was highlighted [here](#).

On July 21st, USAID promoted a blog post authored by Principal Research Scientist and head of the Plant Pathology Department at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization Miriam Otipa on various USAID programs helping Kenya feed its people. For example, the African Women in Agricultural Research and

Development Fellowship is teaching Kenyans how to treat plant pests and diseases, while the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Integrated Pest Management is developing environmentally friendly crop protection technologies. Details can be accessed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On July 16th, U.S. and Somali officials announced a U.S. drone strike on the town of Bardhere, carried out by U.S. and African Union (AU) forces, killed Al Shabaab commander Ismael Jabhad, and potentially other members of the Islamic extremist group. The joint force was moving toward the town when rebels advanced. In response, a U.S. drone fired on the rebels. The attack was reported [here](#).

On July 20th, U.S. Army Africa announced the postponement of Medical Readiness Exercise (MEDRETE) 15-4 in Uganda, originally planned for August 3rd-28th. MEDRETE 15-4 is an annual exercise that allows U.S. forces to train in an austere environment and share medical procedures with Ugandan medical professionals. The exercise will be rescheduled, but a new date has yet to be determined. The postponement was noted [here](#).

On July 21st, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) highlighted a recent gathering of 17 African partner nations at the opening of a national emergency operations center in Accra, Ghana to mark the start of the West Africa Preparedness Initiative. Led by regional organizations with support from the AFRICOM Operation United Assistance Transition Disaster Preparedness Project, the initiative is designed to build upon lessons learned during the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. For details, click [here](#).

Department of Commerce

On July 20th, the Department of Commerce announced Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker will attend the GES, which will take place July 25th-26th in Nairobi, Kenya. Secretary Pritzker will help lead the U.S. delegation to the GES, demonstrating the U.S. Government's continued commitment to fostering a culture of innovation around the world. She will be joined by Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship (PAGE) initiative members Steve Case, Brian Chesky, Julie Hanna, and Daymond John. Secretary Pritzker's upcoming travel was announced [here](#).

Congress

On July 16th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued the latest edition of her weekly Africa newsletter. The most recent Africa Update highlights how Cameroon is using solar power to overcome drought conditions, as well as Google's investment in the Lake Turkana Wind Power Project in Kenya. The newsletter can be downloaded [here](#).

On July 21st, Senate Foreign Relations Africa Subcommittee Chairman Jeff Flake (R-AZ) confirmed he will join President Barack Obama on his trip to Africa later this week. Senator Chris Coons (D-DE), who also serves on the Africa Subcommittee, is also expected to join President Obama in Kenya and Ethiopia. The trip, scheduled for July 23rd-29th, will cover a range of issues including U.S. business investment on the continent, efforts to counter Islamic extremists, and aid programs aimed at expanding Africa's power sector. Details can be found [here](#).

On July 22nd, the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee held a hearing on "The Unfolding Crisis in Burundi." The Subcommittee received testimony from Michael Jobbins of Search for Common Ground, Elavie Ndura of George Mason University, Alissa Wilson of American Friends Service Committee, and Steve McDonald of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. A webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On July 22nd, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa hosted a hearing titled, "Promoting U.S. Commerce in the Middle East and North Africa." Witnesses included Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Elizabeth Richard and Special Representative for Commercial and Business Affairs Scott Nathan. A recording of the hearing was archived [here](#).

North Africa

On July 16th, the AU-U.N. Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) expressed concern over reports of escalating tensions and confrontations between the Reizegat and the Habaniya tribes in South Darfur. UNAMID reported that recent fighting was allegedly triggered by a cattle rustling incident in which both tribes had mobilized their fighters and resulted in the deaths of at least 12 people and many more injuries. Feedback from UNAMID can be seen [here](#).

On July 17th, U.N. Deputy Special Representative for South Sudan Moustapha Soumare said despite ongoing fighting between political opponents in the country, there have increasingly been demands throughout South Sudan for peace. Having recently traveled throughout the country, Deputy Special Representative Soumare said he heard in different meetings, at all levels, and during extensive travels in different states of the country that peace is wanted now. An updated on the situation in South Sudan was provided [here](#).

On July 17th, Egyptian Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehlab resolved to form Egypt's first National Council on Climate Change to advance scientific research, streamline adaptation projects, and reduce emissions. The Council will be led by the Minister of Environment and will be tasked with drafting the nation's climate change and sustainability strategy. Representatives from across the Egyptian government are expected to participate, including officials from the Ministries of Defense, Interior, Planning, Finance, Agriculture, Industry, Water Resources, and Foreign Affairs. The Council was launched [here](#).

On July 17th, six supporters of Egypt's outlawed Muslim Brotherhood were killed in clashes with police near the Giza pyramids in Cairo as Egyptians marked the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. Security forces reportedly intervened and arrested 15 armed members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo, as well as another 20 members of the group in Alexandria. The clashes were reported [here](#).

On July 17th, the Hudson Institute hosted a briefing titled, "The Future of Egypt: A Somalia on the Nile or a Stable, Robust U.S. Ally in the Region?" Panelists included Mokhtar Awad of the Center for American Progress (CAP), Middle East Analyst Jantzen Garnett, and Samuel Tadros of the Hudson Institute. The discussion was moderated by the Hudson Institute's Lee Smith. Event details were shared [here](#).

On July 19th, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) claimed responsibility for a July 17th attack against a patrol of Algerian soldiers in the Ain Defla region. The claim came as Algerian officials confirmed the attack, reporting the death of 11 soldiers. Algeria has recently seen a divide between its Al Qaeda affiliates, with some fighters allying under veteran commander Abdelmalek Droukel and other rival fighters splitting to claim loyalty to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The full story is available [here](#).

On July 21st, U.S.-based human rights group Human Rights Watch (HRW) warned dozens of people in Egypt have disappeared after being detained secretly by security forces, many of them members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood and secular and liberal activists. While the Egyptian Government denied holding individuals arbitrarily, HRW called on authorities to immediately disclose their whereabouts and hold those responsible to account. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On July 22nd, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien began a four-day visit to South Sudan to see first-hand the humanitarian consequences of the conflict, and efforts by aid organizations to respond to escalating needs. South Sudan has seen a new cholera outbreak that has claimed nearly 40 lives, more than 2.2 million people uprooted from their homes by conflict, and nearly eight million others vulnerable to food shortages during the rainy season. Under-Secretary-General O'Brien's visit to South Sudan was announced [here](#).

On July 22nd, the Moroccan Government banned all summer visits to Tunisia planned by youth groups over fears that some young people might take the opportunity to cross the border into Libya to train with jihadists. The Moroccan Ministry of Youths and Sports cited safety reasons for the ban. It is estimated that approximately 1,600 Moroccans have traveled to Syria to join extremist groups. An article on the travel ban can be read [here](#).

On July 22nd, an Egyptian court sentenced Ahmed Nazif, a former prime minister under ousted President Hosni Mubarak, to five years in jail on graft charges in a retrial. Nazif had previously been sentenced to three years before launching an appeal that led to the retrial. An update on the case can be viewed [here](#).

[East Africa](#)

On July 16th, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet addressed the U.N. Security Council on the situation in Somalia. Assistant Secretary-General Mulet said a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia would be high risk, considering the threats posed by Al Shabaab and despite the advances made by the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). He also urged the international community to engage in Somalia in accordance with country's new federal map. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On July 19th, AMISOM troops reported the launch a new offensive against Al Shabaab, vowing to flush the insurgents out of rural areas in southern Somalia. The new offensive, labeled Operation Jubba Corridor, was launched on Friday in the Bay and Gedo regions along with Somali government troops. The new offensive against Al Shabaab was announced [here](#).

On July 21st, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said that improving security cooperation between Kenya and the U.S. will top the agenda when U.S. President Barack Obama visits the country this weekend. President Kenyatta said he also plans to speak with President Obama about his vision for how more American companies can work with Kenyan firms in the energy and health sectors, as well as infrastructure development. President Kenyatta's comments on his upcoming meeting with President Obama were recorded [here](#).

On July 22nd, Kenyan Finance Minister Henry Rotich said Kenya's shilling is likely to strengthen against the dollar due to an anticipated recovery in tourism and the positive sentiments around U.S. President Barack Obama's visit. Minister Rotich reported a rise in tourism bookings since the announcement of President Obama's travel to Kenya. The shilling is hovering near a three and a half year low against the dollar and is down ten percent so far this year, mainly due to a firmer dollar, a surge in imports, and lower tourism earnings after a number of terrorism attacks. Minister Rotich's comments were captured [here](#).

On July 22nd, preparations continued in Kenya for U.S. President Barack Obama's upcoming visit to the country. For the past month, hundreds of people have been employed to tidy the main highway between the international airport and downtown Nairobi. The public works project has been dubbed "Obamacare." While President Obama is not expected to visit his father's hometown of Kisumu, security has also been increased in the area in case President Obama decides to make an unannounced visit. The preparations underway in Kenya were discussed [here](#).

West Africa

On July 17th, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari approved the dissolution of the governing boards of a number of federal agencies and institutions, effective immediately. It was not clear exactly which agencies were subject to the new policy. According to a spokesperson for President Buhari, until the boards are reconstituted, chief executives of the affected bodies are expected to refer all matters requiring the attention of their boards directly to the President. Details were posted [here](#).

On July 20th, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned that timely intervention is needed to stop the outbreak of the highly virulent avian flu virus H5N1, which has spread to five West African countries, including Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Niger, Cote d'Ivoire, and Ghana, in the past six months. FAO Animal Health Service Division Chief Juan Lubroth called for urgent action to strengthen veterinary investigation and reporting systems in the region and tackle the disease at the root, before there is a spillover to humans. The FAO's warning can be viewed [here](#).

On July 20th, the U.N. Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) praised the people of Timbuktu for reconstructing cultural heritage sites destroyed by armed groups in Mali, including eight mausoleums destroyed by Islamist militants who took over the city in 2012. UNESCO's praise came as UNHCR reported a surge of fighting in the northern part of the country that has led 400 people to cross the border into Mauritania. The new arrivals have joined nearly 50,000 other Malian refugees at Mbera camp. The situation in Mali was described [here](#).

On July 22nd, Gambian President Yahya Jammeh delivered a televised address to mark his 21st anniversary in power. As part of his speech, President Jammeh pardoned all prisoners charged with treason from 1994 to 2013, excluding those who tried to unseat him in a failed coup in December. Those pardoned likely include dozens of prisoners who were involved in coup plots in 2006 and 2009. Excerpts from the address were highlighted [here](#).

On July 22nd, as Gambia marked the 21st anniversary of President Yahya Jammeh's presidency, President Jammeh appeared likely to have the political support needed to make a bid for a fifth term next year. Unlike the political tensions in Burundi and Burkina Faso, where there have been violent demonstrations against political leaders seeking to extend their time in office, Gambia has not seen a public protest since 2000 and a poorly organized coup attempt was quickly snuffed out last year. An article on the situation in Gambia can be read [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On July 16th, the Board of Directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) approved a \$193 million loan and a \$50 million loan from the Africa Growing Together Fund (AGTF) to support the rehabilitation of the Chinsali-Nakonde road, a section of the North-South Corridor in Zambia, connecting Tanzania. The project aims to improve road transport infrastructure and services, as well as reduce transport costs between northern Zambia and southern Tanzania. The financing was announced [here](#).

On July 17th, DRC President Joseph Kabila considered legislation passed by the DRC parliament last month that would update regulations for the hydrocarbons sector. The bill includes steep new taxes on capital gains, increases the state's role in exploration and production projects, and seeks to clarify the tendering process for new permits. Many analysts view the legislation favorably as a way to bring order to a growing sector while addressing concerns about corruption. The reforms were summarized [here](#).

On July 17th, speaking at an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presentation in Johannesburg, South African Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene said the country urgently needs to resolve its energy crisis to boost the struggling economy. Excerpts from Minister Nene's remarks were highlighted [here](#).

On July 17th, DRC-based technology startup, VMK launched a smartphone manufacturing unit. The company, which was founded in 2009, plans to assemble about four million phones annually at the new production facility. The phones were previously manufactured in China. Details can be seen [here](#).

On July 18th, South Africans celebrated Nelson Mandela Day in honor of the former South African President's birthday. Because President Mandela spent 67 years working to make South Africa a better place, local organizations launched a campaign encouraging individuals, organizations, and charities to spend at least 67 minutes giving back to their communities. The campaign was promoted [here](#).

On July 20th, the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) condemned the recent increase in attacks on the Main Supply Road 1 (MSR1) attributed to members of the rebel group Front Democratique du Peuple Centrafricain (FDPC). In one of the latest incidents that targeted a World Food Programme (WFP) convoy, a driver was fatally wounded and several others were injured. The uptick in attacks was reported [here](#).

On July 20th, Zambia's sole 24,000 barrel-per-day oil refinery resumed production after repairs to parts of the plant that were damaged when it was fed highly acidic crude. The Indeni refinery was shut down last week and an investigation was launched to establish which firms imported the unsuitable oil. Details were shared [here](#).

On July 21st, the Zimbabwean Government said had approved \$971 million in foreign investments in the first half of this year. By this time last year, the Government had only approved \$555 million in foreign investments. The increase in foreign investment in Zimbabwe has been largely attributed to the Government's efforts to relax the national indigenization policy, which requires foreign companies to sell at least 51 percent stake to local shareholders. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On July 21st, the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) reported that South Africa's tourism business index is at its lowest level since 2011, as visitor numbers decline due to the country's new visa regulations. Reportedly, the new visa requirements have made it more difficult for international visitors, and in particular those traveling with minors under the age of 18, to gain entry into the country. The new regulations require minors to present an unabridged birth certificate at all ports of entry in South Africa, in addition to normal passports and visas. Details can be seen [here](#).

On July 21st, Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa was discharged from the hospital where he was treated for a week for a persistent infection. Tutu was admitted to the hospital on July 14th after his doctor decided he was not responding to a course of antibiotics. His medical team has prescribed lots of rest. Tutu's discharge was noted [here](#).

General Africa News

On July 20th, AfDB President Donald Kaberuka and members of the AfDB's senior management team began an official mission to China, with a series of engagements with Chinese government officials, fund managers, and development oriented think tanks. The AfDB mission to China was outlined [here](#).

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