



## ML Strategies Update

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## Africa Update

### Leading the News

#### **South Sudan**

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, emergency relief teams from the United Nations (U.N.) Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) reached more than 27,000 people in the town of Wau Shilluk, South Sudan who have been cut off from receiving humanitarian supplies since March. For the past several months, access problems and concerns for staff safety have prevented humanitarian agencies from reaching people in rural areas in Upper Nile state. The situation was described [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council welcomed the recent signature by South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, opposition leader Riek Machar, and others of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan and called on all parties to implement the accord and adhere to the permanent ceasefire. The Security Council also confirmed its intention to move swiftly to update the mandate of the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to support the implementation of the agreement and expressed its willingness to address any violations or failures of any party to implement its provisions, including through the imposition of an arms embargo and additional sanctions. Feedback from the Security Council was shared [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, despite South Sudanese President Salva Kiir's decision to sign a peace agreement, both the government and the opposition in South Sudan continued to accuse each other of attacks. Rebel leader former Vice President Riek Machar said that South Sudanese Government troops had attacked Adok and Malakal, towns held by insurgents, claims that were denied by the South Sudanese army. Instead, the army claimed its positions were attacked by rebels. Under the peace agreement, a permanent ceasefire was scheduled to go into effect at midnight on August 29<sup>th</sup>. Both accounts of the fighting were published [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, South Sudanese opposition leader Riek Machar accused government forces of repeatedly breaking a ceasefire and continuing to put a recently agreed upon peace deal at risk. Former Vice President Machar went further to say that government forces were not only violating the ceasefire, but also provoking rebels throughout Unity state. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.S. Department of State condemned the recent fighting in Jonglei and Upper Nile states in South Sudan and called on all parties to immediately cease provocative action and hostile engagement and to further develop security arrangements at the planned security workshop starting September 5<sup>th</sup>. The State Department noted it had welcomed the earlier declarations by the Government of South Sudan and the opposition

forces to cease military operations on August 29<sup>th</sup> and said the fighting between forces on both sides runs contrary to those orders. Additionally, the State Department warned that anyone acting to spoil the peace agreement's implementation will face consequences, adding the U.S. will work with the U.N. Security Council to impose sanctions, as needed. Feedback from the State Department was posted [here](#).

## **Libya**

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) announced the start of a new round of the Libyan political dialogue in Skhirat, Morocco, with discussions expected to focus on expediting the process towards finalizing the Libyan Political Agreement, including reaching agreement on a Government of National Accord. UNSMIL also acknowledged it had been informed by the delegation from the Tripoli government that it would not be participating in this round of talks due to the need to reorganize its negotiating team. However, UNSMIL noted the Tripoli delegation has reiterated its commitment to the dialogue process and its plans to participate in the next session. More information was posted [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, UNSMIL announced plans to hold a new round of talks between Libya's warring factions in Geneva, Switzerland the week of August 31<sup>st</sup>. The new round of talks was announced after the self-declared government in Tripoli delayed its participation in the U.N.-supported dialogue, saying it needed time to form a new negotiating team after a chief member resigned. The continuation of the talks was noted [here](#).

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, four Libyan soldiers for the country's internally recognized government were killed and six more wounded in fresh fighting with Islamist groups in Benghazi. According to military officials, a tank battalion fought with Islamist brigades that had been trying to advance west of Benghazi, with fighting raging late into the evening. Clashes were also reported outside the city of Derna, where Libyan air and ground forces launched attacks against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) positions. The fighting was described [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, ISIL militants took to social media to claim responsibility for a car bomb attack on the Mellitah oil and gas field in Tripoli, Libya. The attack caused only minor damages at the oil firm, which is co-owned by Italy's ENI. More information was shared [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, following a meeting with a delegation of the Libyan General National Congress (GNC), U.N. Special Representative for Libya and head of UNSMIL Bernardino Leon said tangible results have been achieved for a political deal in Libya, but concrete solutions to the conflict will only be reached when all parties agree on a final draft. Special Representative Leon reported his conversation with the GNC representatives was very frank and open. Last week, the GNC did not attend a round of talks in Morocco, explaining that it needed to reorganize its negotiating team following the resignation of two members. Special Representative Leon added he hopes a final agreement is endorsed within the next two or three weeks so its implementation can begin on October 20<sup>th</sup>. His comments were captured [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Libya's internationally recognized government based in Tobruk banned Yemenis, Iranians, and Pakistanis from entering the country. The move widens a visa ban already applied to Sudanese, Bangladeshis, Palestinians, and Syrians. Acknowledging that Libya is currently divided between two rival governments, the administration based in Tobruk noted it will only be able to enforce the visa ban at the eastern airports of Tobruk and Labraq and at the land crossing with Egypt. More information can be found [here](#).

## **Burundi**

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, official data revealed that Burundi's inflation rate rose to eight percent year-on-year in July from 7.7 percent in June. The increase is attributed to the political crisis in the country driving up costs for essential items, including housing, water, and energy. The political unrest over President Pierre Nkurunziza's successful bid for a third term, which some considered a violation of the constitution, has also had a negative impact on economic activity in the capital of Bujumbura. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon marked the fifteenth anniversary of the initial signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement by calling on all of Burundi's political leaders, including those in exile, to find common cause and commit to building on the stability that was ushered in by the Arusha Agreement.

Secretary-General Ban's comments came as tensions in Burundi remained high following last week's inauguration of President Pierre Nkurunziza for a third term in office. His comments were recorded [here](#).

## ***Nigeria***

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, suspected Nigerian Boko Haram militants raided the village of Abadam in the Diffa region of Niger. According to security sources, three people were killed, including a soldier and two civilians. Witnesses also reported the fighters looted shops before fleeing scene. The attack was reported [here](#).

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, Nigeria's Department of State Services (DSS) announced the arrest of 20 prominent members of Boko Haram thought to be responsible for orchestrating several deadly attacks. The arrests occurred in Lagos, Kano, Plateau, Enugu, and Gombe states between July 8<sup>th</sup> and August 25<sup>th</sup>. DSS said one of those arrested was Usman Shuaibu, who confessed to leading a team of nine militants in carrying out several attacks. Others were accused of ordering attacks, preparing bombs, and strapping explosives to suicide bombers. An article on the arrests was published [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, suspected Boko Haram gunmen on horseback killed at least 24 people in two separate attacks on villages in northeastern Nigeria. The gunmen reportedly opened fire and threw explosive devices in Kolori and Ba'ana Imam. While Boko Haram has yet to officially claim responsibility for the attacks, the assaults on both villages bore the hallmarks of the Islamist group, which is believed to have killed more than 700 Nigerians since President Muhammadu Buhari took office on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The latest attacks were detailed [here](#).

## ***Central African Republic***

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that clashes between rival militias in the Central African Republic (CAR) in the past few days have forced several thousand people to flee their homes in Bambari and seek shelter at a former cotton factory inside the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) compound. As of last Tuesday, about 3,000 newly displaced persons had registered and the MINUSCA compound. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, UNICEF announced the release of 163 children by an anti-balaka militia in the CAR. The children, including five girls, were serving as combatants, cooks, and messengers for the armed group. They were released in a ceremony held in Batangafo and facilitated by UNICEF and MINUSCA. The children received medical care and spoke to social workers before they were taken to a transition center where they will be supported in either going back to school or enrolling in vocational training. The full story is available [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, in its interim report to the CAR sanctions committee, experts on the U.N. Security Council said the illicit trafficking of diamonds from the CAR into neighboring Cameroon and Chad is helping to finance the continuation of the nearly three-year conflict in the country between Muslim Seleka rebels and anti-balaka Christian militias. The export of diamonds from the CAR was banned in May 2013 by the Kimberly Process, but according to the U.N., the illicit exploitation of diamonds continues. For more information, click [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, head of the CAR's National Transitional Council (CNT) Alexandre-Ferdinand Nguendet said the country is falling behind on preparations for the October 18<sup>th</sup> elections and will likely have to delay them. Nguendet reported that the registration of voters has proved difficult in rural parts of the country and, as a result, an electoral census that was due to be completed by July 27<sup>th</sup> is still ongoing. Before the elections can be held, the electorate also has to vote on a new constitution outlining the framework for the new government. The constitutional referendum is scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>. An updated on planning for elections in the CAR was provided [here](#).

## ***Somalia***

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, Colonel Ahmed Hassan, a Somali military official said Al Shabaab extremists had overrun an African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) base in Janaale after a firefight with troops there. The attack started with a suicide bombing at the base's gate, followed by a firefight, which lasted more than an hour. The Al Shabaab fighters reportedly detonated a bomb, damaging a nearby bridge to prevent troops from escaping. While AMISOM could not immediately confirm any casualty figures, Al Shabaab claimed to have killed 50 of the

approximately 150 Ugandan troops stationed at the compound and said the attack was carried out to avenge the killing of seven civilians by Ugandan troops at a wedding in Merka in July. The full story is available [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, U.N. Special Representative and head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Nicholas Kay condemned the attack by Al Shabaab militants on the AMISOM base in Janaale. Special Representative Kay sent his condolences to the families who lost loved ones and to the people and governments of Ugandan and Somalia. He also underscored that UNSOM's solidarity with AMISOM and Somali security forces in their efforts to defeat Al Shabaab will not waver. Special Representative Kay's comments on the attack were captured [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Al Shabaab leader for Somalia's capital region Sheikh Ali Jabal issued a warning against Somalis who frequent hotels, beaches, and nightclubs in Mogadishu, saying the Islamist group will target men and women who engage in immoral culture. The warning comes a day after Al Shabaab stormed an AMISOM base south of Mogadishu. The warning was issued [here](#).

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

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez awarded the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) with the Joint Meritorious Unit Award. The award was made in recognition of the division's five-month deployment in support of the USAID-led mission to fight the spread of Ebola in West Africa. More information was shared [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) said the detection of a new case of Ebola in Sierra Leone over the weekend has prompted the use of an experimental vaccine to fight the disease. A team of experts conducting a ring vaccination trial in Conakry, Guinea travelled to the Kambia district in Sierra Leone where the new case was reported on Saturday to vaccinate all people thought to have come into contact with the person confirmed to have been infected with Ebola. The new case comes after nearly three weeks without any new cases of Ebola reported in Sierra Leone. An article on the latest case of Ebola in the country was published [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. released a virtual reality film aiming to draw attention towards Ebola survivors by guiding viewers through the life of a woman in Liberia who uses her immunity to help others affected by the disease. The "Waves of Grace" video shows Ebola survivor Decontee Davis in a slum in Monrovia, caring for orphaned children and others suffering from Ebola. The film also shows markets reopening, children going back to school, and men returning to work in Liberia as the country edges toward once again being declared Ebola-free. The video series was described [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, the WHO updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending August 30<sup>th</sup>, there were three confirmed cases of Ebola, including two in Guinea and one in Sierra Leone. The WHO noted the new case of Ebola in Sierra Leone is the first in the country in over two weeks. Additionally, the WHO observed overall case incidence has remained stable at three confirmed cases per week for five consecutive weeks. Further, the number of contacts under observation continues to fall, from approximately 600 on August 23<sup>rd</sup> to 450 on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

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

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, up to 200 bodies were discovered floating off the coast of Libya. The bodies were found by a coast guard vessel in the waters off of Zuwara, a port in western Libya that is a major departure point for African refugees hoping to reach Italy. Additional reporting on the discovery can be watched [here](#).

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, a boat carrying migrants sank off Libya's Mediterranean coast, killing at least 37 people in the second such fatal accident within days. Fishermen reportedly discovered 37 bodies in the waters near Khoms, but it was not clear how many migrants might have been on the boat when it sank. The accident was reported [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, hundreds of migrants poured overnight on to the high-speed railway linking Paris near London near the French port of Calais, stranding thousands of passengers aboard Eurostar trains for hours. As many as

4,000 migrants, including a number from Africa, live in camps around Calais and have been increasingly attempting to board trains and trucks heading from France to Britain. The full story is available [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

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

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman met with South African Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davies to discuss outstanding bilateral issues on agricultural products. These products are a focus of an out-of-cycle review being conducted by the USTR, which was mandated by the 2015 reauthorization of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The two trade ministers reviewed the progress to date and the process moving forward. Ambassador Froman also underscored the urgency of finding a resolution to the remaining issues in order to avoid a reduction of AGOA benefits for South Africa. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

### ***State Department***

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the State Department said it was saddened to learn of the passing of Nigeria's Ambassador to the U.S. Adebowale Ibidapo Adefuye. Over the past five years under Ambassador Adefuye's leadership, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner said the U.S. enjoyed a collaborative and open dialogue that yielded real results such as the U.S.-Nigeria Bi-National Commission, a strategic dialogue that succeeded in expanding mutual cooperation across a broad range of shared interests. Spokesperson Toner also praised Ambassador Adefuye's involvement in Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's recent visit to the U.S. in July. A full statement was issued [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner expressed concerns about reports surrounding Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir's visit to China to attend the September 3<sup>rd</sup> World War II commemoration. Deputy Spokesperson Toner noted President Bashir has been charged by the International Criminal Court (ICC) with war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and warrants for his arrest remain outstanding. He reiterated the U.S. supports the ICC's efforts to hold accountable those responsible for such actions and opposes travel by persons subject to outstanding ICC warrants. Deputy Spokesperson Toner's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Mark Toner expressed disappointment and concern by the verdict handed down by an Egyptian court on *Al Jazeera* journalists Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste. The journalists were sentenced to three years in prison for broadcasting false news. Deputy Spokesperson Toner urged the Government of Egypt to take all available measures to redress this verdict, which he said undermines the very freedom of expression necessary for stability and development. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry delivered remarks at the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Diplomatic reception at the Department of State. U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator Special Representative for Health Diplomacy Ambassador Deborah Birx also delivered remarks at the event, which brought together U.S. Chiefs of Missions from nearly 30 PEPFAR-supported countries, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and other partners in the global response to HIV/AIDS. PEPFAR also hosted its first Executive Leadership Strategy Session for all Chiefs of Mission overseeing the implementation of PEPFAR to engage in a strategic dialogue around the programs future in advancing epidemic control. For more information, click [here](#).

On September 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin will travel to Nigeria. While in Nigeria, Assistant Secretary Rivkin will deliver the keynote address at the Nigeria-American Chamber of Commerce's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Financing Conference, participate in an intellectual property (IP) rights roundtable, and meet with government and business officials to discuss how Nigeria can be a key source of regional growth. In Lagos, Assistant Secretary Rivkin will meet with heads of rising Nigerian conglomerates and technology officials, lead a discussion on Nigeria's Nollywood film industry with high level industry executives, and visit several business incubators. Following his trip to Nigeria, Assistant Secretary Rivkin will travel on to Senegal. His visit to Nigeria was outlined [here](#).

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

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Global Development Lab announced \$10 million for 45 new research projects that will address evidence gaps and advance technical capacity in critical areas of development. Spanning 23 USAID partner countries, the 45 new projects are funded through the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program. Among the new awards, the PEER program will support American and Kenyan scientists working together as part of East Africa's strategic efforts to reduce threats to the region's wildlife heritage, including poaching, trafficking, disease, and human-animal conflicts. For details, click [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, USAID Acting Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt authored a blog post on USAID's efforts to help curb child and maternal deaths. For example, with USAID's support, 27 hospitals throughout Malawi now have access to a device that helps newborn babies breathe until their lungs have fully developed, tripling the survival rate for babies treated for respiratory distress syndrome. Additionally, with USAID's help, the Ethiopian Government has trained more than 38,000 health workers and deployed them around the country, helping Ethiopia to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) focused on reducing child mortality by two thirds two years ahead of schedule. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

## ***Department of Defense***

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, AFRICOM highlighted a recent training and leader development conference (TLDC) and a senior leader strategy and orientation session (SLSOS) hosted by U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) in Vicenza, Italy. The two events brought together active, guard, Reserve, and Army civilians who have cultural and subject matter expertise on the continent to lay the foundation for USARAF's strategic plan, known as African Horizons. Among the attendees were Army Secretary John McHugh and AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez. Both events were highlighted [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Benin's Minister of Interior Placide Azande met with U.S. Marines and sailors and U.S. Embassy Charge d'Affaires Todd Whatley to discuss the country's security concerns and to express his gratitude for the training that will take place between the Marines and the Benin National Surveillance Police. At the request of the Government of Benin, and in coordination with the U.S. Embassy in Cotonou, Marines and sailors with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response- Africa will begin training Benin's National Surveillance Police next week to help defend the country's borders against illicit trafficking. The meeting was noted [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 19 officers from the Kenyan and Ugandan militaries completed the 16<sup>th</sup> iteration of the U.S. Department of State's Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) Force Headquarters Training held at the Humanitarian Peace Support School at the International Peace Support Training Center in Nairobi, Kenya. The military officers are expected to participate in AMISOM, which is tasked with assisting the Somali Federal Government in their effort to stabilize the country and foster political dialogue and reconciliation. More information can be found [here](#).

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

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) highlighted the winner of this year's Power Africa photo contest. The winning photo shows workers at the start of construction of Gigawatt Global's 8.5 megawatt (MW) solar facility east of Kigali, Rwanda. The project is East Africa's first grid-connected, utility-scale solar energy facility and represents a full six percent contribution to the entire country's power generation capacity. OPIC supported the Gigawatt Global project in its early stages, which helped the project progress to receive financing from both private lenders and international development finance institutions. The project was touted [here](#).

## ***Congress***

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the House Select Committee on Benghazi rejected a request from former State Department Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills to have her testimony occur in a public session. Mills was scheduled to appear before the panel in a closed session on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, along with former State Department Director of Policy Planning Jake

Sullivan. Mills expressed concern that Republicans would use the close session to leak selected information that would cast her in a negative light. The situation was discussed [here](#).

## **North Africa**

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, Spanish authorities announced the arrest of Abdeladim Achriaa, a Moroccan man accused of coordinating a network of ISIL supporters in Moroccan cities and recruiting militants to fight in Iraq and Syria. Achriaa was detained last Tuesday in a small town near Madrid as part of a joint Moroccan-Spanish police operation against alleged ISIL sympathizers that resulted in 13 others being arrested. Achriaa has been denied bail and was ordered to be held on terrorism charges pending further investigation. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, experts with the U.N. Human Rights Council voiced alarm after a female Sudanese student was sentenced to public flogging and a heavy fine for charges of indecent dressing, while another receive a hefty fine for the same charges. The U.N. officials urged that the convictions be overturned immediately. Both girls have filed appeals, but no date has been announced for the appeal trials. The situation as described [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Egyptian manufacturers warned that production will continue to suffer unless the government starts diverting some of the gas supplied to electricity plants powering homes to factories. While public unrest over power cuts has been on the decline, it is estimated that manufacturing output has contracted by almost 30 percent due to foreign exchange restrictions and gas shortages. The circumstances were detailed [here](#).

On August 30<sup>th</sup>, Egypt's election commission announced the country will hold its long-awaited parliamentary election on October 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. A second round of voting will be held November 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. Egypt has been without a parliament since June 2012 when a court dissolved the democratically elected main chamber, which at the time was controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood. The election had been due to begin in March, but was delayed after a court ruled part of the election law unconstitutional. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir arrived in China for a four-day visit to include a commemoration of the end of World War II. While President Bashir is wanted by the ICC for genocide and other atrocities committed in Darfur, China is not a member of the ICC, meaning it has no obligation to act on the arrest warrants. President Bashir's visit to China was announced [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the Algerian Energy Ministry announced plans to increase natural gas output by 13 percent by 2019 in order to reverse a decline in energy production in recent years that has hit its export earnings and spending policy. An Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) member and a major gas supplier to Europe, Algeria relies heavily on energy revenues, which comprise 60 percent of its budget and account for 95 percent of its exports. Earnings from oil and gas exports are expected to fall 50 percent this year. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, Kenya's national assembly defeated a proposal put forward by Finance Minister Henry Rotich to increase the minimum core capital for banks to \$48.17 million. The proposal was rejected by the body's budget committee. According to committee chairman Mutava Musyimi, the Finance Ministry's plan would stifle growth in Kenya's banking sector. For more information, click [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, an Iranian fishing vessel and its crew escaped after being held captive for five months by Somali fishermen. The boat was captured by Somali pirates on March 26<sup>th</sup> and has since been held close to the shore of Ceel Hur in central Somalia. Local officials had also accused the Iranian crew of fishing illegally in Somali waters. An article on the incident can be read [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. warned the number of Somalis in hunger has risen in the past six months and predicted a further spike in the weeks to come. Following a poor cereal harvest caused by an early end to the rainy season, there has been a 17 percent increase in the number of Somalis facing a food crisis, up to 855,000 people or two-thirds of those who are internally displaced. The U.N. cautioned the situation in Somalia could worsen as scientists predict the country will face severe flooding because of El Nino. The situation was described [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, Ugandan lawmakers debated a bill that would give authorities sweeping powers to regulate civil society and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Civil society groups are opposed to the bill and argue the legislation would give the government unprecedented powers, including the ability to shutdown NGOs and jail members. Additionally, LGBT groups are especially concerned the LGBT community may be targeted under the new law. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) was presented the “Power Transaction of the Year” award by the East African Power Industry for its role in financing the development of an independent solar hybrid mini-grid project in rural Tanzania. With national electricity coverage estimated at about 21 percent in Tanzania, at the end of 2014, SEFA approved a preparation grant for joint venture Jumeme – Rural Power Supply Ltd (JRPS) to develop the project using solar energy to expand rural electrification in the northwestern part of the country. The project was highlighted [here](#).

## [West Africa](#)

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel Toby Lanzer concluded a four-day visit to Chad and the Lake Chad Basin. In the past four weeks alone, Coordinator Lanzer observed the worsening security situation in the region has forced over 41,000 people to flee their homes on islands and relocate to safer areas inland. Additionally, Coordinator Lanzer called on the international community to ramp up its support in response to the humanitarian challenges affecting Chad, the seventh largest refugee-hosting country in the world. Reflections from Coordinator Lanzer’s recent trip were shared [here](#).

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari appointed former United Bank for Africa chief Alhaji Abba Kyari as his new chief of staff, marking his first senior appointment since taking office. President Buhari also announced the selection of Babachir David Lawal to serve as Government Secretary and retired Colonel Ibrahim Ali to serve as head of the Nigerian Customs Service. Former lawmakers Ita Enang and Suleiman Kawu were appointed as advisers on parliament, while Kure Martin was chosen to lead the Nigerian Immigration Service. The appointments were announced [here](#).

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, authorities in Lagos, Nigeria, shut down churches across the city following an onslaught of complaints over noisy worship. The Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency said it had sealed off 22 premises after receiving dozens of complaint calls each day. Authorities said the churches would be allowed to reopen after paying fines starting at \$250. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Guinea-Bissau and head of the U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Support Office in the country (UNIOGBIS) Miguel Trovoada briefed the U.N. Security Council on the situation in the country. Special Representative Trovoada said that before dismissing Prime Minister Domingos Simoes Pereira, President Jose Mario Vaz had, in a message to the nation, explained the sequence of events leading up to an emerging constitutional crisis. While acknowledging the political turbulence in the country, Special Representative Trovoada expressed hope that political leaders will rise to their responsibility to preserve the gains made so far in the interest of the country and its people. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the first review of Ghana’s economic performance under the program supported by an Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, allowing a disbursement of an additional \$116.6 million. The Executive Board noted the implementation of the ECF-supported program by the Ghanaian authorities has been broadly satisfactory, despite an unfavorable economic environment. In particular, the Executive Board observed the government’s fiscal consolidation efforts are on track and the government’s decision to liberalize the prices of fuel prices is encouraging. Additional feedback was posted [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the African Development Bank (AfDB) hosted a group of opinion leaders, global thinkers, and innovators at its global headquarters in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire for the premiere edition of its new speaker series called The Baobab Forum. Under the theme, “The Many Faces of Leadership for African Development,” the Forum sought to deliberate on how to address the development gaps on the continent. The Forum will be held annually with the objective of capturing and sharing new ideas to tackle Africa’s development challenges. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expressed regret for the resumption of the death penalty in Chad and called for an official moratorium on its use. OHCHR said Saturday's execution by firing squad of ten people sentenced to death was an unfortunate development, especially given the Government of Chad's abolition of the death penalty in 2014. The death penalty was reinstated as part of an anti-terrorism law unanimously approved by Chad's parliament on July 30<sup>th</sup>. The situation was discussed [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, two Malian soldiers were killed when unidentified gunmen attacked a checkpoint on the outskirts of Timbuktu. The incident raises new concerns regarding whether or not the U.N.-backed peace deal signed in June between the Malian Government and rival armed groups will hold. In recent weeks, pro-government militias have been forcing the opposition further north. While pro-government forces agreed last week to withdraw from the town of Anefis, they have yet to do so, fueling tensions with the separatists Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA). An article on the circumstance in Mali can be read [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, former Nigerian National Security Adviser Sambo Dasuki pleaded not guilty in court to a charge of illegally possessing weapons, including assault rifles and bulletproof vehicles. Last week, the Department of State Security (DSS) announced it had recovered arms and ammunition after credible intelligence led to a search of Dasuki's properties in Abuja and Sokoto. Justice Adeniyi Ademola adjourned the case and scheduled the trial to take place on October 26<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile, Dasuki remains on bail, but is not permitted to leave the country. An update on the case was provided [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, speaking at a conference on security in the Gulf of Guinea, Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Ibe Kachikwu announced a plan to deploy drones to monitor the movement of ships to fight oil theft on Nigeria's waterways. Managing Director Kachikwu also said the NNPC is trying to help the Nigerian navy make up for a lack of equipment to carry out patrols. His comments were transcribed [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cameroon awarded a contract for its Kribi port to a consortium led by French logistics group Necotrans. The deepwater port will allow for the import and export of raw materials, such as timber and cotton, as well as vehicles and service equipment for Cameroon's oil and gas sector. The new port is also intended to ease congestion on the port of Douala. The contract award was announced [here](#).

## Sub-Saharan Africa

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved a \$45 million International Development Association (IDA) grant to strengthen the National Statistical System in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to produce and disseminate basic economic and social statistics, such as population, agriculture, and poverty data. The goal of the DRC-Statistics Development Project is to produce more accurate and easily accessible data that can be used to improve development planning. A press release was issued [here](#).

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, South African Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said South Africa will introduce a new ten percent customs duty on certain steel products. Minister Davies said the new tariffs are intended to help protect the local manufacturing industry from cheaper Chinese steel imports. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, 11 young women and two men died in a road accident in Swaziland on their way to an annual ceremony where King Mswati III might have chosen one of the women as his wife. The accident occurred when four trucks transporting scores of young women to the traditional Umhlanga Reed dance collided near the town of Matsapha on the country's major highway. Eighty-one others were admitted to the hospital. The accident was reported [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, steel firm ArcelorMittal said it is planning to shut down two mills in South Africa and is reviewing operations at its largest plant in light of weak demand and lower prices. The company noted the closure of the two mills could result in the loss of up to 400 jobs. ArcelorMittal also indicated that trading conditions had continued to worsen since it had started reviewing its steel business in July, adding that South African import duties would only bring relief over the medium to long term. The company's status was detailed [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, six unidentified gunmen killed six elite presidential guard soldiers in an ambush in the eastern DRC. Members of the Republican Guard, responsible for protecting the president and strategic posts, were on their

way to collect rations when their jeeps came under heavy fire on a main road north of Goma. For more information, click [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, following a meeting with Zimbabwean Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote, announced plans to build a cement plant in Zimbabwe and to explore additional investments in coal mining and power generation. The proposed cement plant will produce 1.5 million tons of cement a year. The move is viewed as a boost for Zimbabwe's efforts to attract foreign investment. More information can be found [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, the AfDB announced through the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative, the Bank is now supporting the development of country action agendas and investment prospectuses in four new countries: Angola, the DRC, Malawi, and Zimbabwe. SE4All action agendas are now being developed in more than 25 African countries and might become a national implementation framework for the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on energy. Details were posted [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, South African Energy Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson told parliament the Ministry will handle negotiations of a nuclear agreement with transparency. Minister Joemat-Pettersson's remarks come as opposition parties have criticized the Energy Ministry of favoring a nuclear deal with Russia. The U.S., China, France, Russia, South Korea, Japan, and Canada have all expressed interest in cooperation with South Africa on nuclear technology. The situation was described [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, South Africa's parliament rejected a motion that would launch an investigation into President Jacob Zuma for possible impeachment for allowing Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir to evade an arrest warrant and leave the country in June. Parliament is dominated by President Zuma's African National Congress (ANC) and the motion was defeated by 211 votes against, to 100 in favor. Seventeen lawmakers abstained. The vote was recorded [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, Zambia power utility Zesco Ltd. announced it will deepen power cuts after water levels at its largest hydro power station dropped following a drought. The cut in power generation at the Kariba North Bank power station from 540 MW to 305 MW could potentially affect mining operations in the country. Until power generation is restored in 2016, Zesco will procure emergency power from Mozambique and the Southern African Power Pool. Details were shared [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda pleaded not guilty before the ICC to 18 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the DRC in the early 2000s. ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda told judges that fighters from Ntaganda's Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) had lured ethnic Lendus occupying the land they wanted to purported peace talks in order to capture and kill them and expand the power of the Hema ethnic group. The proceedings were summarized [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, more than 1,000 South African workers ended a two-day sit-in protest at Sibanye's Driefontrijn mine located west of Johannesburg. The workers were protesting against Sibanye's refusal to take responsibility for the deaths of colleagues over the past several months. Mines in South Africa are generally the deepest and most dangerous in the world. Mining companies operating in the country are required to halt operations after fatalities, which often results in production losses. The strike was reported [here](#).

## **General Africa News**

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, AfDB President Donald Kaberuka stepped down after ten years as President of the Bank. At a farewell event, AU Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma thanked President Kaberuka for his wisdom, support, and encouragement, as well as his respect for the people of the continent. President Kaberuka's successor, former Nigerian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Akinwumi Adesina was sworn in on September 1<sup>st</sup>. An article on the AfDB's change in leadership can be read [here](#).

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the AfDB launched a new report seeking to empower women to take the lead in agribusiness and agriculture value chains. The report, titled "Economic Empowerment of African Women through Equitable Participation in Agricultural Value Chains," identified opportunities for women that can increase Africa's competitiveness and participation in global value chains. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, upon being sworn in as President of the AfDB, Akinwumi Adesina said the AfDB will focus in the coming years on tackling Africa's chronic power shortages to try to unlock its economic potential and end its vulnerability to fluctuations in commodity prices. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Africa requires an additional \$450 billion in power sector investment to halve blackouts and achieve electricity access for all urban areas by 2040. President Adesina's comments were captured [here](#).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, the AfDB announced the expansion of its African Bond Index, welcoming Botswana and Namibia into the fold. The Index was first launched in February 2015, comprised of South African, Egyptian, Nigerian, and Kenyan local currency sovereign indices. The expanded Index will now include the six most liquid sovereign bond markets in Africa. More information was posted [here](#).

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