



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On August 28th, the academic journal *Science* published the research of more than 50 Harvard University scientists on the Ebola virus origin and transmission during the 2014 West Africa outbreak. After sequencing the genomes of Ebola virus from 78 patients in Sierra Leone, the scientists believe the virus came from Central Africa within the past decade and was transmitted by a single animal source before it began to spread among humans. The full study can be accessed [here](#).

On August 28th, the *New York Times* reported on the results of a new study in which an experimental Ebola drug was used to treat 18 monkeys exposed to lethal doses of Ebola virus. All 18 monkeys survived, even when the treatment was started after the monkeys were already sick. The sick monkeys' symptoms, such as excessive bleeding, rashes, and signs of liver toxicity, eventually disappeared, while all three monkeys in the control group succumbed to the virus. The study's findings were detailed [here](#).

On August 29th, Senegalese Health Minister Awa Marie Coll Seck issued a statement confirming the first Ebola case in the country, making Senegal the fifth West African country to report cases of Ebola virus. A separate outbreak of a different strain of the virus has also been confirmed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). According to Senegalese authorities, the patient is a Guinean national who traveled to Senegal and is now being treated in quarantine. Last week, Senegal closed its borders with Guinea and moved to block flights from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia from touching down in the country. More information was provided [here](#).

On August 29th, the United Nations (U.N.) World Health Organization (WHO) issued the first in a series of regular updates on the Ebola Response roadmap released last week with the goal of stopping the transmission of Ebola in West Africa within six to nine months. The first update identifies the countries most at risk for spread of the Ebola virus, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Senegal, which all share land borders or major transportation connections with the countries already impacted by the outbreak. The WHO is working with these countries to ensure that full surveillance, preparedness, and response plans are preemptively in place. The WHO update was issued

[here.](#)

On August 29th, the *Los Angeles Register* recounted the efforts of hospitals in southern California to follow the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) infection control recommendations to prepare for potential Ebola cases. The CDC's Ebola recommendations include a number of measures, such as allocating private rooms for Ebola patients, providing protective coverings for staff, and limiting use of needles as much as possible to prevent transmission of the virus. The recommendations were described [here](#).

On August 31st, Northeastern University physicist Alessandro Vespignani extrapolated that if current trends continue, the number of confirmed Ebola cases in West Africa could jump from around 3,000 at present to approximately 10,000 by September 24th, if additional control measures are not implemented. Last week, the WHO suggested the number of confirmed Ebola cases could reach 20,000. Vespignani's research also found that the likelihood of Ebola spreading to other countries is small, but the risk grows with the spread of the epidemic. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On September 1st, *PRI* noted that the popular Liberian hip-hop radio station, Hott FM, has taken on a mission to help spread information to help contain the spread of the Ebola virus. Between playing music from local artists, the station's disc jockeys have been tasked with providing up to date information on the Ebola outbreak, including the opening of new quarantine centers, new cases that have been discovered, and preventive measures. Hott FM's efforts to share information about the Ebola outbreak were highlighted [here](#).

On September 2nd, DRC officials reported that the death toll from the Ebola outbreak in the country has climbed to 31 as the WHO confirmed the Ebola outbreak in the DRC has no link to the epidemic in West Africa. The WHO reported that there were a total of 53 Ebola cases in the DRC and that health officials are continuing to track roughly 160 contacts with those patients. The Zaire strain of Ebola is indigenous to the DRC and there have been seven outbreaks in the country since the disease was first discovered in 1976. An update on the Ebola situation in the DRC is available [here](#).

On September 2nd, health care workers at the John F. Kennedy Medical Center, Liberia's largest hospital, went on strike over unpaid wages, raising concerns about controlling the spread of Ebola in Monrovia. The strike occurred just one day after a similar protest occurred at Connaught Hospital in Freetown, Sierra Leone over pay and conditions. The demonstrations were noted [here](#).

On September 2nd, the U.N. held a high-level briefing for Member States on the response to the Ebola outbreak. Addressing the meeting, U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson encouraged Member States, businesses, and individuals to make their response decisions based on scientific evidence as opposed to fear. Additional U.N. meeting participants included WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan, Senior System Coordinator for Ebola Dr. David Nabarro, U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Director Anthony Lake, and Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous. The briefing was summarized [here](#).

On September 2nd, speaking at the U.N. meeting on the response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, Doctors Without Borders (DWB) International President Dr. Joanne Liu criticized the WHO for not acting sooner to bring the West African Ebola outbreak under control. In addition, Dr. Liu recommended ramping up response efforts by scaling up isolation centers, deploying mobile laboratories to improve diagnostic capabilities, establishing dedicated air bridges to move personnel and equipment, and building a regional network of field hospitals to treat suspected or infected medical personnel. Dr. Liu's comments at the U.N. meeting were transcribed [here](#).

On September 2nd, after receiving a briefing from CDC Director Tom Frieden, U.S. President Barack Obama delivered a video message to residents in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Nigeria regarding the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. President Obama said the first step to slowing the diseases is to know the facts and delivered a tutorial on how the disease is and is not spread. In addition, President Obama encouraged medical professionals treating Ebola patients in West Africa to wear gloves and masks and discouraged the traditional practice of touching the bodies of the victims who succumb to the virus. President Obama's video message can be watched [here](#).

On September 2nd, CDC Director Tom Frieden delivered an update on the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa. Director Frieden warned that the virus is spreading faster than anyone anticipated and the number of cases will likely increase significantly in coming weeks. The CDC currently has 70 specialists deployed in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria to assist in efforts to control the Ebola outbreak. Director Frieden also called for the international community to do more to help control the spread of the virus now that Ebola is present in five countries. The briefing can be accessed [here](#).

On September 2nd, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a \$24.9 million, 19-month contract with Mapp Biopharmaceuticals, the manufacturer of the experimental drug ZMapp that has been effective in treating some Ebola patients. HHS's Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) will provide subject matter expertise and technical support to speed up manufacturing and testing and will have the option to extend the contract up to a total of \$42.3 million. The contract was announced [here](#).

On September 2nd, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Anthony Fauci announced that the first human volunteer had received an injection of the experimental Ebola vaccine developed in partnership with pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline. Testing of the vaccine will continue on healthy volunteers, and if deemed safe, the vaccine will later be tested in other trial groups who will also be closely monitored for side effects. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) also indicated the vaccine will be tested on healthy volunteers in the United Kingdom (U.K.), the Gambia, and Mali. The launch of the clinical trials was noted [here](#).

On September 2nd, *Al Jazeera* detailed a training camp DWB recently hosted in Brussels, Belgium, to help prepare health care workers for deployment to Ebola-stricken countries in Africa. Participants included 36 representatives of organizations such as Save the Children, the U.N., and the CDC. The training included practice scenarios in a mocked-up isolation unit designed to resemble the field conditions in West Africa. DWB said it hosted the training camp to fill the gap caused by lacking WHO leadership, especially as more than 120 health care workers have died and at least 240 have contracted Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. The training camp was described [here](#).

On September 2nd, SIM USA reported that one of its missionary doctors in Liberia has tested positive for Ebola virus. The American doctor, who had yet to be identified, was treating obstetrics patients at SIM's ELWA hospital in Monrovia. It was not clear how the doctor contracted the virus, especially as he was not involved in treating Ebola patients. SIM USA reported that the infected doctor has been transferred to the ELWA Ebola isolation unit, where he is reportedly doing well and is in good spirits. A press release was issued [here](#).

On September 2nd, *NBC News* interviewed Dr. Kent Brantly, the American doctor infected with Ebola while working in West Africa who recovered after receiving the experimental ZMapp drug and was released from Emory University hospital two weeks ago. Dr. Brantly described the early onset of the virus and his reaction to the news that a SIM USA doctor whom he had worked with at the ELWA hospital in Monrovia, Liberia, had contracted the virus. The interview can be watched [here](#).

On September 2nd, the *New York Times* highlighted the CDC's recommendations for the precautions that should be taken by U.S. colleges and universities and students and staff arriving from the nations in Africa impacted by the Ebola outbreak. The CDC has recommended that colleges conduct screening for anyone who has been in Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, or Sierra Leone in the past 21 days. In addition, the CDC also advised precautionary measures to minimize the proximity of these students to others. More information can be found [here](#).

On September 3rd, the WHO released new statistics related to the impact of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. According to the WHO, more than 3,500 people have been infected with the disease and more than 1,900 people have died. In advance of a WHO meeting related to the potential use of experimental drugs and vaccines, WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan called for a major response to the ongoing crisis. An update can be seen [here](#).

On September 3rd, Guinean officials said that Ebola has spread to a previously unaffected part of the country in Kerouane, roughly 500 miles southeast of Conakry. The Guinean Health Ministry reported that a team has been sent to the region to help contain the spread of the disease. In Kerouane, there have

been nine confirmed Ebola cases and an additional 18 people are under observation. An update on the situation in Guinea was provided [here](#).

On September 3rd, Nigerian Health Minister Onyebucchi Chukwu said that Nigeria now has 18 Ebola cases after a fourth case was confirmed in Port Harcourt. In addition, Minister Chukwu said that 255 people are now under surveillance in port Harcourt, while 41 people remain under surveillance for Ebola symptoms in Lagos. Developments in Nigeria were posted [here](#).

On September 3rd, the *New York Times* shed light on how budget cuts have hampered the WHO's ability to lead an extensive response effort to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. In particular, budget cuts have weakened the WHO's outbreak and emergency response units that have previous experience in fighting Ebola and other diseases and would have been best positioned to lead the response to the current outbreak. In response to the criticism that the WHO was slow and not aggressive enough in its response to the epidemic in West Africa, the WHO has said the current outbreak is unprecedented and unusual, and its impact was underestimated not only by the WHO, but also by African governments. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On September 3rd, SIM USA held a press conference to provide more information on the American missionary doctor in Liberia who recently tested positive for Ebola. SIM USA identified the patient as 51-year-old Dr. Rick Sacra, who served as the organization's Liberian Country Director and Medical Director of the SIM/EWLA Hospital in Monrovia. SIM USA believes that Dr. Sacra contracted the disease while caring for pregnant women at the hospital. He is currently being treated at the ELWA 2 Ebola Care Center in Monrovia. The press conference was transcribed [here](#).

On September 3rd, Ebola survivor Nancy Writebol and her husband reported that the SIM/EWLA Hospital in Liberia, where three Americans were infected with Ebola, has been overwhelmed with a surge in patients and does not have enough hazard suits and other supplies that are needed to keep doctors and nurses safe. The Writebols reported that many health care workers are exposed to the disease by individuals who evade surveillance efforts and others who display symptoms of Ebola virus, but leave health care facilities before receiving a diagnosis. Excerpts from an interview with the Writebols were highlighted [here](#).

On September 3rd, William Pooley, the 29-year-old, British, volunteer nurse who was flown from Sierra Leone to the U.K. on August 24th after contracting Ebola, was discharged from the Royal Free Hospital in London. While admitted, Pooley was treated with the experimental ZMapp drug and kept in isolation. Upon his discharge from the hospital, Pooley said that he has no plans to return to Africa, especially as British authorities incinerated his passport. Pooley's discharge was announced [here](#).

On September 3rd, Georgetown University hosted a discussion titled, "The West African Ebola Epidemic: How Can It Be Contained and How Can We Prevent the Next One." Panelists included Dr. Marty Cetron of the WHO Ebola Emergency Committee, J. Stephen Morrison of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Dr. Daniel Lucey of Georgetown University Medical Center, and Dr. G. Kevin Donovan, also of Georgetown University Medical Center. The conversation was moderated by Special Adviser to the President of Georgetown University on Global Health John Monahan and Lawrence O. Gostin of the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law. Event details were shared [here](#).

On September 4th, Ben Kargbo, an aide to Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma said that President Koroma is now more seriously considering a nationwide shutdown to help contain the spread of Ebola. Allegedly, President Koroma is considering the implementation of a 21-day, nationwide, quarantine that is intended to keep patients infected with Ebola virus from moving throughout the country. Speculation about the nationwide quarantine came as Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health and Sanitation reported 1,145 confirmed Ebola cases in the country and 399 deaths. The full story is available [here](#).

On September 4th, Canadian officials reported that as many as 1,000 doses of an experimental Ebola vaccine that were cleared as donations to the WHO for use in West Africa three weeks ago remain held at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg. According to Health Canada Spokesman Sean Upton, Canadian health officials are working with the WHO to address complex logistical issues related

to the safe storage and transportation of the vaccines. There is no estimated date for when the vaccines will leave the lab. Details were reported [here](#).

On September 4th-5th, the WHO convened a meeting of more than 100 scientists and industry executives at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, to consider experimental Ebola drugs and vaccines and to develop a plan for carrying out clinical trials. The meeting comes as the WHO faces criticism for not doing more to respond to the Ebola crisis in West Africa more quickly, resulting in more than 1,500 deaths and more than 3,500 confirmed cases of Ebola. Additional information was reported [here](#).

Libya

On August 31st, the *New York Times* reported a nonviolent invasion of a residential compound abandoned by the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya, where U.S. diplomats were removed from the post in July. State Department employees, along with diplomats from many other countries, had been removed from Tripoli in response to escalating tensions between Misurata and Zintan militias. More information was relayed [here](#).

On August 31st, Libya Dawn, the coalition of Misurata and Islamist militias in Tripoli, released a video claiming that its forces had entered and taken control of the U.S. diplomatic compound in Tripoli last week. The video showed men playing in a pool at the compound, with most of the U.S. equipment still in place. The video's release was noted [here](#).

On September 1st, the Libyan Government based in Tobruk issued a statement announcing that it had lost control of government ministries in Tripoli as a coalition of militias from Misurata and Islamist factions, known as Libya Dawn, took control of the capital city. Battling Libya Dawn is the group of primarily Zintan-based militias loyal to renegade Libyan General Khalifa Hiftar, who claims to be waging war against Islamist extremists. Upon taking Tripoli, Libya Dawn called for the reformation of the recently dissolved, Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC) and the dissolution of the Tobruk-based House of Representatives. The situation was described [here](#).

On September 4th, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) issued a statement on the deterioration of the security situation in Libya. Congressman Royce expressed concern about the escalating violence in the country and noted the U.S. Embassy in Libya has been evacuated and the international airport in Tripoli has been destroyed. He cautioned that Libya, a country that is rich with natural resources and awash with militants, cannot be allowed to become a failed state and a sanctuary for terrorists. Congressman Royce's statement can be read [here](#).

Lesotho

On August 30th, Lesotho's Prime Minister Thomas Thabane fled to South Africa after reporting an attempted military coup. While claiming that Lesotho's Army was looking for him from hiding in South Africa, Prime Minister Thabane pledged not to resign his post. While government soldiers reportedly seized buildings in the capital city of Maseru, Army officials denied staging coup. Developments in Lesotho can be viewed [here](#).

On August 30th, the U.S. Department of State issued a statement expressing deep concern for the clashes between security forces in Lesotho. The U.S. Government called on all parties to remain committed to peaceful political dialogue and to follow democratic processes in line with the Lesotho Constitution and principles of the rule of law. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On August 31st, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern about the reported military takeover in Lesotho and called for all parties to work together towards a peaceful and lasting resolution of their differences. Secretary-General Ban also commended the efforts of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to help restore trust among members of the coalition government and bring peace back to the region. Feedback from Secretary-General Ban was shared [here](#).

On September 1st, Lesotho's Prime Minister Thomas Thabane and Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing, who allegedly has the support of the country's military, participated in crisis talks in Pretoria, South Africa, on the situation in Lesotho, led by South African President Jacob Zuma. Tensions between

Prime Minister Thabane and Deputy Prime Minister Metsing have been high since Prime Minister Thabane suspended the parliament earlier this summer to avoid a vote of no confidence. During the peace talks, Prime Minister Thabane called for the SADC to send peacekeeping troops to Lesotho. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Metsing's supporters claimed that he was preparing to take power as Deputy Prime Minister Metsing continued to refute having any part in the military uprising. An update on the situation was provided [here](#).

On September 1st, the SADC rejected a request by Lesotho's exiled Prime Minister Thomas Thabane that the regional organization immediately deploy troops to help restore order in the country. Instead, the SADC endorsed sending an observer team to monitor developments in Lesotho. The SADC also reported that Prime Minister Thabane and Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing had agreed to timetables for restoring parliament. While calm was reported in Maseru, the SADC expressed concern that confusion regarding the political situation could lead to another uptick in violence. The SADC's decision was detailed [here](#).

On September 1st, the U.S. Department of State issued an emergency message for U.S. citizens in Lesotho, ordering the departure of non-employed family members at the U.S. Embassy in Maseru due to concerns over a possible deterioration of the security situation in the country. The U.S. Embassy in Maseru continues to conduct essential services and was open September 2nd-3rd for emergency American citizens services only. Additionally, the State Department reiterated its concern for violence in Lesotho and called on the Lesotho Defense Forces and the Lesotho Mounted Police Service to respect democratic processes and rule of law. The State Department also encouraged the SADC's work with Lesotho's leaders to reach a political solution. The emergency message was issued [here](#).

On September 2nd, there was a resurgence of violence in Maseru as Prime Minister Thomas Thabane prepared to return to Lesotho from exile in South Africa. An aide to Prime Minister Thabane reported that the new clashes might keep Prime Minister Thabane from returning to Lesotho on Tuesday as scheduled. In addition, there was growing confusion in Lesotho as it was unclear who is controlling Lesotho's army. For example, Motloheloa Phooka, a minister for the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy party, claimed the title of acting prime minister, while Lieutenant General Tlali Kamolo, who was supposed to assume command of the Lesotho Defense Forces, also fled to South Africa following an assassination attempt. New developments in Lesotho were shared [here](#).

On September 3rd, Lesotho's Prime Minister Thomas Thabane returned to the State House in Maseru after fleeing Lesotho for South Africa. Prime Minister Thabane was escorted by South African police who provided security and reported that Prime Minister Thabane maintains power in the country. Prime Minister Thabane's return to Lesotho was noted [here](#).

Somalia

On August 31st, Al Shabaab launched an attack on Somalia's intelligence headquarters in Mogadishu. Witnesses said a car bomb explosion was followed by gunfire that is thought to have killed at least seven Al Shabaab fighters. It was suggested the insurgents were looking to create a distraction that would allow them to free Al Shabaab prisoners held in underground cells at the building. The incident was reported [here](#).

On September 1st, the U.S. military carried out a counterterrorism strike against Al Shabaab in Somalia. While the details and the outcome of the operation were not immediately known, witnesses in Somalia reported that U.S. drones fired missiles near the port city of Barawe, where last year U.S. Navy SEALs carried out a failed attempt to capture senior Al Shabaab Commander Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulkadir. While unconfirmed, initial reports related to Monday's raid suggested its target might have been Ahmed Abdi Godane, also known as Mukhtar Abu Zubeyr, the suspected mastermind of Al Shabaab's attack against the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, last September. An initial report on the operation can be seen [here](#).

On September 1st, in response to the U.S. raid against Al Shabaab carried out on Monday in Somalia, the *New York Times* reported that the Pentagon and the State Department have been supporting a 22,000 member African force that has been active in driving Al Shabaab from Mogadishu. In addition, the U.S. has approximately 100 Special Operations forces, primarily Navy SEALs, operating in different

parts of the country in both training and operational capacities. More information can be found [here](#).

On September 2nd, U.S. and Somali leaders revealed the target of Monday's raid on Al Shabaab was the group's leader, Ahmed Abdi Godane, but were unable to confirm whether or not he was killed in the attack. It was suggested that Godane might have been killed in a separate strike carried out late Monday on a location where intelligence indicated that senior Al Shabaab leaders were thought to be meeting. Godane has been the leader of the extremist group since 2008. An update on the U.S. attack against Al Shabaab in Somalia was reported [here](#).

Central African Republic

On August 31st, ex-Seleka coalition Vice President Nouredine Adam announced the group's rejection of the newly appointed Central African Republic (CAR) cabinet, claiming that it had not been consulted on the appointments. Prime Minister Mahamat Kamoun had announced a 30-member cabinet that included three Seleka members, who have now been expelled from the ex-Seleka group. Additionally, the Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People, the party of former CAR Prime Minister Martin Ziguele, also announced that it was expelling its member serving in the new government. The response to the newly appointed cabinet can be seen [here](#).

South Sudan

On September 2nd, Ellen Margrethe Loj assumed her new position as U.N. Special Representative to South Sudan and head of the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). As she took up her new post, Special Representative Loj stressed that UNMISS will continue to focus on protecting civilians, monitoring and reporting on human rights, facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and providing support to the peace process led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Special Representative Loj has previously served as head of the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and held a number of positions in Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More information can be viewed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On September 3rd, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman announced the country-specific and first-come, first-served in-quota allocations under the tariff-rate quotas (TRQs) on imported raw cane sugar, refined and specialty sugar, and sugar-containing products for FY15. The FY15 raw cane sugar allocations for the Republic of Congo (ROC), Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe were posted [here](#).

Department of State

On August 27th, *Reuters* reported that Equatorial Guinea's Ambassador to the U.S. Ruben Maye Nsue Mangue is suspected of beating his daughter with a wooden chair leg at the diplomatic residence, leaving her hospitalized. Local police in Arlington, Virginia, reported that Ambassador Mangue was not arrested because he has diplomatic immunity, but indicated the U.S. Department of State had been informed of the incident and would be tasked with handling any further action. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 28th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki responded to the incident recently reported at the residence of the Ambassador of Equatorial Guinea to the U.S. Ruben Maye Nsue Mangue. She said the State Department is deeply concerned by the alleged assault and U.S. officials have been in close touch with local authorities regarding the welfare of the victim and possible charges against the perpetrator. Generally speaking, Spokesperson Psaki said when diplomats are involved in alleged criminal activities and the prosecutor's office informs the State Department that it would prosecute but for immunity, the Department requests the government of the diplomat waive his or her diplomatic immunity or else the State Department requires the diplomat to depart the U.S. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On August 28th, the State Department announced the five U.S. graduate students and recent graduates selected to participate in the 2014-2015 Fulbright-mtvU Fellowship to explore the power of music to foster cross-cultural communication, overcome cultural barriers between nations, and identify ideas that unite diverse societies. Among this year's participants are Benjamin Cohn, a graduate of the University of Puget Sound who will facilitate access to music education in Ghana, and Martha O'Donovan, a New York University alumna who will explore how youth in Zambia express themselves through music culture. Details were shared [here](#).

On September 2nd, the State Department issued a statement condemning an attack against the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which killed four Chadian peacekeepers and wounded 15 others. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki expressed condolences to the families of those killed, wished a speedy recovery to those wounded, and called on the Government of Mali to immediately investigate the incident and hold those responsible to account. In addition, Spokesperson Psaki noted that 15 peacekeepers have been killed in Mali this year and expressed the State Department's commitment to supporting MINUSMA in assisting Mali in consolidating peace and security gains, advancing national reconciliation, and negotiating a durable peace agreement through the talks scheduled to begin in Algiers, Algeria, later this week. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On September 2nd, the State Department and espnW announced the mentor organizations and international emerging leaders participating in the 2014 Global Sports Mentoring Program, September 7th – October 9th. The program seeks to advance the rights and participation of women and girls around the world by using sports as a vehicle toward greater opportunity and inclusion. This year's emerging leaders include participants from Egypt, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. Participating mentor organizations include Burton Snowboards, DLA Piper, ESPN, NCAA, the National Hockey League, Proctor & Gamble, the Professional Golf Association of America, Playworks, Saatchi & Saatchi, U.S. Olympic Committee, Wasserman, Women in Cable Telecommunications, Women's National Basketball Association, Women's Sports Foundation, and Women's Tennis Association. More information can be found [here](#).

On September 2nd-5th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield was on foreign travel to Nigeria. While in Nigeria, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield was scheduled to attend a regional ministerial on Boko Haram, co-chair a meeting of the U.S.-Nigeria Binational Commission's Regional Security Working Group, and meet with government officials and civil society to discuss the country's 2015 elections. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield also planned to meet with recently returned Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni from President Barack Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). On September 5th-6th, Assistant will travel to Cameroon where she will meet with government officials, representatives of the NGO community, and Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's travel was announced [here](#).

On September 3rd, the State Department issued a statement welcoming the release of Mourad Ghessas and Kaddour Miloudi, two Algerian diplomats who were kidnapped in April 2012 in Gao, Mali, by the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO). The State Department also expressed condolences for the loss of two other Algerian diplomats, including Tahar Touati, who was killed by his captors, and Boualem Saies, who died in captivity. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki condemned MUJAO's kidnappings for ransom and called for the immediate release of all hostages. The full statement can be read [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On August 31st, Jill Boezwinkle of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) U.S. Global Development Lab previewed the upcoming 7th annual Social Capital Markets Conference (SOCAP). SOCAP will bring together 2,000 entrepreneurs, investors, philanthropists, and venture capitalists to discuss how business investments can deliver financial returns while serving the needs of some of the most vulnerable communities around the globe. Among the innovative companies the U.S. Global Development Lab will be supporting at SOCAP are Niokobok of Senegal, Off.Grid:Electric of Tanzania, Eco-Fuel Africa of Uganda, and Sanergy of Kenya. The companies were profiled [here](#).

On September 1st, at World Water Week in Stockholm, USAID, Sweden's development agency (Sida), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (MFA-NL) announced 17 award

nominees for their program Securing Water for Food: A Grant Challenge for Development. Through the program, USAID and its partners will provide \$32 million in funding for innovations that can produce more food using less water. The nominees include Abyar Engineering of Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan, FutureWater of Mozambique, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture of Egypt, TAHMO of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, and World Hope International of Sierra Leone. Additional information was posted [here](#).

Department of Defense

On August 30th, 17 U.S. Air Forces Africa and Air Mobility Command Airmen arrived in Mauritania to participate in African Partnership Flight (APF), co-hosted by the Mauritanian Government and the U.S. Air Force. The exercise brings together airmen from the U.S., Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, and Tunisia, for the purposes of enhancing aviation capabilities, regional cooperation, and interoperability. Previous APF exercises have been held in Senegal and Angola. Information on the APF exercise held in Mauritania can be viewed [here](#).

On September 1st, the *Washington Post* noted the Pentagon has finalized negotiations with the Government of Niger authorizing a second U.S. drone surveillance hub in the country. U.S. military officials will be permitted to fly unarmed drones from Agadez to assist U.S. and French forces in tracking Islamist fighters in West and North Africa. U.S. and French forces both have existing drone bases in Niamey, Niger. The U.S. Air Force has also been flying drones from a French air base in Chad to help conduct surveillance for the more than 200 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram earlier this year. An article on the new U.S. drone operations can be accessed [here](#).

On September 1st, a U.S. Marine Corps CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) crashed at sea in the Gulf of Aden as it attempted to land aboard the USS Mesa Verde. The aircraft had been transferring U.S. military personnel following training on shore in Djibouti. The 17 Marines and eight Navy sailors aboard the helicopter were rescued and only minor injuries were reported. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps are currently investigating the crash. More information was shared [here](#).

On September 1st, the second day of APF Mauritania began with the arrival and close up viewing of a Cessna-208 Grand Caravan from the Mauritania Air Force. As part of the exercise, more than 50 students from six African partner nations and 17 U.S. airmen toured the aircraft to learn more about its surveillance capabilities and the cargo carrying versatility the Cessna has to offer in support of Mauritanian military operations. After learning about the aircraft, students continued their learning with additional lessons on intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), ground and safety, and air command post operations. The exercise was detailed [here](#).

On September 2nd, two groups of U.S. Army Security Assistance Command soldiers from the Security Assistance Training Management Organization (SATMO) at Fort Bragg traveled to Liberia to teach members of the Liberian Army how to build a stronger non-commissioned officer corps. Across four phases of training, the U.S. soldiers helped to select and train 15 Liberian soldiers to be trained as instructors. Details were provided [here](#).

On September 3rd, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) reported on U.S. Army Major General Wayne Grisby Jr.'s recent travel to Kimaka, Uganda, to meet with approximately 40 army officers from Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania. Major General Grisby delivered a lecture on leadership and comradery and planted a tree to signify the partnership between CJTF-HOA and the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF). In addition, Major General Grisby held a press conference to discuss CJTF-HOA's role in countering terrorism on the continent and visited the Peace Support Operations Training Center in Singo. His trip to Uganda was summarized [here](#).

Department of Justice

On September 3rd, Libyan Al Qaeda suspect Anas al-Liby indicated he plans to continue to work with his defense lawyer, Bernard Kleinman, even though U.S. District Judge Lewis Kaplan warned there could be a conflict of interest because the Libyan Government is paying Kleinman's legal fees. Judge Kaplan said he would permit Kleinman to remain on the case if al-Liby agreed to waive any future appeal on whether

Kleinman's representation was tainted by the conflict of interest. Al-Liby faces charges related to his involvement in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The full story is available [here](#).

Department of Commerce

On August 28th, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Stefan Selig authored a post for the Commerce Department's *Commerce Blog* on the outcomes of last month's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. Under Secretary Selig highlighted a number of multi-million and multi-billion dollar deals announced at the Summit, including a deal for IBM to provide IT services to the Fidelity Bank of Ghana, Blackstone to invest in African energy projects, Coca-Cola to help bring clean water to African communities, Marriott to build more hotels on the continent, and General Electric (GE) to help build African infrastructure. In addition, he highlighted International Trade Administration (ITA) initiatives to help American companies have continued access to opportunities in Africa, including the establishment of the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa, the DISCOVER GLOBAL MARKETS: Sub-Saharan Africa Forum, and plans to double the presence of the U.S. Commercial Service on the continent. Under Secretary Selig's full blog post can be viewed [here](#).

Department of Energy

On August 28th, the Department of Energy (DOE) shared a list of deliverables from the June 2014 U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial (AEM). The AEM attracted more than 600 participants and senior ministerial representatives from over 40 countries to discuss Power Africa, energy efficiency, renewable energy, natural gas, and capacity building. The full list of deliverables from the AEM can be downloaded [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On September 3rd, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) announced that Director of the U.S.-Africa Clean Energy Development and Finance Center (CEDFC) will participate in the 8th Annual Powering Africa: Finance Options Meeting to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, October 30th-31st. The meeting will bring together industry executives to discuss challenges and opportunities surrounding the financing of power projects in Africa and trends related to the development of financial frameworks and changes in African regulatory environments. More information was shared [here](#).

Congress

On August 28th, the *New York Times* profiled the work ahead for the U.S. Select Committee on Benghazi. According to Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC), the Committee's investigation of the September 2012 attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya, will extend into next year, and possibly even longer. While Ranking Member Elijah Cummings (D-MD) has said he has been repeatedly assured that politics will play no part in the investigation, he also said there is no need for the investigation to extend into 2016. The full article can be read [here](#).

On September 4th, Ranking Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee Henry Waxman (D-CA), Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Health Frank Pallone (D-NJ), and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Diana DeGette (D-CO) sent a letter to the Committee's Republican leadership calling for a hearing on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The Ranking Democrats suggested that the hearing focus on whether the CDC and international public health agencies have adequate plans to address the crisis, whether the U.S. health system is fully prepared to handle any Ebola cases that arise in the U.S., and the status of efforts to rapidly develop drugs to treat or prevent the virus. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On September 10th, the House Foreign Affairs Committee will hold a hearing on "Libya's Descent." The Committee will receive testimony from Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Gerald Feierstein. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

North Africa

On August 27th, following a cabinet meeting, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika said that Algeria

will launch an investment plan worth \$262 billion for 2015-2019. The plan, which President Bouteflika said will be completed by the end of this year, will seek to boost domestic production and to diversify the Algerian economy so that it is not so reliant on oil and gas. Previous investment plans launched in Algeria to help improve the country's infrastructure, construct water desalination plants, and build subsidized housing units only saw limited success. More information is available [here](#).

On August 29th, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the fourth review of Tunisia's economic performance under a 24-month program supported by a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA), allowing for an additional disbursement of \$217.5 million. Despite Tunisia's progress on its political transition, the IMF observed that Tunisia's economic situation remains difficult, with a slow growth rate, high unemployment, and rising external imbalances putting pressures on the exchange rate and reserves. While acknowledging these challenges, the IMF also noted that Tunisia's program implementation has been strong and structural reforms have been progressing. Additional observations were noted [here](#).

On September 2nd, Egyptian officials reported that an attack on a convoy traveling through the Sinai Peninsula killed 11 members of the Egyptians security forces. Two people were reportedly killed by a roadside bomb, while the others were shot as they attempted to flee. The attack was detailed [here](#).

On September 2nd, Sudanese authorities ordered Iran to close three cultural centers in the country and gave the Iranian diplomats running those centers 72 hours to leave the country. It has been speculated that the expulsions were a result of the Sudanese Government's concerns that Iranian officials were promoting Shia Islam in the predominantly Sunni country. Details were shared [here](#).

On September 2nd, the World Bank highlighted the burden of water loss in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which has created challenges for public utilities. In response to the growing problem of water scarcity, the World Bank convened a conference to share their experiences and best practices in reducing water losses. Participants included roughly 30 officials from major water utilities in Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and other countries in the Middle East. The conference was described [here](#).

On September 2nd, the Word Bank highlighted a two-day workshop held for policy makers, the private sector, and the international donor community in Khartoum, Sudan, to discuss recommendations included as part of the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) Update. The DTIS addresses the trade challenges that are impacting the Sudanese economy and includes suggestions for how Sudan might increase its trade capacity and diversify its exports. The DTIS Update for Sudan is expected to be finalized in October. More information can be viewed [here](#).

East Africa

On August 27th, Kenyan human rights group Muslims for Human Rights accused Kenya Wildlife Services officers at Tsavo National Park of killing poachers to cover up the officers' collusion with the criminals on elephant poaching. The human rights organization has been tracking the disappearances of 18 suspected poachers over the last three years. The group asserts that eight of their bodies were discovered in the park after being eaten by animals, while witnesses report that ten others were shot by park rangers. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 28th, the African Union's (AU) Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa (CISSA) hosted a conference in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss the ongoing threat posed by Islamist militant groups, such as Boko Haram and Al Shabaab. According to CISSA, African Islamists are likely emboldened by the gains made by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the Middle East. Speaking at the conference, Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto called for better intelligence sharing between African countries to help challenge Islamist militants and criminal cartels smuggling arms, drugs, and ivory. The conference was summarized [here](#).

On August 29th, the IMF, in partnership with the East African Community (EAC) completed an inaugural workshop to launch a collaborative program to improve the compilation and dissemination of Government Finance Statistics (GFS) for Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Held in Arusha, Tanzania, the workshop allowed economic experts in the region to identify needs for technical assistance. The workshop was described [here](#).

On September 2nd, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) issued a news release warning that more than one million people in Somalia are at risk for food insecurity and the situation is likely to continue to deteriorate. Rain, conflict, trade disruptions, and reduced humanitarian assistance have led to severe food insecurity in the country. The FAO also cautioned that as many as 43,800 Somali children are malnourished and at high risk of morbidity and death. Additional information can be viewed [here](#).

On September 2nd, the AU hosted an Africa Security Summit in Nairobi, Kenya. The Summit was attended by heads of state from Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Kenya, Tanzania, and Somalia, and senior government officials from other African countries. The meeting focused on combating terrorism and promoting greater intelligence sharing between African nations, as the threat of terrorism is accelerating across the country following terrorist incidents in 22 countries. The Summit was detailed [here](#).

On September 3rd, Ethiopian Minister for Transport Workneh Gebeyhu announced the opening of the Yabelo-Mega road that connects Ethiopia and Kenya. The Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) reported that the construction of the road lasted for over three years. Construction was completed by a Chinese company. The opening of the roadway was announced [here](#).

On September 4th, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its 2014-2015 Global Competitiveness Report. Of particular interest, Rwanda was once again flagged as the most competitive economy in East Africa and was ranked 18th globally in terms of having the best structured institutions. Rwanda ranked 62nd out of all 144 countries analyzed. Kenya was ranked as the second most competitive economy in East Africa, and ranked 90th worldwide. More of the report's findings were highlighted [here](#).

West Africa

On August 28th, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan launched a national electronic identity card system in the country. The biometric cards will be used to maintain government databases and can also be used to make electronic payments. MasterCard is providing the prepaid element and hopes the new initiative will help Nigerians who do not have bank accounts access financial services. The Nigerian Identity Management Commission (NIMC), which is overseeing the rollout of the electronic identity cards, said the program will also help to integrate several government databases, including those for driving licenses, voter registration, health insurance, taxes, and pensions. Details can be seen [here](#).

On September 2nd, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that recent attacks in northeastern Nigeria have forced thousands of people to seek refuge in Cameroon over the past 10 days. UNHCR reported that even after arriving in Cameroon, insurgents have continued to pursue the refugees, who in many cases are seeking shelter and schools and churches and suffering from poor health. The total number of Nigerian refugees in Cameroon is now estimated at approximately 39,000. In addition, Niger is hosting more than 50,000 Nigerian refugees. More information was shared [here](#).

On September 2nd, a least four Chadian peacekeepers were killed and 15 others injured when their convoy hit a mine near Kidal, Mali. The region where the incident occurred is home to a separatist Tuareg rebel movement, as well as other Al Qaeda groups. U.N. Special Envoy for Mali Bert Koenders condemned the attack and said that it compromises Mali's peace process. This year, 15 peacekeepers have been killed in Mali. The full story is available [here](#).

On September 2nd, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement condemning the latest in a series of attacks against U.N. personnel in Mali, but noted the attack on a convoy of peacekeepers would not deter the U.N. from providing continued support to the Malian Government and the people of Mali. Secretary-General Ban's statement can be read [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On August 20th, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with Angola. The IMF observed that Angola is likely to see a drop in its economic growth rate from 6.8 percent in 2013 to 3.9 percent in 2014, due primarily to a decline in oil output. While noting that progress in structural reforms has been strong and that Angola's medium-term economic prospects remain favorable, the IMF noted that poverty and income inequality will be persistent challenges.

Additional analysis of Angola's economy was shared [here](#).

On August 31st, the campaign season opened for the October 15th elections for president, parliament, and provincial assemblies in Mozambique. Reports suggested that candidates for the Frelimo, Renamo, and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) parties launched their campaigns in a peaceful and orderly fashion. The upcoming elections will be monitored by observers from the European Union (EU), the SADC, and the AU. The start of the campaigning period was detailed [here](#).

On September 2nd, the Center for Global Development hosted an event on "Paying for Performance in Health Care: Empirical Evidence from Rwanda's National Program." The Center for Global Development's Director of Global Health Policy and Senior Fellow Amanda Glassman hosted a conversation with RAND Corporation Economist Sebastian Bauhoff on Rwanda's pay for performance health care system. Event logistics were posted [here](#).

General Africa News

On September 1st, the World Bank highlighted the findings of a new study on "The Limits and Possibilities of Prepaid Water in Urban Africa: Lessons from the Field." The report notes that because many of Africa's towns and cities are experiencing growth at 5 percent per year, which is faster than anywhere else in the world, there has been an increase interested in prepaid water systems. By assessing eight African cities, the World Bank found that most customers have had a positive experience with prepaid water systems, including spending less money on water, planning their use of water more accurately, and reducing restricted hours of access. The study can be downloaded [here](#).

On September 4th, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) hosted an event titled, "Boserup and Beyond: Mounting Land Pressures and Development Strategies in Africa." The seminar highlighted the challenges that African governments and development partners must anticipate in light of Africa's rapidly changing land and demographic situation, evidence of unsustainable forms of agricultural intensification, a rapidly rising labor force, and limited nonfarm job creation. Speakers included Shenggen Fan and Derek Headey of IFPRI and Thomas Jayne and Milu Muyanga of Michigan State University. The event was streamed [here](#).

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