



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On October 22nd, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released a new fact sheet on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The fact sheet highlighted the \$344.5 million commitment from the U.S. Government for the Ebola response in West Africa and notes that the East African Community plans to send 600 health workers, including 41 doctors, to Ebola-affected counties in West Africa. Additionally, the fact sheet includes information on the current situations in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, and provides an update on the international response effort. The fact sheet can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 23rd, Malian Health Minister Ousmane Kone appeared on television to announce the first case of Ebola in Mali. The patient, Fanta Kone, a two-year-old girl who recently arrived in Mali from Guinea, was isolated for treatment at the Foyseyeni Daou hospital in Kayes. Malian health officials have identified individuals who came into contact with the patient and have placed them under watch. Mali is the sixth West African country to be directly affected by the Ebola outbreak. The new case was reported [here](#).

On October 23rd, experts from the United Nations (U.N.) World Health Organization (WHO) emphasized the fight to contain the Ebola outbreak must focus on halting the virus' transmission within Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The WHO advocated for reinforcing high-quality exit screening procedures at airports and reiterated the need to pay specific attention to the needs of healthcare workers. More on the WHO's response to the Ebola outbreak can be found [here](#).

On October 23rd, the 1st Area Medical Laboratory (AML) based in Aberdeen, Maryland, announced plans to deploy a U.S. Army medical laboratory designed to detect battlefield contaminants to West Africa in the coming week as part of the fight against Ebola. The 1st AML will join Operation United Assistance and serve as the Army's only forward deployed, theater-level laboratory. The deployment was noted [here](#).

On October 23rd, staff for U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) announced they are working on legislation that would increase funding for biomedical research by \$1 billion annually over ten years. The news broke following a meeting with industry representatives focused on the urgency to respond to the Ebola outbreak. Details on the emerging proposal were shared [here](#).

On October 23rd, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Dr. Craig Spencer, a Doctors Without Borders (DWB) physician with who recently returned from treating Ebola patients in Guinea, tested positive for the virus. Dr. Spencer was put in isolation at Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan. In response, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) dispatched a team of specialists to New York to assist in tracing Dr. Spencer's contacts. A bowling alley Spencer visited the night before his hospitalization was closed out of an abundance of caution. In addition, Spencer's fiancé and two of his friends were quarantined. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 23rd, DWB issued a statement in response to Dr. Craig Spencer's Ebola diagnosis. DWB noted that out of more than 700 expatriate staff deployed to West Africa, Dr. Spencer is the first to develop confirmed Ebola symptoms after returning to their home country. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On October 23rd, authorities in Connecticut placed six West Africans who recently arrived in the U.S. under quarantine for possible Ebola exposure. While authorities declined to elaborate on where the family came from, they noted the travelers planned to live in the U.S. They will be monitored for Ebola symptoms for 21 days. More information was reported [here](#).

On October 23rd, the *Wall Street Journal* detailed new policies under development within U.S. school districts in response to fears about Ebola. While most schools have existing policies related to communicable diseases, new policies are being adopted that include isolating patients, questioning parents about travel documents, and requiring a doctor's report for new enrollees from West Africa. Some schools are also taking precautionary measures that would allow superintendents to close schools, conduct Ebola risk assessments during registration, and provide schoolwork to students under quarantine. The new policies were discussed [here](#).

On October 23rd, the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation increased its commitment to tackling Ebola to at least \$100 million and called on the global community to join the cause. The Foundation is currently funding a number of initiatives to help address the Ebola crisis in West Africa, including humanitarian aid, medical evacuations, education, supplies and training for medical professionals, and the launch of a new donation platform. A press release was posted [here](#).

On October 24th, U.S. President Barack Obama spoke separately with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio regarding the Ebola case in New York City. In addition to discussing the extensive preparations for handling Ebola cases at Bellevue Hospital Center, the leaders discussed the deployment of CDC officials to New York City. President Obama offered any additional federal support necessary to provide the highest standard of care, maintain the strictest safety protocols for health care workers, and monitor the contacts of any patient at risk for exposure to Ebola. A readout of President Obama's calls was issued [here](#).

On October 24th, Nina Pham, the first person to be infected with Ebola in the U.S., was discharged from the National Institute of Health's (NIH) Clinical Center after being declared virus free. Pham was treated with plasma from fellow American Ebola survivor, Dr. Kent Brantly. On her way home from Texas, Pham visited the White House, where she was hugged by President Barack Obama. Pham's story was shared [here](#).

On October 24th, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel called U.S. Northern Command Commander General Chuck Jacoby to get an update on the training for the military medical professionals that make up the Department's 30 person Ebola response team. General Jacoby, who recently visited the team, praised the quality of their training and their enthusiasm. He also reassured Secretary Hagel the training was meeting CDC standards and would ensure the team's readiness to deploy on short notice. A readout of the call was provided [here](#).

On October 24th, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Dr. Karen DeSalvo was appointed to serve as Acting Assistant Secretary of HHS focused on Ebola response efforts. Dr. DeSalvo will continue to perform policy work for ONC, while Acting Principal Deputy National Coordinator Lisa Lewis will provide day-to-day leadership at ONC. As Acting Assistant Secretary of HHS, Dr. DeSalvo will support HHS's efforts to provide education and preparedness guidance to health care organizations that may encounter Ebola. Details on Dr. DeSalvo's new role can be found [here](#).

On October 24th, the U.S. House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hosted a hearing on "The Ebola Crisis: Coordination of a Multi-Agency Response." Witnesses included Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services (HHS) Nicole Lurie, Assistant Secretary of Defense Michael Lumpkin, Department of Defense (DOD) Deputy Director of Political-Military Affairs Major General James Lariviere, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Inspector General (IG) John Roth, National Nurses United Co-President Deborah Burger, and International Medical Corps Senior Vice President for International Operations Rabih Torbay. A webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On October 24th, Ranking Member of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Karen Bass (D-CA) released a statement wishing Dr. Craig Spencer a speedy recovery after he received a confirmed Ebola diagnosis. She also honored Dr. Spencer's service and his bravery for providing much-needed health care to people in West Africa. Additionally, Congresswoman Bass commended the response of health officials in New York City. Her statement was issued [here](#).

On October 24th, U.S. Congressman Tim Murphy (R-PA) called for a mandatory three-week quarantine for any health worker who treats Ebola and then returns for the U.S. Following the confirmed Ebola diagnosis of Dr. Craig Spencer, Congressman Murphy argued every necessary precaution must be taken to prevent the spread of Ebola in the U.S. Congressman Murphy's position was outlined [here](#).

On October 24th, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo held a joint press conference to announce new, mandatory quarantine policies for travelers returning to New Jersey and New York from the countries affected by Ebola in West Africa, as both Governors said CDC guidelines were inadequate for stopping the transmission of the virus in the U.S. The mandatory quarantine policies have been criticized by the medical community, who believe the policies are motivated by fear, rather than scientific evidence. More information was reported [here](#).

On October 24th, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn instituted a mandatory 21-day quarantine for any high risk travelers entering the U.S. who has contact with Ebola patients in West Africa. The policy requires individuals to stay at home for 21 days and undergo daily checkups. Governor Quinn distinguished Illinois' policy from other procedures implemented in New York and New Jersey by noting that visitors would be allowed under the home quarantine. While there have been no confirmed Ebola cases in Illinois, Governor Quinn said the policy is needed to protect public health. Illinois' quarantine policy was detailed [here](#).

On October 25th, U.S. President Barack Obama delivered his weekly address focused on the fight against Ebola. In this week's address, President Obama discussed the measures the U.S. Government is taking to respond to Ebola cases at home, while containing the epidemic at its source in West Africa. The President also emphasized it is important to follow the facts, rather than the fear caused by Ebola and noted America is leading the world in the fight to stamp out the virus in West Africa. President Obama's weekly address was transcribed [here](#).

On October 25th, DOD issued a press statement on Major General Gary Volesky's assumption of command over Operation United Assistance. For the past 38 days, Major General Darryl Williams has been leading an advance detachment in Monrovia, Liberia. Under Major General Williams' leadership, U.S. military personnel have established two additional labs for testing patient specimens, constructed a 25-bed hospital facility in Monrovia, and started construction on a second Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in Tubmanburg, and established a transport hub in Dakar, Senegal. The press statement was issued [here](#).

On October 25th, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed an order giving the Florida Health Department authority to monitor anyone returning from the U.S. from places designated by the CDC as affected by Ebola. The order was signed in response to four people that have already returned to Florida from West

Africa with unclear levels of risk for exposure to Ebola. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 26th, U.S. President Barack Obama convened his public health and national security teams to discuss appropriate measures to mitigate the risk of additional domestic Ebola cases. President Obama's advisors updated him on policy considerations for new measures pertaining to health care workers returning to the U.S. from West Africa. President Obama underscored that policies must be guided by medical science and recognize health care workers as an indispensable element of the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. A readout of the meeting is available [here](#).

On October 26th, the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) issued a call for proposals from researchers and companies that can develop new vaccines, testing procedures, and other methods to fight Ebola. DTRA is specifically seeking products that can be accelerated towards clinical evaluation in the next three to six months to provide additional medical countermeasures for Ebola virus. The Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) can be accessed [here](#).

On October 26th, U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Dr. Anthony Fauci warned that aggressive protocols targeting health workers fighting Ebola in West Africa are not backed by good science and could ultimately threaten public health in the U.S. The aggressive quarantine policies were also opposed by the White House, in addition to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Criticism of the mandatory quarantine policies can be seen [here](#).

On October 26th, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio clarified the mandatory 21-day quarantine policy implemented by New York on Friday for all health care workers returning from West Africa. Governor Cuomo praised health care workers and said they would be transported home in state vehicles, where they would be trusted to honor voluntary quarantines. In addition, health care workers will be compensated at their regular salary for any time lost during their quarantine. New York's quarantine policy was clarified [here](#).

On October 27th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement expressing concern for the recent restrictions implemented in several countries and localities applying to people who have traveled to the main Ebola-affected countries. Secretary-General Ban said these restrictions put particular pressure on health care workers who should not be subjected to restrictions that are not based on science. In addition, Secretary-General Ban reiterated the best way for any country to protect itself is to stop the Ebola outbreak at its source in West Africa. Secretary-General Ban's statement was issued [here](#).

On October 27th, following a visit to Guinea, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power arrived in Freetown, Sierra Leone, as part of a broader trip to Ebola-stricken countries in West Africa. In Guinea, where the Ebola epidemic has killed almost 5,000 people, Ambassador Power met with religious leaders regarding the Ebola outbreak. Ambassador Power was expected to hold similar meetings in Sierra Leone, where nearly 1,300 people have died from Ebola. Ambassador Power's trip to West Africa was detailed [here](#).

On October 27th, Major General Darryl Williams, the commander who led the U.S. Ebola response in Liberia, and 11 of his staff were isolated upon returning from West Africa to a base in Vincenza, Italy. Upon their arrival, the military personnel were met by Italian security officials wearing full hazardous materials suits. While Major General Williams and his staff had no direct contact with Ebola patients in Liberia, they will remain isolated near the base for 21 days. Their isolation comes as the result of Army Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno directing a 21-day controlled monitoring period for all redeploying soldiers returning from the Ebola fight in West Africa. The situation was reported [here](#).

On October 27th, following individual states' implementation of quarantine policies over the weekend, the CDC published updated guidelines for monitoring people who may have been exposed to Ebola virus, either in the U.S. or abroad. The new guidelines classify asymptomatic people into four categories based on their risk for exposure to Ebola in the previous 21 days. The new guidelines recommend that high risk individuals be asked to remain in voluntary isolation in their homes and be visited daily by public health officials. The updated guidelines do not place restrictions on low risk individuals, but still recommend daily monitoring of their symptoms. The new CDC guidelines can be accessed [here](#).

On October 27th, the American College of Emergency Physicians, working with the Emergency Nurses Association and the CDC, released new guidelines advising emergency departments on how to deal with possible cases of Ebola. The guidelines address measures for identifying potential Ebola patients, isolation protocols, and triggers for the use of personal protective gear. The new guidelines can be accessed [here](#).

On October 27th, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved two new diagnostic tests for Ebola that provide test results within two hours. The tests, which were developed by BioFire Defense, can detect Ebola from blood, urine, or saliva samples. The tests use a FilmArray machine, a device already in use at 300 hospitals in the U.S. One test is designed for commercial use in hospitals, while the other is approved for labs designated by DOD. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On October 27th, DWB nurse Kaci Hickox was released from mandatory quarantine at the University Hospital in Newark. Hickox was quarantined in a tent inside the hospital after returning from Sierra Leone where she had been treating Ebola patients, even after not showing any symptoms and having tested negative for Ebola. Following her discharge, Hickox was transported to her home in Maine. Prior to her release, Hickox hired a legal team to challenge New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's quarantine policy. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 27th, in conjunction with Kaci Hickox's arrival in Maine, Maine Governor Paul LePage said Hickox, who has tested negative for Ebola and does not have any symptoms of the disease, will still be expected to abide by a 21-day quarantine. In addition, Governor LePage said his administration is prepared to take appropriate action against Hickox if she does not comply with the in-home quarantine order. Meanwhile, Hickox's attorneys said there is no basis for Hickox to be kept in quarantine and her legal team is prepared to establish that in a court of law. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 27th, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley announced Maryland will directly monitor the health of all returning travelers from Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. Under Maryland's policy, screeners at airports of entry are providing the names and contact information for all travelers from the affected countries to Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for the purposes of contacting travelers with specific guidance. Returning health care workers may see additional monitoring and restrictions based on their level of risk for exposure to Ebola. The policy was described [here](#).

On October 27th, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe announced a new policy for active monitoring of all returning travelers from countries affected by the Ebola outbreak. Virginia's policy requires airport screeners to provide the Virginia Department of Health the names and contact information for all travelers arriving from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Local health districts are contacting these passengers to provide them with specific guidance, information, and telephone numbers for assistance. The policy also includes specific provisions for health care workers, who are expected to sign agreements for restrictions in activity and recognizing the state will check for compliance and reserves the right to issue a quarantine order if needed. Details can be seen [here](#).

On October 27th, appearing alongside New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Florida Governor Rick Scott defended his decision to monitor anyone coming from Ebola-affected countries in the interest of protecting Floridians. The new policy, instituted by executive order, gives state health officials the authority to conduct twice-daily monitoring of individuals arriving from places the CDC designates as affected by Ebola. An article on Florida's quarantine policy can be read [here](#).

On October 27th, a five-year-old boy who had recently traveled to West Africa and begun to show Ebola symptoms tested negative for the virus. The patient will continue to be held at Bellevue Hospital Center in New York City where he will undergo additional testing for Ebola out of an abundance of caution. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 28th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged countries that have imposed travel bans or closed their borders in response to the Ebola outbreak to convey a sense of urgency without inciting panic. Secretary-General Ban stressed the need for foreign medical personnel in Ebola-stricken countries in order to stop the outbreak at its source. Secretary-General Ban's position was articulated [here](#).

On October 28th, following his visits to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone last week, head of the U.N. Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) Special Representative Anthony Banbury said authorities are struggling to determine how many more people are becoming infected with Ebola in Liberia and Sierra Leone and where the hot spots are in those countries. Because of this lacking data, health workers are seeing challenges in targeting resources appropriately to stop transmission of the virus. Additional observations from Special Representative Banbury were highlighted [here](#).

On October 28th, the WHO said no new cases of Ebola have been reported in Mali. The update comes following the death of a 2-year-old Ebola patient who had travelled by bus from Guinea to Mali. Health workers are continuing to monitor 82 individuals that had contact with the child. Details on the situation in Mali can be read [here](#).

On October 28th, speaking from African Union (AU) headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim said Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone need at least 5,000 more health care workers to fight the Ebola epidemic. President Kim questioned where these health care workers can be found, given the widespread fear of Ebola and new quarantine policies that could hurt recruitment efforts. President Kim's remarks were recorded [here](#).

On October 28th, World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim announced his upcoming travel to Ghana on October 30th. President Kim will meet with Ghanaian Vice President Kwesi Amissah-Arther, as well as officials from UNMEER to discuss the Ebola outbreak. The World Bank Group has a demonstrated commitment to fighting the Ebola outbreak and has mobilized financing to help Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone combat the virus. Further details on President Kim's travel can be found [here](#).

On October 28th, Liberia reported a recent drop in new admissions to Ebola treatment centers, a decrease in samples submitted to laboratories, a decline in the percentage of people testing positive for Ebola, and more empty beds in Ebola clinics. As of Sunday, fewer than half of the 649 treatment beds across the country were occupied, representing a departure from previous conditions where patients were turned away because there was not enough space. While these are positive developments that seem to indicate that response efforts are beginning to prove effective, health officials in Liberia are hesitant to say the outbreak is under control. An update was provided [here](#).

On October 28th, U.S. President Barack Obama delivered remarks on the Ebola crisis. President Obama reiterated that the best way to combat Ebola is to stop the outbreak at its source in West Africa, including through the efforts of USAID's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) on the ground in West Africa. President Obama also applauded the new CDC guidelines for monitoring health care workers returning from West Africa who might have had exposure to Ebola and discouraged mandatory quarantine policies that could discourage health care workers from serving on the frontlines. The President also highlighted that all seven Americans treated for Ebola so far have survived. President Obama's full remarks can be read [here](#).

On October 28th, U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Ranking Member Lamar Alexander (R-TN) announced plans to introduce legislation to help speed the development of treatments and vaccines for Ebola by adding Ebola to the FDA's priority review voucher program. The FDA program was designed to incentivize the development of new drugs for neglected tropical diseases. The bill will be introduced in the lame duck Congress. Details on the forthcoming legislation were shared [here](#).

On October 28th, U.S. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) called for a 21-day quarantine period and a blood test to precede any travel to the U.S. from the Ebola-afflicted region in West Africa. Senator McCain said it does not make sense to wait to implement these procedures until after passengers have already arrived in the U.S. In addition, Senator McCain called for congressional hearings that could be used to probe Administration officials on why U.S. troops were sent to the Ebola zone without congressional approval. Senator McCain's comments were captured [here](#).

On October 28th, Dallas nurse Amber Vinson, who was infected with Ebola while caring for Thomas Eric Duncan, was discharged from Emory University Hospital. Vinson was successfully treating using plasma transfusions donated by Ebola survivors Dr. Kent Brantly and Nancy Writebol. The hospital had confirmed that Vinson was free of the virus on October 24th, when blood tests confirmed no traces of the

virus in her bloodstream. With Vinson's release, Dr. Craig Spencer remains the only patient in the U.S. currently being treated for Ebola. Vinson's discharge was announced [here](#).

On October 28th, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie continued to dare Kaci Hickox, the nurse who spent a week in an isolation tent at Newark hospital after returning from West Africa, to sue him over the quarantine policy. Governor Christie dismissed complaints about Hickox's treatment, saying she was inside the hospital in a climate-controlled area with access to her cellphone, the Internet, and takeout meals. In addition, Governor Christie noted he had spoken with HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell and White House adviser Valerie Jarrett regarding Hickox's situation. Governor Christie's comments were recorded [here](#).

On October 28th, Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy distinguished Connecticut's Ebola quarantine policy from those in other states by stressing that Connecticut's policy authorizes quarantines on a case-by-case basis. Governor Malloy first issued an order authorizing the state health commissioner to quarantine travelers on October 7th. The policy has since been used to quarantine nine people in their homes. More information can be seen [here](#).

On October 28th, a number of medical trade groups expressed their support for the CDC's new guidelines for monitoring people with exposure to Ebola. According to the American Hospital Association (AHA), the American Medical Association (AMA), and the American Nurses Association (ANA), the new guidance appropriately safeguards public health without burdening those who have heroically cared for Ebola patients in West Africa. A joint statement released by the AHA, the AMA, and the ANA can be read [here](#).

On October 28th, the father of a third grader in Connecticut filed a lawsuit after his daughter, Ikeoluwa Opayemi was told that she would need to stay home from Meadowside Elementary School until November 3rd, following a family trip to Nigeria. Public officials decided to bar Opayemi from school out of concerns that she could transmit Ebola to other students. Nigeria has controlled its Ebola outbreak and the Opayemi family did not visit any of the West African countries where there are currently active Ebola cases. The full story was told [here](#).

On October 28th, a number of organizations came out in opposition to mandatory quarantines for health workers returning from Ebola-stricken areas of West Africa. For example, DWB warned that quarantining health workers who are not showing health symptoms could undermine efforts to halt the outbreak by creating a shortage of health care workers. Similarly, the American College of Physicians warned that mandatory quarantines threaten to stigmatize health care professionals working in West Africa and will discourage clinicians from traveling to the region. Additional feedback was posted [here](#).

On October 29th, the WHO announced the spread of Ebola in Liberia may be slowing. At a press conference, WHO Assistant Director-General Dr. Bruce Aylward reported this conclusion is supported by the freeing up of hospital beds, the plateauing of laboratory-confirmed cases, and a decline in burials. However, Dr. Aylward stressed that a decline does not signal a disappearance of the disease. More information can be read [here](#).

On October 29th, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel signed an order validating a recommendation from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to place all U.S. military service members returning from Ebola response efforts in West Africa into a 21-day controlled monitoring regimen. Secretary Hagel also directed the Joint Chiefs to develop an implementation plan for controlled monitoring for review within the next two weeks. Secretary Hagel also noted the new monitoring policy will be reviewed within 45 days to determine if the policy should continue. A press release was issued [here](#).

On October 29th, the U.S. Defense Information Systems Agency turned on a node of the Blue Force Tracking System over West Africa, to allow for real-time messaging and location information for DOD vehicles and personnel deployed as part of Operation United Assistance. The system is part of the Army's Warrior Information-Tactical battlefield network (WIN-T), which will be used by the 4,000 U.S. soldiers who will deploy to Africa this month to fight Ebola. The Army is also setting up networks to support NGOs participating in Ebola response efforts. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 29th, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued a notice designating Ebola as a

qualified disaster, granting tax relief to Ebola victims. The designation means that any money received by Ebola victims for medical, quarantine, or funeral expenses will not be taxable. The notice can be accessed [here](#).

On October 29th, U.S. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-CA) issued a statement expressing his belief that Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel made the right decision in agreeing with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on controlled monitoring for service members returning from the Ebola fight in West Africa. Congressman McKeon said the new policy will protect U.S. forces and the larger military family. Congressman McKeon's comments can be viewed [here](#).

On October 30th, the Senate Appropriations Committee announced the witnesses for its upcoming hearing on the U.S. Government response to the Ebola outbreak. Witnesses will include HHS Secretary Sylvia Matthews Burwell, CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden, NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci, DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom, USAID Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance Nancy Lindborg, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict Michael Lumpkin, and Joint Chiefs of Staff Deputy Director for Political-Military Conflict James Lariviere. The hearing, which was originally scheduled for November 6th, will now be held on November 12th. More information can be found [here](#).

On October 30th, the World Bank Group announced an additional \$100 million in funding for its Ebola crisis response. The money will speed up deployment of foreign health workers to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The additional \$100 million brings the World Bank contribution to fighting Ebola to \$500 million. Read more details [here](#).

On October 30th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) hosted an Ebola town hall meeting at Kelley Barracks to discuss the U.S. military mission in countries in West Africa affected by Ebola, as well as the precautions in place to ensure the safety of service members who are fighting the Ebola crisis. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On October 30th, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah delivered remarks at Notre Dame University's 2014 Global Impact Forum in Washington, DC. Administrator Shah addressed the U.S. response to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa and underscored the importance of seeking new and improved tools to solve significant challenges, such as how USAID is sourcing proposals for improved personal protective equipment (PPE). Administrator Shah's remarks were outlined [here](#).

Egypt

On October 24th, the U.S. Department of State strongly condemned the terrorist attack that targeted a military checkpoint in the Sinai near al-Arish, and killed tens of Egyptian soldiers and injured dozens more. In addition to extending condolences to the families of the victims, Spokesperson Jen Psaki said a prosperous and dynamic Egypt requires an environment of stability and security, and the U.S. will continue to support the Egyptian Government's efforts to counter terrorism. The press statement was issued [here](#).

On October 25th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.N. Security Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in North Sinai on October 24th. The attacks killed at least 31 members of the Egyptian security forces and injured dozens more. Excerpts from Secretary-General Ban's statement can be found [here](#).

On October 25th, Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby issued a press statement on the terrorist attack in the Sinai. Press Secretary Kirby said DOD strongly condemns the recent terrorist attacks that killed dozens of Egyptian soldiers and wounded many others. He expressed condolences to the families of those killed and wished those wounded speedy recoveries. Press Secretary Kirby also noted DOD continues to support Egypt's efforts to counter the threat of terrorism as part of the important and longstanding strategic partnership between the U.S. and Egypt. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On October 26th, after two attacks killed 33 Egyptian security personnel in Sinai, Egypt declared a postponement of talks in Cairo aimed at cementing the Gaza war ceasefire. An Egyptian diplomat cited a

state of emergency in the border area between Egypt and Gaza as cause for the discontinuance. No new date for negotiations between Israel and Palestinian factions has been announced. For more details, click [here](#).

On October 27th, Egypt increased the jurisdiction of military courts to try civilians accused of attacking state facilities or blocking roads. The expansion of power, approved by President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, comes after two attacks that killed at least 33 security personnel in the Sinai Peninsula. The new law allows those who obstruct roads, such as protesters, to be arrested and tried. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On October 27th, an Egyptian court ordered the arrest of 21 democracy activists at the beginning of their retrial for breaking the protest law instituted after the removal of President Mohamed Morsi last year. Those arrested included Alaa Abdel Fattah, a secular figure known for participating in the 2011 revolt that ousted former President Hosni Mubarak. Details were reported [here](#).

On October 27th, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel spoke with Egyptian Minister of Defense Colonel General Sedki Sobhy to underline DOD's condemnation of the October 24th terrorist attacks that killed dozens of Egyptian soldiers and wounded many more. Secretary Hagel expressed condolences to the families of the victims and wished the wounded a speedy recovery. Minister Sobhy provided information about the incident and Egypt's overall security situation. He also thanked Secretary Hagel for American support for Egypt's security. The call was summarized [here](#).

On October 27th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said the U.S. Government is deeply troubled by the harsh prison sentences issued against 23 Egyptians for organizing an unauthorized protest. The defendants were sentenced to three years in prison under Egypt's demonstration law. Spokesperson Psaki urged Egyptian leadership to quickly complete its review of the demonstration law and to release an amended version that will enable full freedom of expression and association. Her comments were posted [here](#).

Libya

On October 24th, the U.N.'s human rights office expressed deep concern over reports of threats and intimidation directed against Libya's national human rights institution, the National Council for Civil Liberties and Human Rights (NCCLHR). These threats included phone calls from people claiming to be affiliated with Operation Libya Dawn and staff members' encounters with groups of hostile, armed men. Details can be read [here](#).

On October 26th, heavy fighting occurred in Benghazi as the Libyan armed launched an offensive against Islamist militias seeking to retake one of their largest camps in the area. Fighting was heaviest near the university in Benghazi. At least 130 people have been killed in the violence. The fighting over the weekend is part of an ongoing struggle between rival tribes and political factions with two governments vying for legitimacy since a coalition of Misrata extremists took control of Tripoli in August. Developments were reported [here](#).

South Sudan

On October 26th, over 60 civilians were injured in Juba, South Sudan, when fighting broke out at a protection of civilians' site next to the U.N. House. The U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reported that four injured civilians are in serious condition and two U.N. police officers suffered minor injuries. Details can be read [here](#).

On October 29th, the U.N. publically announced its support for the Government of South Sudan in its renewed commitment to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers. The statement of support was made by Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, at the launch of the Children, Not Soldiers campaign in the country. More details can be read [here](#).

On October 30th, the U.S. Department of State issued a press release condemning the latest attacks by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLA) in and around Bentiu, South Sudan. Noting that

thousands of people have been killed and millions have fled their homes since the conflict arose last December, the State Department said the need is more urgent than ever to respect previous agreements to end the hostilities, cease the recruitment and mobilization of forces, and engage in inclusive negotiations. The State Department also reminded all parties in South Sudan of the need to guarantee that UNMISS sites and personnel are protected and that the U.N. and other humanitarian agencies have safe, unfettered access to people in need of assistance. The press release was issued [here](#).

Nigeria

On October 26th, at least 17 people were killed by suspected Boko Haram militants in Nigeria. Additionally dozens of people were abducted during a series of attacks in the central region of the country's Borno state. Despite the declaration of a ceasefire by the Nigerian Government and Boko Haram, the attacks are the latest in an escalation of violence. According to Chadian and Nigerian officials, the attacks are attributed to dissident factions within Boko Haram. Accounts of the attacks can be read [here](#).

On October 27th, Nigerian Foreign Minister Aminu Wali said the surge in violence has not threatened talks between the government and Islamist militant group Boko Haram aimed at securing the release of 200 abducted schoolgirls. Ahead of the negotiations, Nigeria's military announced a ceasefire, however, bombings, killings, and kidnappings have continued. Despite this conflict, Minister Wali said progress on the release of the girls will be made. Developments were reported [here](#).

On October 28th, Nigeria's lower house speaker, Aminu Tambuwal, defected to the main opposition coalition. The move will boost the opposition's chances in the February 2015 elections against President Goodluck Jonathan. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 29th, staff for Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan confirmed that he will seek a second term in office in the February 2015 presidential contest. While speculation was high that President Jonathan would compete in the elections, he was expected to obtain an official nomination form on Thursday. President Jonathan had also already been accepted as the candidate for the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). The top two contenders for the All Progressives Congress (APC) are former military leader Muhammadu Buhari and recently defected Vice President Atiku Abubakar. More information can be seen [here](#).

On October 30th, residents of Mubi, Nigeria, reported that Boko Haram took control of the city on Thursday, a clear violation of the ceasefire agreement announced by the Nigerian Government earlier this month. According to witnesses, Nigerian soldiers abandoned their combat posts and fled the city as the militants arrived on motorbikes. The attack occurred as peace talks were underway between the Government of Nigeria and Boko Haram in Chad. The incident was detailed [here](#).

Burkina Faso

On October 28th, police fired tear gas on hundreds of stone-throwing protestors in Burkina Faso. The clash occurred in the country's capital Ouagadougou, where opposition supporters attempted to march on the National Assembly and were blocked by police. The scene was described [here](#).

On October 28th, the State Department issued a press statement expressing concern for a draft National Assembly bill in Burkina Faso that would amend the constitution to allow the term-limited incumbent president to run for an additional five-year term. The State Department emphasized that constitutionally mandated term limits provide an important mechanism to hold heads of state accountable, ensure peaceful and democratic transitions of power, and give new generations the opportunity to compete for political office and elect new leaders. Additionally, the State Department urged a non-violent, peaceful, and inclusive debate on the proposed legislation. The statement was posted [here](#).

On October 28th, in response to the demonstrations in Burkina Faso, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on African Affairs Chris Coons (D-DE) issued a statement opposing attempts by Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore to amend the constitution so that he can seek a third term in office. Senator Coons said democratic constitutional processes are vital to ensuring free and fair societies and urged President Compaore to adhere to the existing constitutional limitation and agree to

hand over power following elections next year. Senator Coon's full statement can be read [here](#).

On October 30th, the Burkina Faso opposition called for a blockade of parliament as the parliament debated constitutional changes to allow President Blaise Compaore to extend his rule. The call for the blockade follows rallies on Tuesday and Wednesday where thousands of protestors opposed President Compaore's rule. An update on the situation was provided [here](#).

Zambia

On October 28th, Zambian President Michael Sata died in London after receiving treatment for an undisclosed illness. President Sata's death was announced on national television by Cabinet Secretary Roland Msiska. Earlier this month, President Sata went abroad for a medical checkup, which resulted in the appointment of Defense Minister Edgar Lungu as acting President. President Sata's passing and his legacy were described [here](#).

On October 29th, Zambia's cabinet met and appointed Zambian Vice President Guy Scott as acting President. Acting President Scott will serve as the first white leader of an African country since FW de Klerk stepped down as President of South Africa in 1994. Scott will serve for 90 days until an election is held. Vice President Scott's promotion was announced [here](#).

On October 29th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon paid tribute to the late Zambian President Michael Sata, who passed away October 28th at a London hospital. Secretary-General Ban praised President Sata's vision for the country and his commitment to helping the country's poor population. He expressed his sadness for the President's passing and offered his condolences to President Sata's family. Details can be read [here](#).

On October 29th, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki expressed the condolences of the U.S. Government on the passing of Zambian President Michael Sata. She said the U.S. expects a peaceful and constitutional transition and welcomed Vice President Guy Scott's appointment as acting President in line with the Zambian constitution. Spokesperson Psaki also noted that President Sata's passing comes just days after Zambia's celebration of 50 years of independence. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were recorded [here](#).

Tunisia

On October 26th, a new parliament was elected in Tunisia. The country has made more democratic progress than other countries in the region that also ousted leaders in the 2011 Arab Spring. Tunisia approved a new constitution at the beginning of the year. The election also saw high voter turnout. For details on the election, click [here](#).

On October 26th, the White House issued a statement congratulating Tunisia on the democratic election of a new parliament. Calling the parliamentary elections an important milestone, the White House applauded Tunisia for setting an example that shows dialogue, consensus-building, political pluralism, and peaceful assembly are the bedrocks of democracy. In addition, the statement reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to supporting democracy in Tunisia and to promoting economic opportunities, protecting freedom, and ensuring security for all Tunisians. The White House's statement can be read [here](#).

On October 27th, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry joined President Barack Obama in congratulating the Tunisian people on the success of the October 26th legislative elections. Secretary Kerry said he was encouraged by strong voter turnout and to see voting occur peacefully and without any significant security incidents. Secretary Kerry recognized the elections as an important milestone in Tunisia's democratic transition and noted the U.S. Government is committed to working with the next democratically elected government. Secretary Kerry's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On October 28th, Tunisia's Ennahda party conceded defeat to its secular rival in Monday's elections. The Ennahda party was the first Islamist movement to gain power and set off additional uprisings in the 2011 Arab Spring. Lotfi Zitoun, an Ennahda senior official, said the party accepted the results and congratulated Nidaa Tounes on the win. Details are available [here](#).

On October 28th, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Robert Menendez (D-NJ) issued a statement following Tunisia's parliamentary elections. Senator Menendez congratulated the people of Tunisia on the peaceful and democratic election of their new parliament and commended leaders for their commitment to dialogue, pluralism, and consensus. He noted the Tunisian people will continue to take critical steps in their democratic transition by holding presidential elections in November. Senator Menendez's statement was issued [here](#).

On October 30th, Tunisia's election board confirmed that the secular party Nidaa Tounes had won a decisive victory in the parliamentary elections, securing 85 seats and knocking the Islamist Ennahda party to second place, with 69 seats. The Nidaa Tounes party was formed in 2012 and is led by Beji Caid Essebsi and other members of the Ben Ali government. The election results were announced [here](#).

Botswana

On October 25th, The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), Botswana's long time ruling party, won 33 of 57 parliament seats in the national elections. Early results indicated that BDP's main opposition, the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) secured 14 seats, while the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) won just two seats. Information on the elections can be seen [here](#).

On October 27th, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement congratulating Botswana on its successful national parliamentary elections. Secretary Kerry noted international observers have declared the election free, fair, and transparent, and commended all Botswana who turned out in overwhelming numbers to participate in the polls. In addition, Secretary Kerry observed the U.S.-Botswana friendship is based on shared commitment to democracy and rule of law. Secretary Kerry's statement can be read [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On October 24th, President Barack Obama notified congressional leaders of his plan to extend the national emergency with respect to Sudan for one year through November 3, 2015. First declared in 1997 and modified in 2006, the national emergency has allowed the U.S. to provide resources for addressing the conflict in Sudan's Darfur region and to block the assets of individuals connected to the conflict. President Obama expressed his belief the actions and the policies of the Government of Sudan continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the U.S. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On October 27th, the White House announced Vice President Joe Biden will travel to Marrakech, Morocco, to lead the U.S. delegation to the Fifth Annual Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES). GES 2014, which will be held November 19th-21st, is expected to bring together over 3,000 entrepreneurs, heads of state, high level government officials, global entrepreneurs, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), corporate leaders, and young entrepreneurs to promote projects and share ideas. Vice President Biden's participation was announced [here](#).

Department of State

On October 22nd-28th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield traveled to South Africa and Zambia. In South Africa, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield visited Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Cape Town, for a regional conference of U.S. Ambassadors and bilateral meetings. She then traveled to Lusaka in honor of the 50th anniversary of Zambia's independence. In both countries, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield is also expected to meet with local youth, including alumni of the 2014 Mandela Washington Fellowship. Her travel was announced [here](#).

On October 24th, Secretary of State John Kerry met with Sir Elton John to discuss the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the work of the Elton John AIDS Foundation at the Department of State. In remarks before their meeting, Secretary Kerry and Sir Elton John announced a \$7 million partnership between PEPFAR and the Elton John Foundation to bring additional assistance to South Africa to help achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation. The partnership was described [here](#).

On October 24th, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Sheba Crocker met with Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Ellen Margrethe Loj, at the Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On October 26th, the State Department issued a press statement congratulating Dr. Denis Mukwege on receiving the Sakharov prize for Freedom of Thought 2014 from the European Parliament. The award is intended to recognize exceptional individuals who defend human rights and combat oppression. Dr. Mukwege is best known for his efforts to confront sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) through medical care and advocacy for women's empowerment. The statement can be read [here](#).

On October 28th, the State Department announced the Secretary's Office of Global Partnerships, in partnership with the Aspen Institute, the International Trade Center, and the Dar Teknoma Business Incubator (DTBi), will lead a delegation of U.S. investors, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists to Tanzania, as part of the Partnership Opportunity Delegations (PODs) initiative October 27th-November 1st. The delegation, led by Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs David Duckenfield, traveled to Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, and Zanzibar to explore investment and trade opportunities. The trip to Tanzania was detailed [here](#).

On October 28th, the U.S. joined over 80 countries, international organizations, and companies in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), for the 17th Plenary of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. The U.S. delegation was led by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Todd Chapman and included representatives from the State Department, DOD, the Department of Justice (DOJ), and the U.S. Coast Guard. The Contact Group's achievements were listed [here](#).

On October 29th, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Charles Rivkin delivered keynote remarks at the Doing Business in Algeria Roadshow, held in Washington, DC. Hosted by the U.S.-Algeria Business Council and the Embassy of Algeria, the event brought the largest Algerian delegation to ever visit the U.S. to Chicago, IL, and Washington, DC, as part of a reverse trade mission (RTM). Later, Assistant Secretary Rivkin met with Algerian Minister of Industry and Mines Abdeslam Bouchouareb. Assistant Secretary Rivkin's remarks were transcribed [here](#). Additional information on the Roadshow can be found [here](#).

On October 29th, the State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs hosted a Google+ Hangout to discuss the power of entrepreneurship in advance of the 2014 GES taking place November 19th-21st in Marrakech, Morocco. Participants included Global Entrepreneurships Programs Director Caron De Mars, Kenyan entrepreneurs Kate Kiguru and Chris Asego, and entrepreneur, investor, and filmmaker Jonathon Purrelli. Details were shared [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On October 28th, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah traveled to London, United Kingdom (U.K.) to meet with government and business leaders about strengthening the capacity of African governments and economies, as well as continuing to build international support for combating the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Administrator Shah's travel was announced [here](#).

Department of Defense

On October 28th, AFRICOM reported on a training session recently hosted by U.S. forces for 25 Burundian National Defense Force Soldiers in the art of Civil Military Cooperation. Held at the Gukumba training area in Bujumbura, the course was intended to train students to serve as liaisons between the combatant commander and the civilian populous. The training was described [here](#).

Department of Treasury

On October 27th, Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew traveled to Cairo, Egypt, to meet with Egyptian Finance Minister Hany Dimian. The leaders discussed the initial steps Egypt has taken to advance its economic reform agenda, including initiatives focused on job creation, re-orienting the budget towards improving

the lives of the Egyptian people, and increasing spending on social programs while decreasing spending on unnecessary government subsidies. In addition, Secretary Lew and Minister Dimian discussed U.S. assistance to Egypt and planning for U.S. Chamber of Commerce mission to Egypt in November, as well as an International Monetary Fund (IMF) assessment to be conducted later this year. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On October 28th, Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew participated in a business roundtable event hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In his remarks to the roundtable, Secretary Lew highlighted U.S. Government initiatives that were designed to help improve the environment for business in Africa and create jobs and opportunities for African people, including the Doing Business in Africa Project, Power Africa, and Trade Africa. Secretary Lew's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On October 29th, Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew traveled to Pretoria, South Africa, where he participated in a business roundtable hosted by U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Patrick Gaspard and the Gordon Institute for Business Sciences at the University of Pretoria. In his remarks, Secretary Lew highlighted IMF projections that make Africa a bright spot in the global economy, with economic growth expected to accelerate to almost six percent next year. Secretary Lew also discussed the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. Secretary Lew's speech can be read [here](#).

Department of Commerce

On October 27th, the Department of Commerce announced Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker will attend the GES in Marrakech, Morocco, November 19th-21st, to demonstrate the U.S. Government's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship around the globe. On November 19th, Secretary Pritzker is anticipated to focus her activities on Women's Entrepreneurship Day. Secretary Pritzker will be joined in Morocco by four Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship (PAGE), an initiative that President Barack Obama launched at last year's GES. Secretary Pritzker's travel was announced [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On October 18th-30th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) sponsored a Sub-Saharan Africa Light Aircraft and Helicopter Reverse Trade Mission (RTM). The RTM introduced delegates from across sub-Saharan Africa to U.S. technology and industry best practices in the aviation sector. Delegates from private sector aviation companies in sub-Saharan Africa participated in site visits where they met with U.S. industry experts and suppliers of light aircraft and helicopters. Details on the RTM were posted [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On October 23rd, the *Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Blog* featured a post on the potential to maximize utilization of geothermal power on the continent through President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. During the recent Geothermal Resources Council's 38th Annual Meeting, Power Africa Coordinator Andrew Herscovitz discussed opportunities for geothermal power in East Africa with representatives from Kenya's Geothermal Development Company and the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation. The conference was described [here](#).

On October 27th, OPIC highlighted its support for renewable energy projects in Africa as part of President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. According to OPIC, while Africa has abundant solar, wind, geothermal, and hydropower resources, renewables currently account for just two percent of the continent's energy mix. Due to increasing electricity demand, OPIC has helped finance a number of renewable energy projects, including the Lake Turkana wind power project in Kenya, the Ormat geothermal plant in Kenya, and the SunEdison solar plant in South Africa. A blog post on the topic can be read [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On October 28th, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) notified Congress of its plans to obligate

up to \$9,780,000 to facilitate the development of a compact with the Government of Tanzania. MCC previously signed a five-year, \$698.1 million compact with Tanzania, which expired on September 17, 2013. The new compact is expected to focus on power sector reforms, utility upgrades, improvements in access to power, and improvements to market access roads. Details were posted [here](#).

On October 28th, the MCC's *Poverty Reduction Blog* published a post on investment in the tourism sector of Namibia that has resulted from the MCC compact with the country. Through the Tourism Project's North American Destination Marketing (NADM) Activity, Namibians have been taught tools for marketing Namibia to North American tourists. More than 800 Namibian travel professionals have completed training. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On October 28th, the MCC rolled out a blog post describing the homes that have been built under the Tourism Project included as part of the MCC's five-year, \$304.5 million compact with Namibia. In total, 98 staff houses have been constructed to help improve the management of Etosha National Park. The staff homes have made it easier to attract and retain park staff. More information can be viewed [here](#).

North Africa

On October 26th, Sudan's National Congress Party officially announced that President Omar Hassan al-Bashir would be its candidate in next year's presidential election. President Bashir has ruled Sudan for 25 years. Party leaders supported President Bashir with a 94 percent margin at the conference held last Saturday. Additional details can be found [here](#).

On October 29th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern over findings of a review conducted into allegations that the UN-AU peacekeeping force in Sudan's Darfur region tried to conceal crimes against civilians and peacekeepers. In a statement, Secretary-General Ban said that while evidence supporting those claims was not found, it was reported that there was a tendency to under-report unless absolutely certain of the facts. For more information on the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) review and Secretary-General Ban's statement, click [here](#).

On October 29th, the World Bank's *Doing Business 2015: Going Beyond Efficiency* was released. The report found that 11 economies in the Middle East and North Africa reformed in at least one area tracked by the report in 2013-2014. Economies in the region implemented the most regulatory reforms in the area of trade, easing export regulations and leading to tangible benefits for entrepreneurs. Excerpts from the report can be found [here](#).

On October 29th, the World Bank's *Doing Business 2015 Fact Sheet: Middle East and North Africa*, was released. The Fact Sheet highlights business regulatory reforms in the region. The Ease of Doing Business ranking is steadily rising across the region. Since 2005, 90 percent of regional economies have implemented business regulatory reforms in the areas measured by Doing Business. The Fact Sheet in its entirety can be found [here](#).

East Africa

On October 26th, Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud told his cabinet to disregard cabinet changes made by Prime Minister Abdiweli Sheikh Ahmed. Because he had not been consulted on changes beforehand, President Mohamud declared them all invalid. More information can be read [here](#).

On October 27th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced an \$8 billion development initiative aimed at boosting economic growth, reducing poverty, and spurring commercial activity in the Horn of Africa. Secretary-General Ban noted rapidly growing economies in East Africa, which are vulnerable to piracy, corruption, and flares of violence. The initiative is a combination of pledges from the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Islamic Development Bank. Excerpts from Secretary General Ban's announcement can be found [here](#).

On October 27th, the World Bank highlighted its recent reengagement with Somalia through the World Bank-administered Multi-Partner Fund for Somalia. The fund finances the Recurrent Cost and Reform Financing Project, which pays salaries and operating support for Mogadishu's federal institutions. This fund is also a central part of the New Deal for Somalia, an international commitment to support Somalia's

peace and state-building agenda. More information on the fund can be found [here](#).

On October 28th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon hailed the opening of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa compound in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as a milestone in the U.N.'s partnership with Africa. Secretary-General Ban's speech at the inauguration was one stop on a longer tour to promote food security, development, and peace in the Horn of Africa. More on Secretary-General Ban's trip can be found [here](#).

On October 28th, the World Bank's Health Sector Support Program and the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Health in Africa Initiative (HIA) highlighted their collaboration with the Kenyan Government to launch Kenya's Health Insurance Subsidy Program (HISP) in April 2014. HISP provides Kenya's poorest citizens with a health insurance subsidy covering both inpatient and outpatient care in public and private health facilities. More information on the program and the World Bank's involvement can be found [here](#).

On October 28th, hundreds of Kenyans gathered to protest the four-month government dusk-to-dawn curfew. The curfew was imposed on the coastal county of Lamu after nearly 100 people were killed by gunman in the area. Last week, the government extended the curfew. While the government says the curfew is meant to increase security close to southern Somalia, residents say it has damaged trade and fishing. The protests were reported [here](#).

On October 29th, the IMF conducted its thirds review of Uganda's economic program supported by the Policy Support Instrument (PSI). At the conclusion of the visit, IMF Mission Chief and Senior Representative for Uganda Ana Lucia Coronel said the country's economic growth was favorable. Furthermore, Senior Representative Coronel said low and stable inflation and a strong external position continue to provide important buffers against potential shocks to the economy. For more details on the IMF review, click [here](#).

On October 29th, an IMF mission traveled to Tanzania to conduct its first review under the Policy support Instrument (PSI) program. IMF representative Herve Joly released a statement noting that macroeconomic performance in the country had been in line with PSI. Additionally, Joly's statement highlighted that economic growth was strong in the beginning of 2014 and core inflation reach a historical low. The full statement can be accessed [here](#).

West Africa

On October 29th, Senior Director for the World Bank's Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice Paula Caballero underscored the importance of natural resources and ecosystems for the livelihoods and well-being of the world's poorest people. Furthermore, after trips to Mali, Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Ethiopia, Director Caballero said the environments in these countries are threatened by degradation and over-use. These countries are a part of the World Bank-funded Great Green Wall Initiative, which aims to address land degradation and desertification in the Sahel, boost food security, and support communities in adapting to climate change. Excerpts from the report were highlighted [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On October 24th, U.N. and AU envoys met with officials from the eastern DRC to urge unity in the fight against Ugandan armed rebel groups. U.N. and AU officials affirmed their determination for the Congolese military and U.N. peacekeeping troops to work together to fight the threat posed by rebel groups. Further information on the meeting can be found [here](#).

On October 24th, Director of the IMF's Africa Department Antoinette Sayeh concluded a visit to Zimbabwe to meet with Zimbabwean authorities and other stakeholders and to present the Fall 2014 Regional Economic Outlook on Sub-Saharan Africa. While in Zimbabwe, Director Sayeh met with Chief Secretary of the President's Office and Cabinet Dr. Misheck Sibanda, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development Dr. S. Udenge, and Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Dr. John Mangudya. Many of Director Sayeh's discussions centered on how the IMF can help support the economic reform agenda in Zimbabwe. Director Sayeh's visit to Zimbabwe was summarized [here](#).

On October 27th, U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler emphasized the need for decisive joint military action by Congolese forces and U.N. peacekeeping troops to counter the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). The ADF is responsible for the brutal massacre of over 80 civilians between October 2nd and October 17th in the DRC's Eastern regions. Further remarks by Special Representative Kobler can be found [here](#).

On October 27th, U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler became the latest person to criticize the government's decision to expel U.N. human rights official, Scott Campbell. While speaking to the U.N. Security Council, Special Representative Kobler said it is those who commit human rights violations and go unpunished who tarnish the image of the DRC and weaken its security institutions, not those who make them public. Special Representative Kobler's comments were captured [here](#).

On October 27th, the World Bank released *Weathering Future Storms in the Seychelles*, a report highlighting achievements in disaster risk management. The report highlights the Seychelles Government's efforts to develop disaster resilient development initiatives, including the establishment of a World Bank-financed disaster contingent credit line and the creation of the Southwest Indian Ocean Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative, a regional effort to increase fiscal capacity for disaster response. Full text of the report can be found [here](#).

On October 27th, South African chemical company Sasol announced plans to move forward with an \$8.1 billion ethane cracker and derivatives complex at its existing manufacturing facility in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The ethane cracker is expected to produce 1.5 million tons of ethylene each year to be used in food packaging, fragrance, detergent, and tire products. The site is being prepared for construction now and the facility is due to be fully operational in 2018. The project, which is one of the largest foreign direct investments in U.S. history, is expected to create 5,000 construction jobs and 1,200 permanent jobs. The full story is available [here](#).

On October 28th, President Robert Mugabe opened parliament in Zimbabwe. Amid a succession struggle in his Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party, President Mugabe promised to invest in infrastructure, offer free fertilizer and seed to farmers, and revise tax and labor laws to boost foreign investment. For more details, click [here](#).

On October 28th, the Johns Hopkins Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) hosted a panel discussion titled, "What Did the U.S.-Africa Summit Mean for the Great Lakes Region?" Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs David Gilmour, President and CEO of the Initiative for Global Development Mima Nedelcovych, and Senior Director for the Africa Program at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) Dave Peterson discussed the outcomes of the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. The panel was moderated by Peter and Frances Duigan Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University Mvemba Dizolele. Event details were shared [here](#).

On October 29th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Valerie Amos, stated that South Africa will play a key role in humanitarian assistance across Africa. In a speech that opened the regional consultation for Eastern and Southern Africa of the World Humanitarian Summit, Under-Secretary-General Amos said that South Africa has the resources and capacity to address the growing humanitarian needs on the continent. For more details, click [here](#).

On October 29th, the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) released a report finding that the ongoing conflict in Central African Republic (CAR) is destroying the country's ability to secure sufficient food for the population. Crops, livestock, and fishing have been damaged by looting and insecurity. According to the report, the CAR's agricultural sector diminished by 46 percent in 2013. Additionally, the FAO and WFP said that prior to the crisis between a quarter and a third of people in CAR were already food insecure. Excerpts from the report can be read [here](#).

On October 29th, the World Bank's *Doing Business 2015: Going Beyond Efficiency* report was released. This report found that Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest number of business regulatory reforms globally in 2013-2014, with 74 percent of the region's economies improving their business regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs. The report also shows that over the past five years, 11 different Sub-Saharan African countries have appeared on the annual list of the 10 global top improvers. Further analysis from the report can be found [here](#).

General Africa News

On October 28th, The Brookings Institution hosted an event entitled, “The International Energy Agency’s (IEA) Africa Energy Outlook.” Speakers included Faith Birol of the IEA and Charles Ebinger and Amadou Sy of The Brookings Institution. The panel addressed how limited energy access on the continent presents a significant obstacle to development. Event details were posted [here](#).

On October 29th, Maplecroft unveiled its annual Climate Change and Environmental Risk Atlas (CCERA), which finds that a growing number of countries most at risk from climate change are now also among the most vulnerable to food insecurity. Many of these countries are concentrated in Africa. For example, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Chad, and Ethiopia were all found to be at extreme risk for storms, droughts, and floods, while also being deeply dependent on agriculture. The CCERA can be downloaded [here](#).

On October 29th, SAIS hosted a discussion on “Election Violence in Democratizing States: Africa in Comparative Perspective.” The discussion was led by Associate Professor Leonardo Arriola of the University of California-Berkeley. More information can be seen [here](#).

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