



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

Tunisia

On March 18th, unidentified gunmen wearing military uniforms opened fire on visitors at the Bardo National Museum in Tunis, Tunisia. According to initial reports, at least 19 people were killed in the ambush, including 17 foreign tourists, a local museum worker, and a security official, and 22 others were injured, making the incident Tunisia's worst terrorist attack in more than a decade. According to Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid, two assailants were killed, but three other gunmen fled the scene. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but it has raised concern the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) is expanding its operations in North Africa. It is believed the militants may have initially intended to target the Tunisian parliament as it debated an anti-terrorism law. The attack was reported [here](#).

On March 18th, senior United Nations (U.N.) officials, including U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Director-General of the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Irina Bokova, and Secretary-General of the U.N. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Taleb Rifai condemned the terrorist attack on the Bardo Museum in Tunisia. Calling the museum a place of discovery and dialogue between cultures, the U.N. said the cowardly attack is a denial of these principles and must unite the international community in combatting violent extremism. The U.N. response was highlighted [here](#).

On March 18th, World Bank Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer Sri Mulyani Indrawati issued a statement on the Bardo Museum attack in Tunisia. Dr. Indrawati expressed condolences to the families of those lost and to the Government of Tunisia. She said Tunisia serves as an example of a successful democratic transition with a commitment to transformation in a peaceful way. Dr. Indrawati said the attack, which occurred during her visit to Tunisia, will only strengthen the World Bank's resolve to stand by the Tunisian people and support the government in creating shared and equitable economic growth. Her statement was posted [here](#).

On March 18th, the White House issued a statement extending sympathies to the victims of the violence in Tunisia and condemning the terrorist attack. The Office of the White House Press Secretary reported U.S. officials are in touch with Tunisian authorities and the U.S. is prepared to offer assistance to their investigation. While the attackers and their motives had yet to be identified, the White House labeled the incident cowardly. Additionally, the White House boasted its robust cooperation with Tunisia on

counterterrorism and broader security issues. The statement was published [here](#).

On March 18th, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry condemned the deadly terrorist attack at the National Bardo Museum in Tunisia, where gunmen killed at least 19 people and wounded more than 20 others. In addition to extending condolences to victims' loved ones, the State Department commended Tunisian authorities' rapid response and their efforts to resolve the hostage situation and restore calm. Secretary Kerry reiterated the U.S. stands with the Tunisian people and continues to support the Tunisian government's efforts to advance a secure, prosperous, and democratic Tunisia. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On March 19th, additional details were shared on Wednesday's attack on the Bardo National Museum in Tunisia, as the death toll rose from 19 to 23 and the number wounded rose to nearly 50. According to Tunisian officials, two attackers, identified as Yassine Laabidi and Hatem Khachnaoui, burst from a vehicle wielding assault rifles and began shooting at tourists before charging into the museum and taking hostages before they were killed by security forces. In addition, Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid reported that one of the gunmen was known to intelligence services, but links to any particular extremist group had yet to be established. Meanwhile, a manhunt continued for two or three others believed to be involved in the attack. An update was provided [here](#).

On March 19th, after the attack on the Bardo Museum in which militants gunned foreign tourists, the Government of Tunisia announced plans to deploy its army to major cities as part of an effort to enhance security. A report on Tunisia's efforts to ramp up security in the aftermath of the attack can be found [here](#).

Nigeria

On March 12th, ISIL's media arm Al-Furqan issued an audio recording by ISIL Spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani accepting Boko Haram's pledge of allegiance. Acknowledging the pledge made by Boko Haram last week, Al-Adnani claimed the caliphate has now expanded to West Africa and called for foreign fighters around the world to migrate to West Africa to join Boko Haram. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 12th, *The New York Times* detailed the role South African mercenaries are playing in the fight against Nigerian militant group Boko Haram. While the Nigerian Government has not officially acknowledged the presence of its soldiers, mercenaries from South Africa are reportedly operating attack helicopters and armored personnel carriers and fighting to retake towns and villages captured by Boko Haram. Witnesses reported that South African mercenaries camped out in Maiduguri, Nigeria, are primarily conducting their operations under the cover of night. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 12th, following reports that foreign mercenaries were playing a large role in the offensive against Boko Haram, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan said the foreigners were only technicians who were brought in to Nigeria to assist with maintenance and instruction. While President Jonathan's advisers acknowledged the presence of foreign military personnel in operations against Boko Haram, they alleged they are only advisers accompanying military equipment purchased from South Africa, Russia, and Ukraine. Statements by Nigerian government officials have been disputed by Nigerian soldiers who report the foreign soldiers are participating in combat. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 12th, in response to reports that South Africans had joined the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria, South African Ministry of Defense Spokesperson Joy Peter said South Africa has no official deployments to Nigeria and any South Africans involved in the conflict against Boko Haram are not under the authority of the South African National Defense Force. Further, Spokesperson Peter said the National Prosecuting Authority and the police will investigate reports related to the presence of South African mercenaries in Nigeria and such individuals could face prosecution. Her comments were recorded [here](#).

On March 13th, Chadian and Cameroonian military sources indicated much of the Chadian force fighting Boko Haram in Nigeria has withdrawn to Cameroon and is deploying further south, possibly signaling the start of a new offensive. According to Chadian troops, soldiers operating in Nigeria had pulled back from their forward base of Gambaru, Nigeria, to Fotokol, Cameroon, where they were then ordered to

continue on to the border town of Banki. Banki lies on the main road from Cameroon to the Nigerian town of Bama, the second-biggest town in Borno state, which has been under Boko Haram control since late last year. Troop movements were detailed [here](#).

On March 15th, Boko Haram militants from Nigeria attacked the village of Djargagoroum, Chad. According to residents, one local person was killed and two houses were burned to the ground. Boko Haram first extended its operations into Chad last month with an attack on Ngouboua. Meanwhile, Chadian soldiers continue to participate in the military offensive against the insurgency. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 16th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman arrived in Nigeria for a two-visit intended to demonstrate U.N. support ahead of the March 28th elections. While in Nigeria, Under-Secretary-General Feltman facilitated meetings on the importance of holding the elections in accordance with the new electoral calendar issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). He was accompanied by U.N. High-Level Representative to Nigeria Mohamed Ibn Chambas, who addressed the situation in northeastern Nigeria resulting from Boko Haram attacks against civilians. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 18th, Boko Haram militants killed at least one civilian in an attack on a town in northern Cameroon. Two others were wounded in the attack. An article on the attack can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, the Nigerian army reported it had pushed Boko Haram from all but three government districts in the northeast. The announcement of the offensive victory comes just two weeks before Nigeria's presidential election. The remaining districts said to still have Boko Haram presence include Abadam, Kalabaldi, and Gwoza. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 18th, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden spoke with Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan and presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari ahead of the Nigerian presidential election scheduled for March 28th. While commending President Jonathan and General Buhari for signing the Abuja Accord, Vice President Biden raised concerns about the violence during some recent election-related events and reiterated the need for both candidates to make clear that such violence has no place in democratic elections. He also expressed support for the Independent Nigerian Electoral Commission and its work to deliver free, fair, and credible elections. Vice President Biden's conversations were summarized [here](#).

Libya

On March 13th, the U.N. opened a new round of consultations with Libyan politicians focused on ending the country's crisis. Notably, the internationally recognized Libyan parliament was not present for the latest talks after requesting the next round of dialogue be delayed to allow more time for preparations. As the talks resumed, fighting continued between forces of the internationally recognized government based in Tobruk and the rival administration of the armed groups that seized Tripoli in August. This session represents the second round of U.N.-brokered talks held in Skhirat, Morocco, following previous rounds of talks in Geneva, Switzerland, and elsewhere. An article on the latest talks can be read [here](#).

On March 13th, the next round of political dialogue between parties in Libya, facilitated by the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) concluded in Morocco. Noting the most recent talks addressed substantive and procedural issues for moving forward on a political agreement, UNSMIL proposed resuming the political dialogue on March 19th in Morocco, with the time between to allow for more consultations and further work on the draft documents presented in earlier discussions. An update on the peace process in Libya was provided [here](#).

On March 16th, militants loyal to ISIL claimed responsibility for a Sunday bomb attack on a police check point in Tripoli, publishing a picture of the explosion site on social media. Five police officers were wounded when a bag of explosives went off next to a Janzour security building. A car bomb also exploded in Misrata. It is believed ISIL militants are also responsible for that attack. Details were posted [here](#).

On March 19th, Libya's internationally recognized government sent warplanes to attack the only operating commercial airport in Tripoli, which is controlled by the rival administration. Airport spokesman

Abdulsalam Buamoud said while the airstrikes damaged the runway, repairs would be finished shortly. No one was hurt in the airstrikes. An article on the airstrikes can be read [here](#).

On March 19th, ISIL militants killed ten fighters loyal to the government controlling Tripoli. Prior to this attack, ISIL militants had been active primarily in the east, where the internationally recognized government of Libya is based. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 19th, Ansar al-Sharia released ten photographs of fighters in training at camps believed to be located near Benghazi, Libya. The photos show 14 fighters training with weapons, in hand-to-hand combat, and in a classroom setting. Additionally, the photos appear to depict an individual believed to be a lead trainer, but his identify was not disclosed. The photos can be viewed [here](#).

Mali

On March 16th, following consultations with protest leaders in Azawad, rebels in northern Mali rejected a U.N.-brokered preliminary peace deal, but indicated they remain committed to continuing negotiations. According to a statement released by the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA), the proposal, put forward after eight months of talks and Algeria and already signed by the Malian Government, did not tackle the root causes of the conflict. In addition, the CMA argued that rebels want more autonomy for the northern region. Feedback from the CMA was highlighted [here](#).

On March 19th, the Government of Mali declared it would not participate in additional talks with rebels seeking autonomy in northern Mali. After the Government signed a proposal earlier this month, the rebels rejected it this week, citing a lack of autonomy for the region of Azawad. The rebel coalition known as the CMA agreed to another round of talks, but did not set a date. The CMA also submitted a document with a list of demands for an agreement. More information on the Mali peace process can be found [here](#).

Egypt

On March 13th, the African Development Bank (AfDB) participated in the Egypt Economic Development Conference, held in Sharm el-Sheikh. The AfDB's delegation, led by Vice President of Sector Operations Aly Abou-Sabaa, focused on promoting the growth of Egypt, one of its founding members. The international forum was organized to showcase the investment opportunities offered by different key sectors of the Egyptian economy, including electricity and renewable energies, water and sanitation, oil and minerals, transport, agriculture, and tourism. The AfDB's participation was noted [here](#). Vice President Abou-Sabaa remarks at the conference can be viewed [here](#).

On March 13th, General Electric (GE) delivered a shipment of gas turbines to Egypt as part of a \$1.9 billion deal to boost power capacity. To date, 34 of 46 planned turbine deliveries have occurred as part of a project to provide 2.6 gigawatts of power to the grid by May 2015. In addition, at the Egypt Economic Development Conference, GE announced plans to invest \$200 million in a planned economic zone near the Suez Canal. According to GE, the company generates about 30 percent of Egypt's installed power capacity. GE's investments in Egypt were noted [here](#).

On March 13th-15th, Secretary of State John Kerry was in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to attend the Egypt Economic Development Conference. He was accompanied by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs John Desrocher, Special Representative for Commercial and Business Affairs Scott Nathan, Special Envoy for Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Frank Lowenstein, Senior Advisor David Thorne, National Security Council (NSC) Director in the Middle East and North Africa Andrew Miller, Chief of Staff Jon Finer, and Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf. Secretary Kerry delivered remarks at a reception hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce of Egypt and met with Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi. Secretary Kerry's schedule for his visit to Egypt was outlined [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks at the American Chamber of Commerce of Egypt event were transcribed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks at the Opening Plenary of the Egypt Economic Development Conference can be read [here](#). A press event with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry was highlighted [here](#).

On March 14th, addressing the Egypt Economic Development Conference, Egyptian Housing Minister Mostafa Madbouli said the Egyptian Government will build a new capital city in the desert east of Cairo,

to be called Capital Cairo. The project, which is estimated to cost \$54 billion, will span 270 square miles, including government buildings, diplomatic missions, and residential units, in addition to a new airport. The city is expected to be constructed within the next seven years. The plan was articulated [here](#).

On March 15th, at the end of the Egypt Economic Development Conference, Egyptian Prime Minister Ibrahim Mehleb said Egypt had signed deals worth \$36 billion as part of the event. Egypt hosted the conference with the intent of projecting an image of stabilizing and restoring investor confidence in the Egyptian economy. Prime Minister Mehleb said the new investments will help boost the government's efforts to promote economic revival. His comments were captured [here](#).

On March 17th, World Bank Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer Sri Mulyani Indrawati concluded a three-day visit to Egypt, where she participated in the Egypt Economic Development Conference. She led high level meetings with government officials and reiterated continued committed to support the people of Egypt. Following her participation in the conference, Dr. Indrawati met with a group of young leaders to listen to the challenges they are facing and solicit insights on their views on development priorities and how the World Bank can best support Egypt. Dr. Indrawati's visit to Egypt was summarized [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On March 12th, the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) issued a new report on the regional effects of the Ebola outbreak on Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. According to the report, the effects of the outbreak have extended beyond the borders of the worst-affected countries because of the strong ties between countries in the region. The report finds West Africa as a whole may lose an average of least \$3.6 billion per year between 2014 and 2017 as the result of border closures, flight cancellations, and reduced foreign direct investment and tourism due to Ebola. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

On March 12th, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced an American health care worker who was infected with Ebola while volunteering for Partners in Health at an Ebola treatment unit (ETU) in Sierra Leone would be flown to the U.S. for treatment at NIH. NIH's Special Clinical Studies Unit also treated Dallas nurse Nina Pham, who was the first person to become infected with Ebola on U.S. soil. The news came as British officials announced a Royal Air Force plane had recently left Sierra Leone carrying three British military health works, one of whom had tested positive for Ebola. The news broke [here](#).

On March 12th, *Science* published a reporting finding that while transmission of Ebola in West Africa is declining, the conclusion of the Ebola crisis may give way to an outbreak of measles. According the report, in the midst of the Ebola crisis, between 25 and 75 percent of routine measles vaccinations may have been neglected. Because of missed vaccinations and other disruptions in West African health care systems due to Ebola, the report suggests there could be 127,000 to 227,000 more cases of measles in an 18-month time frame, resulting in between 2,000 and 16,000 deaths. The report's findings were summarized [here](#).

On March 13th, the World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged the death toll from the West African Ebola outbreak has now surpassed 10,000. Liberia has recorded the most deaths with 4,162. Sierra Leone is the second worst-hit nation with 3,655 deaths, and Guinea has recorded 2,187 deaths. Data on Ebola's death toll in West Africa was posted [here](#).

On March 13th, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Chief Information Officer Steven VanRoekel and Executive Director of the U.S. Global Development Lab Ann Mei Change delivered a presentation at South by Southwest (SXSW). Their presentation provided an overview of how USAID has mobilized science, technology, and innovation in the fight against Ebola and featured a live demonstration of a new protective health care worker suit, a winner of USAID's Fighting Ebola: A Grand Challenge for Development. The presentation was announced [here](#).

On March 14th, the first of a group of ten American aid workers who may have been exposed to Ebola in Sierra Leone were evacuated to the U.S. All ten Americans worked with Partners in Health and were determined to have varying degrees of risk, but were not showing any symptoms. Another Partners in Health aid worker who was confirmed to have Ebola arrived in the U.S. on Friday and is undergoing

treatment at NIH. According to officials, Americans who came into contact with him or might have had similar exposures will be subject to voluntary isolation at NIH, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, or Emory University Hospital. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 16th, the NIH reported the condition of an American health care worker being treated for Ebola had worsened to critical. While the NIH noted it currently had no pending admissions of more people who might have been exposed to Ebola in Sierra Leone, the news on the patient's condition was reported as four Americans arrived at the University of Nebraska Medical Center for observation. An update was provided [here](#).

On March 16th, American biotech company Emergent BioSolutions announced modifications to its Ebola vaccine. The new booster shot will be used in an initial Phase I clinical trial study along with GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) experimental vaccine conducted by researchers at the University of Oxford. While West Africa has seen a drop in Ebola transmission, the debate in the biotech community on pursuing a one-shot or a two-shot vaccine continues. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 17th, UNICEF released a report on the impacts of the West African Ebola outbreak on children. The report finds more than 9,000 children have seen death and suffering as a result of the Ebola outbreak. In addition, the report notes of the more than 24,000 people infected, some 5,000 were children. Further, more than 16,000 children have lost one or both parents or their primary caregiver to Ebola. The report's findings were summarized [here](#).

On March 17th, Guinea officials acknowledged the country may be facing a setback in its fight against Ebola. According to a government health report released over the weekend, there were 21 new cases in a single day, a spike from the recent daily average of eight new cases. In addition, three more doctors have been infected with the virus, leading officials to believe that surveillance efforts are still lacking and safety procedures are not being followed. The situation in Guinea was noted [here](#).

On March 18th, the WHO released its weekly Ebola situation report. For the week ending on March 15th, 150 new confirmed cases of Ebola were reported in West Africa, compared to 116 new cases the previous week. There were 95 new cases reported in Guinea, the highest weekly total for the country in 2015. Sierra Leone reported 55 new confirmed cases, the country's lowest weekly total since June 2014. For the third consecutive week, Liberia reported no new cases. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

State Department

On March 12th-20th, Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall traveled to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, to meet with government officials, representatives of civil society, religious leaders, and young people to underscore U.S. support for their efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism, as well as to address a range of security, counterterrorism, human rights, and refugee-related concerns. In Kenya, Under Secretary Sewall met with the Kenyan delegation to the recent White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism to discuss follow up, including an upcoming regional event that Kenya will host. In Tanzania, Under Secretary Sewall visited State Department grantees working to counter violent extremism in their communities, including a youth center that facilitates discussion between Tanzanian youth and local policy in order to build better community-security force relations and a job training and community integration program for former gang members. In Uganda, Under Secretary Sewall led the U.S. delegation to the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (GCTF) Horn of Africa working group plenary meeting. Further details were provided [here](#).

On March 17th- 18th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield was on travel to Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR) for official meetings. Her travel was included on the State Department's appointment schedule, which can be accessed [here](#).

On March 17th, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp was on travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to meet with representatives of the African Union (AU) and participate in meetings on international justice issues, including the Extraordinary Africa Chambers in the Courts of Senegal. Ambassador Rapp's travel was noticed [here](#).

On March 18th, State Department Counselor Tom Shannon and Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations Affairs Sheba Crocker met separately with Special Representative for the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (MONUSCO) Martin Kobler, at the Department of State. The meetings were listed [here](#).

On March 18th, Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell participated in a Twitter chat with the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Network, at the Department of State. Ambassador Russell discussed her recent meetings with African recipients of the Secretary of State's International Women of Courage Award, as well as broader State Department initiatives to empower women and girls on the continent. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 18th, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power said a lack of accountability in South Sudan for sexual and gender-based violence, child soldier recruitment, and mass graves are deterring peace efforts. At a press briefing, Ambassador Power said that without a mechanism for accountability, collective ascription of responsibility is going to remain a major impediment to peace and to trust. More information on her statement can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, the State Department announced the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti would be closed to the public on Thursday and would reopen for regular business on Sunday. However, emergency consular services will still be available for U.S. citizens in Djibouti. According to officials, the Embassy was closed so embassy leaders could review the facility's security posture. Details can be seen [here](#).

On March 19th, upon the conclusion of her visit to the CAR, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield traveled to Windhoek, Namibia. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's visit to Namibia was announced [here](#).

On March 19th, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Michele Bond traveled to the DRC for meetings with government officials to discuss inter-country adoption concerns. Acting Assistant Secretary Bond's visit to the DRC was noted [here](#).

On March 19th, U.S. Ambassador to Chad James Knight broke ground on the new U.S. Embassy in N'Djamena. The new embassy will be situated on a 12-acre site southeast of downtown N'Djamena and will include a chancery, a U.S. Marine Corps residence, a support annex/warehouse, a utility building, and facilities for the embassy community. The \$225 million project will incorporate numerous sustainable features and targets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification by the Green Building Council. A media note was issued [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On March 16th, the Government of the DRC announced the release of Kevin Sturr, a USAID official with the democracy and good governance program, who was arrested at a pro-democracy conference in Kinshasa. About 40 arrests were made, including activists, journalists, and musicians, including Senegalese and Burkinabe youth leaders. At the time of Sturr's release, DRC Information Minister Lambert Mende said Senegalese and Burkinabe activists and their Congolese accomplices remained detained for questioning. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 16th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki confirmed USAID Democracy Rights and Governance Director Kevin Sturr was detained by Congolese authorities on March 15th and released unharmed several hours later, following an inquiry by the Embassy in Kinshasa. According to Spokesperson Psaki, U.S. officials had yet to be informed as to why he was detained. As a result, she noted U.S. Ambassador to the DRC James Swan has raised this at the highest levels with the DRC Government and the State Department has also placed an inquiry with the DRC Embassy in Washington. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were recorded [here](#).

Department of Defense

On March 12th, U.S. and Kenyan officials reported a U.S. drone strike in Somalia may have killed senior Al Shabaab leader Adan Garaar and two others who allegedly helped plan the 2013 Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya. The suspects were thought to have been killed after their car was targeted near

the town of Bardhere. Officials believe Garaar was also involved in planning failed attacks on Kenya's coast and in Kampala, Uganda, last year. The drone strike was reported [here](#).

On March 13th, more than 40 participants from the United Kingdom (U.K.) High Command and Staff College visited U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. The students and civilian support staff learned about AFRICOM's roles and mission on the African continent and had the opportunity to interact with senior AFRICOM staff. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 16th, the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), in cooperation with the Government of Djibouti, kicked off a health awareness campaign in Petite Soudah. As part of the campaign, CJTF-HOA service members are facilitating a 48-week Basic Home Health Awareness program to educate Djiboutians on issues essential to healthy living. The goal of the program is to support the Djiboutian Social Development Agency (ADDS) with its efforts to combat poverty and create self-sustainment projects throughout Djibouti. An article on the campaign was published [here](#).

On March 17th-19th, military lawyers from 17 African nations joined their U.S. counterparts to discuss a variety of legal topics during a forum hosted this week by AFRICOM at the U.S. Army Garrison in Stuttgart, Germany. The forum is intended to provide an opportunity to learn and share information to further efforts in serving justice and promoting rule of law. For details, click [here](#).

On March 18th, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) confirmed last Thursday's drone strike in Dinsoor, Somalia had killed Al Shabaab leader Adnan Garaar, who was thought to be the mastermind of the 2013 attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. According to the Pentagon, Garaar posed a major threat to the region and the international community and his death represents another significant blow to Al Shabaab. An article on his death can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, Marine Commandant General Joseph Dunford said the U.S. Navy's newly christened mobile landing platform afloat forward staging base, the Lewis B. Puller, could get early work positioning Marines off the coast of Africa. Noting that AFRICOM has a gap in its current capabilities to provide crisis response from the sea, General Dunford suggested the new afloat forward staging base could be a possible stopgap in filling this shortfall. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On March 19th, CJTF-HOA highlighted the efforts of the Coastal Riverine Squadron One (CRS-1) to provide port security and over-watch for any U.S. Navy vessel that enters the waters of East Africa, including most recently the USNS Laramie. CRS-1 routinely escorts U.S. warships deployed to provide security and conduct anti-piracy operations arriving in Djibouti to port. The role of CRS-1 was described [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On March 23rd-25th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), will host the U.S.-South Africa Aviation Leadership and Skills Development Seminar in Cape Town, South Africa. The seminar is the capstone of a series of USTDA-sponsored workshops for South Africa aviation professionals held in the U.S. These training courses have focused on aviation education and skills awareness, operations, management and security/safety training, emergency planning, and airport terminal airspace capacity development and planning, among other important human capacity-building requirements. Details can be seen [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On March 13th, *The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Blog* highlighted OPIC financing in support of microfinance lending in East Africa through BRAC, a Bangladesh development organization. BRAC-Tanzania has opened more than 100 new microfinance branches serving an estimated 109,000 borrowers in Africa, 98 percent of who are women. According to OPIC, BRAC's approach to poverty reduction includes both economic development and social development with a commitment to engaging, supporting, and recognizing the value of all members of society, including women. The blog can be accessed [here](#).

Congress

On March 17th, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing titled, “The FY16 Budget Request: Assessing U.S. Foreign Assistance Effectiveness.” Witnesses included Acting USAID Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt and Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Chief Executive Officer Dana Hyde. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

On March 17th, the House State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriates Subcommittee held a hearing on the FY16 USADI budget request. As part of his testimony, Acting USAID Administrator Alfonso Lenhardt addressed USAID programs in Africa. A recording of the hearing was posted [here](#).

On March 18th, the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee held a hearing on “U.S. Election Support in Africa” to examine how funding decisions are made and implemented. The Subcommittee received testimony from USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Eric Postel. Private sector witnesses included William Sweeny of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Gretchen Birkle of the International Republican Institute, Eric Robinson of the National Endowment for Democracy, and Patrick Merloe of the National Democratic Institute. A webcast of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On March 18th, the House Foreign Affairs Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee held a hearing titled, “Does the President’s FY16 Budget Request Address the Crises in the Middle East and North Africa?” Witnesses included Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Anne Patterson and USAID Assistant Administrator for the Middle East Paige Alexander. A recording of the hearing was archived [here](#).

On March 18th, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued her biweekly Africa newsletter. The latest edition focused on women’s stake in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) reauthorization, the unanimous passage of new legislation in Malawi that would raise the age of consent for marriage from 15 to 18, and the White House’s recent launch of the Let Girls Learn initiative. The Africa newsletter can be accessed [here](#).

On March 19th, the Senate Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee held a hearing titled, “The U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit Seven Months Later: Progress and Setbacks.” The Subcommittee received testimony from Ben Leo of the Center for Global Development and Karen Daniel of Black and Veatch, who serves as a Member of the President’s Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa. The hearing was noticed [here](#).

North Africa

On March 12th-19th, World Bank Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer Sri Mulyani Indrawati visited Egypt and Tunisia to hold meetings with government officials and visit World Bank funded projects. In Egypt, Dr. Indrawati led the World Bank’s delegation to the Egypt Economic Development Conference and visited the Giza North Power Plant project. In Tunisia, Dr. Indrawati met with Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi and Prime Minister Habib Essid. She also visited Sonde, the national water utility, to see the results of a World Bank supported urban water supply project and a micro-finance project funded by the International Finance Corporation (IFC). Dr. Indrawati’s visit to Egypt and Tunisia was detailed [here](#). An interview with Dr. Indrawati on reforms needed in Egypt in advance of her visit was published [here](#).

On March 13th, in response to the International Criminal Court (ICC) announcing its intentions to report to the U.N. Security Council on Sudan’s failure to cooperate in its investigation of war crimes committed by Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Sudanese Information Minister and Government Spokesman Ahmed Bilal Osman dismissed the ICC’s course of action. Minister Osman said the decisions of the ICC are non-binding on Sudan and the referral of Sudan’s case to the Security Council shows the failure of the ICC. While the Security Council has the power to authorize embargoes, military action, and other measures, few expect it to impose penalties that would result in Sudan handing over its president. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 13th, Younes Makhyoun, the leader of Egypt’s ultra-conservative Islamist Nour party, said the party is committed to participating in Egypt’s deferred parliamentary elections. The parliamentary

elections represent the final step of the political roadmap established upon President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi assuming office. Nour was founded in the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Previously aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, Nour broke ties with the group when it became apparent the Muslim Brotherhood would not maintain power. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 15th, Algeria began a trial for corruption charges against the state-owned oil company Sonatrach, which generates most of the country's venue. Former head of Sonatrach Mohammed Meziane, his two sons, and 16 other company officials are accused of influence peddling, inflating contract prices, money laundering, and collecting millions of dollars in bribes. The trial was adjourned to an unspecified date to allow police to locate missing witnesses. The trial has already been delayed for five years. The proceedings were detailed [here](#).

On March 16th, *Reuters* reported that Moroccan human rights group AMDH has been subject to new bans and restrictions in the past six months that activists see as a creeping campaign by Moroccan officials to crack down on opposition. While AMDH highlighted last month's police raid on journalism offices in Rabat as a new low, government officials continue to deny any violations. The full story can be accessed [here](#).

On March 16th, the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) hosted a briefing titled, "Understanding the Role of Libya's Religious Actors in Confronting Violent Extremism." Speakers included Susan Hayward and Palwasha Kakar of USIP and Zahra Langhi of Libyan Women's Platform for Peace. Event details were posted [here](#).

On March 17th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous briefed the U.N. Security Council on the situation in the Darfur region of Sudan. Under-Secretary-General Ladsous cited worsening security and humanitarian situations and discussed the challenges faced by the AU-U.N. Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in carrying out its mandate. Further, he warned of the potential for even greater insecurity as election campaigns intensify. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On March 17th, Tunisia's Interior Ministry said it had dismantled four recruiting cells sending jihadis to fight in Libya and arrested dozens in part of tighter security and border controls to counter Islamist militants. At 3,000 people, Tunisians make up one of the largest contingents of foreign fighters supporting ISIL and Iraq and Syria, but more recently militants have been sending jihadis to Libya. In addition, Prime Minister Habib Essid said Tunisia has strengthened its military presence on the Libyan border to control the situation. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 17th, Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid announced Tunisia's new government will launch an emergency economic plan that is projected to revive economic growth to seven percent in five years. According to Prime Minister Essid, speaking on a public broadcast, the rescue program will start with reforms in health, education, state subsidies, and social funds. The program will also include a plan to lift the retirement age to ease pressure on state pension payments. The proposal was summarized [here](#).

On March 17th, Egypt's public prosecutor said 16 people, including members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, its supporters, and members of a fan group known as the Ultras, were charged with killing and inciting violence in connection with the deaths of 19 soccer fans last month. According to the court, the defendants intentionally instigated violence to create an image of instability ahead of the recent Egypt Economic Development Conference. The charges were noted [here](#).

On March 17th, an Egyptian police officer was charged for shooting Shaimaa Sabbagh, a young mother, at a Cairo protest to mark the 2011 anniversary of the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak. A criminal court charged the police officer for an action that it said led to Sabbagh's death, a charge less than murder and one that many believe is too lenient. A photo of the incident went viral, leading to international calls for justice. An article on the case can be read [here](#).

On March 18th, Egypt's Foreign Ministry announced it would begin restricting visa rules by requiring visitors to obtain visas at embassies instead of receiving them upon arrival at Egyptian airports. The new rules may make it more difficult to revive Egypt's tourism industry. Despite this, officials says the decision gives intelligence services more time to analyze those wishing to visit Egypt in a period of Islamist insurgency. The new rules take effect on May 15th. For more information, click [here](#).

On March 19th, the trial of two *Al Jazeera* television journalists was adjourned by an Egyptian court until March 25th. Last month, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed were released on bail after spending over one year in detention. The two are charged with aiding the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been outlawed as a terrorist organization. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 19th, Interior Minister Habib el-Adly was acquitted of graft charges by an Egyptian court. Minister El-Adly was a prominent figure in the era of President Hosni Mubarak and had been acquitted of a separate graft charge last month along with former Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif. His case was detailed [here](#).

East Africa

On March 11th, the Board of Directors of the AfDB approved an African Development Fund (ADF) loan of \$123 million for Kenya for the Mombasa-Mariakani Highway upgrade project. The road is a key import/export gateway, and an important section of the Northern Corridor (NC), which links the port of Mombasa with land-linked countries in eastern and central Africa, including Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC. With increasingly constrained capacity due to traffic volumes dominated by heavy trucks, the road experiences persistent congestion that hinders access to the port. A press release was issued [here](#).

On March 12th, Al Shabaab militants launched an attack on government offices in Baidoa, Somalia. According to police, nine people, including four attackers, were killed after gunmen in military uniforms attacked the house of former Somali parliament speaker and current president of the newly established southwest regional administration Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden. The attack began when a car bomb detonated at the gate of the state palace in Baidoa city. The incident was reported [here](#).

On March 12th, U.N. Special Representative for Somalia and head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Nicholas Kay condemned the attack in Baidoa town on the Interim South West Administration, which resulted in the death and injury of security personnel and civilian bystanders. After speaking with President Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan, Special Representative Kay reiterated U.N. support for working with Somalia to rebuild government institutions and security forces. Special Representative Kay's comments were captured [here](#).

On March 13th, Al Shabaab fighters crossed from Somalia into Kenya and attacked a convoy carrying the governor of Kenya's Mander region Ali Roba from Mandera to Wajir. According to Al Shabaab's Military Operation Spokesman Abdiasis Abu Musab, the militants killed four soldiers, burnt two military trucks, and stole a car. Meanwhile, the Kenyan military reported its forces had not been ambushed, but confirmed the governor's convoy was attacked, wounding four people and resulting in the hijacking of one vehicle. Both accounts of the incident were shared [here](#).

On March 13th, *Voice of America* profiled Victor Ochen, Africa's youngest-ever nominee to be considered for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize. Ochen and his organization, the African Youth Initiative Network, were nominated for the award for their work with war victims in northern Uganda. His nomination was first announced in January as Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Dominic Ongwen appeared before the ICC. An article on the nomination can be read [here](#).

On March 16th, the U.N. Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea presented its report to the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, Switzerland. Commission Chair Mike Smith reported that national service in Eritrea is universal and of an indefinite duration. In addition, the Commission reported the Government of Eritrea has curtailed basic freedoms and that arbitrary detentions, often with torture are an ordinary fact of life. Excerpts from the presentation were highlighted [here](#).

On March 17th, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced it had begun the relocation of more than 50,000 South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia from flood prone regions ahead of the rainy season, expected to commence in late April. Refugees from the Nip Nip camp will be moved to the existing Pugnido camp, while refugees at the Leitchuor camp will be transferred to the new Jewi camp. It is estimated there are more than 250,000 South Sudanese refugees currently residing in Ethiopia's Gambella region. The transfers were detailed [here](#).

On March 17th, Kenya's Energy and Petroleum Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir said Kenya will not raise electricity costs despite the drought and a forecasted continuation of dry weather. While the drought has raised concern that water levels in hydroelectric dams has declined, Secretary Chirchir noted that power generation from geothermal steam in Kenya's rift valley has led to less reliance on hydropower. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On March 17th, the high court in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia convicted in absentia Ethiopian Airlines pilot Hailermedhin Abera Tegegn of hijacking his own plane last February at flying it to Geneva, Switzerland. Upon arriving in Geneva, Tegegn reportedly surrendered to police and requested asylum. If Tegegn returns to Ethiopia, he could face up to 20 years in prison. His current whereabouts are unknown. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 18th, four Kenyans were killed in a raid by Somali Islamist militants. According to witnesses, hooded gunmen attacked a shop in Wajir, a town near the border of Somalia. The men set the shop on fire with victims locked inside. Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack shortly after. For more details, click [here](#).

West Africa

On March 14th, speaking from hiding, Sierra Leone's Vice President Samuel Sam-Sumana said he had requested asylum at the U.S. Embassy in Freetown after soldiers surrounded his residence in response to his expulsion from the ruling All People's Congress (APC) party last week. Vice President Sam-Sumana was expelled from his party after an investigation accused him of creating his own rival political movement and fomenting violence in the Kono region. He has denied all allegations, in addition to calls that he resign as vice president. The situation was described [here](#).

On March 15th, *The New York Times* reported on France's engagements in the Sahel region to combat Al Qaeda's affiliate in North Africa, other extremists in Mali, and more recently Boko Haram in Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. The French military has concentrated its air power and mission headquarters in Chad, its reconnaissance drones in Niger, its special operations forces in Burkina Faso, and its logistics hub in Ivory Coast. Approximately 1,200 soldiers have also been deployed to Mali to fight the remnants of militant organizations that French-led forces rolled back in early 2013. An article on French military presence on the continent can be read [here](#).

On March 16th, the World Bank Group's Board of Executive Directors approved a total of \$22 million to strengthen the management and governance of fisheries and improve the handling of fish brought to shore in Mauritania and Guinea as part of the West Africa Regional Fisheries Program (WARFP). WARFP is a nine country, multi-phase series of projects approved by the World Bank to ensure productivity from West Africa's fish resources. In Guinea, the additional funding is expected to contribute to the initial recovery phase from the Ebola crisis. A press release was issued [here](#).

On March 16th, analysts expressed concern that the recent conviction of 83 allies of former Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo's allies for their role in the violence that followed the 2011 election will divide the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) party and radicalize political views. The divisions between party factions are expected to bolster opposition party incumbent President Alassane Ouattara in presidential elections anticipated in October. The political dynamics in Ivory Coast were analyzed [here](#).

On March 17th, in defiance of rumors related to Cameroonian President Paul Biya's health, Communications Minister Issa Tchiroma Bakary told reporters that President Biya, who has been out of the country since March 3rd, is on a private trip in Europe and not seeking medical help in a hospital in Switzerland, as has been reported. The allegations were first made by the French newspaper *Le Monde*. Minister Bakary accused the newspaper of launching a smear campaign against President Biya. For details, click [here](#).

On March 17th, speaking at a news conference in Dakar, Senegalese President Macky Sall proposed a May 2016 referendum on reducing his mandate by two years. According to President Sall, the proposal is intended to strengthen Senegal's democracy and set an example for other African nations, such as Benin, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Republic of Congo (ROC), which are considering constitutional changes that would allow their leaders a third term in office. While President Sall said he would prefer

Senegal's next presidential elections be held in 2017, as opposed to 2019, he declined to comment on potentially running for a second term. More information was shared [here](#).

On March 18th, the U.N. Security Council expressed regret at the death of two Dutch peacekeepers, serving with the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in a helicopter crash in Gao. The Security Council also reiterated its full support for MINUSMA's efforts to assist the Malian authorities and people in their efforts to bring lasting peace and stability to the country. Feedback from the Security Council was articulated [here](#).

On March 18th, after seeking asylum in the U.S. embassy, Sierra Leone's Vice President Samuel Sam-Sumana was fired by President Ernest Bai Koroma. In a statement, President Koroma said a new deputy will be appointed soon. Vice President Sam-Sumana requested asylum after his home was surrounded by soldiers. For details, click [here](#).

On March 19th, security forces in Mali arrested three suspects for alleged complicity in the militant attack on a restaurant earlier this month. Sources say two shopkeepers and an employee at a transport company were arrested. Details on the arrests can be read [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On March 13th, a South Africa court struck down Olympian Oscar Pistorius' bid to block prosecutors from appealing the culpable homicide verdict handed down against him in favor of a murder conviction for the killing of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. Judge Thokozile Masipa ruled state lawyers could proceed with their appeal to challenge the verdict she issued in October. Pistorius is currently serving a five-year prison sentence. That sentence could increase to 15 years if he is found guilty of murder. An update on the case was presented [here](#).

On March 13th, a Rwandan court issued jail sentences ranging from ten years to life to 11 people accused of conspiring with rebels to topple the government of President Paul Kagame. Located in the Musanze area, the defendants were found to be conspiring with the Forces for the Democratic Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), based in the eastern DRC. Those sentenced to life in prison included former FDLR fighter Nsengiyumva Jotham, who confessed to the plan but also presented his choice not to carry out the mission, and two women. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 14th, U.S. Government officials expressed concern that nuclear fuel housed at the South African Pelindaba Nuclear Research Center could be stolen by militants and used to make nuclear bombs for use in terrorist attacks. Technicians extracted the highly enriched uranium from the apartheid regime's nuclear weapons in 1990 and melted the fuel down and cast it into ingots. While some of the supply has been used to make medical isotopes, roughly 485 pounds remain. While the U.S. has encouraged the Government of South Africa to get rid of its nuclear materials, South African President Jacob Zuma has repeatedly refused to do so. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 16th, the IMF announced plans to co-host the Finance for All: Promoting Financial Inclusion in Central Africa Conference in Brazzaville, ROC on March 23rd. The conference is expected to bring together more than 200 participants for discussions on the policy challenges facing the countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) as they seek to increase access to financial services for all while managing policy challenges and supervisory risks. More information was posted [here](#).

On March 17th, Pakalitha Mosisili was sworn in as Lesotho's Prime Minister two weeks after forming a coalition government to resolve the lack of a clear winner in Lesotho's February 28th elections. Mosisili's Democratic Congress (DC) ousted former Prime Minister Thomas Thabane's All Basotho Congress (ABC) by uniting with smaller parties. At the inaugural ceremony, former Prime Minister Thabane accepted defeat and said it was time to end political hostilities. An article on the new government was published [here](#).

On March 17th, Zimbabwe's parliament expelled 17 legislators who left the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) party due to political infighting last year. The expulsion of the opposition members, including former MDC Secretary General and Finance Minister Tendai Biti, is expected to

weaken the opposition's power in the legislative body, where President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party holds a majority. For details, click [here](#).

On March 19th, Vice President Emerson Mnangagwa said at least five Zimbabwean inmates died after being shot by police in the prison protest last week. The protest over food shortages escalated when some prisoners attempted to break out of jail. Vice President Mnangagwa said that the police only fired on inmates after feeling imminent danger. An article on the event can be read [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 16th, AfDB President Donald Kaberuka addressed the opening plenary of the Africa CEO Forum 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland. President Kaberuka expressed optimism for the future of Africa's economy and addressed the conditions needed for strong growth on the continent, including the importance of planning for both investment and policy, confidence between governments and people, and ensuring adequate energy supply. Additional speakers included World Bank Vice President for the Africa Region Makhtar Diop and Executive Secretary of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Carlos Lopes. Excerpts from President Kaberuka's address were highlighted [here](#).

On March 17th, the WHO and UNICEF published a joint report on the availability of clean water in health care facilities. Drawing on data from 54 countries, the report finds Mali is currently the poorest performer, with just 20 percent of health care facilities providing clean water. The report also highlights inequities in other African countries. For example, in Kenya, 58 percent of hospitals have access to water, but this is only true for 35 percent of primary care clinics. In Ethiopia, there is access to drinking water in 99 percent of health facilities in Addis Ababa, but only 23 percent in the Gambella region. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

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