



ML Strategies Update

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AFRICA UPDATE

Leading the News

Egypt

On February 24th, following a meeting with Egyptian Field Marshal General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, Prime Minister Hazem Beblawi appeared on public television to announce that Egypt's entire interim cabinet had submitted resignations to interim President Adly Mansour. While noting that the interim cabinet had completed the first part of Egypt's political roadmap culminating in the constitutional referendum, he also acknowledged the cabinet's shortcomings. Details were reported [here](#).

On February 24th, after the resignation of Egypt's interim cabinet, the *Washington Post* speculated that Egyptian Field Marshal General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi will be left out of the replacement cabinet lineup, making his announcement to run for president evident. Should Field Marshal Sisi give up his position to announce his candidacy, he is likely to be replaced by his current chief of staff, General Sobhi Sedki. The full story is available [here](#).

On February 24th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki indicated U.S. officials were surprised by the unexpected resignation of the Egyptian cabinet. As a result, she said U.S. diplomats are reaching out to their Egyptian counterparts for additional information, as well as to continue to urge an inclusive transition process and transparent elections. Spokesperson Psaki's remarks were shared [here](#).

On February 25th, outgoing Egyptian Housing Minister Ibrahim Mihlib was appointed to serve as Egypt's new Prime Minister. Upon his appointment, Prime Minister Mihlib, a former construction company chief and senior official in former President Hosni Mubarak's National Democratic Party, vowed to restore security and crush terrorism in Egypt. More information can be seen [here](#).

On February 26th, an Egyptian court sentenced 26 people to death, asserting they had formed a terrorist group planning to attack ships in the Suez Canal. The men were charged with harming

national unity by inciting violence against the army, police, and Christians. The case will now be referred to Egypt's top Islamic official for validation of the sentences. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Nigeria

On February 23rd, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement condemning last week's Boko Haram attacks in northern Nigeria, which killed 115 people and destroyed 1,500 buildings. Secretary Kerry expressed support for the efforts of Nigerian authorities to investigate the attacks and to bring the perpetrators to justice. He also noted the U.S. is providing counterterrorism assistance to help Nigerian authorities develop a comprehensive approach to combat the threat posed by Boko Haram while protecting civilians and ensuring respect for human rights. The statement was issued [here](#).

On February 26th, United Nations (U.N.) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) condemned an attack carried out by unidentified gunmen against the Federal Government College of Buni Yadi in Yobe state, Nigeria. The incident left at least 45 children between the ages of 13 and 17 dead. The incident was reported [here](#).

On February 27th, *Reuters* provided additional information on the Boko Haram attack against the Federal Government College of Buni Yude in Nigeria. As authorities began to investigate the incident, the death toll climbed to 59 students as additional bodies were discovered. The incident also left 24 buildings, including staff quarters, completely burned to the ground. Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan called the attack callous and senseless and labeled Boko Haram as deranged terrorists and fanatics who have lost all human morality and descended to bestiality. Developments in the investigation of the attack were noted [here](#).

Somalia

On February 21st, Al Qaeda-linked militant group Al Shabaab launched an attack against the presidential palace in Mogadishu known as Villa Somalia. Despite a heavy security presence at the compound, Al Shabaab attempt to enter at the main gates, where attackers exploded a car bomb and engaged in firefight with African Union (AU) peacekeepers. While Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was unharmed, it was immediately unclear how many others were killed in the attack. Details were provided [here](#).

On February 21st, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, U.N. Special Representative to Somalia Nicholas Kay, and the U.N. Security Council came together to condemn the Al Shabaab attack against Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's compound in Mogadishu. Al Shabaab also claimed responsibility for a recent attack against a U.N. convoy near the Mogadishu airport. The U.N.'s response to the attacks was posted [here](#).

On February 21st, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf shared a press statement condemning Al Shabaab's attacks against the Villa Somalia Compound in Mogadishu. She said the attack shows that Al Shabaab continues to stand for death and destruction. Deputy Spokesperson Harf commended the quick response of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and pledged the U.S. will continue to support Somalis in rebuilding their country. The statement can be viewed [here](#).

On February 24th, in response to Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's pledge to end Al Shabaab by the end of 2014, Al Shabaab Spokesman Sheikh Ali Dheere vowed the group will recapture all Somali territory lost to the Somali Government and AU peacekeepers over the past year. Comments from Spokesperson Dheere can be seen [here](#).

On February 27th, Al Shabaab claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack in Mogadishu. At least ten people were killed when a suicide bomber drove his car into a tea shop near Somalia's national security headquarters. Al Shabaab claimed they were targeting members of Somalia's national security forces and threatened to carry out future attacks. The attack was detailed [here](#).

Uganda

On February 24th, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni signed controversial anti-homosexuality legislation into law, requiring jail sentences for homosexuals and outlawing the promotion of homosexuality. In signing the bill, President Museveni called homosexuals mercenaries and prostitutes. He also said there is something wrong with anyone who is gay. Comments from President Museveni on signing the bill were transcribed [here](#).

On February 24th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay expressed opposition to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni signing anti-homosexuality legislation into law. Secretary-General Ban noted his plans to discuss the law with Permanent Representative of Uganda to the U.N. Richard Nduhura, while High Commissioner Pillay reiterated that the law will institutionalize discrimination and encourage harassment and violence against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation. The U.N.'s reaction the law's enactment can be seen [here](#).

On February 24th, the Office of the White House Press Secretary issued a statement upon Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni signing into law legislation criminalizing homosexuality in the country. The White House reiterated that the law is a danger to the gay community in Uganda, as well as efforts to fight HIV/AIDS, and said the Obama Administration will continue to urge the Ugandan Government to repeal the law. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On February 24th, Secretary of State John Kerry made a statement expressing disappointment at the enactment of the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda and calling for its repeal. Over the past four years, the U.S. has opposed the legislation, which Secretary Kerry said violates human rights obligations and threatens Uganda's initiatives to combat HIV/AIDS. Secretary Kerry said now that the law is enacted, the State Department will begin an internal review of the U.S. relationship with Uganda, including bilateral engagement and assistance programs. Comments from Secretary Kerry can be found [here](#).

On February 24th, Senate Foreign Relations African Affairs Committee Chairman Chris Coons (D-DE) issued a statement speaking out against the enactment of Uganda's anti-homosexuality law. Senator Coons called the law a shameful setback that will impact U.S.-Uganda relations. He said the U.S. should not stand by as Uganda's political leadership disregards democratic values and humanitarian principles through the law's implementation. The full statement was issued [here](#).

On February 25th, following his comments in opposition to the enactment of anti-homosexuality legislation in Uganda, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reiterated his call for the law to be revised or repealed. Secretary-General Ban has called for the complete and universal decriminalization of homosexuality, which remains a criminal offense in 76 countries, including many in Africa. More information was shared [here](#).

South Sudan

On February 21st, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) provided the U.N. Security Council with a report on human rights violations committed in South Sudan from mid-December 2013 through the end of January by both Dinka forces loyal to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and Lou Neur forces loyal to former Deputy President Riek Machar. The report highlights instances of rapes, mass killings and torture, and enforced disappearances. The report's findings were summarized [here](#).

On February 24th, following multiple patrols in Malakal, where fighting between pro-government and anti-government forces recently escalated, U.N. peacekeepers reported that nearly the entire city has been burned and looted, with bodies scattered along major arteries into the city. UNMISS also observed that a number of civilians wounded in last week's attacks remain at the Malakal Teaching Hospital for treatment. The recent patrols in Malakal were detailed [here](#).

Central African Republic

On February 20th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented to the U.N. Security Council on risks facing the Central African Republic (CAR). Over the past year, Secretary-General Ban observed a number of new challenges, including the violent overthrow of the government, the collapse of state

institutions, and growing lawlessness and sectarian brutality. As the U.N. considers a future peacekeeping operation in the CAR, Secretary-General Ban called for the rapid reinforcement of AU and French troops on the ground and the provision of logistics and financial support. Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

On February 22nd, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appeared in a video message that was broadcast in the CAR. Speaking directly to Central Africans, Secretary-General Ban called on all parties to lay down their weapons, putting an end to the months-long cycle of violence. In addition, Secretary-General Ban appealed to the international community for greater support on the ground, both in terms of security assistance and humanitarian aid. Details were provided [here](#).

On February 25th, the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) warned that food and nutritional assistance is desperately needed in the CAR and in neighboring countries that have recently accepted Central African refugees. Since December 2012, more than 700,000 people have been internally displaced and more than 288,000 people have fled to Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Republic of Congo (ROC). WFP also noted that food insecurity has significantly worsened since December 2013. More information can be found [here](#).

On February 26th, the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) announced a two-year \$26 million initiative in the CAR that will launch a series of cash for work and social cohesion activities to aid more than 35,000 people in central and western parts of the country. The projects will be focused on repairing damaged infrastructure, such as water reservoirs, sewers, bridges, and local clinics. The program was announced [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On February 20th, President Barack Obama notified Congress of his decision to extend the national emergency declared with respect to Libya beyond February 25th. In his letter to Congress and *Federal Register* notice, President Obama noted the state of emergency was declared in 2011 when Muammar Gadhafi and his associates began to use extreme measures against the Libyan people. While the U.S. is in the process of winding down sanctions in response to positive developments in Libya, he noted the security situation in the country continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to U.S. national security and foreign policy. President Obama's letter to Congress can be read [here](#). The *Federal Register* notice can be accessed [here](#).

On February 23rd, National Security Advisor Susan Rice appeared on *NBC's* "Meet the Press" for an interview on the September 2012 terrorist attacks on U.S. diplomatic interests in Benghazi, Libya. National Security Advisor Rice defended her response immediately after the attack, noting that the Administration shared the best information available at the time. She also reiterated the Obama Administration's commitment to tracking down those responsible for the attacks. Clips from the interview can be watched [here](#).

On February 25th, President Barack Obama announced the designation of a presidential delegation to attend Nigeria's Centenary Celebration February 27th-28th. The delegation will be led by State Department Counselor Thomas Shannon. U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria James Entwistle will also participate. The delegation was announced [here](#).

State Department

On February 25th, Secretary of State John Kerry participated in a discussion on ending sexual violence in conflict hosted by U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Cathy Russell. Additional participants included United Kingdom (U.K.) Foreign Secretary William Hague, U.N. Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Hawa Bangura, and *Washington Post* Publisher Katharine Weymouth. The discussion addressed examples of sexual violence in African conflicts, including in the DRC, Libya, Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia, and the CAR. The discussion was transcribed [here](#).

On February 25th, the State Department announced an initial contribution of \$124.5 million toward the 2014 Emergency Appeal of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The contribution includes \$51.5 million for Africa, which will support ICRC's work in South Sudan and the CAR. The funding contribution was announced [here](#).

On February 25th, the State Department announced an initial contribution of \$226 million toward the 2014 operations of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The State Department specified \$119.7 million in funding to support UNHCR efforts in sub-Saharan Africa, including in South Sudan, the CAR, the DRC, and Kenya. More information was shared [here](#).

On February 26th, Secretary of State John Kerry met with U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa and the DRC Russ Feingold and Founder of the Eastern Congo Initiative Ben Affleck at the Department of State. Secretary Kerry, Special Envoy Feingold, and Affleck discussed efforts to promote stabilization and economic development in the DRC. Joint remarks following their meeting were posted [here](#).

On February 26th, State Department Counselor Thomas Shannon departed on foreign travel to Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria and to Monrovia, Liberia. While in Nigeria, Counselor Shannon led the U.S. delegation to Nigeria's Centenary, where he met with Nigerian Government officials and other world leaders. In Lagos, Counselor Shannon was expected to participate in events with Nigerian youth. Following his visit to Nigeria, Counselor Shannon will travel on to Monrovia to open the second meeting of the U.S.-Liberia Partnership Dialogue. More information on Counselor Shannon's travel can be seen [here](#).

On February 26th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield delivered remarks at the Africa Society of the National Summit during the Andrew Young Lecture Series at the Embassy of Nigeria in Washington, DC. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's participation was noted [here](#).

On February 26th, the State Department's Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) announced the design/build award for a new U.S. Embassy in N'djamena, Chad, to BL Harbert International. The project includes construction of a chancery, a U.S. Marine Corps residence, two access pavilions, a warehouse and shops, a utility building, and recreational facilities. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On February 27th, Special Representative for Global Partnerships Andrew O'Brien co-hosted a lunch meeting with Moroccan Ambassador to the U.S. Rachad Bouhlal at the Moroccan Embassy in Washington, DC. The lunch was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be found [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On February 24th, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) published a blog post authored by USAID Associate Administrator Mark Feierstein on his reflections from his recent travel to Africa. Associate Administrator Feierstein reported on his visit to Nairobi and Baringo, Kenya, where he visited a 12 megawatt power plant project being constructed through the Power Africa initiative. He then traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he solicited ideas for USAID's Powering Agriculture program. The full blog post can be accessed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On February 19th, the Flintock 2014 military exercise was officially launched in Niamey, Niger. Conducted since 2005, the African-led military exercise focuses on interoperability in security, counterterrorism, and humanitarian aid. Over the next three weeks, more than 1,000 troops from Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, France, Mauritania, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Senegal, the U.K., the U.S. and Niger will participate in the exercise. Flintock 2014 was detailed [here](#).

On February 19th-20th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) hosted more than 100 U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), Department of State, and USAID officials in Stuttgart, Germany, for the Africa

Strategic Dialogue (ASD). The goal of the forum was to bring together relevant executive branch officials to align the U.S. strategic approach to Africa. Key participants included AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez, Deputy Assistant Director of Defense for African Affairs Amanda Dory, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa Earl Gast. An article on ASD can be read [here](#).

On February 21st, *The Pentagon Channel (TPC) News* aired a video on the Coast Guard's investigation of the deaths of two U.S. security officers aboard the Maersk Alabama in Seychelles. The bodies of Jeffrey Reynolds and Mark Kennedy were discovered in a cabin on the ship last week. The video report can be watched [here](#).

On February 26th, U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) Public Affairs provided additional information on USARAF's efforts to train African forces in securing their own borders. Recently, USARAF has facilitated capacity training in Rwanda, Burundi, and the CAR. Details were shared [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On February 23rd – March 5th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) hosted a delegation of 12 Libyan power sector officials on a visit to the U.S. to participate in the Natural Gas-Fired Power Generation Reverse Trade Mission (RTM). While in the U.S., delegates are meeting with U.S. companies to gain exposure to U.S. technologies, equipment, and services that can support efforts to expand and modernize electricity generation in Libya. More information can be found [here](#).

Congress

On February 24th, Senate Foreign Relations African Affairs Committee Chairman Chris Coons (D-DE) announced that former President Bill Clinton will provide the keynote address at the third annual Opportunity: Africa conference, which will be held on March 10th in Wilmington, Delaware. The conference is intended to provide businesses in Delaware with key insights on trade and investment opportunities in Africa and to call attention to human rights, sustainable development, food security, and global health challenges facing the continent. More information is available [here](#).

On February 25th, House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-CA) announced a March 5th hearing on the FY15 national defense authorization budget request from AFRICOM. AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez is scheduled to appear before the Committee. The hearing was announced [here](#).

On February 26th, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing to examine prospects for peace in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region. The Committee received testimony from U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region and the DRC Russ Feingold, former U.S. Ambassador and U.N. Representative to the DRC Roger Meece, Raymond Gilpin of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), and Ben Affleck of the Eastern Congo Initiative. Clips from the hearing can be watched [here](#).

On February 26th, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing on international wildlife trafficking threats to conservation and national security. Witnesses included Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Kerri-Ann Jones, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Daniel Ashe, and Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division Robert Dreher. Information on the hearing was posted [here](#).

On February 26th, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing on U.S. Policy Toward Sudan and South Sudan. The subcommittee received testimony from U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan Ambassador Donald Booth, John Prendergast of the Enough Project, Walid Phares of the Transatlantic Legislative Group on Counter Terrorism, and Adotei Akwei of Amnesty International. A webcast of the hearing can be viewed [here](#).

On February 27th, the House Foreign Affairs Committee met to mark up the Electrify Africa Act of 2013. Introduced by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA), Ranking Member

Eliot Engel (D-NY), and Africa Subcommittee Chairman Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA), the bill would require the establishment of a comprehensive U.S. Government policy to assist countries in sub-Saharan Africa in developing an appropriate mix of power solutions for more broadly distributed electricity access, alleviating poverty, and driving economic growth. Details on the bill can be accessed [here](#).

North Africa

On February 20th, Libyans went to the polls to vote for a 60-member assembly to be tasked with drafting the country's new constitution. Once its membership is finalized, the assembly will have 120 days to draft the document, which will be submitted to a popular referendum. Information on voting in Libya can be seen [here](#).

On February 20th, U.N. Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan Mashood Adebayo Baderin concluded an eight-day mission to Sudan, where he met with government officials, civil society actors, political opposition leaders, and humanitarian organizations throughout the country. The focus of Independent Expert Baderin's meetings was on human rights issues in Sudan, including press censorship, arbitrary arrests and detentions, freedom of religion, rights for women and children, humanitarian access, economic, social, and cultural rights, and protections for civilians in conflict areas. Independent Expert Baderin's visit to Sudan was summarized [here](#).

On February 23rd, Executive Director of the U.N. Environmental Programme Achim Steiner attended the high-level African ministerial conference on the green economy in Oran, Algeria. Speaking at the conference, Executive Director Steiner highlighted the importance of Africa's natural capital and said innovation and investment in Africa is driven by the need for new energy resources, wealth generation, and job creation. Information on the conference can be found [here](#).

On February 25th, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) issued a news release expressing concern about continuing violence in Libya. UNSMIL noted that attacks are increasingly targeting state personnel and buildings, including judges, security forces, polling centers, government facilities, and diplomatic missions. The U.N. mission also called for an end to the violence that poses a threat to Libya's stability. UNSMIL's observations can be viewed [here](#).

East Africa

On February 25th, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) team concluded a visit to Tanzania to assess the economy's performance under the Standby Credit Facility (SCF) and to discuss a possible new Policy Support Instrument (PSO) program. IMF officials met with Tanzanian Minister of Finance Saafa Mkuya Salum, Governor of the Bank of Tanzania Benno Ndulu, and other government officials. The IMF delegation observed strong economic performance under the IMF-supported SCF program and commended policies to attain deficit targets and address revenue shortfalls. More information was shared [here](#).

On February 26th, *Bizcommunity* reported on the success of mobile payments in East Africa, providing an overview of a number of mobile payment options, including M-Pesa, Airtel Money, Tigo Pesa, and Ezy Pesa. Mobile banking has become especially popular in Africa, where there are more than 650 million mobile phone users, including many who do not use conventional banking. An article on mobile banking in East Africa can be read [here](#).

West Africa

On February 24th, U.N. Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire Doudou Diene reported to the U.N. Security Council on reforms in the country in advance of presidential elections scheduled for October. During a recent visit to Cote d'Ivoire, Independent Expert Diene acknowledged the improved security situation, strengthened state institutions, and increased political dialogue, and urged reform of the Independent Electoral Commission and the updating of the electoral list. Highlights from Independent Expert Diene's report were noted [here](#).

On February 24th, World Bank Africa Region Vice President Makhtar Diop delivered remarks to the

Senegal Consultative Group, which met in Paris, France. Vice President Diop urged Senegal to leverage its strong human capital resources to pursue sustainable growth and development. His remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On February 24th, Senegalese-American hip hop musician Akon, in partnership with Give1Project and ADS Global Corporation SA, announced the Akon Lighting Africa tour, which will aim to bring electricity to one million households in Africa by the end of 2014. To launch the project, Akon is visiting nine African countries, including Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, and Ivory Coast to discuss projects that will equip households with solar panels. More information was shared [here](#).

On February 25th, an IMF mission concluded its visit to Ghana. The delegation met with Vice President Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, Finance Minister Seth Terkper, and Bank of Ghana Governor Henry Kofi Wampah, as well as members of parliament, representatives of the private sector, think tanks, and civil society. While the IMF team observed weakening growth momentum and inflationary pressures that are expected to continue into 2014, the delegation also applauded the government's policy agenda for restoring macroeconomic stability. The delegation's visit to Ghana was summarized [here](#).

On February 26th, the U.N. Security Council issued a press statement expressing concern that overdue elections in Guinea-Bissau have been delayed once again from March 16th to April 13th. In addition, the U.N. called on authorities in Guinea-Bissau to take steps to ensure safe, full, and equal participation in the elections and threatened to use sanctions against any parties seeking to undermine the vote. The statement was posted [here](#).

On February 26th, leaders of the recent U.N. Security Council trip to Mali led a discussion on the delegations activities in the country. After meeting with President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Prime Minister Oumar Tatam Ly, and other cabinet members, in addition to representatives of Malian armed groups, the delegation observed that efforts to reach a political solution in the country must be Malian-led. Information on the delegation's visit to Mali was shared [here](#).

On February 26th, Reporters Without Borders called on the Government of Sierra Leone to drop charges of libelous sedition against journalists in the country. Since October, seven journalists have been arrested and the offices for two newspaper outlets have been searched. Reporters Without Borders requested that charges be handled by Sierra Leone's Independent Media Commission (IMC), an apolitical regulatory body whose code states that journalists should be objective and free of government and opposition control. The full story is available [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On February 19th, U.N. WFP Executive Director Ertharin Cousin arrived in Zimbabwe to observe WFP efforts in the country to combat food insecurity. According to U.N. estimates, approximately two million Zimbabweans are food insecure. In partnership with Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health and Child Care, WFP has implemented a program that is assisting more than 200,000 malnourished pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On February 21st, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe turned 90. As part of the celebrations, thousands of people gathered in Harare at Marondera stadium to recognize the occasion. At the event, President Mugabe addressed the crowd and noted that his victory in the July presidential elections continues to confound the West. Information on President Mugabe's birthday celebrations can be found [here](#).

On February 21st, U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler expressed concern regarding reports that 50 people had been injured at a political rally in South Kivu on Thursday. The rally had been organized by the Union pour la Nation Congolaise (UNC) at Independence Square in Bukavu. The incident was reported [here](#).

On February 21st, former U.S. Representative Mel Reynolds (D-IL) pleaded guilty to an immigration offense in Zimbabwe for overstaying his visa and was subsequently ordered to leave the country.

Reynolds' exit from the country means that he will not stand trial on separate charges for possession of pornography. Those charges have been dismissed. The full story can be seen [here](#).

On February 23rd, former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda was hospitalized for fatigue. President Kaunda became the country's first president in 1964 when Zambia won its independence. Current Zambian President Michael Sata visited President Kaunda at the hospital and reported that he is in good spirits. An article on President Kaunda's hospitalization can be read [here](#).

On February 24th, Facebook launched its new SocialEDU application as part of a pilot online education program in Rwanda. By partnering with mobile companies, including telecommunications company Airtel, the application will be used to provide university students with free educational data for one year. Simultaneously, the Rwandan Government will expand free wifi offerings on college campuses and adopt course materials locally. The launch was announced [here](#).

On February 25th, judges from Pretoria's High Court in South Africa ruled that the Oscar Pistorius trial, due to begin next week, may be broadcast live. Pistorius, a South African paralympian, is accused of murdering his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. Live audio will be available throughout the duration of the trial, while video footage will only be permitted during opening and closing arguments, the evidence of experts, and the final judgment and subsequent sentencing. The ruling was detailed [here](#).

On February 25th, the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) reported it is conducting a study on Nyamuragira, a volcano in the eastern DRC, to see if the increasing plume of the volcano is related to increasing levels of magma at the service – a sign that the volcano may be ready to erupt. Nyamuragira is one of Africa's most active, but least studied volcanoes. Information on the study was posted [here](#).

On February 26th, South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan announced the National Treasury and the Department of Environmental Affairs will move forward on a package of policy measures to address climate change, but the implementation of a carbon tax will be postponed to 2016. The tax, \$11 for each metric ton of carbon released above a 60% threshold, was due to go into effect in 2014, but had previously been delayed until 2015. Instead, the South African Government may soon require new levies on mining companies that will be used to treat acid water leaking from abandoned gold mines. More information was reported [here](#).

On February 26th, police announced that South African political opposition figure and leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters party Julius Malema is under investigation for assault. On Tuesday evening, Malema was involved in a road rage incident, during which he participated in abusing a driver who complained about his driving and damaging his car. The altercation was described [here](#).

On February 26th, an IMF staff team concluded a visit to Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in the DRC. The IMF delegation met with several government officials, including Prime Minister Matata Ponyo Mapan, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Budget Daniel Mukoko Samba, and Central Bank of Congo (BCC) Governor Deogratias Mutombo Mwana Nyembo. The IMF team found the DRC's economy grew by 8.5% in 2013 and forecast an 8.7% growth rate for 2014. Additional analysis of the DRC economy was provided [here](#).

General Africa News

On February 23rd, Christian Aid and Tax Justice Network-Africa unveiled a new report on wealth and income inequality in Africa. The report, which examined income inequality in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, finds the gap between Africa's rich and poor is growing, primarily due to revenues escaping offshore in illicit flows and tax systems that do not properly redistribute wealth and only further disadvantage the poor. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

On February 24th, telecommunications firm Millicom launched the first international mobile money service with currency conversion. Millicom, which operates in seven African markets, said the service will allow African users to send each other funds in their respective currencies without the need to travel or use a traditional bank or money agent. The new service was described [here](#).

On February 26th, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a multi-panel symposium on women's access to water and clean energy in Africa. Panelists addressed barriers that hinder African women from accessing water and energy, as well as potential opportunities to increase access to these resources through partnerships and innovative investment models. A recording of the discussion can be watched [here](#).

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