



## ML Strategies Update

David Leiter, [djleiter@mlstrategies.com](mailto:djleiter@mlstrategies.com)  
Georgette Spanjich, [gmspanjich@mlstrategies.com](mailto:gmspanjich@mlstrategies.com)

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: [@MLStrategies](https://twitter.com/MLStrategies)

ML Strategies, LLC  
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004 USA  
202 296 3622  
202 434 7400 fax  
[www.mlstrategies.com](http://www.mlstrategies.com)

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## Africa Update

**Editor's Note: The next Africa Update will be published on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

### **Leading the News**

#### ***Nigeria***

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued a statement on the recent kidnapping of schoolgirls in Nigeria. Congresswoman Bass said that attacks against children and the targeting of schools are prohibited by international law. She called on the abductors to release the girls immediately and unharmed so that they can return home safely. The full statement was issued [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, *The Telegraph* reported that United Kingdom (U.K.) Government officials were in preliminary talks with Nigerian security forces on coordination and technical assistance around rescue attempts to free more than 200 schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram. The news comes as Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan held all night meetings with school, security, and state officials to discuss a strategy to attempt to free the girls. An article on the U.K.'s offer to assist Nigeria can be read [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Naomi Mutah, a representative of the Chibok community in Nigeria who has been leading demonstrations demanding more government action to rescue the girls abducted by Boko Haram, was detained by authorities. Allegedly, Mutah took part in a meeting called by Nigerian First Lady Patience Jonathan, where she was detained and taken to a police station. The full story is available [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Eliot Engel made a statement calling Boko Haram's abduction of more than 200 Nigerian girls a cowardly and despicable act and a horrific abuse of basic human dignity and human rights. He said the Government of Nigeria must do whatever it takes to bring the perpetrators to justice and he urged the U.S. Department of State to keep working with African allies to help unite the girls with their families as soon as possible. Congressman Engel's statement was posted [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau released a video confirming that Boko Haram militants had abducted eight additional girls between the ages of 12 and 15 from Warabe village in Borno state, close to the Sambisa forest, where the first group of abducted schoolgirls was thought to be taken. In addition, Shekau threatened to sell the victims into slavery for forced marriages. The video

comes as Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni stepped up his condemnation of the kidnappings and as officials began to speculate that victims had been moved out of Nigeria and into Cameroon or Chad. Developments were reported [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations (U.N.) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) expressed concern for the outrageous claims made by Boko Haram leadership in the video released on the kidnapping of schoolgirls in Nigeria. OHCHR has warned Boko Haram leaders that slavery and sexual slavery are prohibited under international law and any effort of the terrorist group to sell their victims into slavery will be viewed as crimes against humanity. OHCHR's response to the Boko Haram video was detailed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, following a discussion between U.S. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry, the White House announced that the U.S. is sending technical experts to Nigeria to join Nigerian officials in their search for the girls kidnapped from the Chibok Government Girls Secondary School. The U.S. team, assembled by the U.S. Embassy in Abuja, will include U.S. military and law enforcement personnel, who will provide technical assistance on intelligence, investigations, hostage negotiations, information sharing, and victim assistance. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, in an interview with *CBS*, President Barack Obama addressed the kidnapping of almost 300 schoolgirls in Nigeria and said that the U.S. will do everything it can to help. President Obama indicated the U.S. will soon deploy a team of military, law enforcement, and other experts to Nigeria, and said he was glad Nigeria has accepted assistance. In addition, President Obama labeled Boko Haram as one of the worst regional or local organizations in the world. President Obama's remarks can be seen [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution condemning the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in Nigeria. The resolution expressed support for the victims of the Boko Haram attack and called for action against the terrorist group, which has threatened to sell the girls into slavery because the organization does not believe in educating women. The resolution passed by a voice vote shortly after President Barack Obama announced plans to send a U.S. team to Nigeria to assist in the search for the girls. Details on the resolution were shared [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, all 20 U.S. women Senators sent a bipartisan letter to President Barack Obama condemning Boko Haram's abduction of schoolgirls in Nigeria and calling for additional international sanctions against the terrorist organization. The U.S. Department of State has already designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. The letter encourages U.S. officials to press the U.N. Security Council to add Boko Haram to the Al Qaeda sanctions list, which imposes international sanctions against Al Qaeda-affiliated groups. The full letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Dick Durbin (D-IL), and Chris Coons (D-DE) wrote a letter to Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan expressing concern for the welfare of the schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram. In their letter, the Senators urged the Nigerian Government to engage with international partners to address the root causes of unrest in Nigeria. The full letter can be accessed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict Leila Zerrougui issued a press release expressing deep concern for the fate of more than 200 girls abducted by Boko Haram last month, as well as Boko Haram's announcement that it has kidnapped several more and plans to sell them into slavery. Special Representative Zerrougui and other U.N. officials continue to dialogue with the Nigerian Government, calling on authorities to redouble their efforts to secure the release of the girls. The press release is available [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank issued a statement on the abduction of schoolgirls in Nigeria, noting that World Bank staff and management recently gathered for a moment of solidarity with the more than 200 victims. World Bank officials said they were horrified by the abduction of the girls and reiterated that every child should have the right to go to school without fear. The statement can be read [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Boko Haram militants killed as many as 300 people in the town of Gamboru Ngala in northeast Nigeria, located along the border with Cameroon. Witnesses reported that homes and businesses were set on fire as gunfire was sprayed into crowds of people shopping at a local marketplace. The attack continued for 12 hours, with the perpetrators targeting residents trying to

escape the attack. The incident was reported [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki provided additional insights on U.S. assistance to Nigeria. Spokesperson Psaki noted that U.S. forces from U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) will soon arrive in Nigeria to assess Nigeria's needs as the U.S. Embassy in Abuja prepares to stand up an interdisciplinary team. In addition, meetings have been held between the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria and the Nigerian National Security Advisor, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and Nigerian police, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other humanitarian organizations on the ground. The entire update was provided [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Pentagon Spokesman Colonel Steve Warren clarified that the U.S. has no plans to launch military operations in Nigeria. He said that fewer than ten troops will be included as part of the U.S. assistance team to Nigeria, and they will be tasked with supporting communications, logistics, and intelligence planning. In addition, Colonel Warren noted there are already about 70 military personnel in Nigeria, including 50 who are regularly assigned to the embassy and 20 Marines engaged in training. Colonel Warren's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announcing his plans to convene a hearing on the Administration's response to the kidnapping of Nigeria schoolgirls by Boko Haram. In his letter, Congressman Royce called on the Administration to develop a longer-term approach to help Nigeria combat Boko Haram. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, British special forces officially joined the growing international effort to rescue the schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram militants in Nigeria. British forces in Nigeria have begun a process to evaluate their capacity to assist in the rescue effort and will be joined in the coming days by a team of Whitehall experts from the Ministry of Defense, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Department for International Development. The U.K.'s participation in the response effort was described [here](#).

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Committee will meet to markup a resolution condemning Boko Haram's abduction of female students in the northeastern provinces of Nigeria. Information on the markup was posted [here](#).

### ***Djibouti***

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, in a meeting hosted at the White House, U.S. President Barack Obama and Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh finalized a 10-year, \$63 million per year lease to preserve the U.S. military base at Camp Lemmonier. Camp Lemmonier, which houses U.S. conventional forces as well as special forces and aerial drones, is the only U.S. military installation in sub-Saharan Africa. The agreement also includes an option to extend the lease for an additional ten years without renegotiating the terms, as well as a provision to extend the agreement for ten years beyond that at a renegotiated rate. The agreement was detailed [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, following the meeting between President Barack Obama and President Ismail Omar Guelleh, the White House issued a joint statement from the two leaders expressing their shared vision for a secure, stable, and prosperous Horn of Africa and ways the U.S. and Djibouti can cooperate to strengthen and deepen the bilateral, strategic partnership. The joint statement elaborates on initiatives in economic, trade, and energy cooperation, regional integration, youth empowerment, and development, defense, security and regional counterterrorism, and shared efforts in Somalia. The entire joint statement can be accessed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey met with Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh at the Pentagon to discuss the White House's announcement of a new long-term lease for the American base at Camp Lemmonier in Djibouti. Secretary Hagel reiterated the U.S. commitment and partnership for regional security in the Horn of Africa and efforts to prevent Al Qaeda and Al Shabaab from threatening stability and the free flow of commerce. He also lauded Djibouti's contributions to the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). A readout of the meeting was provided [here](#).

## South Sudan

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reported that opposition forces had taken control of Lich University and continue to inhibit the ability of UNMISS personnel to carry out humanitarian activities. UNMISS said it has warned rebels that the use of educational institutions for military purposes represents a violation of international law. Details were posted [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) shared new statistics on the scope of the crisis in South Sudan. Based on developments over the past two weeks, OCHA now estimates that recent fighting in parts of South Kordofan and Blue Nile states has displaced approximately 16,500 people. The World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) are continuing to provide support to South Sudan. The update from OCHA can be viewed [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, U.S. Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Chris Coons (D-DE), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Dick Durbin (D-IL), John McCain (R-AZ), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), and Tim Kaine (D-VA) sent a letter to President Barack Obama expressing concern over the escalating crisis in South Sudan. The Senators urged that U.S. leadership is essential due to intensifying violence and that the U.S. must put South Sudanese leaders on notice that there will be consequences if the status quo continues. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the WFP and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) issued a joint news release warning of ongoing challenges to ensuring access for humanitarian actors in South Sudan. Noting that it is becoming increasingly difficult to reach an estimated 125,000 refugees in Maban County of Upper Nile state, U.N. officials suggested that if road access remains blocked, costly airlift operations might become necessary. The news release was published [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, following a recent visit to South Sudan, U.N. Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide Adama Dieng briefed the U.N. Security Council on increasing ethnic violence and revenge killings in South Sudan, encouraging the Security Council to take further action to address the conflict. Special Advisor Dieng noted this is especially important after observing risk factors of genocide and other atrocities, including separation of persons based on ethnicity and incitement to violence. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Juba, making a previously unannounced visit to South Sudan as part of his trip to Africa. Secretary Kerry met with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and held solo press availability. Secretary Kerry then met with civil society members, visited the U.S. Embassy in Juba, met with local leaders at a UNMISS camp for internally displaced people, and met with U.N. Special Representative to South Sudan Hilde Johnson. Secretary Kerry's activities in South Sudan were described [here](#). Remarks from Secretary Kerry's meeting with staff at the U.S. Embassy in Juba were posted [here](#). A transcript of Secretary Kerry's press availability in South Sudan is available [here](#).

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, just days after Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to South Sudan to meet with both South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar in an attempt to reignite peace talks, violent clashes broke out once again in Bentiu. Over the weekend, government forces moved in around the city, while forces loyal to former Vice President Machar attempted to hold control. The escalation in violence comes at the close of Secretary Kerry's trip to Africa and his threat to impose sanctions on both sides in the South Sudanese conflict. Developments in South Sudan were chronicled [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued remarks condemning new military offensives by South Sudanese Government forces against opposition-held positions in Nassir, Bentiu, and throughout South Sudan's Unity and Jonglei states. Secretary Kerry noted the attacks are a violation of the January 23<sup>rd</sup> cessation of hostilities agreement and contradict recent commitments made by South Sudanese President Salva Kiir. He called on President Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar to initiate discussions on an inclusive political transition. Secretary Kerry's remarks were posted [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, USAID's Impact Blog featured a post on reuniting families separated during the conflict in South Sudan, authored by USAID's Response Manager for the South Sudan Response Management

Team Eileen Simoes. The blog post details five programs launched by USAID since the resurgence of violence in South Sudan in December that are aimed at reuniting boys and girls with their surviving family members and caregivers. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, concluding a visit to Juba, South Sudan, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar need to sit down later this week to address South Sudan's ongoing political conflict through dialogue. Peace talks are scheduled to begin on Friday in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While in South Sudan, Secretary-General Ban also visited civilian protection sites. Secretary-General Ban's one-day visit to South Sudan was summarized [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, UNHCR reported that 11,000 people had crossed the border from South Sudan into Ethiopia in the past three days to escape continuing violence. The exodus follows the offensive launched by government forces to recapture rebel stronghold of Nasir over the weekend. As a result of more refugees moving into Sudan, UNHCR indicated it is rushing food and medical supplies to the Ethiopian border. More information was shared [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, senior State Department and Treasury Department officials hosted a teleconference to provide background on Secretary of State John Kerry's recent trip to South Sudan and the newly announced U.S. sanctions. Immediately prior to the briefing, the State Department's Office of Foreign Asset Controls (OFAC) rolled out sanctions on Commander of the Presidential Guard for the South Sudanese Government Marial Chanuong, who reports to South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, as well as anti-government force leader, Peter Gadet, who is commanding troops loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar who are responsible for some of the recent violence in Bentiu. The sanctions impose a ban on travel to the U.S. and the freezing of any assets under U.S. authority. The background briefing was transcribed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez (D-NJ) issued a statement following the Treasury Department's decision to sanction individuals on both sides of the conflict in South Sudan. Senator Menendez welcomed the announcement and reiterated his call for a strengthened U.N. peacekeeping mandate, as well as the suspension of security assistance and other measures available to the Administration to hold South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar accountable in peace negotiations. The full statement was published [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, South Sudanese Information Minister Michael Makuei Lueth said the Government has ordered a one-month suspension of attacks on rebel forces in an effort to allow peace talks being held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to advance. While the pause on military actions have been ordered, South Sudanese officials made clear that government forces would still have full authority to retaliate if attacked by rebel forces. Face-to-face talks between President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar are scheduled to begin on Friday. Developments in South Sudan were noted [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, addressing the U.N. Committee on World Food Security, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon cautioned that South Sudan is on the brink of a food security calamity. Secretary-General Ban speculated that as many as one million people in South Sudan could be at risk for famine over the next several months, especially as malnutrition rates are on the rise. Excerpts from Secretary-General Ban's address were highlighted [here](#).

### ***Democratic Republic of Congo***

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Kerry met with DRC Foreign Minister Raymond Tshibanda and visited a microfinance-funded medical supply store to deliver brief remarks on African entrepreneurship. Additionally, Secretary Kerry visited the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa, met with participants from the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), and met with U.N. Special Representative to the DRC and head of the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) Martin Kobler. Secretary Kerry's schedule in the DRC was detailed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks with DRC Foreign Minister Tshibanda before their meeting were transcribed [here](#). Secretary Kerry's speech delivered at the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa can be read [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry continued his visit to Kinshasa. Secretary Kerry met with DRC President Joseph Kabila, followed by separate meetings with democracy and elections officials. In

addition, Secretary Kerry toured the USAID-funded Fistula Clinic at St. Joseph's Hospital before departing the DRC for Angola. Secretary Kerry's appointments in the DRC were listed [here](#). A transcript of Secretary Kerry's press availability in the DRC was issued [here](#). Secretary Kerry's comments after touring the Fistula Clinic at St. Joseph's hospital are available [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, while in the DRC, Secretary of State John Kerry said the U.S. would consider increasing assistance tied to elections in the DRC from \$12 million to \$30 million, so long as certain conditions are met. Among those conditions, Secretary Kerry asked DRC officials to continue to pursue efforts to demobilize armed groups. Secretary Kerry also noted the DRC will have to continue preparations so that elections will be held on time. In addition, Secretary Kerry indicated the U.S. may choose to cut assistance to the DRC should DRC President Joseph Kabila move to change the constitutional limit of two consecutive presidential terms. The full story can be seen [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and the DRC Russ Feingold led a press briefing on Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to the DRC and recent developments in the region. Special Envoy Feingold indicated that Secretary Kerry's visit was intended to commend the DRC on its positive economic growth, the admirable performance of the military, and efforts to alleviate the threat posed by M23 rebels over the past year. Additionally, Special Envoy Feingold raised a number of challenges still facing the DRC, including the threats posed by other armed groups, such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda. (FDLR). Special Envoy Feingold's remarks were posted [here](#).

### ***Ethiopia***

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he met with Commission of Inquiry Chair Olusegun Obsanjo before continuing on to Juba for additional meetings in South Sudan. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry continued his visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While in Addis Ababa, Secretary Kerry delivered a speech on the U.S. commitment to Africa. He also met with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, before departing for the DRC. A transcript of Secretary Kerry's speech was posted [here](#). More information on Secretary Kerry's schedule was shared [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks on the U.S. commitment to Africa can be read [here](#).

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, senior State Department officials provided a background briefing following Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to Ethiopia. Officials provided a readout of Secretary Kerry's meeting with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, noting their discussion of Somalia's progress since the country's collapse 25 years ago, efforts to combat Al Shabaab, and programs for Somalia's large youth population. A transcript of the background briefing was provided [here](#).

### ***Angola***

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Luanda, Angola. Upon his arrival, Secretary Kerry toured a General Electric (GE) facility in the capital with GE, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and ExxonMobil representatives, met with staff and families at the U.S. Embassy, and met with local civil society leaders. Secretary Kerry's schedule while in Luanda can be viewed [here](#). The Secretary's speech while touring the GE facility in Luanda was posted [here](#). Secretary Kerry's remarks at the U.S. Embassy in Angola can be found [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry continued his visit to Angola. Secretary Kerry met with Angolan Foreign Minister Georges Chikoti and Angola's Ministry of Finance. The leaders discussed bilateral relations, as well as the recent \$600 million U.S. Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank credit issued that allowed Angola to purchase Boeing aircraft. Secretary Kerry's remarks with Foreign Minister Chikoti after their meeting were transcribed [here](#). A transcript of Secretary Kerry's solo press availability was posted [here](#).

### ***Egypt***

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, in a public interview given by Egyptian presidential candidate and former Minister of Defense General Abdul Fattah Al Sisi said that former U.S. Ambassador to Egypt and now U.S.

Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Anne Patterson had asked him to wait a day or two before ousting Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi last July. The interview is the first indication that U.S. officials were aware of a potential military takeover in Egypt before it occurred and were involved in trying to prevent it. Meanwhile, many of General Sisi's supporters continue to accuse the U.S. of supporting deposed President Morsi. The full story is available [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, White House officials indicated that President Obama will soon announce his intent to nominate Ambassador Robert Stephen Beecroft to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Egypt. Ambassador Beecroft has been serving as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq since 2012. Obama Administration officials had previously wanted to nominate former U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford for the position, but the Egyptian Government signaled that they viewed Ambassador Ford as too close to Islamist parties in the Middle East. Once nominated, Ambassador Beecroft will need to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The forthcoming nomination was detailed [here](#).

### ***Central African Republic***

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, following a recent visit to the Central African Republic (CAR), Director of OCHA John Ging called on the international community to uphold its pledges and responsibility to provide security and resources to address the ongoing conflict and to prevent the country from splitting between Christians and Muslims. Director Ging expressed concern that the ethnic and religious dimensions of the CAR conflict are resulting in the segmentation and segregation of communities and leading ordinary people to become radicalized. Feedback from Director Ging was shared [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the WFP announced an acceleration of its operations in the CAR, noting that the U.N. agency distributed 60% more food in April than it did in March. By the end of the month, more than 200,000 people had received food assistance, including 24,700 children. In addition, the WFP recently launched a program in the CAR to help target assistance to the most malnourished people. The WFP's efforts in the CAR were described [here](#).

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, during a visit to Bangui, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous said no effort will be spared in the deployment of the newly mandated 12,000-strong U.N. mission to the CAR to be known as the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA). The U.N. mission, approved by the U.N. Security Council on April 10<sup>th</sup>, will take over for the African-led International Support Mission (MISCA) on September 15<sup>th</sup>. More information was provided [here](#).

### ***South Africa***

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, South Africans headed to the polls to vote in general elections. Even before the polls opened, the African National Congress (ANC) was expected to win more than 60% of the vote, despite low satisfaction ratings for President Jacob Zuma and other ANC leaders. Competing against the ANC in the elections were liberal pro-business party the Democratic Alliance (DA), led by anti-apartheid activities Helen Zille, and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EEF), launched last year by former ANC youth leader Julius Malema. An article on the South African elections can be read [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement congratulating South Africa on its national and provincial elections. In his remarks, Secretary Kerry noted these elections mark the fifth round of inclusive elections since the end of apartheid in 1994, as well as the first elections since the passing of former South African President Nelson Mandela. Secretary Kerry said the U.S. looks forward to working with the new Government of South Africa on building strong, democratic institutions and a prosperous future for its citizens. The full statement on the South African elections can be read [here](#).

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission released preliminary results in the recent round of voting. With ballots counted from 60% of all voting districts, the Independent Electoral Commission reported the ANC had captured 63% of the vote, with the DA totaling 22.5% of the vote, trailed by the EEF with 4% of the vote. Voter turnout was estimated above 70% of South Africa's 25 million registered voters. The preliminary vote counts were announced [here](#).

### **United States – Africa Relations**

## **White House**

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Marcia Denise Occomy as the U.S. Director for the African Development Bank (AfDB). Occomy is currently a Specialist Leader in the Emerging Markets Division of Deloitte Consulting, where she has partnered with USAID on a number of assignments, including in South Sudan and Egypt. Her nomination was announced [here](#).

## **State Department**

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, senior State Department officials provided a background briefing previewing Secretary of State John Kerry's upcoming travel to Ethiopia, South Sudan, the DRC, and Angola. Officials noted that this is Secretary Kerry's second trip to Africa since beginning his tenure as Secretary of State. A transcript of the press briefing previewing Secretary Kerry's trip can be accessed [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry was on overseas travel, making stops in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Juba, South Sudan, Kinshasa, DRC, and Luanda, Angola, to encourage democratic development, promote respect for human rights, advance peace and security, engage with civil society and young African leaders, promote trade, investment, and development partnerships and to highlight U.S. investments in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Secretary Kerry was accompanied by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and the DRC Russ Feingold, U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan Donald Booth, Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell, Vice Admiral Kurt Tidd of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) President Elizabeth Littlefield. Secretary Kerry's travel was announced [here](#).

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, in conjunction with Secretary of State John Kerry's travel to Africa, *The Washington Post* published an op-ed authored by Secretary Kerry outlining how the U.S. can help support Africa's rise. Secretary Kerry noted that seven of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies are on the continent, real income has risen more than 30%, and GDP is expected to rise to 6% per year over the next decade. In order to secure Africa's prosperity and stability, Secretary Kerry argued that the ongoing conflicts in South Sudan, the CAR, and the DRC must be addressed. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Sarah Sewall was on international travel, including a stop in Nigeria. Under Secretary Sewall is scheduled to meet with senior government officials and other key stakeholders to discuss the U.S.-Nigeria bilateral relationship and efforts to ensure a peaceful, prosperous, stable, and democratic future for the Nigerian people. In addition, Secretary Sewall is expected to discuss efforts to rescue the schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram. Under Secretary Sewall's travel to Nigeria was detailed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry met with African conservationists and wildlife law enforcement officials from 12 African nations who are visiting the U.S. as part of the Wildlife Conservation: Anti-Poaching and Anti-Trafficking International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). During their visit to the U.S., the African delegation will also travel to Florida, Montana, and Oregon to meet with wildlife officials and nongovernmental organization leaders in national parks and nature preserves. More information was shared [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry responded to a subpoena issued by House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) compelling him to testify before the Committee on May 21<sup>st</sup> on the September 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya. While pledging to comply with the subpoena, Secretary Kerry noted this is a partisan effort that is unlikely to bring forward anything new on Benghazi. A video of Secretary Kerry's response can be watched [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Embassy in Uganda issued a security message warning of intelligence indicating a specific terrorist threat against churches and other places of worship in Kampala. The alert did not specify who was planning the attack, but indicated that a group of attackers was planning to target religious sites frequented by expatriates, likely in May or June. It is widely speculated that Al Shabaab might be involved in coordinating these attacks. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry will host a Twitter chat to engagement members of the YALI Network and to answer questions about his trip to Africa and U.S. policy in the region. During his recent

trip to Africa, Secretary Kerry met with YALI graduates and 2014 finalists in Ethiopia, the DRC, and Angola. Information on the upcoming Twitter chat was posted [here](#).

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

On May 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah traveled to Abuja, Nigeria to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa, “Forging Inclusive Growth, Creating Jobs,” where he will discuss U.S. efforts to reduce hunger, including the Feed the Future project, and to double access to energy in Africa, including through the Power Africa initiative. The WEF on Africa is expected to bring together 11 African heads of state and more than 1,000 other African leaders across politics, business, and civil society. Administrator Shah’s participation was noted [here](#).

### ***Department of Defense***

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, AFRICOM Public Affairs provided an overview of the Africa Logistics Capacity Development Seminar, which recently concluded in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The seminar attracted military personnel from Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, and Djibouti, who met with U.S. and European logistics experts with the ultimate goal of developing a strong logistics network for security interventions, peace support operations, and humanitarian assistance. An article on the seminar can be read [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, during a trip to Kenya, U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) Commanding General Major General Patrick Donahue II received a series of briefings at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, including a briefing from Commander of the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Kenya (USAMRU-K) Colonel Tom Logan. Composed of 12 U.S. military officers and located in Nairobi, USAMRU-K is focused on developing and testing improved means for predicting, detecting, preventing, and treating infectious disease threats to the U.S. military and Kenya. Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, *Defense News* ran an article detailing the ramp up of U.S. military personnel in Africa, as thousands of U.S. service members deploy across the continent to advise and train local forces in combating terrorist organizations and local armed groups. On any given day, there are between 5,000 and 8,000 U.S. military personnel on the ground in Africa and participating in training and coordination exercises with African forces. The full report can be found [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, U.S. airmen from the 303<sup>rd</sup> Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (ERQS) collected and distributed nearly 400 pairs of donated shoes and 25 boxes of donated clothing and baby supplies to people at the Caritas Djibouti Clinic. As part of the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the airmen are responsible for executing crisis response operations, recovering U.S. and allied military personnel, and building relationships with the people in the partner nation of Djibouti. An article on the donations can be read [here](#).

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Coast Guard held a decommissioning ceremony for the Cutter Gallatin, which has been used in maritime missions in law enforcement, domestic and international humanitarian relief, search and rescue, national building, and ambassador of good will. The decommissioned Gallatin will change flags and continue to serve as a Nigerian Navy ship. More information is available [here](#).

### ***Department of Energy***

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz distributed an open invitation letter to the U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial (AEM), which will be held June 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Hosted by the U.S. and Ethiopian Governments, the AEM will include a number of interactive sessions to examine effective policies and technologies for expanding renewable energy use, improving energy efficiency, developing mini-grids, harnessing natural gas resources, building governance frameworks to enable private sector investment, and identifying financing for infrastructure projects. The AEM will also highlight President Obama’s Power Africa initiative. Secretary Moniz’s letter can be seen [here](#).

### ***Export-Import Bank of the U.S.***

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Ex-Im Bank announced the appointment of 11 members to its 2014 Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee, who will be tasked with advising the Bank on the development and implementation of policies and programs designed to support the Bank’s engagement in sub-Saharan Africa to help

boost American exports and to create and sustain American jobs. The new and returning members of the Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee were listed [here](#).

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

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Special Assistant to OPIC President Elizabeth Littlefield Benjamin Hunt authored a piece for the OPIC blog on an investment mission to Malawi and Rwanda that President Littlefield led in February. The OPIC delegation held roundtable meetings with investors across all sectors of the Malawian and Rwandan economies and met with government ministers to understand their long-term plans for investment and the investment policy landscape. The OPIC investment mission to Malawi and Rwanda was described [here](#).

### ***Securities and Exchange Commission***

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) released an order agreeing to put on hold the part of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act conflict minerals rule that a recent court ruling found unconstitutional. The order was issued after the SEC published guidance last week directing companies to report on their use of conflict minerals from the DRC by June 2<sup>nd</sup> in order to comply with the parts of the rule that the court upheld. The stay on the rule will continue until litigation on a potential First Amendment violation is completed. The SEC order can be accessed [here](#).

### ***Congress***

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, following last week's publication of an email from White House official Ben Rhodes days after the terrorist attack against the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) called on Secretary of State John Kerry to explain why the email was not disclosed to Congress under its subpoena for any documents related to Benghazi. Speaker Boehner said failure to release the email sooner shows the White House's defiance of the House's subpoena power. Comments from Speaker Boehner can be viewed [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) called Republicans' latest attacks of the Obama Administration on Benghazi a subterfuge, accusing House Republicans of creating a diversion from work on other issues, such as jobs, economic growth, immigration reform, and voting rights. Congresswoman Pelosi's comments are available [here](#).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) said that the recently released email on the terrorist attack in Benghazi prove the cover up and obfuscation of the Obama Administration. He said the email shows the White House's concern for the impact of Benghazi on President Obama's reelection campaign and noted that none of the perpetrators in the September 2012 attack in Benghazi have been brought to justice. Senator McCain's comments were reported [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) announced the House would vote on establishing a select committee to expand the Republican investigation into the terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya. Speaker Boehner's staff said the proposal was still under development. Last year, Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA) introduced a resolution calling for a select committee on Benghazi, which has 189 co-sponsors. Developments in the congressional investigation of the Benghazi attack were shared [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee issued a subpoena requiring Secretary of State John Kerry to testify at a May 21<sup>st</sup> hearing on the Benghazi attack. In response, State Department Spokesperson Marie Harf noted that Secretary Kerry is already scheduled to be in Mexico on May 21<sup>st</sup> and that the Department was reviewing the subpoena. More information can be found [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, in an interview on CBS's "Face the Nation," Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) said the White House created a political smokescreen after the terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya, instead of presenting facts to the nation and the families of the four Americans who were killed in the attack. Senator Graham's comments follow last week's release of an email from senior Obama Administration official Ben Rhodes preparing then U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice for public appearances to address the attack. More information can be seen [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, appearing on "Fox News Sunday," Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) praised House Speaker

John Boehner (R-OH) for planning to move forward with creating a select committee on Benghazi. In addition, Senator Ayotte accused the Obama Administration of changing the Benghazi narrative leading up to the 2012 presidential election to cover up a broader failure of U.S. foreign policy. Senator Ayotte's comments were noted [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) issued a statement announcing that Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) will chair the new House select committee on Benghazi. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) was a strong supporter of Congressman Gowdy's appointment. More information can be found [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said he planned to vote against the creation of a special subcommittee to continue to investigate the September 2012 attack against the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi. A vote on the resolution creating the committee was scheduled for Thursday. Congressman Hoyer said that House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) would be caving to the conservative base in moving forward with establishing the committee, and indicated that he would push his Democratic colleagues to oppose the panel. Comments from Congressman Hoyer are available [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Senators Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), John McCain (R-AZ), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) expressed support for a bipartisan, bicameral panel to continue to investigate the September 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya. While House Republicans have proposed a panel with more Republicans than Democrats, the Republican Senators indicated they would be willing to participate on a panel that is evenly divided. More information can be seen [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the House Rules Committee made the resolution that would create a House select committee on Benghazi publically available. The panel will be composed of seven Republicans and five Democrats and will be tasked with completing a full investigation of the Benghazi attack and issuing a report. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) has objected to the ratio of Democrats to Republicans and members of the Democratic caucus continue to consider boycotting the committee. The resolution can be viewed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the Electrify Africa Act was slated for the House floor's suspension calendar, which would allow the bill to surpass the committee process for having more than two-thirds support in the House. The bill, which directs the President to establish a multiyear strategy to assist countries in sub-Saharan Africa in developing an appropriate mix of power solutions to provide sufficient electricity access to people living in rural and urban areas in order to alleviate poverty and drive economic growth, has widespread bipartisan support with 117 co-sponsors and was expected to pass under suspension of the rules. Information on the bill and its status can be found [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Eliot Engel (D-NY) delivered remarks on the House floor in support of the Electrify Africa Act. In his speech, Congressman Engel said that nearly 70% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa lacks access to electricity, and the statistics are even higher in certain countries, including the DRC, Kenya, and Uganda. He said the legislation will help Africa improve electricity access in a way that helps them to grow their economies and ultimately reduce their reliance on foreign aid. Congressman Engel's remarks were posted [here](#).

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee Jim Inhofe (R-OK) said he believes the Obama Administration will capture Ugandan warlord and leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) Joseph Kony within the next two years. Senator Inhofe has visited Africa more than 130 times and has frequently pressured the Obama Administration to step up its efforts to capture or kill Kony. A recording of Senator Inhofe's comments can be viewed [here](#).

## **North Africa**

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, Libya's General National Congress (GNC) selected businessman Ahmad Mitig to serve as the country's next prime minister, following several rounds of voting and some confusion of the validity of his election. The vote was initially planned for last week, but was postponed when armed men stormed the parliamentary headquarters. Information on the vote can be viewed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, *The Daily Beast* ran an op-ed authored by Eli Lake arguing that Libya could increasingly

pose a threat to the U.S. as Al Qaeda operatives and other affiliated groups, such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Ansar al-Sharia, and Al-Mulathameen, seek refuge in Libya. The article suggests that these groups are staging in Libya to send terrorists to Syria and other parts of the region. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos arrived in Chad to visit with refugees in Gaoui. Chad is currently hosting more than 100,000 people who have been displaced by the ongoing fighting between Christians and Muslims in the CAR. Throughout the remainder of her visit to Chad, Under-Secretary-General Amos will examine food insecurity and malnutrition issues. More on Under-Secretary-General Amos' travel to Chad was shared [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde departed on overseas travel to Morocco. In Morocco, Managing Director Lagarde will meet with Prime Minister Abdelilah Bankiran, Minister of Economy and Finance Mohamed Boussaid, Governor of the Bank of Al-Maghrib Abdellatif Jouahri, and other senior officials to discuss the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council. She was also scheduled to meet with civil society representatives, students, businesses, and women leaders. Managing Director Lagarde's travel was noticed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the American Security Project hosted a conference on "21<sup>st</sup> Century U.S.-Egypt Strategic Relations." The conference addressed bilateral strategic relations moving forward, counterterrorism and regional security, and the investment climate and entrepreneurship. The keynote address was delivered by Amr Moussa, who previously served as Secretary-General of the Arab League and as Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Event logistics were posted [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, following the recent arrest and detention of six members of the blogging collective Zone Nine and three other journalists in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay condemned the crackdown on journalist in Africa, as well as other restrictions on freedom of opinion and expression in the Horn of Africa. The charges against those arrested remained unclear as the international community prepared to recognize World Press Freedom Day on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The arrests were reported [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the World Bank approved a \$380 million credit to help improve the capacity and performance of local urban governments to expand sustainable infrastructure and services in cities across Ethiopia. The Second Urban Development Program (ULGDP II) will scale up support to 26 new Urban Local Governments across nine regional governments in the country, which is intended to address institutional and fiscal gaps that limit the ability of municipalities to provide infrastructure and urban services. Details were shared [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, at least three people were killed and 62 wounded when two homemade bombs exploded on commuter buses on Thika highway in Nairobi, Kenya. It remains unclear who carried out the attack, but Al Shabaab has been responsible for recent, similar attacks in the country. The bombing in Nairobi follows two other bomb blasts over the weekend that killed four people in Mombasa. The bombing attacks were reported [here](#).

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the U.N. Security Council condemned Saturday's terrorist attack in Mogadishu, Somalia, which has been attributed to Al Shabaab. At least six people were killed and several more injured when a remote controlled device was used to detonate a bomb on a crowded street in Mogadishu. In its condemnation of the attack, the Security Council reiterated that this and other attacks will not impact the U.N.'s strong support for Somalia. More information is available [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, in his first official visit to Africa, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and a delegation of Chinese ministers and company executives arrived in Ethiopia, where the Chinese agreed to 16 deals, including loans and cooperation agreements, for the construction of roads, industrial zones, and telecommunications infrastructure. Following meetings with government officials in Ethiopia, Li will travel on to Nigeria, Angola, and Kenya. More information on Li's visit to Ethiopia can be found [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea Sheila Keetharuth called

upon Eritrean authorities to immediately release or charge and bring before a court of law journalists who were arrested in 2001 due to their opinions and religious beliefs. While welcoming last month's release of eight of the detainees in Eritrea, she said that more systemic releases are required in order for Eritrea to meet its commitments under international law. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, U.N. independent expert on the conditions of internally displaced persons Chaloka Beyani concluded a visit to Kenya to examine humanitarian challenges in addressing Kenya's relatively large refugee population. While welcoming the Kenyan Government's efforts to resettle displaced persons, he noted that there is unlikely to be a lasting solution until other challenges, such as the lack of secure land tenure, children out of school, lack of access to health services, discrimination, and low livelihood are addressed. Special Rapporteur Beyani's visit to Kenya was summarized [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the Steering Committee of the IMF Regional Technical Assistance Center for West Africa (West AFRITAC) met in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to review West AFRITAC's progress and engage in planning for the year ahead. In the past year, West AFRITAC has increased its technical assistance activities by 6%. In the next year, West AFRITAC will assist in finalizing automated risk management systems and selective customs controls in Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire, launching pilot medium-sized taxpayer units in Ivory Coast, and strengthening budget preparation framework in Togo. More information can be seen [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sierra Leone's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said the government will soon begin to regulate trade of seafood, and more specifically sea cucumbers. Over the past four years, demand for sea cucumbers has increased exponentially, while local traders in the industry have not reaped the benefits of growing trade. The EPA is now conducting basic research that will be used to develop regulations. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank approved a package of loans and guarantees to support a series of energy projects in Nigeria that will increase independent power generation. The package includes \$245 million in risk guarantees for the 559 megawatt (MW) Azura Edo gas-fired power plant near Benin City and up to \$150 million for the 533 MW, gas-fired Qua Iboe plant in Obeno. While Nigeria has the eighth largest reserves of natural gas in the world, 65% of the population still lacks access to consistent electricity. Additional details on the projects were cited [here](#).

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the WEF on Africa opened in Abuja, Nigeria, attracting heads of government, chief executives of global firms, financiers, policymakers, and development experts from more than 80 countries. Nigerian Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said the theme of the forum, "Forging Inclusive Growth, Creating Jobs," is fitting given the fast growth of the Nigerian economy. This year's forum marks the first time the event is being held in West Africa. Leading up to the event, Nigerian officials ramped up local security. Details on the WEF on Africa were posted [here](#).

## **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, MONUSCO confirmed reports of a Mayi Mayi rebel offensive launched against U.N. peacekeepers in Goma. Heavy exchanges of fire were reported, with MONUSCO forces supporting the national army (FARDC) in recapturing the commercial district of Birere. At least six people were killed in the fighting and several others wounded. The incident was described [here](#).

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, an IMF mission concluded a trip to Gaborone, Botswana, to review recent economic developments, prospects, and policies to help ensure Botswana's macroeconomic stability and growth. IMF delegates met with Minister of Finance and Development Planning Kenneth Matambo, Bank of Botswana Governor Linah Moholo, and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Solomon Sekwakwa. The IMF team noted that Botswana is experiencing economic recovery at a pace similar to some of its largest trading partners and forecasted that real GDP growth would moderate to 4.5% in 2015. Further economic analysis was provided [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, South Africa's National Treasury issued a white paper discussing a proposal to reform its alcohol tax scheme. The white paper suggests that South Africa may begin to tax products based on alcohol content, as opposed to product type, in order to achieve the dual goals of raising revenues and

reducing alcohol consumption. The National Treasury will accept comments on the white paper through June 30<sup>th</sup>. More information was shared [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, following an extended hiatus, the trial of South African Olympian for the murder of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp, resumed in Pretoria. The most recent break in proceedings was due to the prosecution's need to attend to other cases. The conclusion of the trial has been repeatedly pushed back since March due to a number of pauses. The resumption of proceedings was noted [here](#).

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, MONUSCO reported that at least one person died and 10 others remain missing after a boat capsized on Lake Kivu in the DRC. As the boat was sinking, U.N. peacekeepers rushed to the scene and were effective in rescuing 14 passengers. The rescued passengers are being treated at a MONUSCO medical facility. The incident was reported [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, OHCHR said it was disappointed by a ruling issued by the DRC Operational Military Court that acquitted half of the 39 Congolese soldiers (FARDC) accused of mass rape in 2012. The court condemned 26 FARDC members, including two for rape, one for murder, and the rest only on minor charges, including looting and disobedience. OHCHR said the court ruling its evidence of the shortcomings in the DRC's judicial system. OHCHR's reaction to the ruling was posted [here](#).

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Madagascar, where an agreement was reached with Malagasy authorities on a program that could be supported by the IMF's Rapid Credit Facility (RCF). The IMF Executive Board is expected to consider the agreement, which would allow Madagascar to access up to \$47.4 million, this June. The agreement was formed as a result of meetings with President Hery Rajaonarimampianina, Minister of Finance and Budget Jean Razafindravonona, Minister of Economy and Planning Herilanto Raveloharison, and Acting Governor of the Central Bank of Madagascar Vonimanitra Razafimbelo. Details can be viewed [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Africa Program and International Crisis Group (ICG) hosted a discussion on "Twin Challenges to Peace and Stability in Africa and to U.S. Policy: Boko Haram in Nigeria and Civil Conflict in South Sudan." Speakers included Wilson Center scholars Dr. Comfort Ero, Ambassador Princeton Lyman, and Monde Muyangwa. An audio recording of the discussion can be accessed [here](#).

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched The Africa Progress Report in London. The report estimates that African loggers lost \$17 billion and fishermen lost \$1.3 billion due to illegal activity in these sectors. Annan said these lost revenues could be used to spur a green revolution in Africa's agriculture sector and to improve infrastructure to enhance economic growth across the continent. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

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