



## ML Strategies Update

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

### **Leading the News**

#### ***Libya***

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, Libya's Foreign Minister Mohamed Abdelaziz asked the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council for assistance protecting oil installations, oil export ports, and civil airports in Libya. He specified that military intervention would not be needed, but rather experts to teach Libyan forces how to protect the sites. President of the Security Council, Eugene Gasana, told reporters that the Council noted the request. Further details on Minister Abdelaziz's remarks can be found [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Special Representative to Libya and head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Tarek Mitri briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in Libya and warned that recent violence in Tripoli could threaten the political process in the country. Special Representative Mitri reported that the recent turmoil has reportedly been some of the worst fighting since the 2011 uprising against Libyan dictator Muammar Gadhafi. He blamed the recent uptick in fighting on political polarization. Excerpts from the U.N. Security Council briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, clashes in the Tripoli International Airport resumed after ceasefire efforts failed. At least three people have died as Zintan and Misrata groups continue to battle for control of the airport. Two fighters from Misrata were killed. The final death was a civilian who was killed by a stray rocket hitting his home. More information on the clashes can be viewed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, seven people were killed in Benghazi, Libya, when assailants attacked an army base. Ansar al Sharia tried to capture the camp belonging to Special Forces. Special Forces and troops loyal to rouge Libyan General Khalifa Hiftar fought back. More information on the attack is available [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the U.N. Security Council released a press statement again condemning continuing violence in Libya, including around the Tripoli International Airport. The Security Council encouraged all sides to engage in political dialogue and to refrain from fighting, and urged the expeditious seating of the new Council of Representatives elected on June 25<sup>th</sup>. The press statement can be read [here](#).

#### ***Nigeria***

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the *LA Times* reported on the backlash on Twitter against Levick, the US public relations

harm hired for \$1.2 million by the Nigerian Government to help improve news coverage of the Nigerian Government's efforts to rescue the schoolgirls that were kidnapped by Boko Haram in April. Organizers of the #BringBackOurGirls campaign have started a new Twitter hashtag, #SomeoneTellLevick, to help criticize the public relations efforts. The full story is available [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, fighters set fire to homes and killed many villagers in Damboa, Nigeria. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but it is believed that the fighters were members of Boko Haram. There is no exact count, but estimates say that 50 people were killed. In the past two weeks, Damboa has experienced three attacks and it is still unguarded. More information on the attacks is available [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Nigerian Government officials announced that more than 15,000 people have been displaced due to the massive assault by Boko Haram in Damboa. Security reinforcements were sent to remove the fighters, but for most of the fighting, which began on Thursday, the town was left defenseless. Boko Haram has claimed the town, and the National Emergency Management Agency has not been able to establish a death toll. Details on the fighting can be seen [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan met for the first time with the parents of the schoolgirls kidnapped from Chibok by Boko Haram. More than 150 people attended the meeting with President Jonathan after the Nigerian Government reportedly chartered a plane for them. Despite the criticism that President Jonathan has received for his administration's handling of the response effort, President Jonathan attempted to reassure the victims' parents that the Nigerian Government is doing everything possible to secure their children's release. The full story can be read [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, *The Telegraph* reported that in the three months since the kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls by Boko Haram in Nigeria, 11 of their parents have died. Seven fathers of the kidnapped girls were among the 51 bodies brought to the hospital in Chibok after a Boko Haram attack on the village of Kautakari earlier this month. In addition, four more parents have died of heart failure, high blood pressure, and other conditions that are believed to be associated with the trauma of the kidnappings. The situation was described [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon marked the 100-day anniversary of the abduction of the Nigerian schoolgirls in Chibok by reiterating his call for their immediate release and endorsing vigils held for the girls around the globe. Details on the U.N.'s recognition of the anniversary of the Boko Haram kidnappings in Nigeria were provided [here](#).

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

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous briefed the U.N. Security Council on the rollout of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (CAR). While Under-Secretary-General Ladsous noted the U.N. is actively at work on addressing the logistical challenges to deploying more troops, he also highlighted the need for greater airlift capacity and other logistical assistance as the African-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) transitions to the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MISCA), which was approved in April. An update on the transition was provided [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos and European Union (EU) Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid, and Crisis Response Kristalina Georgieva issued a joint statement expressing concern for violence in the CAR targeting civilians. U.N. and EU officials noted recent attacks in Bambari that have left hospitals overwhelmed in responding to the number of people in need of treatment for gunshot and machete wounds. In addition, Under-Secretary-General Amos and Commissioner Georgieva highlighted the refugee crisis resulting from the conflict, and urged more funding for humanitarian operations inside the CAR and neighboring countries. Details were shared [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Muslims in the Central African Republic (CAR) accused the transitional government of abandoning them during Ramadan. Issues with security and the lack of food in camps for internally displaced people have dampened the spirit of Ramadan for many. Many Muslims said that they felt that they were abandoned because of their faith. The full story was reported [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Seleka and anti-Balaka militias met in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo (ROC), to discuss peace in CAR. The aim of the meeting was to come to a ceasefire agreement. Prior to the talks, the Seleka said they would only make demands and would not negotiate with the anti-Balaka. During the negotiations, Seleka rebels called for the partitioning of the CAR into a Muslim north and a Christian south. More information on the discussions is available [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the people of CAR to seize the opportunity of talks taking place in Brazzaville, ROC, to advance reconciliation. Secretary-General Ban said national ownership is imperative and without it, the efforts of the international community would be in vain. Details on Secretary-General Ban's remarks are available [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for High Refugees (UNHCR) asked donors to increase funding for programs in Chad, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and ROC, all countries hosting refugees from the neighboring CAR. The appeal, backed by 16 other agencies providing life-saving relief, is a revision of a Regional Refugee Response Plan. The CAR is one of the most poorly-funded emergencies. To date the \$210 million request is just 31 percent funded. The gaps in funding are hampering the agency's ability to provide basic survival assistance for the refugees. Further details on the appeal are available [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, Muslim Seleka rebels and the Christian anti-Balaka militia signed a ceasefire agreement aimed at ending the yearlong religious conflict in the CAR. Despite the signing of the ceasefire agreement in Brazzaville, ROC, there have been reports of ongoing fighting in Bambari that have resulted in the murder of at least one ex-Seleka soldier by suspected anti-Balaka fighters. Developments on the negotiations between rival armed groups in the CAR were detailed [here](#).

### **South Sudan**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos briefed the U.N. Security Council on humanitarian conditions in South Sudan. Under-Secretary-General Amos expressed concern for the increasingly interlinked crises in South Sudan and Sudan, warning that the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate for hundreds of thousands of people in both countries, including 170,000 people who have been displaced from Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)-North areas since the start of this year. Themes from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, following the attack launched by armed youth and defected soldiers loyal to former South Sudanese Vice President Riek Machar against Nassir in Upper Nile state, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) condemned the attack. U.N. officials called for all offensive operations to end immediately and for both sides of the conflict to resume suspended peace talks under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The U.N.'s response to the incident was detailed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, heavy shooting continued for a second day in Nasir, South Sudan. These clashes have been the largest offensive since the broken May truce. Famine conditions are looming in some areas. The U.N. also condemned the fighting and encouraged the parties to reach a compromise. Details on the fighting and the response are available [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf issued a statement condemning the South Sudanese opposition forces' attack on Nasir. She urged both parties to come to a ceasefire and to protect the civilians that have been harmed by the fighting. The statement also emphasized that Executive Order 13664 makes clear that those who threaten peace, commit human rights abuses, or obstruct humanitarian operations, risk US sanctions. The statement was shared [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Ellen Margrethe Loj of Denmark to succeed Hilde Johnson as U.N. Special Representative to South Sudan. From 2008-2012, Loj served as Special Representative and head of the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Special Representative Loj's appointment was announced [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Director of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) John Ging

concluded a trip to Ethiopia to observe the influx of refugees fleeing the conflict in South Sudan. Ethiopia is currently hosting 180,000 South Sudanese refugees who are primarily women and children. Director Ging called for an urgent political solution to the conflict in South Sudan and warned that there may be as many as 350,000 South Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia if the conflict persists through the end of the year. Director Ging's observations were noted [here](#).

## **Egypt**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, journalists around the world held vigils for the three *Al Jazeera* journalists who have spent 200 days in an Egyptian prison. Wednesday marked the 200<sup>th</sup> day of their detention. *Al Jazeera* has rejected the charges against its journalists and maintains their innocence. The journalists, Mohamed Fahmy, Baher Mohamed, and Peter Greste, were sentenced to seven to ten years each on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Additional information on their detention and the vigils can be found [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, armed men killed 21 Egyptian military border guards near the frontier with Libya. The soldiers were killed when a rocket-propelled grenade blew up a weapons storage facility. Two assailants were killed in the attacks. Five Egyptian border guards were killed in a similar incident in the same area a few months ago. Further details on the attack are available [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, *Al Jazeera* reported that diplomatic efforts brokered by Egypt to negotiate a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas have failed to make headway. According to the report, Qatar is seen as the primary negotiator and is posed to host a discussion between Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. *The Al Jazeera* story can be read [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of State John Kerry traveled to Cairo, Egypt to discuss the situation in Palestine and Israel. He was accompanied by Acting Special Envoy for Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Frank Lowenstein, National Security Council Senior Director for the Middle East and North Africa Prem Kumar, Vice Admiral Kurt Tidd of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki. Secretary Kerry met with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, Arab League Secretary General Nabil al Araby, Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi, and Director of Egypt's General Intelligence Service General Mohamed Farid al Tohamy. He also delivered statements to the press with Foreign Minister Shoukry. The announcement of Secretary Kerry's travel was posted [here](#), and Secretary Kerry's remarks with Foreign Minister Shoukry are available [here](#). A background briefing on Secretary Kerry's travel to Cairo was transcribed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf commented on Secretary of State John Kerry's travel to Egypt. She said Secretary Kerry will be talking with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Egyptians because a ceasefire is needed as soon as possible. She also encouraged any country with influence over Hamas to push them towards the Egyptian ceasefire proposal. She acknowledged Egypt's history in the region, and said the involvement of the Egyptians is very important because of their previous engagement in ceasefires. The US is focused on the Egyptian proposal as the most realistic option. Deputy Spokesperson's responses can be viewed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the US Department of State issued a press statement condemning Saturday's terrorist attack in Egypt's western desert near al-Farafra, which killed more than 20 Egyptian soldiers. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf expressed condolences for the victims and urged that a prosperous and dynamic Egypt requires an environment of security and stability. In addition, she said the US continues to support the Egyptian Government's efforts to counter the threat of terrorism in Egypt as part of the US commitment to the bilateral strategic relationship. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, US State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf said that Secretary Kerry plans on remaining in Egypt for the foreseeable future. When asked, she said Secretary Kerry had no plans to leave Egypt until a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas has been reached. Her remarks can be read [here](#).

## **Mali**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, the Malian Government and Tuareg rebels held negotiations in Algiers, Algeria. The

Government said it is open to giving the northern territories more autonomy, but it was not willing to discuss independence. Prior to negotiations, the Malian Government and rebels released 42 and 45 rebels and civilians respectively. Thus far, Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita said the talks have been productive and both groups are working together to construct a new path forward for Mali. Further details on the negotiations were shared [here](#).

## **Algeria**

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, aviation authorities lost contact with Air Algérie flight AH 1507 as it was flying over Gao, Mali. The Algerian passenger jet was traveling from Burkina Faso to Algeria and carrying 110 passengers and six crew members. Aviation officials in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Algeria, and Spain are currently investigating the incident. Live updates are available [here](#).

## **United States – Africa Relations**

### ***Planning for the US-Africa Leaders Summit***

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission Erastus Mwencha said the August US-Africa Leaders Summit represents an opportunity for Africa to enter into a strategic partnership with the US. Deputy Chairperson Mwencha also said that leaders for AU members look forward to discussing US interests in investing in Africa's future, peace, and security and to enhancing Africa's engagement with the world's largest economy. Comments from Deputy Chairperson Mwencha were transcribed [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker said that deals worth up to almost \$1 billion will likely be announced during the US-Africa Business Forum that the Commerce Department is hosting next month with Bloomberg Philanthropies as part of the US-Africa Leaders Summit. She indicated the deals will be a combination of different types of structures and that additional partnerships are to come. The US-Africa Business Forum will bring together more than 200 US and Africa business people, heads of state, and government officials to encourage US private sector investment in Africa. More information was shared [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield met with members of the African diaspora and young African-American leaders to discuss US-Africa leaders and the upcoming US-Africa Leaders Summit. The meeting was held at the Department of State and listed [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Karen Bass (D-CA) announced plans to host a Growth and Opportunity in Africa Forum on August 5<sup>th</sup> in coordination with the US-Africa Leaders Summit. More information was posted [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the US Institute of Peace (USIP) hosted a conversation with Ambassador Johnnie Carson, Ambassador Princeton Lyman, and Ambassador George Morse on the upcoming US-Africa Leaders Summit. The panelists discussed themes that could, and should, be prioritized at the Summit, as well as strategies for strengthening relations between the US and Africa. A recording of the discussion can be viewed [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) announced plans to hold a Google+ Hangout on July 29<sup>th</sup> about its upcoming Africa Leaders' Visits that are being held in conjunction with the US-Africa Leaders Summit. USTDA Director Leocadia Zak will facilitate the discussion on the upcoming visits to Chicago and Houston to show case US expertise in transportation and energy. The Google+ Hangout can be accessed [here](#).

## **White House**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Virginia Palmer to serve as US Ambassador to Malawi. Palmer is a career member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa. She has also previously held positions at the US Embassy in Kenya and the US Embassy in Zimbabwe. Palmer's nomination was announced [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, President Barack Obama issued a statement honoring Nelson Mandela International Day. President Obama said that Nelson Mandela was a personal hero of his, and that as he had wished the day should be devoted service. The President's statement can be read [here](#).

### **State Department**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the State Department issued a statement condemning the terrorist attack near Kasserine, Tunisia, that killed at least 14 Tunisian soldiers. In addition to offering condolences to the families of the victims and a quick recovery to the wounded, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said the US will continue to support the efforts of the Tunisian Government to combat the threat of terrorism, especially as a democratic Tunisia will only be able to continue to move forward in a positive direction in an environment of security and stability. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the State Department issued a press statement expressing concern for the Ethiopian Federal High Court's decision to press charges against six bloggers and three independent journalists under the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki urged the Ethiopian Government to ensure that the trial is fair, transparent, and in compliance with Ethiopia's international human rights obligations. She also reiterated Secretary of State John Kerry's call on Ethiopia to refrain from using anti-terrorism laws as a mechanism to curb freedom of expression. The statement was issued [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and US Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy Danny Sepulveda and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Associate Administrator Fiona Alexander hosted an interactive video program called, "Internet Governance: The Significance of NETmundial and Nigeria's Policy Priorities for the Global Internet Governance Forum." More information can be found [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the Department of State issued remarks expressing concern about the convictions of human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko and magazine editor Bheki Makhubu for contempt of court. The statement said their ongoing detention undermines respect for Swaziland's human rights obligations. The State Department also reiterated the US commitment to universal fundamental freedom of expression. The remarks were posted [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the State Department issued a statement welcoming the appointment of Mary Robinson as U.N. Special Envoy for Climate Change and the announcement of Said Djinnit's appointment to succeed her as U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf applauded Special Envoy Robinson's contributions to the implementation of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region and welcomed the opportunity to work closely with Special Envoy Djinnit as this process continues. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the US Embassy in Accra, Ghana, issued a public apology after a staff member sent an errant Tweet criticizing Ghanaian President John Mahama. Tweeting about Ghana's financial situation, President Mahama tweeted that everyone in Ghana has to make sacrifices. In response, the Embassy's official Twitter account questioned the sacrifices President Mahama is making. According to the Embassy, the staff member mixed up a personal Twitter account with the official Twitter account for the Embassy. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations Rick Barton met with USIP Senior Advisors Ambassador Johnnie Carson and Ambassador Princeton Lyman at the Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, during State Department Deputy Spokesperson Harf's daily press briefing, a reporter asked about security improvement requests for the Special Mission in Benghazi that were made before the September 2012 attack but not filled. Deputy Spokesperson Harf said the request had not been received in the US by the time the attack occurred, and no one thing could have prevented the tragedy. Her comments can be viewed [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp traveled to Kigali, Rwanda, for the announcement of a joint initiative of the US, Rwanda, Interpol, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to track and arrest the remaining fugitives charged with responsibility for the Rwanda genocide. Ambassador Rapp's travel was announced [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, the State Department issued a media note announcing that Tunisia has closed on its offering of a \$500 million sovereign bond issuance guaranteed by the US, acting through the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The loan guarantee is intended to help the Government of Tunisia meet some of its reform goals and to demonstrate the US commitment to the people of Tunisia by strengthening the government's ability to maintain access to international financing and to achieve its economic development and reform goals. The media note can be seen [here](#).

### ***US Agency for International Development***

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, USAID announced three major HIV and AIDS awards funded by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). One of the awards is for Southern Africa's Capacity Development & Support Project (CDS). The CDS aims to decrease the impact of HIV and AIDS by increasing the capacity of local partners and the South African Government. The \$180 million grant will be implemented over five years. The announcement of the award was shared [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah and US Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell traveled to London for the Girls Summit on Bringing It All Together: Ending FGM through Strong and Effective National Action. Ambassador Russell introduced the Spotlight session. The travel announcement can be seen [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, as part of the Girls Summit, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah announced over \$8.4 million this year to fund programs in a number of countries, including Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Tanzania, to end child, early, and forced marriages. In these African countries, USAID is supporting a study to assess the effectiveness of various approaches, including economic incentives, to prevent child, early, and forced marriages. Findings of the study that highlight the most effective interventions to prevent and respond to this practice will ultimately be shared with other regions. A press release was issued [here](#).

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

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the three-day Command Surgeon's Conference concluded at the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) Event Center in Stuttgart, Germany. The conference brought together representatives from the command's component and sub-unified commands, the Department of State, and European partners to discuss efforts to collaborate and synchronize medical and health-related activities in Africa. Specific topics reviewed included disease and injury surveillance, occupational and environmental health assessment, and medical intelligence. More information can be seen [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, a small aircraft carrying US military personnel made an emergency landing in Uganda after running out of fuel. According to Ugandan police, the aircraft has been returning to Uganda's Entebbe International Airport after a failed attempt to land in South Sudan. No one was hurt and the aircraft was not damaged, although traffic flow was seriously disrupted on the highway where the plane landed. The incident was noted [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, AFRICOM and the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) hosted a workshop in Lilongwe, Malawi, on conflict prevention and peace support operations. The workshop brought together 45 participants from AFRICOM's Southern Accord exercise who will likely deploy to the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), representatives from NGOs, African peacekeeping professionals, and international peacekeeping experts. Additional participants hailed from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Nigeria, Namibia, Madagascar, and Mozambique. The workshop was described [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Africa 14 detailed a recently completed partnership exercise completed in Gabon. As part of the exercise, a team of 15 Marines and soldiers trained with their Gabonese counterparts from the Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux and the Gabonese military and Gendarmerie to demonstrate tactics to combat illicit activities, including narcotics

trafficking. The exercise focused on marksmanship, combat life saver and casualty evacuation, tactical site exploitations, mission planning, basic infantry skills, and patrolling tactics. Details were shared [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, a delegation of journalists and media representatives from various media outlets in Angola and Mozambique arrived at AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. During the five-day visit, the African delegation was scheduled to participate in meetings to increase understanding of AFRICOM's mission, objectives, and engagement programs in Africa and to strengthen the communication and information flow between AFRICOM and media organizations on the continent. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, AFRICOM reported on the successful completion of the Burkina Faso Disaster Preparedness and Response Exercise in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. More than 130 representatives of Burkina Faso's government, military, national media, African partner nations, and international organizations participated in the event, which was hosted in partnership with the AFRICOM Disaster Preparedness Program (DPP). An article on the exercise can be read [here](#).

### **Department of Commerce**

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the US Census Bureau released its annually updated interactive global resource on the prevalence of HIV infection and AIDS cases and deaths. The database now holds more than 164,000 statistics from more than 14,900 sources in international scientific and medical journals, individual countries' annual HIV/AIDS surveillance reports, and papers and posters presented at international conferences. The database can be accessed [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, President and CEO of SEWW Energy, Inc. Kevon Makell authored a post for *The Commerce Blog* on the \$175 million, seven-year contract the company has signed with entities in Ghana as a result of its participation in the West Africa Trade Mission led by Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker earlier this year. As part of the deal, SEWW Energy will work with the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) to help improve the transmission and distribution of electricity in the country. The blog post can be seen [here](#).

### **Congress**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee considered the nomination of Erica Barks Ruggles to serve as US Ambassador to Rwanda. Ruggles is a career Senior Foreign Service officer. She previously served as the Consul General of the United States in Cape Town, South Africa. Before her posting in Cape Town, Ruggles served for more than two years as the Deputy to the US Permanent Representative to the U.N. From January 2009 to July 2011, she led the Washington office for Ambassador Susan Rice. Ruggles' opening testimony can be read [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, *the Hill* reported that lawmakers are wary of President Barack Obama's proposed Counterterrorism Partnership Fund. The Fund would increase deployment of special operations forces to combat terrorists in Libya, Somalia, and Syria. Congress does not want to provide the funds without further details on how funding would be spent. The *Hill* article can be viewed [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, Assistant Administrator for USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment Eric Postel testified at the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing on US security issues cause by international energy policies. Assistant Administrator Postel's testimony focused on the importance of energy security for development. He also promoted the Power Africa initiative, which he said is intended to support private-sector solutions to improve electricity services in Africa. Assistant Administrator Postel's testimony can be viewed [here](#).

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Mark Kirk (R-IL), Tim Kaine (D-VA), and John McCain (R-AZ) introduced a bill to provide certain legal relief from politically motivated charges by the Government of Egypt. The bill has been referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Additional information can be found [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Congressman Bill Huizenga (R-MI) said he hopes that House Select Committee on Benghazi Chairman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) will begin to hold hearings on the Benghazi attacks during the



upcoming August recess. Congressman Huizenga noted the Committee is still hiring staff, but expressed his belief that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton should testify. Congressman Huizenga's comments were captured [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing on "The Troubling Case of Meriam Ibrahim." Witnesses included Zuhdi Jasser of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, and Grover Joseph Rees, former General Counsel for the US Immigration and Naturalization Service. Details were shared [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing titled, "The Struggle for Civil Society in Egypt." Witnesses included Charles Michael Johnson, Jr. of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Charles Dunne of Freedom House, Sam LaHood, formerly with the International Republican Institute (IRI), Patrick Butler of the International Center for Journalists, and Lila Jaafar of the National Democratic Institute (NDI). A webcast can be watched [here](#).

### **North Africa**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, several ousted Tunisian leaders were freed when appeals courts reduced their sentences to time served. The releases have angered supporters of the revolution, especially families of protesters who were killed during the uprising and argue that perpetrators large and small are skirting justice. The governing Islamist party, Ennahda, came under pressure to give up power after two political assassinations, rising Islamic militancy and street protests. Ennahda's concessions to keep power include the release of the officials and dropping plans to ban former Ben Ali era officials from running for political office. The full story was reported [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, 14 Tunisian soldiers were reported killed after gunmen attacked military checkpoints near the border with Algeria. The assailants staged two simultaneous attacks on army posts in the Mount Chaambi area. The fighters attacked with rocket-propelled grenades and rifles during the Iftar. Further details on the attacks are available [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the lawyer of Nazih Abdul-Hamed al Ruqai, the accused conspirator in the Al Qaeda 1998 bombings of two US Embassies in East Africa, said Ruqai is terminally ill. His health has been an issue since he was captured by US forces in Tripoli, Libya, last October. There are now questions about whether or not his poor health will interfere with resolving that issue. The full story can be read [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, Bernard Kleinman, the lawyer for accused Al Qaeda conspirator Nazih Abdul-Hamed al Ruqai, said the Libyan Government was rushing Ruqai's trial by opposing its severance from that of a co-defendant. He argued that the prosecutors are mishandling the case and that Ruqai has the right to attend any hearing. Details on Mr. Kleinman's remarks can be seen [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, Tunisian authorities shut down Nour FM radio and Al Insen satellite channel for allegedly promoting jihad. The decision came after fighters attacked two army posts on Wednesday, killing 14 soldiers. The Government said the unlicensed media outlets were closed after they turned into platforms for takfiris and jihad and noted it would take all necessary measures to deal with the incitement of terrorism on social networks. Additional information on the closures is available [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa decided to close all mosques that are not under the control of authorities or that celebrated the deaths of Tunisian soldiers following Wednesday's attack. The number of mosques shut down is not known. Mosques have been taken over by ultra-conservative Salafist groups since the 2011 uprising. Details on the government action can be found [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the Atlantic Council hosted a briefing on Libya's transition process. Speakers included Fadel Lamen of Libya's National Dialogue Preparatory Commission and Karim Mezran of the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. Event details can be seen [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Atlantic Council coordinated a briefing titled, "The Struggle for Public Space in Egypt." Presenters included Khaled Dawoud of the Al-Doustour Party, and Mirette Mabrouk of the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the World Bank held its first phase of consultations for the new Country Partnership Framework for Egypt for 2015-2019 in Aswan, Egypt. This is the first time direct consultations have been held with a broad range of Egyptians from outside official institutions. Many of the participants emphasized the need for adding infrastructure and fisheries, minerals, and tourism. The consultations were summarized [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, Meriam Yahya Ibrahim Ishag, the Sudanese woman relieved from a death sentence for converting from Islam to Christianity, arrived in Rome, Italy, on an Italian Government plane. Upon her arrival in Italy, Ishag was greeted by Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and later met privately with Pope Francis at the Vatican. The full story was reported [here](#).

## **East Africa**

On July 16<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a new three-year Policy Support Instrument (PSI) for Tanzania. The PSI is intended to support maintenance of macroeconomic stability, the preservation of debt sustainability, and the promotion of more equitable growth and job creation. In announcing the PSI, the IMF noted that Tanzania is expected to sustain its recent positive macroeconomic performance, predicated in part on authorities' intention to undertake further reforms to improve the investment climate and diversify the economic base. Further analysis was issued [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, gunmen in a bus ambush along Kenya's northern coast killed at least three people. According to local officials, gunmen stopped the bus and then sprayed it with bullets. It is unclear how many passengers were hijacked. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Al Shabaab has previously carried out similar attacks. The full story is available [here](#).

On July 19<sup>th</sup>, Al Shabaab attacked a bus in Lamu County, Kenya, killing at least seven people. The group said the attack was a response to the government's false claim that they increased security in the area. The attackers hijacked the bus, and it is still unknown if any people were taken. A spokesperson for Al Shabaab said the group is ready to attack anywhere necessary within Kenya. Additional information can be seen [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, a shooting rampage in Kenya resulted in the deaths of at least four people. The attack took place in Mombasa, and witnesses said two attackers shot at people indiscriminately. The police have arrested eight suspects in connection with the attack. Leaflets were scattered saying the attack was retribution for the June raid on Mbeketoni. The full story was reported [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, nine Ethiopian bloggers were charged with terrorism. Seven bloggers from Zone Nine and three journalists were arrested in April for having links to an outlawed group and planning attacks. Judge Tareke Alemayehu told the court that they learned how to make explosives and planned to train others. The judge said their work was a cover for clandestine activities. Their charges have prompted outcry from rights groups who said the cases were an attack on press freedom. More details can be read [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the World Bank issued its latest Ethiopia Economic Update report. The report finds that while rising exports have contributed to Ethiopia's double digit economic growth over the past decade, the recent drops in prices have exposed vulnerabilities in Ethiopia's export structure. For example, Ethiopia's export portfolio is dominated by unprocessed and undifferentiated agricultural products and there has been little upgrading or branding to increase the value of exported units. The full Ethiopia Economic Update report can be downloaded [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, philanthropist Bill Gates received an honorary doctorate from Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. In addressing the audience at the university, Gates said it is important for Africa to decrease its rates of malnutrition and premature mortality or else the continent will not achieve the productivity levels necessary to compete in the global marketplace. In addition, Gates discussed the similar catastrophic impact of diseases on the continent, such as malaria. Excerpts from Gates' address were noted highlighted [here](#).

## **West Africa**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors launched a new Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Sao Tome and Principe focused on supporting macroeconomic stability and national competitiveness and reducing vulnerability and strengthening human capacity. The World Bank has agreed to provide up to \$20 million in International Development Association (IDA) resources over four years to assist Sao Tome and Principe in cutting poverty, increasing growth, creating jobs, and reducing the country's vulnerability to shocks. Details can be found [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Al Mourabitoun, an armed extremist group formed by Al Qaeda commander Mokhtar Belmokhtar, claimed responsibility for the recent suicide bombing in Mali that killed a French soldier. The spokesperson for the group, Abu Assem Al-Muhajir, said the attack was a response to French claims that they had eliminated the Mujahideen. It is not clear if the claim is valid. More information on the announcement can be seen [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, President Francois Hollande spoke in Niger promoting France's new military strategy in West Africa. Under the new plan, 3,000 French troops will operate out of Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Chad. President Hollande said threats from Libya and growing terrorist activity in the region encouraged France to restructure their force structure on the continent. He also spoke to the risks posed by the worsening Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Additional information on President Hollande's remarks was shared [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the Nigerian State Health Commissioner reported that six people were killed in the cholera outbreak in northern Kano state. A local charity said the death toll was at least 16 people. There are concerns that the outbreak could become a pandemic. Contaminated water is the suspected cause of the epidemic. Further details on the outbreak can be read [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) urged increased efforts to improve awareness about the risks of contracting Ebola from eating certain wildlife species. FAO Chief Veterinary Officer Juan Lubroth said communities need advice on the need not to touch dead animals or to sell or eat any meat of any animal they find already dead. Fruit bats, usually eaten dried or in a spicy soup, are thought to be the most likely reservoir species for the virus. More information on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is available [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, World Bank Vice President for the Africa Region Makhtar Diop visited Cameroon to hold discussions with Cameroonian authorities, representatives from the private sector and academia, and development partners. During his meetings, Vice President Diop discussed development challenges in Cameroon and how the World Bank can help Cameroon optimize its development prospects. In addition, Vice President Diop visited the World Bank-funded Lom Pangar hydropower construction site, and signed financing agreements for a Center of Excellence in Information and Communication Technologies (CETICs) in Yaounde, as well as a transport agreement that will reduce travel times, improve road safety, and reduce travel and freight costs for people and goods. Vice President Diop's visit to Cameroon was outlined [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the World Bank highlighted the completion of a recent Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for Nigeria following record rainfall and heavy flooding in the country. The PDNA, completed by the Government of Nigeria, the World Bank, the EU, the U.N., and other partners, identified damages in need of more than \$7 billion in recovery funding. The PDNA's findings will also be used to help incorporate disaster risk management into Nigeria's 2015-2017 Country Partnership Strategy. More information can be viewed [here](#).

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

On July 15<sup>th</sup>, the IMF concluded the Article IV consultation with Swaziland and considered and endorsed the staff appraisal without a meeting. IMF staff concluded that Swaziland's economic performance has improved, with GDP growth for 2013 increasing to 2.75 percent from just 0.5 percent in 2011. While noting that business confidence is beginning to show improvement and commercial bank credit to the private sector is growing, the IMF cautioned that Swaziland's long term growth trend remains low and that the economy could be vulnerable to exogenous shocks. Additional analysis was posted [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that he has appointed Said Djinnit of Algeria as his new Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa. Djinnit currently serves as U.N. Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and will succeed Mary Robinson, who recently accepted a new position as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Climate Change. Special Envoy Djinnit's appointment was announced [here](#).

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (SEIFSA) said talks to end the metal workers strike would resume on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Six unions representing metal workers are striking, the largest union of which is the National Union of Metalworkers South Africa (NUMSA). Over 200,000 workers are on strike, and the workers have threatened to increase the number if their demands are not met. Details on the status of the strikes are available [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the world celebrated Nelson Mandela day. For the first "Mandela Day" since his death, events were planned in Paris, New York, Dallas, London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, while a film portraying his life premiered in China. In South Africa, President Jacob Zuma helped clean a school in the village where Mandela was born and encouraged citizens to volunteer. Thousands around the globe donated 67 minutes to mark Mandela's 67 years of activism for South Africa's freedom. Additional information on the day can be seen [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the EU and the six countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland, finalized an agreement including commitments from both sides to protect a wide swath of unique names for food and beverages. As part of the deal, the SADC agreed to give deference to a list of 251 EU geographical indications on agricultural products, while the EU agreed to protect 105 unique African labels. The negotiations were summarized [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank launched a program to mobilize technical capacity and knowledge in an effort to help Rwanda achieve its financial inclusion targets. The program will focus on key areas including: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Finance; Financial Consumer Protection; Financial Literacy; Payment Systems, and Financial Infrastructure. The Financial Inclusion Support Framework (FISF) for Rwanda is a \$2.25 million trust fund executed by the World Bank and financed by the Dutch Government. The funding announcement can be viewed [here](#).

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, the IMF reported on its 2014 Article IV Consultation with Swaziland. The consultation showed improvement in Swaziland's economic performance and business confidence as a result of Southern African Customs Union revenue. Although Swaziland is improving, the nation faces serious development and long term growth challenges. An overview of the consultation was posted [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the World Bank announced Makhtar Diop, the World Bank Vice President for Africa, will visit the DRC from July 24-28, 2014. He is scheduled to meet with Congolese authorities and hold discussions with civil society representatives and development partners. He will also visit World Bank project sites. The travel announcement can be found [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the U.N. issued the Fifth Children and Armed Conflict in the DRC Report, which revealed that the ongoing recruitment and use of children by armed groups remained endemic. Leila Zerrougui, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, said impunity has encouraged perpetrators to continue their violations against children. Details on the report are available [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, South Africa's Kruger National Park revealed they are considering a plan to move some rhinos out to protect them from poachers. Some 560 rhinos have been poached this year. The goal behind the move is to spread the risk to other game reserves. South Africa has 70 percent of the world's rhinos and in 2013 1,004 of them were killed by poachers. Conservationists warn that next year rhino deaths could exceed births. Further details on the situation can be found [here](#).

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, *Voice of America* reported on a new initiative that will be launched by the Groupe Special Mobile Association (GSMA) in sub-Saharan Africa in September to help improve maternal and child health and nutrition. GSMA is partnering with digital security company Gemalto, Mobile Telephone Network (MTN), Samsung, and others to connect mothers and mothers-to-be to local health care

workers to receive nutrition and health care support via mobile technology for no cost. The partnership was reported [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, gunmen attacked a major military base in Kinshasa, DRC, but the Government said the situation had been brought under control. According to witnesses, shooting died down after a half hour. The base was Camp Tshatshi and it was also attacked in December 2013. Security forces deployed tanks to the city center, but they were withdrawn quickly. More information on the attacks was reported [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (SEIFSA) accepted the South African Government's proposal to raise wages by as much as 10 percent. The offer has been extended to the unions for review. Information on the agreement was shared [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) and other striking unions noted they are considering the latest government wage proposal. SEIFSA warned that the government proposal would lead to heavy job losses. The unions have until Friday to respond to the offer. The full story was reported [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, a South African Court sentenced rhino poacher Mandla Chauke to 77 years in prison after being convicted of murder, illegal firearms possession, and trespassing in a national park, in addition to poaching charges. The sentence represents one of the heaviest-ever prison sentences related to poaching. Chauke was apprehended in 2011 after he and two accomplices shot three rhinos and engaged in firefight with patrolling rangers in Kruger National Park. The full story is available [here](#).

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, *Venture Burn* reported on this week's launch of PayPal operations in Nigeria in partnership with First Bank of Nigeria. PayPal's Head of Business Development for sub-Saharan Africa Malvina Goldfeld said PayPal is launching in Nigeria in hopes of helping the country to transition away from a cash-on-delivery approach towards using PayPal to pay for online purchases. An interview with Goldfeld was transcribed [here](#).

### **General Africa News**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, speaking at the U.N. thematic debate on the promotion of investment in Africa, President of the General Assembly John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda noted that Africa must close the financing gap in order to boost the country's development prospects, including by increasing financing from the continent, greater private sector investment, and more public-private partnerships. While noting that foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa has been on the rise since 2009, President Ashe noted that much of that investment has been related to resource extraction and had not led to local job creation. President Ashe's comments on investment in Africa can be seen [here](#).

On July 19<sup>th</sup>, Italian rescuers found 18 deceased bodies on a boat with African asylum-seekers. It is believed that the toxic fumes from the boat's engines killed them. Two people in critical condition were evacuated from the vessel and taken to an Italian hospital. Further details on the rescue can be viewed [here](#).

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, *The New York Times* reported increased economic expansion in Africa. The African Development Bank (AfDB) expects foreign investment in Africa to reach \$80 billion in 2014. A large share of the money is going towards manufacturing, aiding growing commercial opportunities. Africa's population has expanded so rapidly that as prosperity increases, so does the number of impoverished Africans. However, recent trends indicate progress towards sustainable expanding economies. The full *New York Times* story can be read [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the U.N. International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) released new data on female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. According to the data, more than 130 million girls and women have experienced some form of FGM. As a result of a combination of community activism and legislation, Kenya and Tanzania have seen rates drop to a third of their levels from 30 years ago. In the CAR, Liberia, and Nigeria, prevalence has dropped by as much as half. An overview of the data is available [here](#).

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, UNICEF and the United Kingdom (U.K.) co-hosted a summit to mobilize international efforts to end FGM and child marriage within a generation. The summit worked to secure commitments from the private sector, faith leaders, other civil society organizations, and governments. The summit will also share success stories and spread good practice in tackling these issues. The Girl Summit website can be accessed [here](#).

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos announced \$75 million from the U.N. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support humanitarian relief operations in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Humanitarian agencies in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Eritrea will receive \$12 million, \$10 million, and \$2.5 million, respectively. Another \$30.5 million will be used to boost emergency response operations in Niger, Cameroon, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Gambia. Details were shared [here](#).

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