



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

****Editor's Note: The next edition of the Africa Update will be published on January 7th. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!***

Leading the News

Libya

On December 11th, the new United Nations (U.N.) Special Representative for Libya Martin Kobler announced the parties to the country's political dialogue process reached an agreement to set December 16th as the target date to sign the U.N.-facilitated agreement on forming a national unity government and to bring to an end the crisis that has left 2.4 million Libyans in need of humanitarian assistance. Briefing the U.N. Security Council on the conclusion of negotiations held in Tunisia, Special Representative Kobler reported there would be no reopening of the text of the agreement. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On December 13th, newly appointed U.N. Special Representative for Libya Martin Kobler, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni held joint press availability at an international summit on Libya held in Rome, Italy. The leaders noted the 18 African governments and regional governments convened for the meeting, including the European Union (EU), the Arab League, and the African Union (AU) fully support the agreement reached by Libya's rival governments on forming a Government of National Accord. Additionally, participants agreed to support Libya in the implementation of the agreement. For more information, click [here](#).

On December 13th, the U.S. Department of State issued a press release on the Ministerial Meeting for Libya Joint Communiqué. The State Department affirmed full support for the Libyan people in maintaining the unity of Libya and its institutions and argued a Government of National Accord based in Tripoli is urgently needed to provide Libya with the means to maintain governance and promote stability and economic development. The State Department encouraged all political stakeholders to sign the final agreement on December 16th and called on all Libyans to unite behind the deal. A full press release was posted [here](#).

On December 13th, at a high-level meeting convened by Italy on the situation in Libya, diplomats from Europe, Africa, and the Middle East discussed concerns about Libya becoming a breeding ground for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters. According to recent U.N. figures, an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 ISIL fighters are now in Libya. The group also maintains control over the city of Sirte. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On December 16th, the U.N. announced signing of the Libyan peace deal would be pushed to from December 16th to December 17th due to logistical reasons. While political stakeholders appeared to be reaching consensus that a unity government would be the best case scenario for Libya's economy and security, the U.N. cautioned it remains to be seen how armed factions throughout the country will react to the deal. Developments were noted [here](#).

On December 16th, the U.S. Department of State welcomed the announcement of plans for Libyan stakeholders to sign a political agreement drafted after U.N.-facilitated political dialogue in Morocco on December 17th. The State Department noted the agreement provides the framework for establishing a unified Libyan government of national accord to address the country's humanitarian, economic, and security challenges. The State Department again encouraged all political actors to support the final agreement. Comments from State Department Spokesperson John Kirby were transcribed [here](#).

On December 17th, delegates from Libya's warring factions signed a U.N.-brokered agreement to form a national unity government, a deal that Western powers hope will bring stability and help to combat a growing ISIL presence. Under the deal, a nine-member presidential council will form a government with the current, eastern-based House of Representatives (HOR) as the main legislature and a State Council as a second consultative chamber. Details on the agreement can be found [here](#).

Burundi

On December 11th, heavily armed attackers launched coordinated assaults on several army barracks in Burundi. A spokesperson for the army said 12 insurgents were killed and another 20 arrested following hours of gunfire and explosions in Musaga and Ngagara. The attacks on the bases represent the worst violence to hit the country since the attempted coup in May sparked by President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial decision to run for a third term. The full story is available [here](#).

On December 11th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned attacks by groups of unidentified assailants on military camps in Burundi and said such acts of violence can lead to further destabilization of the crisis in the country. Secretary-General Ban urged the leadership of armed groups and the national authorities to refrain from any further escalation of violence or retaliation and stressed that anyone responsible for ordering or committing human rights violations will be held individually accountable. Secretary-General Ban's response was captured [here](#).

On December 11th, the U.S. Department of State expressed alarm for the attacks that occurred overnight in Bujumbura, Burundi, condemning the clashes and calling on all sides to immediately refrain from violence. The State Department said the East African Community (EAC) should immediately convene high-level political dialogue between the government and the opposition to defuse the situation. It also reiterated the readiness of the U.S. to pursue additional sanctions against individuals in Burundi responsible for or complicit in actions or policies that threaten the country's peace, security, or stability. Feedback from the State Department can be seen [here](#).

On December 11th, due to an uptick in violence, Kenya Airways suspended all flights to Burundi and halted operations at the country's international airport. The airline said that a security incident in Burundi had made it difficult for its employees to reach the airport and noted it was unclear when flights to Burundi may resume. Kenya Airways' decision to stop service to Burundi was announced [here](#).

On December 12th, Burundian Army Spokesman Colonel Gaspard Baratuza provided an update on the recent attacks on military posts in the country. Colonel Baratuza reported the Army's response to the attacks left 75 enemies killed, 45 captured, and 90 weapons seized. Additionally, eight soldiers and police were killed and an additional 21 were injured during Friday's assaults. The aftermath of the attacks was detailed [here](#).

On December 13th, the U.S. Embassy in Burundi issued a travel warning advising U.S. citizens against all travel to Burundi and recommending that citizens currently in Burundi depart as soon as it is feasible to do so. Additionally, the State Department ordered the departure of dependents of U.S. government personnel and non-emergency U.S. government personnel from the country, noting the U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura will only be able to offer limited emergency services to U.S. citizens in Burundi. The full security message was posted [here](#).

On December 14th, Burundi announced that former Defense Minister Cyrille Ndayirukiye and five other generals were among the 28 people to stand trial for their role in the attempted coup in May, launched when President Pierre Nkurunziza was abroad. The trial was discussed [here](#).

On December 14th, Burundi accused Rwanda of supporting a rebel group that was recruiting Burundian refugees on Rwandan soil. Rwanda's Minister of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs Seraphine Mukantabana dismissed the allegations when asked about the report. The tensions between Burundi and Rwanda were outlined [here](#).

On December 15th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein sounded the alarm at the unfolding crisis in Burundi and urged those involved to take every step possible to stop the growing violence and engage in a meaningful and inclusive dialogue. High Commissioner Zeid called for decisive action from the international community to stop senseless violence in the country that he warned could lead to further destabilization. His comments were recorded [here](#).

On December 16th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for urgent talks to avert civil war in Burundi as the central African country defended the actions of its security forces and rejected any idea of stationing foreign troops on its soil. Secretary-General Ban's demands were issued as the U.N. and the AU began preparing for the possible deployment of international peacekeepers to Burundi. Further action would require Security Council approval. Developments were noted [here](#).

On December 17th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein urged the international community to take robust, decisive action to avert a civil war in Burundi that could have serious ethnic overtones and alarming regional consequences. He called on the government to take all necessary steps to disarm pro-government militias and bring the operations of the police, intelligence services and other security forces under the mantle of the law. High Commissioner's Zeid's statement can be read [here](#).

Central African Republic

On December 11th, ahead of a vote on a constitutional referendum in the Central African Republic (CAR), U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein expressed concern for ongoing tensions between Muslims and Christians and the potential for the incitement of violence by some armed groups and political leaders. High Commissioner Zeid also raised alarm at the increasing tendency for Christians and Muslims to organize vigilante self-defense groups and condemned the violence that followed last week's announcement of candidates for the presidential election to be held later this month. High Commissioner Zeid's concerns were articulated [here](#).

On December 12th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on all stakeholders in the CAR to do their part to ensure the referendum on the country's new constitution to be held over the weekend would be conducted in a peaceful and credible manner. Secretary-General Ban stated the referendum is a milestone toward the end of the transition in the CAR and reiterated the commitment of the U.N. to supporting transitional authorities and the electoral process. Secretary-General Ban's remarks were recorded [here](#).

On December 14th, additional peacekeepers were sent to Bangui, CAR to maintain security and allow safe voting after violent clashes prevented voting in a key referendum on the adoption of a new constitution on Sunday. According to the Red Cross, fighting involving rocket launchers and machine guns killed five people in the largely Muslim PK-5 neighborhood of the capital and wounded 20 others. According to poll observers, turnout on Monday was high despite the violence, with voters expressing a desire for peace. The referendum was highlighted [here](#).

On December 14th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Herve Ladsous noted voting on a constitutional referendum in most parts of the CAR took place on Sunday, although violence disrupted voting in some areas. According to the U.N., three peacekeepers were injured in cases of violence and intimidation in Bangui and Bria. Noting only two weeks remain before the CAR's presidential elections, Under-Secretary-Ladsous urged attempts to spoil voting must be contained. His feedback on the referendum was posted [here](#).

On December 15th, the U.S. Department of State welcomed the successful completion of the constitutional referendum in the CAR as the first step to a credibly-elected, post-transition government. The State Department highlighted strong participation throughout the CAR, despite threats and scattered violence, and congratulated

transitional authorities for their organization of the referendum. Additionally, the State Department encouraged authorities in the CAR to take steps to contain those who seek to thwart the democratic process. A statement on the referendum was issued [here](#).

On December 16th, CAR Muslim rebel leader Nouredine Adam declared an autonomous state in his stronghold and said he will seek independence, leading the country's transitional government to call for international action against him. The transitional government, which is charged with leading the country of five million people to elections, immediately condemned the announcement, while U.N. peacekeepers in the CAR threatened to use force against Adam, if necessary. Read more about the announcement [here](#).

On December 16th, hundreds of protestors marched through Bangui demanding that peacekeepers arrest militia leaders opposed to the elections to be held later this month. Most of the demonstrators came from the Muslim PK5 neighborhood where heavy fighting was reported during the constitutional referendum over the weekend. An article on the march was published [here](#).

On December 17th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon pledged to urgently review the recommendations made by an independent panel that found that the U.N. did not act with the speed, care or sensitivity required when it uncovered information about crimes committed against children by soldiers sent to the CAR to protect civilians. The report found three U.N. officials abused their authority. Given the gravity of the findings, Secretary-General Ban said he will act quickly to determine what action might be necessary. The report's findings were summarized [here](#).

South Sudan

On December 10th, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker (R-TN) issued a press release calling attention to his remarks on the targeting of aid workers in South Sudan during a hearing on the humanitarian crisis in the country. Senator Corker called on the Government of South Sudan to end the role of its officials in the harassment of aid workers, noting that relief organizations are providing assistance to more than 1.6 million people who are internally displaced and 750,000 who have fled the country. For details, click [here](#).

On December 15th, the U.N. Security Council announced it would increase the U.N. peacekeeping force level in strife-torn South Sudan by over 1,000 to a ceiling of 15,000 troops and police, and extended its mandate for another six months. The Security Council's actions were reported [here](#).

On December 15th, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) issued a joint press release marking the second anniversary of the eruption of violence in South Sudan and warning that ongoing tensions put a whole generation of children at risk. The U.N. called for all parties in South Sudan to uphold their commitments to the Peace Agreement and allow the almost 1.5 million children displaced by violence to return home to continue their education. The press release was published [here](#).

On December 15th, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced an additional \$173 million in emergency food assistance for those suffering from hunger as a result of the conflict that broke out in South Sudan two years ago. USAID's Office of Food for Peace will provide more than 85,000 tons of emergency food assistance, including specialized nutrition products designed to treat acute malnutrition, to more than 2.4 million South Sudanese affected by the conflict. A press release was issued [here](#).

On December 15th, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) issued a statement following the U.N. Security Council's decision to extend the peacekeeping mission in South Sudan. Congressman Royce noted the crisis in South Sudan is now entering a third year and millions of people continue to lack food, clean water, and adequate medical care. He expressed support for the extension and strengthening of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in South Sudan and called for all individuals committing human rights abuses to be held accountable. His full statement can be read [here](#).

Nigeria

On December 10th, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) appealed to the international community for rapid funding assistance needed to avoid a degradation of the situation in the Lake Chad region. According to OCHA, more than 50,000 people have been forced to flee their homes in the area in the

wake of Boko Haram attacks. This has left many of those displaced in need of food, drinking water, shelter, and health care and other services. The situation was described [here](#).

On December 11th, a Boko Haram suicide bomber killed at least ten people in Kolofata, Cameroon when he detonated his explosive near the town's stadium. Following the explosion, authorities found a device for a second bomber who was unable to detonate his device and fled the scene. The bombing was reported [here](#).

On December 14th, security forces armed with guns and arrows killed two young women wearing explosive vests in a Cameroonian town, marking the second raid on Boko Haram militants in the area in recent days. Suicide attacks have become an almost daily occurrence in northern Cameroon, despite a military operation late last month to flush out the Nigerian militants. The attack was reported [here](#).

Rwanda

On December 17th, Rwandans abroad voted in a referendum on a constitutional amendment that would allow President Paul Kagame to remain in power through 2034. The amendment, which was approved by the Rwandan parliament last month, reduces presidential terms to five years and maintains a two-term limit while making an exception for President Kagame. Voting inside Rwanda will take place on December 18th. Experts widely anticipate the constitutional amendment will be adopted. For details, click [here](#).

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On December 10th, U.N. Special Envoy on Ebola Dr. David Nabarro was interviewed on the current situation regarding the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Dr. Nabarro said while the Ebola outbreak has significantly declined in recent months, it is not completely over, making it all the more vital for everyone involved in the response to remain vigilant and focused on stopping the outbreak, staying at zero cases, and preventing re-emergence. The interview was transcribed [here](#).

On December 11th, 166 contacts of Liberia's most recent Ebola patient finished their mandatory surveillance period, bringing the country a step closer to once again being declared Ebola-free. The contacts that were considered at the highest risk of becoming contracted with Ebola included health care workers who tried to treat the last victim and members of his family. According to Tolbert Nyenswah, the head of Liberia's Ebola response, the contacts were monitored for 21 days without showing any symptoms of Ebola. Developments were noted [here](#).

On December 15th, Justin Pendarvis, a public health advisor with USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, authored a blog post on the unprecedented international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The response to the Ebola crisis combined humanitarian and public health interventions, as well as the efforts of disease experts, national governments, ordinary citizens, political and religious leaders, community workers, NGOs, U.N. agencies, and militaries at a scale that helped end transmission of the virus. The full blog post can be read [here](#).

On December 16th, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated its statistics on the number of Ebola cases in West Africa. For the week ending December 13th, no confirmed cases of Ebola were reported. The WHO emphasized Liberia will be declared Ebola-free on January 14th if no new cases are reported. Guinea will also be declared Ebola-free on December 28th, so long as there are no new cases. Sierra Leone was declared Ebola-free on November 7th. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

African Migrant Crisis

On December 16th, the EU announced the start of a \$2 billion initiative to curb illegal migration from Africa. The introduction of the first \$325 million in projects focused on efforts to increase employment in migrants' home countries and to tackle human trafficking in places such as Ethiopia and Somalia. Additional projects will be announced in later phases under the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, approved last month. Details were shared [here](#).

21st United Nations Conference on Climate Change

On December 11th, speaking on a high-level panel on advancing Africa's readiness for climate resilient, low carbon development and the green economy held as part of the U.N. climate change conference (COP21) in Paris, France, African Development Bank (AfDB) Manager for Environment and Climate Change Kurt Lonsway announced the AfDB approved 22 proposals under its Africa Climate Change Fund in 2014. Manager Lonsway said the demand for funds has been so high that the AfDB is looking at expanding the portfolio into a trust to open up investment opportunities from international partners. His comments were captured [here](#).

On December 12th, following the adoption of the Paris Climate Change Agreement by 195 countries, AfDB President Akinwumi Adesina hailed the climate negotiations and the agreement as a historic moment for Africa. President Adesina stressed that African representatives to the talks came as solutions providers, and the final agreement largely reflected Africa's specificities, while accommodating the needs of other developing nations. He also applauded the launch of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative and the Africa Adaptation Initiative during COP21. President Adesina's feedback on COP21 was summarized [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On December 14th, President Barack Obama spoke by phone with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. President Obama thanked Secretary-General Ban for his leadership in achieving the historic climate agreement in Paris, France on December 12th, while Secretary-General Ban emphasized the leadership role the U.S. played in achieving a successful agreement. President Obama and Secretary-General Ban also discussed the deteriorating situation in Burundi and the urgent need to begin internationally-mediate dialogue. Their call was summarized [here](#).

On December 14th, the White House issued a statement on Guinea's presidential election and inauguration. The White House congratulated the people of Guinea for overcoming logistical challenges to participate in the largely peaceful October 11th elections. To coincide with the inauguration, the White House congratulated President Alpha Conde for earning a second term and said the U.S. continues to look forward to working with President Conde and the people of Guinea on shared priorities. Additionally, the White House applauded Guinea's contributions to regional security and expressed sympathy for the loss of two Guinean peacekeepers that were killed in Mali on November 28th. The full statement was published [here](#).

State Department

On December 10th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement on International Human Rights Day, commemorating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Recognizing the freedoms of speech and religion codified by the Declaration, Secretary Kerry called on the Government of Burundi to stem the alarming levels of violence threatening the country's stability. He also called on the governments of Egypt, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, among others, to stop stifling free and open media. Secretary Kerry's full statement was posted [here](#).

On December 11th, Secretary of State John Kerry congratulated the people of Burkina Faso on the 55th anniversary of their independence. Secretary Kerry said the November 29th elections demonstrated Burkina Faso's commitment to democracy, as well as a steadfast desire to overcome adversity and build a free, stable, and prosperous country. He articulated U.S. support for these efforts and said the U.S. will working closely with Burkina Faso's new leaders to improve governance, provide security, and create enhanced economic opportunities. Secretary Kerry's remarks were transcribed [here](#).

On December 11th, Secretary of State John Kerry released remarks congratulating the people of Kenya on their 52nd independence day. Secretary Kerry highlighted his visit to Kenya last May, where he said he observed a population rich in culture, strengthened by diversity, dedicated to democratic principles, and eager to expand prosperity and promote stability and peace for its families and all of East Africa. Additionally, Secretary Kerry said the U.S. values its friendship with Kenya and looks forward to continuing to work closely with Kenya in the months and years to come. Secretary Kerry's comments can be read [here](#).

On December 16th, the State Department and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) launched the Emergency Red List of Libyan Cultural Objects at Risk. The Emergency Red List alerts law enforcement and the collecting community to the types of Libyan cultural objects that are vulnerable to being looted and trafficked and

serves as a tool in the fight against trafficking by transnational crime organizations and Foreign Terrorist Organizations, such as ISIL. For details, click [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On December 17th, USAID's U.S. Global Development Lab announced \$5 million in follow-on funding to Off Grid Electric to be used to test its model at scale and catalyze additional investments to reach more than one million households. In Tanzania, where approximately 40 million people lack access to electricity, Off Grid Electric is providing affordable and reliable light and energy services to 10,000 new households per month to families that lack access to the grid. The funding was announced [here](#).

Department of Defense

On December 11th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) highlighted the recent Coastal Resiliency Symposium hosted by AFRICOM's Environmental Security Program and the U.N. Environmental Programme (UNEP) in Dakar, Senegal. The Symposium brought together more than 85 participants to exchange information and expertise, conduct disaster risk management training, and promote the role of civil-military cooperation. Details were shared [here](#).

On December 14th, U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) highlighted a recent visit of delegates from the Botswanan Defense Force (BDF) to USARAF facilities in Vicenza, Italy. The visit was planned to create an opportunity for U.S. and Botswanan soldiers to discuss challenges and opportunities to assist the BDF in their continued professionalization and development of their military capabilities. More information can be found [here](#).

On December 16th, USARAF noted a meeting between USARAF and the Tanzanian People's Defense Force (TPDF) was recently held to conduct planning for the African Land Forces Summit (ALFS) 2016. ALFS is an annual, weeklong summit that brings together land force chiefs of staff from across Africa to discuss mutual threats and challenges from a regional and transregional perspective. This year's summit will be held in May. The planning session was described [here](#).

On December 17th, AFRICOM shared an article describing the Spanish Joint Operations Command's first engagement at AFRICOM centered on Spain's desire to increase information sharing and discuss possible exercise participation and crisis response planning for Africa. Organized by AFRICOM's Multi-National Cooperation Center (MNCC), the engagement included a full day of staff-level discussions about activities and programs currently underway in Africa. The article can be read [here](#).

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On December 15th-19th, U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Michael Froman and Deputy U.S. Trade Representative and U.S. Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Michael Punke traveled to Nairobi, Kenya to participate in the WTO ministerial meeting. Their participation was noted [here](#).

Department of Justice

On December 10th, Abdirizak Mohamed Warsame became the tenth Somali-American to face federal charges of conspiring to join ISIL. The criminal complaint alleges that Warsame was among a group of ten men from the Somali-American community in Minneapolis who began planning around April 2014 to travel to Syria to fight with ISIL. Three of those men have already pleaded guilty to terrorism-related charges. Another five are scheduled to start trial in May. The full story is available [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On December 15th, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) issued its TradePosts newsletter. The most recent edition of the newsletter highlighted the East Africa Ports Security and Modernization Reverse Trade Mission (RTM) scheduled for March 13th-24th, 2016. As part of the RTM, USTDA will host a delegation of senior public and private officials from Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Djibouti in the U.S. and introduce them to U.S.

technologies, service providers, operational best practices, financing products, and training resources in the areas of port development, operation, and security. The newsletter can be downloaded [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On December 17th, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Board of Directors held its quarterly meeting. During the meeting, the Board selected Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal as newly eligible for compacts. In both countries, the Board recommended that MCC explore potential investments that address regional obstacles to economic growth, in addition to domestic investments, while recognizing the need for statutory authority to optimize regional impact. The Board also selected Togo to develop an MCC threshold program. More information can be found [here](#).

Congress

On December 10th, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Africa Subcommittee Jeff Flake (R-AZ) and Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) introduced the END Wildlife Trafficking Act, legislation to combat the rapidly growing crisis of wildlife trafficking by facilitating a strategic interagency approach, with a focus on country-specific and regional initiatives. The bill was immediately endorsed by the African Wildlife Foundation. A press release was published [here](#).

On December 16th, the House Foreign Affairs Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee held a hearing titled, "Egypt Two Years After Morsi (Part II)." The Committee received testimony from David Schenker of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Eric Bjornland of Democracy International, and Steven Cook of the Council on Foreign Relations. A recording of the hearing can be watched [here](#).

North Africa

On December 10th, the Executive Board of the World Bank met to discuss a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Chad to support the country's five-year development plan. The Executive Board ultimately approved a \$50 million budget to support Chad's efforts to strengthen the management of public resources, improve returns to agriculture and building value chains, and building human capital and reducing vulnerability. Details can be accessed [here](#).

On December 10th, the AfDB and the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Government of Sudan, launched the 14th Edition of the African Economic Outlook (AEO) at an event held in Khartoum. The event brought together representatives of international organizations, diplomatic and consular missions, government agencies and departments, academic institutions, the private sector, and civil society to launch the AEO. The AEO is a comprehensive analysis of economic best practices and lessons learned across the continent. For more information, click [here](#).

On December 10th, an EU court ordered a 2012 trade pact between the EU and Morocco annulled on a ruling the agreement should not apply to the disputed Western Saharan region. The case against the deal was brought by the Algerian-backed Polisario Front independence movement. The trade agreement expanded duty-free status to dozens of Moroccan agricultural and fisheries products imported to the EU. The EU has just over two months to appeal the ruling. Details can be seen [here](#).

On December 10th, the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet received the Nobel Peace Prize. In bestowing the award, Nobel Committee Chairperson Kaci Kullman Five said the Quartet, composed of labor, legal, human rights, and business organizations, helped pull Tunisia back from civil war in 2013. More information was posted [here](#).

On December 11th, Moroccan authorities issued an arrest warrant for Salah Abdeslam, the Paris attack suspect who is at the center of an international manhunt. Abdeslam, whose brother blew himself up in the Paris attacks, has been on the run since November 13th. Read more on the arrest warrant [here](#).

On December 13th, schools in Benghazi, Libya opened for the first time in a year and a half. Schools were shuttered in mid-2014 in light of clashes between government forces and armed groups, including Islamist extremists. The security situation in Benghazi ultimately prompted Libya's internationally recognized government to

move its headquarters from Benghazi to the eastern part of the country. The reopening of schools was reported [here](#).

On December 14th, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the second review of Chad's economic performance under the program supported by an Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, enabling a disbursement of \$28.7 million. While noting that Chad's performance under the ECF has been broadly satisfactory, the IMF expressed concern that macroeconomic outcomes have been impacted by external shocks, including the drop in oil prices and deterioration of regional security, slowing economic growth. A press release was issued [here](#).

On December 14th, the Executive Board of the IMF concluded the Article IV consultation with Morocco, noting continued improvements in the country's macroeconomic situation. The Executive Board said economic growth is expected to recover to 4.7 percent in 2015 following a good agricultural season and improvements in construction activity. Further, the IMF urged authorities to continue with ongoing improvements to the policy framework that have yielded positive outcomes. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On December 14th, Egypt's civil aviation industry released a preliminary report on the crash of a Russian passenger jet over the Sinai Peninsula on October 31st. According to the report, a technical investigative committee was unable to identify evidence indicating an illegal intervention or terrorist action. Meanwhile, Russian and Western governments continue to speculate the aircraft was brought down by a bomb smuggled on board by ISIL. The investigations were outlined [here](#).

On December 15th, U.N. Security Council extended for another five months its interim peacekeeping force in Abyei, a resource-rich area contested by Sudan and South Sudan, calling on both sides to swiftly resume regular meetings to resolve the oil-rich territory's final status. For more information, click [here](#).

On December 15th, International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda briefed the U.N. Security Council on Sudan and South Sudan. Prosecutor Bensouda said the Security Council has demonstrated disregard for its obligations in making empty promises to bring Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir to trial for war crimes in Darfur. She urged the Security Council to do more to demonstrate its commitment to the people of Darfur. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On December 15th, the World Bank published an interview with Country Director for the Maghreb Marie Françoise Marie-Nelly related to the reform of public banks in Tunisia. Director Marie-Nelly expressed support for financial sector reforms in Tunisia that entail corrective measures in the micro-finance, insurance, and capital markets sectors. She also expressed support for Tunisia's vision for a financial sector that is modern, efficient, and innovative, and meets the challenges of growth and economic inclusion. The interview was transcribed [here](#).

On December 15th, Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said President Abdul Fattah Al Sisi will inaugurate a desert reclamation project by the end of the year aimed at expanding Egypt's farmland by 20 percent. More than 90 million Egyptians live on only seven percent of the country's land. Prime Minister Ismail explained the project is intended to help close the food gap and increase habitable space in Egypt. The project was detailed [here](#).

On December 16th, the World Bank highlighted its efforts to team up with the U.N. and the Islamic Development Bank Group to launch a new financing initiative to address development challenges in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The initiative was designed to raise the funds required for countries to cope with refugees, jumpstart economic growth, and rebuild and recover from conflict. The initiative was outlined [here](#).

On December 17th, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors endorsed a new CPF to support Egypt during a critical period of economic and social transformation. Priorities include measures to support fiscal consolidation, reorient public spending towards growth and social services, promote energy security, develop a targeted social safety net, strengthen institutional arrangements to improve service delivery in rural sanitation, and modernize public administration. The agreement was announced [here](#).

On December 17th, Egypt announced its progress towards the goal of increasing capacity of Cairo's Terminal 2 by 8 million passengers. In 2010, the World Bank embarked on an ambitious plan to upgrade and expand the second terminal building at Cairo International Airport. Of the \$436 million project, \$280 million of it is financed by the World

Bank. The project is expected to bring the Airport's total capacity to 26 million passengers a year. The project was described [here](#).

East Africa

On December 10th, the AfDB's East Africa Resource Center (EARC) hosted a panel discussion on violence against women in the cyberspace at its offices in Nairobi, Kenya. The event was held as part of the U.N.'s 16 days of activism against gender violence. In the recent past, Kenya has witnessed gender based attacks on social media, including some that have resulted in deaths, health challenges, and court cases. More information can be found [here](#).

On December 10th, *Voice of America* reported clashes between police and protestors in Ethiopia's Oromia region left several people dead. The region has seen protests in recent weeks in opposition to a government plan to integrate parts of the region with Addis Ababa. Protestors argued the plan will undermine local rule and drive local farmers to lose their land. The situation was described [here](#).

On December 16th, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Mauritius to conduct the discussions for the Article IV consultation. IMF staff observed the Mauritian economy has remained resilient in 2015, despite some difficult domestic developments and the volatility affecting other emerging and frontier markets. The IMF also offered authorities with guidance on the challenges forecasted for 2016, including reducing public debt and increasing the resiliency of the financial sector. Further analysis was provided [here](#).

On December 16th, a team from the IMF completed a visit to Kenya to conduct discussions on the second review of the authorities' economic program supported under a 12-month precautionary Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and a 12-month Standby Credit Facility (SCF) arrangement. The IMF team projected the Kenyan economy will continue to expand robustly, with gross domestic product (GDP) growth estimated at 5.6 percent for 2015. However, the IMF mission pointed out challenges facing the Kenyan economy, including a rise in inflation, delays in infrastructure spending, and weaker tourism receipts. Details can be seen [here](#).

On December 16th, Tanzanian President John Magufuli dismissed Edward Hoseah, the long-serving Director-General of the Prevention and Combatting Corruption Bureau (PCCB). According to President Magufuli, Director-General Hoseah was sacked because of the slow pace of anti-corruption efforts in the country. An article on the dismissal can be read [here](#).

On December 16th, Uganda's Finance Ministry announced the country is facing a shortage of drugs to treat HIV. The gap has been caused by a weakening currency and insufficient foreign exchange, but officials said the government is raising funds to fill the shortfall. In Uganda, an estimated 240,000 citizens receive assistance from publically funded HIV programs. More information was posted [here](#).

On December 16th, private schools in Tanzania were ordered to reduce fees as a part of a government review of education. Free government primary education was introduced in 2002, and from January annual fees of \$19 will be abolished at secondary schools too. However, most state schools request contributions from parents of about \$100 a year, which many cannot afford. The order was outlined [here](#).

On December 17th, Amnesty International warned anti-terror rhetoric by Ethiopia's government could escalate into a brutal crackdown on protesters. A plan to expand the capital's administrative control into the Oromia region has sparked deadly protests. The government has accused Oromo protesters of links with terror groups and trying to start a revolution. Read more about the warning [here](#).

On December 17th, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reported more than 540 people in Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp have been diagnosed with cholera in the past several weeks. The Dadaab camps is the largest in Kenya, providing shelter and assistance to approximately 350,000 predominantly Somali and South Sudanese refugees. MSF warned the cholera epidemic in the camp may grow worse if heavy rains continue. The cholera outbreak was highlighted [here](#).

West Africa

On December 9th, AfDB President Akinwumi Adesina delivered remarks on International Anti-Corruption Day at AfDB headquarters in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. President Adesina noted Africa loses \$148 billion to corruption every year. By comparison, he said it would cost just \$55 billion a year to light up and power Africa, and linked corruption with the lack of lighting and energy on the continent. Excerpts from President Adesina's speech were highlighted [here](#).

On December 10th, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors discussed a three-year CPF for Mali and approved an International Development Association (IDA) credit of \$50 million for the Second Recovery and Governance Reform Support Operation. The World Bank's priorities in Mali over the next several years focus on improving governance, creating economic opportunities, and building resistance to development challenges. Details can be seen [here](#).

On December 10th Gambian President Yahya Jammeh declared Gambia an Islamic State during an address to supporters in the town of Brufut. While noting that roughly 90 percent of the country identifies as Muslims, President Jammeh said the Christian minority, primarily residing in the western part of the country would be respected and that women would not be held to a dress code. Excerpts from President Jammeh's remarks can be read [here](#).

On December 10th, *Yahoo* reported the parliament in Sierra Leone passed a law legalizing abortion. The Safe Abortion Act will replace an 1861 law that banned abortions in the country unless it was necessary to save the mother's life. Activists say the legalization of abortions will save countless lives in Sierra Leone, which has the world's highest maternal death rate. The passage of the law was reported [here](#).

On December 12th, AfDB President Akinwumi Adesina received an Honorary Doctorate Degree from his alma mater, Obafemi Awolowe University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. While in Nigeria, President Adesina also paid a courtesy call on the Governor of Osun State, Ogbeni Rauf Adesoji Aregbesola and held discussions on the challenges to development in the state. President Adesina encouraged local officials to engage in public private partnerships to finance agriculture, tap into the Agricultural Equipment Hiring Enterprise to ensure access to modern farming tools, and invest heavily in energy. His trip to Nigeria was outlined [here](#).

On December 14th, attackers fired rockets early at Mali's northern city of Gao, which serves a base for U.N. peacekeepers and a French regional security force. Four explosions were reported near Gao's airport. The precise target was not immediately clear. The incident was noted [here](#).

On December 15th, the Executive Board of the IMF completed the first review of Senegal's economic performance under the program supported by the Policy Support Instrument (PSI) approved in June 2015. While concluding that Senegal's economic performance was broadly satisfactory, the IMF recognized authorities are challenged with mitigating risks related to tax revenue shortfalls and accelerating structural reforms to sustain growth momentum. The IMF projects economic growth of 5.1 percent for 2015. More information was posted [here](#).

On December 15th, an IMF mission concluded a visit to Conakry, Guinea to conduct discussions on the sixth and seventh reviews of the program supported by an ECF. The consultations highlighted that the Ebola epidemic and the decline in commodity prices led to a decline in gold production and exports, foreign exchange earnings, and government revenue, and that policy slippages have increases macroeconomic tensions. With a focus on tightening policies in 2016 to reduce economic imbalances, IMF staff and Guinean authorities reached understanding on a set of policies that could be supported by the next disbursement under the ECF. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On December 15th, at a news conference held to mark the opening of the WTO ministerial meeting in Nairobi, Kenyan Foreign Minister Amina Mohamed said one of the goals for the meeting would be to determine how the WTO moves forward after years of talks without any major successes. According to Foreign Minister Mohamed, the WTO has negotiated only minor and elusive trade deals, without any real progress on major trade agreements. Her remarks were recorded [here](#).

On December 15th, Nigerian police opened fire on unarmed Shiite Muslim protestors in Kaduna, leaving three dead. The incident occurred as activists in Nigeria accused soldiers of having killed hundreds of Shiites in the town of Zaria over the weekend. Nigerian police, however, denied the accusations and said that forces responded with tear gas when a group of Shiites attempted to attack a police station. The full story is available [here](#).

On December 15th, Ghanaian authorities arrested a suspected arms dealer from Burkina Faso in the city of Kumasi, along with four other people suspected of buying weapons. The 72-year-old-man confessed to smuggling arms from Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Niger. According to police, the man was found in his bedroom with weapons capable of shooting down an aircraft. The arrest was reported [here](#).

On December 15th, Nigerien authorities arrested four senior military leaders, including former military Chief of Staff Souleymane Salou and Lieutenant Colonel Dan Haoua, leader of the air force base in Niamey. No justification was provided for the arrests, leading analysts to express concern the detentions could be signs of political tensions rising ahead of the country's elections, due to occur early next year. More information was posted [here](#).

On December 16th, the Nigerien Government announced the scheduling of presidential and legislative elections for February 21st. Campaigning will be permitted from January 30th to February 19th. Incumbent President Mahamdou Issoufou of the Niger Party for Democracy and Socialism is largely favored to win a second term. President Issoufou's primary competition is expected to be for Prime Minister Seyni Oumarou, who finished second in the 2011 presidential election. The Nigerien presidential election was analyzed [here](#).

On December 17th, Gabon announced its progress in reducing poverty in the country. After posting rates of 4.3 percent in 2014 and 5.6 percent in 2013, growth in Gabon slowed to approximately 4.1 percent in 2015, due primarily to the fall in commodity prices that led to a sharp contraction in public investment. Negative growth in the construction and public works sector has been offset in part by a better-than-anticipated performance of the extractive industries. Oil and manganese production increased by 6.6 percent and 6 percent, respectively, at the end of the first half of 2015, boosting trade by 2.3 percent. Read more on the progress report [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On December 9th, the Executive Board of the IMF concluded the Article IV consultation with Swaziland. The IMF welcomed Swaziland's recovery since the 2010-2011 fiscal crisis, but also stressed that significant challenges remain, including a prospective decline in the revenues from the Southern African Custom Union (SACU), a weakening regional outlook, heavy reliance on short-term financing, and large development needs reflected in high unemployment and poverty, as well as the continued prevalence of HIV. Additional data was analyzed [here](#).

On December 10th, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a \$55 million IDA credit for a Resilience Development Policy Operation for Madagascar to support efforts by the Ministry of Finance and Budget in improving the efficiency of public finance management. The World Bank financing will support efforts to increase the availability of information relevant to assessing the effectiveness of public finance, improving payroll management, and upholding the single Treasury account principle. The project was described [here](#).

On December 11th, the Executive Board of the IMF concluded the 2015 Article IV consultation with Malawi. The IMF noted that economic reforms dating back to 2012, including the devaluation of the currency and the liberalization of foreign exchange markets have improved Malawi's economic outlook, but uneven policy implementation continues to pose macroeconomic challenges. Further, the IMF observed the country's economic outlook remains difficult because of the negative impact of weather-related shocks, the ongoing suspension of budget support, high inflation, and weaker demand for Malawi's exports. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

On December 11th, Zimbabwe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party opened its annual conference in Victoria Falls. The meeting comes as party officials are divided on how to handle Zimbabwe's economic crisis. The conference was also expected to reaffirm that President Mugabe will be the party's candidate heading into the 2018 presidential election. More information can be found [here](#).

On December 11th, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe said his country's military and other security services were supporting different candidates to succeed him, warning this could ruin the ruling party. Senior military sources reported the security establishment is deeply loyal to President Mugabe, who they see as a stabilizing figure for the country and the party. However, there are disparate views on who should take over when President Mugabe retires or dies. Additional analysis can be accessed [here](#).

On December 11th, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) announced the arrest of a former Rwandan mayor accused of orchestrating the killing of tens of thousands of people during the 1994 genocide. Ladislav Ntaganzwa

was arrested on Sunday in the town of Nyanzale in North Kivu province during an operation against the headquarters of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Details can be viewed [here](#).

On December 13th, South African President Jacob Zuma reappointed Pravin Gordhan to serve as Finance Minister, making Gordhan the third person to hold the position in just one week. Last week, President Zuma dismissed Nhlanhla Nene from the post and appointed little known lawmaker David van Rooyen. After facing stark criticism and the plummeting of the rand, President Zuma then moved van Rooyen to the post of Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to re-appoint Gordhan, who served as Finance Minister from 2009 to 2014. The full story is available [here](#).

On December 14th, the last defendants appeared before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The court was first established by the U.N. in 1994 in response to the genocide of nearly one million people in Rwanda that year and was intended to bring justice to the orchestrators of the mass killings. In the past few months, the last cases have wrapped up and a liquidation team will soon be called upon to help end the court's operations. The full story is available [here](#).

On December 15th, as criticism of South African President Jacob Zuma's appointment of multiple finance ministers within the past week increased, members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) rejected calls for President Zuma's resignation. Speaking at a news conference, ANC Spokesman Zizi Kodwa publically confirmed there was no discussion of recalling the president. Developments were noted [here](#).

On December 15th, South African King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo was convicted of kidnapping, assault, and arson, and ordered to report to police within 48 hours or risk arrest. The order comes as the South African Constitutional Court threw out King Dalindyebo's bid to have his 12-year prison sentence overturned. He is the first monarch to be given a jail term since South Africa transitioned to democracy in 1994. The case was discussed [here](#).

On December 15th, Director-General of South Africa's Mineral Resources Department Ramontja Thibedi resigned for personal reasons. His resignation comes three months after a cabinet reshuffle in which President Jacob Zuma replaced Minister of Mines Ngoako Ramatlhodi with Mosebenzi, a little-known agricultural official. Details can be seen [here](#).

On December 16th, following reports of increasing food shortages and hunger problems in Malawi, UNICEF announced it is carrying out a mass screening for malnutrition in children under five across 25 districts in Malawi, which accounts for 90 percent of the population. According to UNICEF, nearly four percent of the under-five malnutrition population in Malawi suffers from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), a potentially fatal condition. Additional feedback from UNICEF can be accessed [here](#).

On December 15th, UNICEF warned that some 180,000 children under the age of five die every year in sub-Saharan Africa due to diarrheal diseases linked to inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene. With a population that has nearly doubled in the last 25 years, access to sanitation only increased by 6 percent and to water by 20 percent across the region in the same period, leaving millions behind. Additional insights were provided [here](#).

On December 15th, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on violence against women Dubravka Simonovic released a statement warning that deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes make violence against women an almost acceptable phenomenon in South Africa. She said different forms of violence against women and girls existed throughout the country, including femicides, domestic violence, and gang-rapes. Special Rapporteur Simonovic's observations were shared [here](#).

On December 15th, South African President Jacob Zuma said the government will set aside roughly \$154.32 million to fund a shortfall resulting from its decision to freeze tuition fees at universities next year. In October, South Africa saw a number of student protests that turned violent before President Zuma ultimately decided to freeze tuition fee hikes. More information can be found [here](#).

On December 16th, the AfDB issued a report titled, "Transition Towards Green Growth in Mozambique: Policy Review and Recommendations for Action." The report summarizes the development process of the Green Economy Action Plan (GEAP) prepared to operationalize the goals included in Mozambique's Green Economy Roadmap. The Roadmap puts Mozambique on the path to becoming an inclusive middle income country by 2030

through sustainable infrastructure, efficient use of natural resources, and the strengthening of resilience to socioeconomic shocks and climate variability. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

On December 16th, thousands of protesters marched in South Africa to demand President Jacob Zuma be removed from office. The latest protests are a reaction to him sacking two finance ministers last week, further damaging confidence in the economy. The protests were reported [here](#).

On December 16th, *Reuters* reported the DRC parliament is considering proposals aimed at persuading President Joseph Kabila to leave office when his term ends next year. Under a draft law, former presidents and their aides will receive protection from prosecution for any common law violations committee while carrying out presidential duties. Under the DRC's constitution, President Kabila is term limited and unable to run in the presidential race next November. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On December 16th, Angola's Human Rights Foundation ramped up pressure on U.S. rapper Nicki Minaj to cancel her upcoming performance in the country. Minaj is scheduled to perform at a Christmas festival this weekend sponsored by Unitel, a communications company controlled by President Jose Eduardo dos Santos' family. Human rights groups in Angola have accused President dos Santos of limiting freedom of expression and failing to deliver on his promises to improve housing, education, and employment. An article on protests against Minaj's performance can be read [here](#).

On December 17th, South African Trade Minister Rob Davies said South Africa would open a new tariff-free quota for U.S. poultry on December 18th. The move is aimed at avoiding a suspension of African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) benefits, which President Obama threatened last month if South Africa could not resolve outstanding issues related to U.S. meat imports. Minister Davies cautioned there are still concerns regarding salmonella, but indicated veterinary authorities were working to address the remaining issues. Minister Davies' comments were captured [here](#).

General Africa News

On December 11th, *The Wall Street Journal* observed central bankers in Africa were closely watching the U.S. Federal Reserve, which recently raised interest rates, as expected. While African central bankers might be best served by cutting rates to offset the drag from the collapse in commodity prices, some are raising rates in order to try to strengthen their currencies, fight inflation, and mitigate the flight of capital should the U.S. dollar become more attractive. Additional analysis was provided [here](#).

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