



ML Strategies Update

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MARCH 13, 2014

Africa Update

Leading the News

Sudan

On March 7th, head of the African Union (AU) – United Nations (U.N.) Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Mohamed Ibn Chambas facilitated a meeting between AU Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and leaders of the two main rebel movements in Darfur, Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) leader Minni Minawi and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) Leader Gibril Ibrahim in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Both Minawi and Ibrahim expressed their commitment to peace and articulated support for a national dialogue to address the challenges facing Sudan. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On March 8th, the U.S. Department of State released a statement expressing concern for the escalation of violence by the Sudanese Government-supported Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Darfur. In addition to condemning attacks against civilians, the State Department called on the Sudanese Government to cease its own campaign of aerial bombardments and to allow UNAMID access to areas of recent violence, including Nyala and Kalma Camp. The statement was published [here](#).

On March 9th, UNAMID issued a news release reporting on developments in the outbreak of inter-communal violence in North Darfur. According to UNAMID, thousands of citizens displaced from the town of Saraf Omra are seeking refuge at the U.N. facility, which is also providing medical treatment and humanitarian supplies. While reconciliation efforts are taking place, UNAMID called on all parties in North Darfur to cease hostilities. The UNAMID news release can be accessed [here](#).

On March 11th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay expressed concern for the escalation of violence in North Darfur and called for an immediate end to hostilities. Over the past several days, U.N. officials noted that thousands of people fled inter-communal fighting, looting, and destruction of villages. The U.N. called on the Government of Sudan to cooperate with UNAMID and to provide protection for civilians. Details were shared [here](#).

Burundi

On March 7th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay voiced concern about increasing restrictions on civil and political activities in Burundi. She noted there have been at least 19 violent incidents involving members of the ruling party's youth wing, Imbonerakure, since the beginning of the year. High Commissioner Pillay called on the Government of Burundi to identify the attackers and hold them accountable. Comments from High Commissioner Pillay were transcribed [here](#).

On March 11th, the U.S. Department of State issued a press statement condemning the recent violence in Burundi. Specifically, the State Department expressed concerns with Burundi's actions to prevent and break up two separate meetings of opposition political parties on March 8th, as well as the Government's actions to break up a peaceful International Women's Day rally organized by the United for National Progress opposition party. U.S. diplomats urged the Government of Burundi to reject violence and the use of force, and to respect the democratic process in advance of 2015 elections. The full statement can be read [here](#).

Libya

On March 9th, Libyan Culture Minister Al-Habib al-Amin announced the deployment of Libyan navy vessels to the port of Al-Sidra to respond to reports that military umbrella organization, the Libya Revolutionary Operation Room, had besieged a North Korean tanker with plans to steal and export Libyan oil. According to reports issued over social media by the Libya Revolutionary Operation Room, militants had surrounded the tanker with 22 fishing boats mounted with mortar and rocket launchers. The full story was reported [here](#).

On March 9th, the U.S. Department of State noted concern for reports that a North Korean vessel illicitly obtained oil at the Libyan port of Al-Sidra. The State Department noted that oil theft negatively affects Libyans, as well as U.S. partners that are part of the Waha consortium. Feedback from the State Department can be seen [here](#).

On March 10th, Libya's Ministry of Defense authorized the use of military force to stop rebels from loading crude oil on to the North Korean flagged ship at the port of Al-Sidra. Because the tanker had entered Libyan waters without permission, defense officials also warned the ship's owner that the tanker could be bombed if it tried to exit the port. The authorization of force was announced [here](#).

On March 10th, after Libyan armed forces refused government orders to fire against a North Korean oil tanker seized by the Libya Revolutionary Operation Room, the Libyan Navy impounded the ship, destined for the Qasr Ahmed port in western Libya under government control. The ship's oil cargo was estimated to be valued at approximately \$38 million. In response to the incident, the Libyan General National Congress (GNC) indicated it would consider developing a military force to patrol the country's oil ports. Developments in the situation were noted [here](#).

On March 11th, just hours after a tanker carrying rebel oil broke through a Libyan naval blockade, 124 of 194 members of Libya's GNC voted to pass a no confidence motion against Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan. The GNC identified Libyan Defense Minister Abdullah al-Thinni as Acting Prime Minister and will identify a permanent replacement within two weeks. The vote was detailed [here](#).

On March 11th, following the Libyan GNC's vote to remove Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan from office, U.S. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said the U.S. will continue to support the democratically elected Libyan Government and its people. She also expressed appreciation for Prime Minister Zeidan's leadership during Libya's transition. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were posted [here](#).

South Sudan

On March 6th, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) expressed concern for gunfire reported near the U.N. base in Juba, which is providing refuge to approximately 43,000 civilians. While UNMISS reported that nearby headquarters for opposition forces had been abandoned, the U.N. operation called on all parties to respect the work of the U.N. in the country. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On March 7th, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported on worsening conditions in South Sudan's Upper Nile state where refugees, internally displaced persons, and host communities continue to operate without the delivery of new relief supplies. The security situation in the region surrounding Malakal have prevented the delivery of food supplies, threatening the nutrition status of refugees, including children, pregnant women, older people, people with disabilities, and people who are chronically ill. UNHCR's update was provided [here](#).

On March 7th, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) issued a new fact sheet on the crisis in South Sudan. The fact sheet, which provides updated statistics on the number of displaced persons, refugees, and levels of humanitarian aid, notes that security challenges remain in South Sudan's Jonglei, Unity, and Upper Nile states. The document also suggests that food security and malnutrition concerns are escalating and that humanitarian agencies continue to lack access to those affected by conflict due to pressure from armed groups. The fact sheet is available [here](#).

On March 10th, *Voice of America* reported that at least 100 South Sudanese youths left Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, last week with the intention of launching an offensive against the South Sudanese Government. While many of these youths are expected to join the efforts of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), SPLM has denied that it is actively recruiting young people to fight the South Sudanese Government. The full story was reported [here](#).

On March 10th, U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan Ambassador Donald Booth arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as part of a regional trip to support the Intergovernmental Authority on Development- led (IGAD) mediation process for South Sudan. Ambassador Booth was also scheduled to participate in efforts to reaffirm the January 23rd cessation of hostilities agreement. In addition, Ambassador Booth was scheduled to attend the South Sudanese Civil Society Conference to help facilitate the participation of the South Sudanese people in the ongoing peace process. Ambassador Booth's travel was announced [here](#).

On March 11th, following the first storm of the rainy season which caused flooding and destroyed tents at the UNMISS base in Juba, U.N. humanitarian agencies expressed concern that the onset of the rainy season will make the 706,000 people displaced in South Sudan increasingly vulnerable. In light of the recent storm, humanitarian organizations in South Sudan are repairing tents and looking at new shelter prototypes that may be more durable. More information can be accessed [here](#).

On March 12th, the AU swore in a five-person commission tasked with investigating human rights abuses in South Sudan. The commission, which will be led by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, will focus on incidents that occurred since new fighting broke out in mid-December. The commission is expected to report to the AU Peace and Security Council on its findings within three months.

On March 12th, UNMISS reported increasing difficulties in fulfilling its mandate as security conditions in South Sudan continue to restrict the movement of U.N. personnel. UNMISS said that such restrictions are a violation of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) codifying the rights of foreign personnel operating in a host country and called on all parties to respect the work of humanitarian actors seeking to assist South Sudan. Feedback from UNMISS can be seen [here](#).

Central African Republic

On March 6th, the U.N. Security Council considered U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's proposals for deploying a peacekeeping mission to the Central African Republic (CAR). There was recognition that the Africa-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) is not sufficient enough to protect civilians from attacks. There was also general consensus that the primary task of a new peacekeeping mission in the CAR would be protecting civilians. Additional details were shared [here](#).

On March 7th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos warned that more peacekeepers and greater levels of international aid are needed in the CAR as interreligious fighting between Christian and Muslims continues. Under-Secretary-General Amos noted that the conflict has destroyed State institutions, making the entire region vulnerable to conflict. Comments from Under-Secretary-General Amos were reported [here](#).

On March 10th, Chairperson of the International Commission of Inquiry on the CAR Bernard Acho Muna reported to the U.N. Security Council on the situation in the country. Chairperson Muna warned that human rights violations in the CAR have likely been caused by the collapse of government institutions and the spread of hate speech. He also expressed concern for reports of genocide. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

Egypt

On March 7th, the U.S. co-signed a cross-regional joint statement on Egypt at the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, reiterating concern for violations of human rights in Egypt, including the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association. Additionally, the U.N. and other international partners at the U.N. Human Rights Council condemned terrorist attacks in Egypt. More information was provided [here](#).

On March 11th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki began the agency's daily press briefing by expressing concern about reports that detained political activists Ahmed Maher, Ahmed Douma, and Mohamed Adel were abused and beaten by Egyptian security forces prior to their appearance in court. Spokesperson Psaki urged a thorough and transparent investigation of the incident and called for fair trials that are free of political bias. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On March 12th, during appearances on Capitol Hill to present on the FY15 budget request for the Department of State, Secretary of State John Kerry said he will decide in the days ahead whether or not to resume U.S. aid to Egypt. While the omnibus appropriations package passed by the U.S. Congress in January included \$1.5 billion in military and economic aid for Egypt, the aid transfer has yet to be approved by Secretary Kerry. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 12th, *Fox News* reported on a cable from the U.S. Embassy in Cairo revealing that the Obama Administration rejected an urgent appeal from the Egyptian Government for the delivery of 10 Apache attack helicopters needed for counterterrorism operations against Ansar Bait al-Maqdis in the Sinai Peninsula. According to U.S. Embassy officials, the Egyptians take the rejection as a sign that the U.S. Government supports the ousted Morsi regime. The full report can be seen [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On March 7th, White House National Security Council (NSC) Spokesperson Caitlin Hayden announced National Security Advisor Ambassador Susan Rice's travel to Djibouti, March 6th-8th. In Djibouti, Ambassador Rice met with senior leaders and U.S. troops from the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) at Camp Lemonnier to discuss operations in the region. Ambassador Rice also met with Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh and Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf to discuss terrorism, piracy, and humanitarian issues. The leaders also discussed how the U.S. military presence in Djibouti can enhance the local economy, development, and security. Ambassador Rice's travel was first noticed [here](#). A readout of her meetings in Djibouti can be viewed [here](#).

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On March 11th, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Michael Froman held a bilateral meeting with Nigeria's Minister of Trade and Investment Dr. Olusegun Aganga in Washington, DC. In advance of the meeting, Minister Aganga said Nigeria, which is Africa's second largest economy, is on target to surpass South Africa as the continent's largest economy by the end of the year. Ambassador Froman also participated in the U.S.-Nigeria Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council meeting. Ambassador Froman's participation was noted [here](#).

State Department

On March 7th, the State Department issued a press statement on the International Criminal Court's (ICC) verdict convicting Commander of the Force de Resistance en Ituri (FRPI) militia German Katanga for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Bogoro village in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said impunity for those perpetrating violence in the DRC has resulted in a cycle of violence and human rights abuses. In addition, the State Department reiterated its call for the apprehension of Sylvestre Mudacumura, the leader of another rebel group in the DRC who is also wanted by the ICC for war crimes. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On March 11th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement congratulating Mauritius on the celebration of its National Day. Secretary Kerry praised Mauritius for embracing democratic governance,

economic reform, and social tolerance, as well as the country's efforts to promote regional security and economic development. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be seen [here](#).

On March 11th, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan met with Egyptian Minister of State for Antiquities Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Ali, at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which can be found [here](#).

On March 11th, Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell delivered remarks at U.N. headquarters at the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In her address, Ambassador Russell highlighted the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program, which provides women with the necessary skills to start and grow businesses. Ambassador Russell's remarks were shared [here](#).

On March 12th, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield hosted a meeting at the Department of State with Namibian Prime Minister Hage Geingob. In addition, Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield met with U.N. Assistant Secretary for Peacekeeping Operations Edmund Mulet. Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield's schedule was detailed [here](#).

On March 12th, Assistant Secretary of State for Populations, Refugees, and Migration Anne Richard attended a dinner hosted by the U.N. Foundation titled "United Nations: Addressing Crises in South Sudan and the CAR." Assistant Secretary Richard's participation was noted [here](#).

On March 12th, the State Department issued a statement applauding the efforts of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to work with the Somali National Army to liberate towns in Western Somalia from Al Shabaab. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki also noted that the U.S. continues to support AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Services through the provision of equipment, logistics, and training support. Since 2007, the U.S. has obligated more than \$512 million to support AMISOM and more than \$171 million for training the Somali National Army. The press statement was uploaded [here](#).

On March 13th, Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns met with head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) Tarek Mitri at the Department of State. The meeting was noticed [here](#).

On March 13th, Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Richard Stengel met with U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Morocco, Charge d'affaires Matthew Lussenhop. The meeting was included on the agency's daily appointment schedule, which can be viewed [here](#).

On March 13th, the State Department's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, which was created in 2011, released a report on its activities over the past two years. The report highlighted the Bureau's role in ensuring peaceful 2013 elections in Kenya, which was identified as a top priority country. In addition, the report noted the Bureau's engagement in Central Africa to combat the threat posed by Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The full report can be accessed [here](#).

On March 13th, *Politico Magazine* profiled U.S. Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region and the DRC Russ Feingold. The article outlines Special Envoy Feingold's mission to end civil war, armed rebellion, and cyclic violence in the region and his role in ongoing peace negotiations. The full article can be read [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On March 8th, USAID Africa Communications Officer Cecilia Paredes authored a blog post on the success of USAID's Africa Diaspora Marketplace program, which encourages sustainable economic growth and employment by supporting U.S.-based African Diaspora and other entities through grant funding and technical assistance facilities. As part of the program, small businesses in Ghana have been able to export agricultural products to the U.S. for sale in Whole Foods markets. The blog post can be found [here](#).

Department of Defense

On March 6th, multinational exercise Saharan Express 2014 kicked off near the coasts of Cabo Verde and Senegal. The week-long drill is an at-sea maritime exercise designed to improve cooperation,

tactical expertise, and information sharing between Africa, European, and U.S. partners to increase maritime safety and security in the region. An article on Saharan Express 2014 can be read [here](#).

On March 6th, the guided-missile frigate USS Simpson arrived in Casablanca, Morocco, for a scheduled port visit. The goal of the visit was to continue to enhance the existing military partnership between the U.S. and Morocco through cultural exchanges. While in Morocco, Simpson will conduct a passing exercise with the Royal Moroccan Navy, hold office calls and gift exchanges with Moroccan officials, and conduct a community relations event with the Bennani Center Girls' School. More information can be seen [here](#).

On March 7th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) noted that marines and sailors with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Africa 14.1, who are currently training with the Uganda People's Defense Force, have also been volunteering at a local Ugandan school for orphans and underprivileged children. Details on the volunteer services provided were posted [here](#).

On March 7th, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the U.S. military presence in Africa is growing with the deployment of small special operations forces to help African forces build their capabilities to combat militants on the continent. For example, U.S. special operations teams have been sent to support training African partners in Tunisia, Somalia, and Niger. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

On March 9th, AFRICOM personnel participated in the closing ceremony for Exercise Flintock 2014, held in Niamey, Niger. More than 1,000 service members and civilians from 22 partner nations participated in the three-week training exercise, which was intended to enhance counterterrorism capabilities across the Trans-Sahara region, while fostering collaborative communication and coordination skills. The closing ceremony was described [here](#).

On March 10th, AFRICOM Commander General David Rodriguez warned members of Congress that terrorist groups in North and West Africa have expanded their operations, posing an increased threat to U.S. interests in these regions. General Rodriguez detailed specific threats posed by militia groups in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt, as well as terrorist activities in Mali and Nigeria. Comments from Commander Rodriguez were transcribed [here](#).

On March 10th, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa joined military personnel from 13 partner nations, including Morocco, Senegal, and Liberia, to launch the at-sea portion of Exercise Saharan Express 2014 off the coast of Senegal. This three-day portion of the Saharan Express exercise seeks to build skills in interoperability, communications, and coordination to enhance overall maritime security.

On March 10th, U.S. soldiers began training three companies of the Republic of Guinea Armed Forces in combat skills and battle drills. U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) has designed the training exercises to enhance the capabilities of the Guinean soldiers in cordon and search procedures, convoy operations and battle drills, operation order procedures, and the combat lifesaving techniques. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 10th, AFRICOM hosted an event called "Inspiring Change: Promoting Peace and Security Through Art, Music, and Stories," at AFRICOM headquarters in recognition of International Women's Day. AFRICOM Deputy to the Commander for Military Operations Marine Corps Lieutenant General Steven Hummer provided remarks on the importance of education in helping women to achieve equality. Winners of an AFRICOM contest also read their essays on women who inspire them. The event was described [here](#).

Department of Energy

On March 7th, Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz and Ethiopian Ambassador to the U.S. H.E. Girma Birru hosted an Africa Energy Ministerial Ambassadors Roundtable at the Department of Energy. The roundtable brought together Ambassadors from 38 African countries to discuss preparations for the U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial (AEM), which will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, this June. The AEM will showcase African leadership in energy development, explore ways for accelerating the development of clean energy and energy efficient technologies, review best practices in oil and gas resource development, and highlight the President's Power Africa initiative. The roundtable discussion was summarized [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On March 7th, an Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) delegation concluded a visit to Malawi to talk with investors and government officials about opportunities to support additional private sector investments in the country. The delegation observed that in Blantyre, Malawi's commercial center, investors are interested in opportunities in various sectors, which could help to attract further investments. A post on the delegation's visit to Malawi can be accessed [here](#).

Congress

On March 10th, Senate Foreign Relations African Affairs Subcommittee Chairman Chris Coons (D-DE) hosted more than 1,200 attendees at the third annual Opportunity: Africa conference in Wilmington, Delaware. The conference brought together Delaware businesses, faith communities, and Africa experts to share insights on trade opportunities, human rights challenges, sustainable development, food security, and global health. Former President Bill Clinton keynoted the event and discussed how the U.S. can be a force for growth and empowerment in Africa. More information was provided [here](#).

On March 11th, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a business meeting to consider several pending treaties, resolutions, and nominations. During the meeting, the Committee approved a resolution sponsored by Senator Chris Coons expressing support for international efforts to end the violence, protect civilians, and address the root causes of conflict in the CAR. In addition, the Committee approved the nomination of Deborah Birx to serve as U.S. Ambassador-At-Large and Coordinator of U.S. Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally. Details were posted [here](#).

On March 11th, Beau Jackson of Adduci Mastiani & Schaumberg LLP authored an op-ed calling on Congress to reauthorize and reform the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which is due to expire in September 2015. Given Africa's economic rise, Jackson called on Congress to intensify its focus on AGOA and to consider providing duty-free, quota free access for products, designing better rules of origin, improving trade capacity building efforts, and incentivizing U.S. investments in Africa in the reauthorization bill. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

North Africa

On March 10th, U.N. Special Representative to Libya Tarek Mitri briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in the country. Special Representative Mitri reported that over the past three months, Libya has experienced an increase in violence across the country, with armed groups targeting security and judicial personnel, as well as civilians. He also observed an increase in attacks against journalists and media institutions, and expressed concern about the differences that remain regarding future parliamentary and presidential elections. Excerpts from the briefing are available [here](#).

On March 12th, U.N. Special Envoy on Sudan and South Sudan Haile Menkerios briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in relations between the two countries. In reaction to the briefing, the Security Council expressed disappointment in Sudan and South Sudan's progress in implementing agreements on security, border and economic relations, and the status of the Abyei region. The Security Council also expressed concern for the lack of progress in negotiations between the Government of Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N). The Security Council's reaction was discussed [here](#).

On March 12th, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres applauded a breakthrough that will allow family visit flights between Sahrawi refugees in Algeria and their families in Western Saharan to resume on April 17th. Sahrawi refugees have been in Algeria since 1975, when fighting began between Morocco and the Frente Polisario movement. Developments in the situation were reported [here](#).

On March 13th, *Al Jazeera* reported that Algerian Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal will resign to run Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's reelection campaign. It is expected that Energy Minister Youcef Yousfi will become the next prime minister. News of Prime Minister Sellal's resignation broke as Algerian police acted to stop a march boycotting the elections that was organized by the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) and Islamist Movement for Peace and Society (MSP) opposition parties.

The full story can be found [here](#).

East Africa

On March 6th, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) reported that U.N. initiatives in Somalia have been effective in allowing farmers in the south-central part of the country produce maize for widespread distribution. With conflict and drought negatively impacting Somali farmers over the past several years, the U.N. has been providing farmers with assistance, including agricultural inputs, tools, and technical skills in storage, grading, and marketing. The program in Somalia was detailed [here](#).

On March 7th, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta announced that he and Deputy President William Ruto will take a 20% pay cut, while cabinet ministers will take a 10% pay cut. In announcing the salary reductions, President Kenyatta noted that Kenya is currently spending \$4.6 billion on salaries for government officials, leaving only \$2.3 billion for development. President Kenyatta also urged members of the Kenyan parliament to consider a reduction in their pay. Details were shared [here](#).

On March 11th, UNHCR expressed sadness following a boating accident over the weekend that resulted in 77 migrants and refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia being thrown into the waters of the Gulf of Aden. Only 33 survivors have been rescued, while the additional passengers remain missing. UNHCR said the incident is a reminder of the perils facing African refugees destined for Yemen. UNHCR's reaction to the incident can be viewed [here](#).

On March 11th, U.N. Special Representative in Somalia Nicholas Kay briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in the country. Special Representative Kay expressed concern that recent terrorist attacks against high profile targets in Mogadishu continue to promote insecurity, especially as the risk of future attacks remains high. Despite ongoing security challenges, Special Representative Kay highlighted Somalia's progress in building state institutions under democratically elected President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On March 12th, Icelandic power plant company Reykjavik Geothermal announced it will begin drilling as part of the Corbetti geothermal power project in Ethiopia in July. In October, Reykjavik signed a deal with the Ethiopian Government to undertake a \$2 billion project to generate 500 megawatts of electricity from the imploded volcano in the Rift Valley by 2020. The U.S. Government is providing financial backing to the project through the Administration's Power Africa initiative. More information can be found [here](#).

On March 13th, eLearning Africa announced it will hold its 2014 conference in Kampala, Uganda, this May. The conference will bring together 1,500 technology and education professionals to examine the ways in which technology is revolutionizing learning and training across the continent. Details on planning for the conference were provided [here](#).

West Africa

On March 6th, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved a new \$11.9 million International Development Association (IDA) grant to The Gambia to support a Results for Education Achievement and Development (READ) project in the country. The funding will be used to increase access to basic education, improve the quality of teaching and learning for primary school students, and support governance of The Gambia's education system. The grant was announced [here](#).

On March 6th, the Executive Directors of the World Bank approved a new IDA credit of more than \$42 million to the Lagos EKO Secondary School Project in Nigeria. Building on an original credit worth \$95 million, the funding will continue to support secondary school project in Nigeria by increasing access to education and continue to support initiatives that help technical college graduates find high-skill, high-paying jobs. A press release on the new credit was issued [here](#).

On March 7th, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided details on the recent conclusion of Article IV consultation with Nigeria. The IMF noted that Nigeria's economy grew at a rate of 6.4% in 2013 and projected that economic growth will improve further in 2014, driven by agriculture, trade, and services. The IMF cautioned, however, that Nigeria's economic growth could be hindered by continued weakness in the labor market, lack of access to electricity, and high costs of doing business. Further analysis was

shared [here](#).

On March 8th, *The Guardian* reported that Islamist insurgent group Boko Haram is believed to have killed at least 1,300 people in Nigeria over the past two months and more than 130 people in the past week. While Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in three northeastern states last year, may believe the move has been counterproductive and only triggered further attacks by Boko Haram. An article on the violence perpetrated by Boko Haram in Nigeria can be read [here](#).

On March 11th, UNHCR provided insights into its recent interviews with Nigerian refugees who fled to Niger to escape ongoing violence along the shores of Lake Chad and in Nigeria's Borno state. UNHCR believes as many as 2,000 Nigerians have entered Niger in the past four weeks. Excerpts from UNHCR's interviews with Nigerian refugees in Niger can be viewed [here](#).

On March 12th, *Business Day* published an update on planning for the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Africa, which will be held in Abuja, Nigeria, this May. The theme for this year's WEF Africa gathering is "Forging Inclusive Growth, Creating Jobs." WEF Africa will be co-chaired by Dangote Group Chairman Aliko Dangots and Bharti Enterprises Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal. The full article can be accessed [here](#).

On March 13th, *Bloomberg* reported that pollution from oil spills continues to threaten the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. On average, 240,000 barrels of crude oil leak into the Niger Delta each year, with contaminants surpassing World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations. Oil companies in Nigeria believe that pipeline sabotage and oil theft may be accountable for more than 80% of oil leaks. More information was shared [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On March 7th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler welcomed the ICC verdict against former Congolese militia leader Germain Katanga. Katanga, a senior commander for the FRPI, was convicted on four counts of war crimes and one count of crimes against humanity. Secretary-General Ban's statement on the conviction was issued [here](#). Special Representative Kobler's statement can be found [here](#).

On March 10th, following a raid on former Rwandan Army Chief General Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa's home in Johannesburg, South Africa expelled a Burundi diplomat who government officials believe was collaborating with Rwandan diplomatic personnel at the center of a dispute between South Africa and Rwanda. South Africa and Rwanda have been at odds over reports that the Kagame Administration in Rwanda is behind attacks against exiled opponents in South Africa. The full story is available [here](#).

On March 10th, *Bloomberg News* reported that South African utility Eskom has been unable to startup the Medupi power plant in Limpopo province as a result of contractor errors that have caused delays. The 4,788 megawatt coal plant is the first major power facility construction project in the country since 1983. The utility has accused Alstom South Africa and Hitachi Power Africa of making unnecessary design changes to prolong the project. The full article can be read [here](#).

On March 11th, the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) issued a statement calling on rebel fighters in the DRC, including members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to surrender without delay. In addition, MONUSCO welcomed the launch of an offensive against FDLR fighters, led by the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC). MONUSCO's statement can be downloaded [here](#).

On March 12th, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe called on the international community to provide \$20 million in emergency funding to assist more than 60,000 victims of flooding in the country. Zimbabwe no longer qualifies for World Bank and IMF funds. However, President Mugabe's call for assistance comes on the heels of more than \$16 million in government spending on President Mugabe's 90th birthday party, his daughter's wedding, and commemorative statues of himself. The expenses were outlined [here](#).

On March 13th, South Africa Olympian Oscar Pistorius' trail for the murder of his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp entered into its ninth day of proceedings. Pistorius continues to contend that he killed

Steenkamp by accident, thinking she was an intruder. Forensic evidence presented in the Pretoria court, including photos of Steenkamp's mortal wounds, caused Pistorius to become violently ill as the trial continued. Developments in the proceedings were noted [here](#).

General Africa News

On March 7th, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution outlining a strategy to protect children in armed conflicts. The resolution condemned all violations of international law involving the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict, as well as their recruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other sexual violence, abductions, attacks against schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. The resolution was highlighted [here](#).

On March 10th, as part of the 2014 session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) Executive Director Babatunde Osotimehin participated in a panel discussion on gender-based violence in the Great Lakes and population dynamics in the Sahel region. During the discussion, Executive Director Osotimehin highlighted U.N. initiatives seeking to empower girls and women in these parts of the continent. Comments from Executive Director Osotimehin were posted [here](#).

On March 10th, the United Kingdom's (U.K.) Department for International Development and Canada's International Development Research Center (IDRC) announced a new \$70 million, seven-year study on climate change in high risk areas in Africa and Asia. In Africa, researchers plan to focus on semi-arid regions in East, West, and Southern Africa, and the Volta and Nile River Deltas, with the goal of providing African policymakers with research that can be used to develop regulations that are effective in mitigating climate change. The research project was announced [here](#).

On March 11th, *Forbes* published its annual global millionaire rankings. On this year's list, Aliko Dangote of Nigeria, with a net worth of \$25 billion, became the first African to appear in the top 25 wealthiest billionaires, coming in at 23. Also appearing on the list were Rostam Azizi of Tanzania and Sudhir Ruparelia of Uganda. The Africans appearing on this year's list were profiled [here](#).

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