



ML Strategies Update

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AFRICA UPDATE

Leading the News

Ethiopia

On May 24th, Secretary of State John Kerry arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for meetings with senior Ethiopian officials on bilateral issues and to participate in the Golden Jubilee of the Organization of African Unity at the African Union (AU) Summit. Details on Secretary Kerry's travel can be seen [here](#).

On May 24th, the State Department held a background briefing on the AU Summit. Senior State Department officials discussed anticipated themes of the Summit related to the 50-year anniversary of the AU, including peacekeeping operations on the continent, Ethiopia's leadership role in the AU, and U.S. contributions to furthering good governance, economic development, and peace and security in Africa. The full transcript from the background briefing can be found [here](#).

On May 25th, Secretary of State John Kerry met with Ethiopian Foreign Minister Adhanom Tedros. The leaders discussed cooperation on economic development and bilateral trade. Secretary Kerry commended Minister Tedros for Ethiopia's efforts to realize peace in Sudan and South Sudan and to combat terrorism in Somalia. Secretary Kerry also used the appearance to urge Nigerian authorities to protect the human rights of enemy combatants and to condemn the terrorist actions of Boko Haram. A full transcript from the joint appearance can be viewed [here](#).

On May 25th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon participated in the 21st AU Summit, where he commemorated the 50th anniversary of the AU. Secretary-General Ban met with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and discussed recent developments in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes region. He also met with Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide on the situation in Mali and Mauritania's Foreign Minister Hamadi Ould Baba Ould Hamadi on upcoming elections and the situation in the Sahel. Additional information on Secretary-General Ban's travel to Addis Ababa is available [here](#).

On May 25th, Secretary of State John Kerry delivered remarks at the AU 50th Anniversary Summit

Leaders Dinner. Secretary Kerry recognized the progress the AU has made in furthering peace, security, trade, defense, democracy, good governance, and human rights. He also recognized steps the AU has taken to combat HIV/AIDs in Africa and alluded to President Barack Obama's upcoming trip to Tanzania, South Africa, and Senegal. Secretary Kerry's full remarks can be read [here](#).

On May 26th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon held additional meetings with African leaders on the sidelines of the AU Summit. Secretary-General Ban met with Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza, South African President Jacob Zuma, Senegalese President Macky Sall, Zambian President Michael Chilufya Sata, and Vice-President of Angola Manuel Domingos Vicente on regional development issues. Secretary-General Ban also met with President of the Republic of Congo (ROC) Denis Sassou Nguesso on the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR), as well as Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan on the state of emergency declared in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states. More information on Secretary-General Ban's meetings can be seen [here](#).

On May 26th, Secretary of State John Kerry visited the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, where he met with U.S. Ambassador to the AU Michael Battle and U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald Booth. Secretary Kerry also met with Lelisa Desisa, the Ethiopian national who won this year's Boston Marathon. Remarks delivered at the embassy have been posted [here](#).

On May 26th, Secretary of State John Kerry participated in a *BBC Hardtalk* special at the University of Addis Ababa focused on African youths. During the event, Secretary Kerry fielded questions on a number of foreign policy topics, including youth unemployment in Africa, terrorism in Mali, and the U.S. legacy of combating AIDS in Africa. A transcript from the special can be viewed [here](#).

On May 27th, Chairman of the AU Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn announced the creation of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis, a military rapid reaction force to respond to coups, rebellions and wars, proposed by South African President Jacob Zuma. South Africa, Ethiopia, and Uganda have already pledged to contribute to the new force. A *New York Times* report on the announcement can be read [here](#).

On May 27th, the AU Summit accused the International Criminal Court (ICC) of targeting African leaders on the basis of race. AU Chairman Hailemariam Desalegn made the accusation during his closing statement to the Summit. The AU has asked for the trials of Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Vice President William Ruto to return to Kenya's jurisdiction. An article on the African-ICC relationship can be read [here](#).

Niger

On May 23rd, two separate terrorist bombing attacks were perpetrated in Niger. The first attack targeted a military camp in Agadez and killed 18 soldiers, one civilian, and four kamikazes. The second attack was carried out at a French-operated uranium mine in Arlit, killing one kamikaze and leaving 13 mine workers injured. Details on the attacks are available [here](#).

On May 23rd, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement condemning the two suicide bombings in Niger. He expressed U.N. support for the efforts of the Government of Niger, other nations in Africa's Sahel region, the AU, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to combat terrorism and transnational crime. Secretary-General Ban's full statement can be found [here](#).

On May 24th, the *New York Times* reported Mokhtar Belmokhtar, the mastermind behind the seizure of an Algerian gas plant in January, claimed responsibility for the recent suicide bombings in Niger. Claims were posted on a number of African websites. In March, military leaders in Chad had reported killing the extremist leader. Neither France nor Algeria, who have both been after Belmokhtar since the 1990s, ever confirmed reports of his death. The *New York Times* report can be seen [here](#).

On May 24th, Nigerien President Mahamadou Issoufou visited the site of the terrorist attack in Agadez and paid tribute to the soldiers who were killed in the terrorist bombing. President Issoufou was accompanied by Speaker Hama Amadou, opposition leader Seyni Oumarou, Mines Minister Omar Hamidou Tchana, and National Defense Minister Mahamadou Karidjo, as well as a delegation from

Chad. An article on President Issoufou's visit to Agadez has been posted [here](#).

On May 24th, the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council condemned the two terrorist attacks in Niger. In a statement, the Security Council urged cooperation with Nigerien authorities in their efforts to bring the perpetrators of these acts to justice and condemned all acts of terrorism. The full Security Council statement can be viewed [here](#).

On May 24th, the State Department issued a release condemning the suicide bombings in Niger. The statement expressed the belief the attacks were targeted at France and Niger – two key U.S. allies in the Sahel region. The full statement can be found [here](#).

On May 27th, Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zeidan refuted accusations by Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou that the perpetrators of last week's terrorist attacks had come from southern Libya. President Issoufou said the raids show Libya is a source of regional instability. In response to the charges, Prime Minister Zeidan reiterated demands that Niger hand over the son of Muammer Gaddafi, Saadi, and other Gaddafi –era officials who fled to Niger during the revolution. More comments from President Issoufou and Prime Minister Zeidan can be read [here](#).

On May 28th, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius met with President Mahamadou Issoufou in Niamey, Niger, where he pledged support to Niger in wake of the recent terrorist bombings. More information on the meeting is available [here](#).

Nigeria

On May 27th, Nigeria's military said it disrupted an extensive terrorist attack in the town of Maiduguri in the northeastern part of the country. The military says it took 25 prisoners and killed three terrorists in defense of the town. A summary of the battle in Maiduguri can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, *Reuters* obtained video of the leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, addressing Nigeria's new offensive and the state of emergency declared by President Goodluck Jonathan. Shekau insisted his group remains strong and urged followers from Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Syria to join the fight in Nigeria. An article on Boko Haram's response to Nigeria's offensive is available [here](#).

On May 29th, *The Africa Report* published an update on efforts to combat Boko Haram in Nigeria. According to Ministry of Defense Spokesperson Brigadier General Chris Olukolade, 40 Boko Haram members have been killed and another 85 have been capture over the past several days. Other Boko Haram members have been chased out of Nigerian territories around Lake Chad and along the borders with Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The full update has been posted [here](#).

Democratic Republic of Congo

On May 24th, in conjunction with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim's visit to Goma, M23 rebels declared a temporary ceasefire following a recent uptick in violence between government and rebel forces. A spokesperson for the rebel group indicated the ceasefire was intended to encourage DRC Government officials to resume negotiations with rebels. An article on the ceasefire can be found [here](#).

On May 26th, the 11+4 oversight group for the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region held a meeting on the sidelines of the AU Summit. U.N. Secretary-General addressed the group and reported on U.N. Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region Mary Robinson's efforts to coordinate with each signatory country on benchmarks and regional commitments. He also commended DRC President Joseph Kabila on initiatives targeting governmental reforms and oversight. A report on the meeting can be viewed [here](#).

On May 27th, U.N. Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Kyung-wha Kang began a four-day visit to the DRC. Accompanied by U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator in the DRC Moustapha Soumare, Assistant Secretary-General Kang met with Government officials, NGOs, and senior humanitarian officials in Kinshasa on humanitarian needs. She also traveled to Goma to meet with

some of the 3,000 people seeking refuge in Sotraki following new violence between the Congolese Army (FARDC) and M23 rebels. Details on Assistant Secretary-General Kang's trip to the DRC can be seen [here](#).

On May 27th, Director-General of the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Irina Bokova called on DRC authorities to conduct a full investigation into the murder of journalist Guylain Chanjabo. Chanjabo was reported missing on May 5th and his body was discovered on May 17th in the Ngezi River. Additional comments from Director-General Bokova have been posted [here](#).

Uganda

On May 24th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim conducted a joint visit to Entebbe, Uganda, to support peace and economic development in the Great Lakes Region. The leaders commended Uganda's efforts to support U.N. peacekeeping operations and discussed implementation of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. An article on Secretary-General Ban and President Kim's visit to Uganda can be read [here](#).

Mali

On May 24th, the *New York Times* reported Islamist fighters driven out of Mali by French forces are regrouping in neighboring countries, primarily due to a lack of resources available for African countries to patrol their borders. Of particular concern is a region of southwest Libya, approximately 1,000 miles from Mali. Militants have also been observed in Niger, near the proposed site of the new U.S. drone base. The full *New York Times* report can be accessed [here](#).

On May 28th, following a recent U.N. inter-agency mission to Gao, the U.N. issued a warning on humanitarian needs in Mali. The U.N. urged greater focused on rehabilitating the water supply, especially in light of increased instances of cholera, as well as increased food assistance. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is currently in the process of opening an office in Gao to coordinate the humanitarian response in Mali. More information on the recent U.N. delegation trip to Mali can be viewed [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On May 23rd, President Barack Obama delivered remarks on U.S. counterterrorism policy at the National Defense University at Fort McNair. During his speech, President Obama addressed U.S. efforts to combat terrorism in Mali and Somalia. In particular, he noted U.S. assistance to the French-led mission against Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Mali and intelligence cooperation efforts that led to the capture of a Somali terrorist off the coast of Yemen. President Obama's full speech has been posted [here](#).

State Department

On May 23rd, Deputy Assistant Secretary of African Affairs Reuben Brigety delivered the keynote address at an Africa Day celebration held in Washington, DC. Deputy Assistant Secretary Brigety reflected on historical events in Africa over the past 50 years and noted areas for U.S.-African cooperation in the future, including conflict resolution, democratization and good governance, and economic growth. A copy of Deputy Assistant Secretary Brigety's full remarks can be read [here](#).

On May 24th, Ambassador-At-Large and U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator Eric Goosby delivered remarks at a ribbon-cutting ceremony inaugurating a new state-of-the-art President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) funded outpatient annex for HIV/AIDS treatment at Zewditu Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. More information on the new outpatient annex can be found [here](#).

On May 24th, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes in the Office of Global Criminal Justice Stephen

Rapp was in Rwanda to attend meetings on global criminal justice issues. The trip was noted on the State Department's daily schedule, which is available [here](#).

On May 28th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement congratulating Ethiopia on its national day. Secretary Kerry reflected on his recent travel to Addis Ababa for the 50th anniversary celebration of the AU and recognized a shared commitment to economic growth and development, democratic governance, and respect for human rights. The full statement can be found [here](#).

On May 28th, Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns met with Tunisian Nahda Party Leader Rached Ghannouchi in Washington. The meeting was noted on the State Department's daily public schedule, which is available [here](#).

On May 29th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement in recognition of the International Day of U.N. Peacekeepers. Secretary Kerry commended U.N. peacekeepers for their efforts in particularly challenging environments, including the DRC and Sudan. The full statement has been posted [here](#).

On May 29th, the State Department issued a response to a question taken for the record at Tuesday's daily press briefing regarding Ethiopia's recent move to divert the course of the Blue Nile, as well as Egypt and Sudan's reaction to the news. The Department commended the joint efforts of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan to examine the downstream impacts of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and urged the countries to work together to develop the Blue Nile basin in a way that benefits the region. The State Department's response can be seen [here](#).

On May 30th, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman met with Tunisian Minister of Defense Rachid Sabbagh at the State Department. The meeting was included on the daily appointment schedule, which can be viewed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On May 21st, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) published an article on a report issued by the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College entitled The Challenge of Drug Trafficking to Democratic Governance and Human Security in West Africa. The report finds Latin American and African criminal networks are increasingly viewing West Africa as a hub for producing, distributing, and wholesaling illicit drugs. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

On May 28th, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Deputy Secretary of Defense Ash Carter hosted Tunisian Minister of Defense Rachid Sabbagh at the Pentagon. Secretary Hagel and Minister Sabbagh discussed continued defense cooperation to address security challenges in the region. Deputy Secretary Carter also thanked Minister Sabbagh for Tunisia's support following the attack on the U.S. embassy in Tunis in September 2012. A full readout of the meeting has been posted [here](#).

On May 28th, Pentagon officials confirmed reports that a U.S. reconnaissance drone had crashed off the coast of Somalia near Mogadishu on Tuesday. Contrary to earlier reports, DOD officials denied the drone was shot down by Al-Shabaab fighters, despite Al Qaeda affiliates claiming responsibility for the attack on social media. Pentagon officials indicated the cause of the crash is under investigation. An article on the crash can be read [here](#).

U.S. Congress

On May 23rd, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee announced former Ambassador Thomas Pickering, who co-chaired the Accountability Review Board (ARB) on Benghazi, will appear before the committee for a deposition on June 3rd. Ambassador Pickering continues to request a public hearing following the closed door meeting. Details on Ambassador Pickering's upcoming meeting with Committee staff can be viewed [here](#).

On May 23rd, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) indicated Committee Republicans are getting closer to calling on former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to testify on the September 11th attack in Benghazi. Chairman Issa said before asking Secretary Clinton to testify, the Committee is taking a number of steps to ensure full and complete

discovery. Additional comments from Chairman Issa have been posted [here](#).

On May 24th, Representative Jason Chaffetz (R-UT), a senior member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee accused the Obama Administration of covering up exactly what happened during the attack in Benghazi. He also indicated the Committee's plans to speak with more than two dozen Americans who were in Benghazi during the attack. An article on Representative Chaffetz's position can be read [here](#).

On May 28th, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry compelling the State Department to produce documents related to the talking points on the Benghazi attack by subpoena. The covered documents, which include emails between key State Department officials, are to be turned over by June 7th. Chairman Issa's letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On May 29th, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry requesting information on the status of four Department employees whose employment status was under review as a result of the terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi. The letter to Secretary Kerry can be read [here](#).

North Africa

On May 23rd, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir met with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in Juba, South Sudan. The leaders discussed a proposed pipeline that would move oil between Lamu on Kenya's coast and South Sudan. Following the meeting, President Kiir also announced he will not sign the Rome Statute binding South Sudan to the ICC. A report on President Kenyatta's travel to South Sudan can be viewed [here](#).

On May 28th, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir threatened to halt the flow of oil to South Sudan if it is determined the Government is providing support to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) in South Kordofan and to rebels in Darfur. While South Sudan has repeatedly denied such allegations, it is unclear how South Sudanese President Salva Kiir will respond to the new threat. More information on the tensions between Sudan and South Sudan is available [here](#).

On May 28th, Mohammed Magarief, the leader of the Libyan national assembly, announced his resignation due to passage of a law forbidding anyone who held a senior post in the Gaddafi regime from serving in government. Magarief said his resignation was out of respect for the other members of the assembly. More information on the resignation is available [here](#).

On May 29th, the parents of 15-year-old Chinese tourist Ding Jinhao apologized to the people of Egypt via Chinese media for their son's graffiti on the 3,500-year-old Luxor Temple. Egyptians have tried to clean the carving from the temple. While there has been some improvement, the graffiti is still visible. An article on the incident can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) issued a release calling for women to be involved in the drafting of Libya's new constitution. UNSMIL recognized the role of Libya women in the revolution that ousted Muammar Gaddafi from power and noted the increasing involvement of women in public life, including in the Libyan parliament. The full UNSMIL release can be read [here](#).

On May 29th, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution extending by six months the mandate of the U.N. Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to November 30, 2013. The Security Council also increased the strength of the force to 5,326 troops and welcomed the redeployment of Sudanese and South Sudanese military and police personnel to the Abyei region. The resolution extending the mandate of UNISFA can be seen [here](#).

East Africa

On May 23rd, the GSMA, which represents nearly 800 of the world's mobile operators, opened a permanent office in Nairobi, Kenya. The opening of the office will allow the association to more closely coordinate with members in Africa. The new office seeks to capitalize on the fact that Africa

represents more than 10% of the global mobile market and that progress on spectrum allocations and transparency allocations may allow the mobile industry to create as many as 15 million new jobs in Africa by 2020. Details on the new office can be seen [here](#).

On May 26th, *Reuters* reported Michael Adebolajo, one of two men arrested for the murder last week of veteran British soldier Lee Rigby, has been detained in Kenya in 2010 when he was suspected of seeking training from Al-Qaeda linked terrorist group Al-Shabaab. The revelation has raised questions regarding what British authorities may have done to prevent the terrorist attack. The *Reuters* report has been posted [here](#).

On May 28th, legislators in Kenya's parliament voted to increase their own pay even as President Uhuru Kenyatta urged lawmakers to accept pay cuts. With the raise, members will earn \$10,000 per month, nearly five times the average annual salary in Kenya. Kenya's Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) has said pay should be \$6,300. An article on the vote can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, *Aljazeera* reported on Ethiopia's efforts to divert the Blue Nile and build a dam that is expected to provide 6,000 megawatts of power to the region. Egypt and Sudan object to the \$5 billion project due to concerns that it violates a 1959 agreement regarding control of the Nile. Ethiopia argues the dam would provide hydroelectric power to neighboring countries and that its construction does not violate any past agreements. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On May 29th, the Human Rights Watch suggested that police in Kenya tortured and arbitrarily detained at least 1,000 refugees during a two-month span from November 2012 to January 2013. The abuses primarily took place near Nairobi. A report on the incidents can be found [here](#).

West Africa

On May 24th, *Business Day* published an opinion piece on the potential for partnership between Nigeria and India. The op-ed notes Nigeria is in a similar position as India ten years ago when it was on the cusp of an economic boom. The author also highlights many similarities between the two countries, including their colonial legacies, their governance structure as parliamentary democracies, and their stability despite facing common threats of terrorism. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

On May 28th, a ship contracted by Chevron capsized off the coast of Nigeria. All 12 people on board the *Jascon 4* were reported missing following a towing accident. According to a Chevron spokesman, rescue operations are currently underway. On May 29th, rescuers found the crew's cook. Details on the accident and rescue operation are available [here](#).

On May 29th, Nigeria announced 11 private companies will bid on two power utilities that are currently state-owned. Seven of the companies will bid on Kaduna Distribution, and the other four will bid on Afam Power. Nigeria is seeking to privatize its power generation in an effort to avoid frequent blackouts. Details on the bidding process are available [here](#).

On May 29th, Guinea's President Alpha Conde said he is launching an investigation into clashes between police supporting the government and opposition demonstrators who are concerned about the legitimacy of an upcoming election. President Conde gave the Ministry of Justice the authority to organize a panel of judges to study the events and provide justice for all victims. An article on the impending investigation is available [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On May 23rd, Angola announced plans to launch a stock exchange no later than 2016. The timeline for the launch of the stock exchange is dependent upon how quickly Angola is able to privatize 33 of 90 state-owned firms currently managed by the Government. The launch of the stock exchange is anticipated to boost Angola's economy, which is primarily supported by oil production. More information on the forthcoming stock exchange can be found [here](#).

On May 23rd, Brazilian oil and gas exploration company High Resolution Technology (HRT) announced the discovery of liquid oil off the coast of Namibia. While analysis of an exploratory well

did not find commercially viable oil reserves, testing shows two petroleum source rocks that may be a possibility for commercial oil reserves in the vicinity. Further exploration is scheduled to begin in two weeks. An article on the discovery can be read [here](#).

On May 26th, during a recording of an interview for *People of the South*, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe criticized former South African President Nelson Mandela's reconciliation policies as going too far to support non-black communities at the expense of black communities. President Mugabe also said it is not his time to leave office and expressed his belief that Zimbabwe still needs him. The interview is due to air next Sunday. Additional remarks from President Mugabe are available [here](#).

On May 28th, following the recent launch of its TV white space project in South Africa, Google announced the launch of a new project that will use blimps to deliver portable wireless networks to remote regions in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to providing Internet access to remote parts of the continent, the project is also intended to improve Internet speeds in cities. Details on the new project have been posted [here](#).

On May 28th, incoming CEO of the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory Sello Hatang said the newly refurbished center will officially reopen in August or September. The purpose of the Centre is to provide a resource for information on former South African President Nelson Mandela, to convene dialogue on current social issues, and to recognize President Mandela's legacy through events such as Mandela Day. A report on the new center can be viewed [here](#).

On May 29th, following a briefing conducted by Special Representative and Head of the U.N. Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the U.N. Security Council adopted a statement expressing concern for the pause in operations to counter the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the CAR since Seleka rebels seized power in March. The Security Council called upon CAR authorities, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the AU to coordinate efforts to address violence and looting in the region. Background on the statement can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, new South African tourism statistics were unveiled, showing a decline in tourists from key South African markets, including the U.K., Germany, and China. Tourists from the U.K., which typically comprise South Africa's largest tourist population, declined 18.66%. While the number of U.S. tourists visiting South Africa increased slightly by 2.67%, tourists from Germany declined by 6.01% and Chinese tourism declined by 3.52%. Additional statistics can be seen [here](#).

On May 29th, German solar-energy company SMA Solar Technology announced it will begin building a plant in South Africa in an effort to meet content requirements for its products and become established in the growing South Africa market. A story on SMA's expansion plans is available [here](#).

General Africa News

On May 24th, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) hosted a discussion titled, Africa's Regional Economic Outlook: Building Momentum in a Multi-Speed World. Panelists included Antoinette Sayeh and Sean Nolan of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Stephen Cashin of Pan African Capital Group. A video recording of the briefing can be watched [here](#).

On May 24th, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members met in Vienna to discuss the impacts of rising U.S. shale-oil production. During the meeting, some of the most vulnerable OPEC members, including Algeria, Angola, and Nigeria, noted OPEC should prepare for production cuts as a method for maintaining prices, which continue to fall lower. A *Wall Street Journal* article on the OPEC meeting can be read [here](#).

On May 26th, Brazil announced it will cancel or restructure \$900 million of debt in 12 African countries. Experts suggest the move is an effort by President Dilma Rousseff to strengthen investment ties with the continent. More information on the debt forgiveness can be found [here](#).

On May 27th, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and

the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) released the annual African Economic Outlook (AEO) report. According to the report, four elements can help accelerate the pace of economic growth and ensure benefits for Africans. These elements include improving infrastructure and developing more competitive markets, implementing more effective tax systems and improving land management, ensuring proceeds from natural resources are invested in projects that benefit Africans, and supporting economic diversification. The full report is available [here](#).

On May 28th, European media and advertising firm Invincible announced an \$8.3 million investment in the Mokingo Music platform, known as the “iTunes for Africa.” The music platform is intended to promote African musicians, who can use the platform to share information and music. The platform will launch next week in Nigeria, Cameroon, South Africa, Ghana, and Kenya, with expansion planning underway for the rest of continent. Details on the announcement can be viewed [here](#).

On May 28th, Germano Mwabu and Xanthe Ackerman wrote an opinion piece for the Brookings Institution on the current education system in Africa. Mwabu and Ackerman noted that while enrollment in primary school in sub-Saharan Africa has increased by 18% over the last decade, many students still struggle with learning achievement. The post is available [here](#).

On May 29th, the AfDB and Global Financial Integrity (GFI) unveiled a report at the annual AfDB meetings in Marrakech, Morocco, finding that Africa has been a net creditor to the rest of the world. The report highlights that illicit financial outflows have totaled between \$1.2 trillion and \$1.3 trillion over the past 30 years, negatively impacting economic development. The report recommends that African nations go beyond the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) to ensure transparency across the resource value chain and suggests more strenuous reporting requirements on banks and tax havens imposed by the Bank for International Settlements (BIS). The full report can be accessed [here](#).

On May 29th, AfDB President Donald Kaberuka confirmed reports that the AfDB is in talks with affiliates regarding the creation of an African infrastructure fund. President Kaberuka has previously expressed support for the bank as a means for improving infrastructure and furthering economic growth. Considerations related to the bank, including the initial size of the fund, will be considered at the AfDB’s annual meetings later this week. An article on the proposed infrastructure fund can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, a wreath laying ceremony was held at U.N. headquarters in recognition of the International Day of U.N. Peacekeepers. During the ceremony, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized the 111 peacekeepers who died last year, including personnel killed in attacks in Cote d’Ivoire, the DRC, Sudan, and South Sudan. More information on the ceremony has been posted [here](#).

On May 29th, *Voice of America* released an article on the continued concern over Africa’s decreasing lion population. The article notes the African Lion & Environmental Research Trust (ALERT) will help organize World Lion Day on August 10th in Livingstone, Zambia. More information on the event and Africa’s lion population is available [here](#).

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