



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial

On June 3rd-4th, the U.S. Government and the Government of Ethiopia co-hosted the U.S.-Africa Energy Ministerial (AEM) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AEM focused on the theme of “Catalyzing Sustainable Energy Growth in Africa.” Attended by government ministers from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, U.S. government officials, multilateral development partners, regional and sub-regional African energy organizations, academia, civil society, and private sector leaders, the AEM explored best practices for accelerating the development of clean energy and energy efficiency in Africa and highlighted President Barack Obama’s Power Africa initiative. The U.S. delegation to the AEM was led by Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz. Additional members of the U.S. delegation included U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Patricia Haslach, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Rajiv Shah, Special Assistant to the President and National Security Council (NSC) Senior Director Gayle Smith, President Barack Obama’s Coordinator for Power Africa and Trade Africa Andrew Herscovitz, U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) Director Leocadia Zak, Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank of the U.S. Chairman Fred Hochberg, and Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield. Information on the AEM was posted [here](#).

On June 3rd, while participating in the AEM, Ex-Im Bank Chairman Fred Hochberg announced that Ex-Im Bank has authorized \$1.1 billion to finance U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa in the first seven months of FY14. In the past five years, the Bank has authorized more than \$5 billion for U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa, exceeding the Bank’s authorizations of \$4 billion for the region. In addition, Chairman Hochberg noted Ex-Im Bank is increasing the number of its sub-Saharan authorizations and is on track to exceed the record high of 188 sub-Saharan Africa authorizations achieved in FY13. Comments from Chairman Hochberg can be seen [here](#).

On June 3rd, *The OPIC Blog* published a post on OPIC President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield’s participation in the AEM. While in Ethiopia, President Littlefield participated in a panel discussion on the goals and progress made on President Barack Obama’s Power Africa initiative, along with USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, Kenyan Secretary of Energy David Chirchir, and Nigerian Minister of Power Chinedu Nebo. Building on the AEM, OPIC Vice President of External Affairs Judith Pryor will speak at the Africa Energy Forum next month in Istanbul, Turkey. The full blog post is available [here](#).

On June 4th, during her presentation at the AEM, OPIC President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield offered a

ten-point framework of essential elements to making a power purchase agreement (PPA) bankable. President Littlefield said that bankable PPAs are key to unlocking the private and public sector capital needed to build power generation capacity across the continent, which is a goal of President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. The proposed framework aims to help create a basis for negotiation between private sector investors and African governments. Excerpts from President Littlefield's presentation were posted [here](#).

On June 4th, as part of her participation in the AEM, USTDA Director Leocadia Zak announced new projects in Tanzania and South Africa that will help to replace diesel generation with energy efficient, environmentally friendly solutions. Director Zak signed a grant to fund a feasibility study for the University of Dodoma in Tanzania to evaluate cost-effective solar photovoltaic (PV) solutions for the University's Health Science Diagnostics Center and the surrounding community. Additionally, Director Zak signed an agreement with U.S. technology provider Oorja Protonics to pilot fuel cell technology for cell tower operations in South Africa. The projects are funded under the U.S.-Africa Clean Energy Finance Initiative. Details on both projects can be found [here](#).

Nigeria

On May 29th, following Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan issuing an order for the Nigerian military to carry out a full scale operation against Boko Haram militants, the *Washington Post* published an article suggesting that Nigeria and the U.S. continue to be wary partners as the search for the 276 schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram continues. The article suggests the tensions may be fueled by Nigerian national pride, comments by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) that Nigeria has a nonexistent government, and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's failure to designate Boko Haram as a foreign terrorist organization. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 1st, a bomb exploded at a bar in the town of Mubi in Nigeria's Adamawa state, where football fans had gathered to watch a local club match. Officials reported that at least 14 people were killed and another 14 were injured by the blast, but witnesses have suggested the death toll might be even higher. No group claimed immediate responsibility for the attack, although the attack occurred with proximity to other recent Boko Haram incidents. Details were shared [here](#).

On June 2nd, citing security concerns, Nigerian police announced a ban on protests demanding greater government efforts to rescue the more than 200 schoolgirls kidnapped in April by Boko Haram. Demonstrators, who have been seen protesting daily in Abuja, denounced the ban and indicated their intentions to challenge the move in court. The ban was reported [here](#).

On June 3rd, following an uproar in response to comments made by Nigerian Police Commissioner Joseph Mbu regarding a ban on protests related to the search for the schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram, Police Spokesman Frank Mba walked back those comments, stating that Commissioner Mbu had only meant to advise against gatherings because of intelligence suggesting that demonstrations could be hijacked by insurgents. An update on the situation in Nigeria was provided [here](#).

Egypt

On May 29th, following former Egyptian Field Marshal General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi declaring victory in Egypt's presidential elections, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki indicated that U.S. officials were waiting to comment on the elections until official results were made available. However, Spokesperson Psaki said the U.S. remains concerned about the restrictive political environment in Egypt and its implications for inclusivity and stability. Spokesperson Psaki's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On May 31st, the *New York Times* Editorial Board ran an op-ed on General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi's election as the next President of Egypt. The Editorial Board suggests that General Sisi's victory was tarnished by low voter turnout, which may detract from his credibility in attempting to implement reforms. In addition, it was suggested that while General Sisi portrays the strongman Egypt desires in its current state of instability, he has not outlined the economic reforms that are needed to address corruption, unemployment, and a growing budget deficit. The full op-ed can be accessed [here](#).

On June 2nd, Egyptian comedian and political satirist Bassem Youssef announced that his "Al

Bernameg” program will not be returning to the air. Youssef said the show, which was modeled after Jon Stewart’s “The Daily Show,” was ending while alluding to harassment and other pressures on him and broadcaster MBC Masr since the ousting of Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi. While the specifics of the decision to end the program remain unclear, it has been speculated that Youssef poking fun at President-Elect General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi may have created some tension. The full story is available [here](#).

On June 2nd, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy held a discussion titled “Toward the Sisi Era: A New Page in U.S.-Egypt Relations?” Presenters included Eric Bjornlund of Democracy International, Michelle Dunne of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Eric Trager of the Washington Institute. A recording of the discussion can be watched [here](#).

On June 3rd, celebrations were held throughout Egypt as the Presidential Electoral Commission (PEC) declared General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi the official winner of Egypt’s presidential election. According to the PEC, President-Elect Sisi garnered 23.78 million votes, representing 96.9% of all ballots cast. Appearing on television after the results were announced, President-Elect Sisi said it is now time to get to work on rebuilding Egypt’s economy. President-Elect Sisi will be sworn in on Sunday. Details can be found [here](#).

On June 3rd, in response to the official announcement of President-Elect Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi’s victory in Egypt, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement expressing hope that President-Elect Sisi will support the Egyptian people’s aspirations for a stable and democratic country. In addition, Secretary-General Ban urged President-Elect Sisi and other Egyptian authorities to strengthen democratic institutions and practices, including peace and security, development, and human rights. Secretary-General Ban’s statement can be viewed [here](#).

On June 4th, following the announcement of official election results in Egypt, the White House issued a statement indicating that the U.S. looks forward to working with General Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi, the winner of the presidential contest, on advancing the strategic partnership between the U.S. and Egypt. In addition, the White House indicated that President Barack Obama planned to speak with President-Elect Sisi in the coming days. While acknowledging that the elections were conducted in line with Egyptian laws, the White House raised concerns that the election occurred in an environment with limitations on freedom of assembly, association, and expression. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On June 4th, *Al Monitor* reported that the Obama Administration has yet to ship the ten Apache attack helicopters, whose release was announced in April, to Egypt. State Department officials indicated that the aircraft are in storage in Fort Hood, Texas, as the Department continues to consult with Congress to determine when the helicopters will be shipped. While Egyptian government officials continue to argue that the helicopters are needed immediately to combat terrorists in the Sinai, it has been suggested that Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) might be holding up the shipment. Details were reported [here](#).

Malawi

On May 31st, Peter Mutharika, the brother of former Malawian President Bingu Mutharika, was declared the winner of Malawi’s presidential contest by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC). President-Elect Mutharika’s democratic People’s Party received 36.4% of the vote, followed by 27.8% for the Malawi Congress Party, and 20.2% for the Banda’s People’s Party. President-Elect Mutharika will now serve a five-year term, during which he has pledged to address corruption, reform the electoral system, and jumpstart the economy. More information is available [here](#).

On May 31st, following Peter Mutharika’s swearing in as Malawian President, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for all parties in the country to remain calm, especially following the High Court’s rejection of a request for a recount after reports of vote-rigging in the May 20th elections surfaced. While initially contesting the validity of the election, outgoing President Joyce Banda also admitted to defeat. Secretary-General Ban’s reaction to the election results can be seen [here](#).

On May 31st, the U.S. Department of State issued a press statement congratulating Peter Mutharika and Saulos Chilima on their elections as President and Vice President of Malawi. Additionally, the State Department congratulated Malawi on the completion of peaceful elections and noted the desire to

continue its close partnership with Malawi in advancing the country's development. The full press statement can be read [here](#).

Libya

On June 4th, the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) issued a statement calling for an end to the recent bloodshed in Libya, citing aerial attacks, the use of heavy weaponry, and civilian casualties in eastern Libya. UNSMIL also expressed concern that the increased targeting of military officials and civilians constitutes an evident challenge to state authority that could threaten Libya's opportunity to achieve stability and further regional and international relations. UNSMIL's statement was issued [here](#).

South Sudan

On May 30th, following a meeting with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, U.N. Special Representative to South Sudan and head of the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) Hilde Johnson announced that she will be stepping down from her post in July. Special Representative Johnson has served as the top U.N. representative in South Sudan since July 2011. More information was shared [here](#).

On June 4th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar to meet on Monday, in accordance with the agreement reached in May to end fighting in the country. Secretary-General Ban called President Kiir to urge his participation in the meeting and express concern for ongoing hostilities in violation of the agreement. He also asked President Kiir to support UNMISS's implementation of its new mandate. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Central African Republic

On May 29th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned recent attacks in the Central African Republic (CAR), including the attack on a church in Bangui, and encouraged the country's Transitional Authority to do everything within its means to prevent further violence and to hold the assailants responsible. Secretary-General Ban also condemned violence earlier in the week in which three Muslim youths were beaten by suspected anti-Balaka elements while on their way to an inter-communal reconciliation football match. Feedback from Secretary-General Ban was posted [here](#).

On May 30th, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said that last Wednesday's attack on Notre Dame de Fatima in Bangui has raised concerns about churches, monasteries, and mosques serving as safe havens for internally displaced persons across the CAR. At the time of the attack, the church was sheltering roughly 9,000 people. At least 17 people were killed, including one priest, and two children have since died from injuries sustained in the incident. In addition, Muslim rebels abducted 27 civilians. UNHCR's reporting on the incident can be found [here](#).

On June 2nd, the CAR Telecommunications Ministry sent a letter to all mobile phone operators in the country announcing that Prime Minister Andre Nzapayeke has suspended the use of all text messages because SMS messaging is now viewed as a security threat. The implementation of the text message ban follows days of protests that erupted in response to a resurgence of violence between Christians and Muslims in Bangui. The ban is expected to last several days, with mobile phone subscribers attempting to send text messages receiving an error message that SMS is not allowed. Details were reported [here](#).

On June 4th, U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director Ertharin Cousin and U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres called for more emergency funding for the CAR as their agency's funds are nearly exhausted, putting hundreds of thousands of people fleeing violence in the CAR at risk. WFP and UNHCR reported that refugees from the CAR are now arriving in Cameroon at a rate of up to 2,000 people per week. In addition, U.N. officials suggested that as many as 30% of these refugees arrive acutely malnourished. The U.N.'s call for additional crisis funding for the CAR can be seen [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

On May 26th, U.S. Mission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Attaché Neil Beck participated in the WTO Trade Policy Review of Ghana in Geneva, Switzerland. Attaché Beck noted that Ghana is an important and growing trading partner of the U.S. and continues to benefit from U.S. trade preference programs. In 2013, U.S. duty-free imports from Ghana under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) totaled \$34.7 million and consisted primarily of cocoa products, apparel, baskets, and wood products. Attaché Beck's full statement can be seen [here](#).

State Department

On May 30th, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman met with Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S. Mohamed Tawfik at the Department of State. The meeting was included on the State Department's daily appointment schedule, which was posted [here](#).

On May 30th, Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp was on overseas travel to Monrovia, Liberia, to meet with Solicitor General of Liberia Betty Larmine-Blamo and other senior justice sector officials. Ambassador Rapp's travel was noted [here](#).

On May 30th, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki said the Department was mystified by the release of House Oversight and Government Affairs Committee Chairman Darrell Issa's statement canceling the hearing scheduled for June 12th for Secretary of State John Kerry to testify on the terrorist attack in Benghazi. Spokesperson Psaki reiterated the State Department's position that the attack has already been examined to an extensive degree. Spokesperson Psaki's comments are available [here](#).

On June 2nd, the State Department announced the winners of the 2013 Human Rights Awards. This year's Diplomacy for Human Rights Award goes to U.S. Ambassador to Mali Mary Beth Leonard for her efforts at the U.S. Embassy in Bamako. In recognizing Ambassador Leonard, the State Department noted that she advanced U.S. interests in human rights during a time of sustained crisis in Mali and skillfully guided the American community and U.S. policy through an extremely challenging African political, security, and humanitarian crisis in 2013. The award was announced [here](#).

On June 2nd, the State Department welcomed 16 youth soccer coaches, including individuals from Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, to the U.S. to participate in a multi-nation Sports Visitors program. While in the U.S., the African coaches will meet with American coaches, clinics, and sports professionals to promote exchange dialogue and to allow for discussions on empowering youth through sports. In addition, the participants will discuss promoting leadership, conflict resolution, strengthening democratic governance, and enhancing regional peace and security through sports coaching and administration. Details can be found [here](#).

On June 2nd, U.S. Charge d'Affaires to Mauritania Eunice Reddick broke ground on the new U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott. The new facility was designed to provide Embassy employees with a secure, modern, and environmentally sustainable workplace. The \$181 million project includes the State Department's first major wind-powered turbine for an American Embassy, an onsite water treatment plant for irrigation reuse, and light-emitting diode (LED) site lighting. The Embassy's design targets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On June 2nd, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki confirmed that Daniel Wani, the husband of Meriam Yahya Ibrahim Ishag, the Sudanese woman sentenced to hang for apostasy, is a U.S. citizen. She added that State Department officials have been engaged with him since June 2013 and have been in regular contact throughout the trial, with their most recent meeting on June 2nd. Spokesperson Psaki said that officials at the U.S. Embassy in Sudan will continue their efforts to assist Wani. Comments from Spokesperson Psaki were transcribed [here](#).

On June 3rd, the U.S. and Tunisia signed a loan guarantee agreement that will allow Tunisia to access up to \$500 million in affordable financing from international capital markets as it pursues reforms that will lead to economic growth and prosperity. This is the second U.S. loan guarantee to Tunisia in support of the country's democratic transition. In announcing the agreement, the State Department noted that the move reaffirms the commitment President Barack Obama made to Tunisian Prime Minister during their

meeting in April to help Tunisia build an economic foundation that supports sustainable and inclusive economic and jobs growth, bolsters international confidence in the Tunisian market, and supports and expands U.S.-Tunisian economic relations. The agreement was detailed [here](#).

On June 3rd, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman delivered remarks on the U.S. strategy in Somalia at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). Under Secretary Sherman addressed the range of U.S. interests and efforts in Somalia, within the context of the Obama Administration's partnership with Africa more generally. In her remarks, Under Secretary Sherman announced that the U.S. will soon reopen the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu, which closed 23 years ago, and that President Obama will soon nominate the first U.S. Ambassador to Somalia in more than two decades. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda-Thomas Greenfield also attended the event. Under Secretary Sherman's remarks were streamed [here](#).

On June 3rd, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp was on foreign travel to Bamako, Mali, for meetings with Malian authorities on international justice issues. Ambassador Rapp's travel was noticed [here](#).

On June 4th, the State Department issued a statement expressing deep concern for the arrest and disappearance of dozens of Rwandan citizens over the past two months as well as reports of threats against journalists and the suspension of a call-in radio program to discuss current events. While recognizing that Rwandan authorities have recently taken steps to bring a number of these individuals before a court, State Department officials expressed concern that many individuals may still be held incommunicado and without due process of law. The State Department called on the Government of Rwanda to respect the international human rights of the individuals detained and arrested and to fully respect freedom of expression. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On June 4th, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues Stephen Rapp traveled to Cote d'Ivoire to participate in meetings on international justice issues. Ambassador Rapp's travel to Cote d'Ivoire was noted [here](#).

On June 4th-6th, the State Department and the Government of Botswana, supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, co-hosted the Sub-Saharan Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Workshop in Gaborone. The workshop, which attracted government officials from Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zambia, focused on combating cybercrime, mobile phone security, Internet freedom, access, and affordability, and the development of national computer emergency readiness teams (CERTs). The U.S. delegation to the workshop was led by State Department Coordinator for Cyber Issues Christopher Painter. More information was issued [here](#).

On June 4th-6th, the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs welcomed nearly 200 emerging leaders from 45 countries and territories to Washington, DC, to participate in the Professional Fellows Congress. The Professional Fellows Program is a two-way exchange that embraces the power of individual citizens to find solutions to the challenges that face their societies. This year's event will feature a presentation on "Increasing Single Mothers' Household Income Through Clothing and Fashion and Uganda." In addition, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan acknowledged distinguished program alumni, including a media professional from Morocco who is working to strengthen citizen participation in democracy through social media. Details were shared [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On May 31st, USAID's *Impact Blog* published a post authored by Rachel Grant in USAID's Office of Food for Peace detailing how efforts to fight gender violence in the DRC are also helping to address the country's food crisis. Because Congolese women play a critical role as agricultural producers, tackling gender inequities will also encourage women to stay in their communities, increase production on their land, earn incomes, and put food on their families' tables. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On June 2nd, prior to arriving in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to participate in the AEM, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah traveled to Djibouti for meetings with Djiboutian government officials focused on unlocking opportunity, reducing extreme poverty, and promoting innovation by focusing on deepening the partnership between USAID and the Government of Djibouti on health, education, workforce

development, and energy. Administrator Shah's visit to Djibouti was described [here](#). Administrator Shah's statement on his meeting with Djiboutian ministers was posted [here](#).

Department of Defense

On May 29th, the *New York Times* published an article noting that the Department of Defense (DOD) is increasingly providing intelligence and logistics assistance to proxies in Africa, notably African forces and French commandos, to fight Islamist extremists, for example, in Somalia and Mali. Recognizing this as a departure from the U.S. approach in Iraq and Afghanistan, the article suggests that the U.S. is training foreign troops to battle insurgents in their own territory so that American armies will not have to. The full article can be accessed [here](#).

On May 30th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) reported that leadership from the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti, the Government of Djibouti, and Coalition partners recently attended a dedication for an addition to the Institut Supérieur des Science de la santé (ISSS), or the Higher Institute for Health Sciences, near Peltier Hospital in Djibouti. The \$358,748 expansion project will increase student capacity from 60 students every three years to 150 students per year. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On June 2nd, AFRICOM reported that U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) trained more than 4,000 troops in Chad, Guinea, and Malawi this past March. The training activities focused on ensuring the preparedness of African partners for U.N. deployment and to better enable African land forces to secure their own borders and protect U.S. and regional interests. An article on the training exercises can be read [here](#).

On June 2nd-3rd, the Government of Senegal, AFRICOM, and the Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine hosted the Republic of Senegal Disaster Preparedness and Response Exercise in Dakar. U.S. AFRICOM Chief of Humanitarian and Health Activities Michael Hryshchyshyn participated in the opening ceremony for the exercise. Participants engaged in interactive dialogue on the five pillars of disaster management: communications, health, logistics, operations, and security. Photos from the event were posted [here](#).

On June 4th, AFRICOM acknowledged that U.S. Army soldiers from the 407th Civil Affairs Battalion recently shared combat casualty care tactics and techniques with 25 nurses and medics of the Burundi National Defense Force (BNDF) in Bujumbura. One goal of the five-day exercise was to train the BNDF personnel to react quickly to medical situations in combat in advance of their deployment in support of the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The course was described [here](#).

Department of Commerce

On May 30th, *The Commerce Blog* featured a guest blog post authored by Alistair Jessop, Senior Vice President of Development for SolarReserve, who participated in the recent Department of Commerce Energy Business Development Mission to West Africa, led by Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker. SolarReserve currently has \$800 million in projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Following the trade mission, Senior Vice President Jessop reported that SolarReserve is now interested in deploying its advanced solar thermal technology in Nigeria and Ghana. The blog post was published [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On May 30th, *The OPIC Blog* highlighted the Medical Credit Fund, an OPIC-supported project and the recipient of the 2014 OPIC Impact Award for Access to Finance. The Medical Credit Fund, the first lending institution of its kind in Africa, provides loans to small and medium size private sector healthcare facilities that serve low income populations in Tanzania, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria. More information is available [here](#).

U.S. Trade and Development Agency

On June 8th-18th, USTDA will host a delegation of key public sector officials from Morocco's energy sector as part of the Morocco Solar PV Reverse Trade Mission (RTM). The delegation will meet with U.S. companies to learn about leading solar PV technology solutions, equipment, and services that can

support efforts to expand solar PV development in Morocco. Logistics for the RTM were shared [here](#).

Department of Energy

On June 3rd, the Department of Energy (DOE) launched the Beyond the Grid program as part of President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative. Over an initial five-year period, Beyond the Grid will leverage partnerships with 27 investors and practitioners committing to invest over \$1 billion into off-grid and small scale energy solutions. The new program will seek to advance the policy and regulatory frameworks necessary to overcome recurring constraints in the small scale energy space and create an environment that increases access to financial and technical assistance for small energy business. The Beyond the Grid program was announced [here](#).

Securities and Exchange Commission

On May 29th, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) filed a petition for an en banc rehearing with the D.C. Circuit asking the court to reconsider its finding that the conflict minerals rule stemming from the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act may violate the First Amendment. The SEC claimed that the court handed down a decision using a standard of review that could soon change as a result of an appeal case brought by the American Meat Institute (AMI). More information can be seen [here](#).

On May 29th, *Law 360* reported on companies' experiences submitting forms to the SEC as the June 2nd reporting deadline approached for disclosing whether products contain minerals that are exploited by armed groups in the DRC, as well as their efforts to locate the source of those minerals. Leading up to the deadline, Apple said it did not have sufficient information to definitively determine the country of origin for the minerals in their products. Meanwhile Intel and Hewlett-Packard reported knowing that their products contained conflict minerals, while other companies, such as ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, and BP said they did not believe their products used minerals from the countries covered by the rule. Following the deadline, the SEC was expected to make all filings available to the public. An article on the deadline can be read [here](#).

On June 3rd, as it became clear that many companies required to file with the SEC under the conflict minerals rule reported they were unable to obtain enough information from their suppliers to determine whether or not their products contain conflict minerals, Director of the U.S. Office of Global Witness Corinna Gilfillan said the advocacy group will begin encouraging companies to go beyond SEC guidance by submitting conflict mineral reports for independent audits, which was required under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, but excised by the SEC under its recent guidance. Global Witness will also recognize companies that have made good progress in conducting due diligence. Global Witness' reaction to the SEC filing deadline was shared [here](#).

Congress

On May 30th, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) issued a press release announcing that he was releasing Secretary of State John Kerry from his commitment to testify on the September 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, planned for June 12th. Congressman Issa expressed concern that Secretary Kerry's testimony would obstruct the Select Committee on Benghazi's investigation of the attack and noted that the Select Committee has been tasked with getting the full truth on the attack. The press release was published [here](#).

On June 4th, *Defense News* reported on a provision included in the House-passed FY15 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would require a new report on AFRICOM's ability to plan, monitor, and oversee contractors for its operations in Africa. If the provision is included in the final defense authorization bill, the report would be due to congressional defense committees by April 15, 2015. Details were reported [here](#).

North Africa

On May 29th, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay concluded her first official visit to Morocco. While in the country, High Commissioner Pillay met with King Mohamed VI and Prime Minister

Abdelilah Benkirane, as well as women judges and members of civil society. While applauding Morocco's progress in achieving better promotion and protection of human rights, High Commissioner Pillay urged authorities to more robustly address human rights issues through the adoption and implementation of pending legislation on gender equality and gender-based violence, military justice, and judicial reform. High Commissioner Pillay's visit to Morocco was summarized [here](#).

On June 1st, Sudan's Foreign Ministry clarified reports suggested that Foreign Ministry Abdullah Al-Azraq had told media outlets on Saturday that Meriam Yahya Ibrahim Ishag, the Sudanese woman condemned to death for apostasy and who gave birth in prison this week, would be freed within days. The Foreign Ministry said that Ishag's defense team has appeal the verdict in her trial and she will be release if the appeals court rules in her favor. An article on the situation can be read [here](#).

On June 2nd, the Heritage Foundation hosted a briefing on the House Select Committee on Benghazi. Speakers included Peter Brooks and Helle Dale of the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies, Nile Gardiner of the Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom, and Hans von Spakovsky of the Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies. Event details were posted [here](#).

On June 5th, the American Security Project (ASP) hosted an event on "Al Qaeda 3.0: Three Responses to the Changing Nature of Al Qaeda," which examined the threat posed by Al Qaeda affiliates in Morocco and Egypt. Speakers included Said Tamsamani of Meridian International Center, Zack Gold, an independent research for the Brookings Institution and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague, and Timothy Fairbank of Development Transformations (DT). More information can be viewed [here](#).

East Africa

On May 29th, the World Bank announced a \$178.5 million credit from the International Development Association (IDA) and a \$24.5 million grant from the Scaling-up Renewable Energy Program (SREP) Trust Fund to support the Government of Ethiopia's Geothermal Sector Development Project (GSDP). The project will develop two potential geothermal sites in Aluto and Alalobad, with the goal of providing affordable and reliable electricity to households and businesses currently affected by energy rationing, especially as energy demand in Ethiopia is expected to grow by more than 25% each year over the next five years. More information can be found [here](#).

On May 29th, the AU launched a new campaign focused on ending child marriage in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The two-year campaign will target ten African countries, as one in three girls across the continent have traditionally been forced into child marriage. Globally, nine of the ten countries with the highest rates of child marriages are found in Africa, including Niger, Chad, the CAR, Guinea, Mozambique, Mali, Burkina Faso, South Sudan, and Malawi. The new campaign was described [here](#).

On May 30th, the World Bank approved a \$50 million IDA credit to continue to finance the Tanzania Strategic Cities Project (TSCP). Focused on eight urban centers, the TSCP seeks to improve quality of life in Tanzania's cities by funding fiscal management initiatives, such as new platforms for supporting tax reporting, revenue collection, permitting, and land management, and improved infrastructure, such as the construction of sanitary landfills and storm drains, bus terminals, and street lights. Project details are available [here](#).

On June 1st, while visiting Kipchoge Stadium in Eldoret, Kenya, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach said that Africa may have the potential to host the Olympic Games in the coming years and expressed hopes to soon start visible bidding for Africa to host the games. While noting that infrastructure challenges remain across the continent, President Bach applauded Botswana's successful hosting of the just-concluded Youth Games. IOC President Bach's visit to Africa was summarized [here](#).

On June 2nd, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released a new report finding that depleted food stocks, rising prices, late rain and erratic weather, conflict, and inadequate funding are increasing concerns for Somalia's food security. FAO and partner organizations are seeking \$18 million to scale up rapid interventions to prevent and mitigate the further deterioration of the food security situation. The new report can be downloaded [here](#).

On June 3rd, Kenyan police indicated they were investigating reports that Samantha Lewthwaite, the Islamist widow of 7/7 bomber Germaine Lindsay and a suspect thought to be involved in planning the September attacks on the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, had recently been spotted attempting to cross the border into Somalia. According to reports, a foreign woman paid two Kenyan police officers to escort her from the island resort of Lamu to the border, claiming to be an aid worker with a package that needed to be delivered to Kenyan troops stationed in southern Somalia. The full story can be seen [here](#).

On June 4th, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in Somalia. Under-Secretary-General Amos said that \$60 million is needed for the next three months to help prevent conditions from returning to the humanitarian crisis during the 2011 famine. She reported that 857,000 Somalis require immediate assistance, while an additional two million people in Somalia are on the margins of food insecurity. Excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

On June 4th, NATO defense ministers meeting in Brussels, Belgium, voted to extend NATO's Indian Ocean counter-piracy mission through the end of 2016, citing that piracy off the coast of Somalia remains a threat. While the number of pirate attacks has been on the decline since NATO first began patrolling the waters off the Horn of Africa in 2009, defense ministers express concern about the intent and capacity of Somali-based pirates to attack ships. More information can be found [here](#).

On June 4th, telecommunications firms Airtel, Tigo, and Zantel announced an agreement that will allow their respective subscribers in Tanzania to send money to each other whether using Airtel Money, Tigo Pesa, or EzyPesa on their mobile phones. The partnership is the first interoperability agreement that will allow customers to send and receive money across networks. The new service is expected to go into effect this month and to set a precedent for the adoption of a similar service in other African countries, notably in Kenya. The agreement was reported [here](#).

West Africa

On May 29th, the World Bank approved a series of IDA loan guarantees to support the Banda Gas-to-Power Project in West Africa, including \$130 million for Mauritania, \$99 million for Senegal, and \$32 million for Mali. The project will produce and convert natural gas from offshore gas fields in Mauritania into 300 megawatts (MW) of new electricity, some which will be used domestically to power homes, business, and mining operations, and some that will be exported to Senegal and Mali. The loan guarantees were announced [here](#).

On May 29th, the World Bank approved \$55.2 million in new IDA financing for Niger's Basin Program. The new funds will support the Kandadji Project, which includes the completion of the Kandadji dam, a hydropower plant, and transmission line, as well as community-based local development activities for people being resettled along the Niger River Basin. The project was detailed [here](#).

On June 2nd, *War is Boring* reported that China has deployed an infantry detachment to West Africa to serve as part of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Mali. Observers believe that the service of Chinese troops in a peacekeeping role is intended to alter the perception that the Chinese military is overly aggressive and to allow China greater access to natural resources in Africa. According to the blog post, Chinese peacekeepers have also been deployed to Western Sahara, the DRC, Sudan, Liberia, and Ivory Coast. The full post can be read [here](#).

On June 4th, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported a spike in Ebola cases in Guinea and Sierra Leone. Between May 29th and June 1st, the Ebola outbreak was found responsible for 21 deaths and 37 infections in Guinea, while 13 new cases were reported in Sierra Leone over the same period. The latest statistics bring the total number of suspected Ebola cases in West Africa to 328, making it one of the largest recorded outbreaks in seven years. More information can be seen [here](#).

On June 4th, Ghana Cocoa Board CEO Stephen Opuni said that Ghana plans to soon overtake Ivory Coast as the biggest producer of cocoa. Ghana's forecast for its cocoa harvest was recently increased to 900,000 metric tons, due primarily to greater assistance to farmers in acquiring land and using fertilizers to increase crop yields. Opuni's comments were transcribed [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On May 29th, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the first review under the policy support instrument (PSI) for Rwanda, which was approved in December 2013. The IMF found that, despite a slowdown in 2013 characterized by a 4.6% economic growth rate, growth is expected to improve to 6% in 2014, while inflation is expected to remain well contained. The IMF encouraged Rwanda authorities to maintain priority spending while enhancing the environment for private sector credit expansion. Further analysis was provided [here](#).

On May 30th, speaking at the Africa Rising conference in Maputo, Mozambique, Executive Director of Oxfam International Winnie Byanyima said that Africa loses roughly \$242 billion each year to corporate income tax exemption and unpaid taxes. Executive Director Byanyima encouraged African officials to strengthen the legal frameworks for tax collection across the continent so that lost infrastructure could be used for infrastructure and other development projects. Excerpts from Executive Director Byanyima's remarks at the conference were highlighted [here](#).

On May 30th, at the close of the Africa Rising conference hosted by the IMF and the Government of Mozambique in Maputo, African Ministers and Governors and IMF officials released a joint declaration outlining a shared vision for sustained growth and prosperity on the continent. Participants agreed on a policy and capacity building agenda focused on upholding macroeconomic stability by fostering structural transformation and inclusive growth, overcoming fragility, ensuring adequate financing for Africa's development, and building institutional capacity, especially in human resources. There was also recognition of the imperative to address Africa's infrastructure gap through exploring innovative approaches to financing. The joint statement was shared [here](#).

On June 1st, U.N. Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region Mary Robinson, U.N. Special Representative to the DRC Martin Kobler, U.S. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region and the DRC Russ Feingold, Special Representative of the AU Boubacar Diarra, and European Union (EU) Senior Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region Koen Vervaeke reiterated their calls for the surrender of all leaders and combatants of the rebel Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). The diplomats suggested that members of the FDLR who do not surrender, renounce violence, and agree to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration will remain subject to military action by the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). Details can be seen [here](#).

On June 2nd, in the latest update on the dire fiscal situation in Swaziland, officials indicated that the \$800 million left in the country's official financial reserves will only cover four months of vital imports. According to the newest report, Swaziland blames its current circumstances on a slowing South African economy and a decreasing demand for exports to South Africa. Developments in Swaziland were noted [here](#).

On June 3rd, the U.N. WFP provided new insights into how a lack of funding is jeopardizing food security in the DRC. According to the WFP, 6.7 million Congolese people currently live in acute food insecurity. This problem is only worsened by the fact that 95% of the DRC's population lives on less than two dollars per day and 9% of children under the age of five are acutely malnourished. The situation in the DRC was discussed [here](#).

On June 3rd, Twitter's head of Europe, Middle East, and Africa Ali Jafari said that Twitter's recently announced partnership with contextual ad network Ad Dynamo has provided the company with an efficient means for entering the market. The social media platform officially launched in South Africa last week, where Jafari reported that brands and businesses have quickly expressed interest in Twitter. Working with Ad Dynamo, Twitter is planning for similar launches in Kenya, Ghana, and Uganda. Additional insights from Jafari were shared [here](#).

On June 3rd, *Bloomberg* reported that Johannesburg-based telecommunications company Vodacom is currently in talks with Spotify on a partnership that would make subscriptions for a limited amount of free data to access Spotify's music library available to 31.5 million South African customers. If a deal is reached, Spotify is expected to see competition in the South African market from Finland's Spinlet, London-based Rara Media Group Ltd., and Paris-based Deezer, Inc. An article on the negotiations can be read [here](#).

General Africa News

On May 29th, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted three separate resolutions extending U.N. missions in Abyei, Guinea-Bissau, and Somalia. The mandate for the U.N. Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) was extended through October 15, 2014, while the U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) was extended through November 30, 2014 and the mandate of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) was extended through June 2015. Details on all three resolutions can be viewed [here](#).

On May 30th, the Ookla Net Index was made public, comparing global average consumer download speeds over the past month and ranking countries according to Internet speed. The study found that Seychelles was the African country with the fastest average Internet speed of 11.32 Mbps, making it the country with the 72nd fastest Internet speed globally. The other top ranking African countries on Internet speed were Namibia, Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Libya, Lesotho, and Tanzania. Details were posted [here](#).

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