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MUST READS

1. [Nigeria: Hezbollah armoury discovered in Kano city](#)

-BBC, 05/30

BLUF: An armoury belonging to the Lebanese group Hezbollah has been discovered in northern Nigeria, the West African nation's army and spy agency has said

- Three Lebanese nationals have been arrested, an army spokesman, Brig Gen Ilyasu Isa Abba, said.
- The cache, including rifles, anti-tank weapons and an RPG, were found in a warehouse in the city of Kano, he said.
- "What has just been discovered is a cell of Hezbollah and what you have seen here is a Hezbollah armoury," he told journalists in Kano on Thursday.

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2. [Maliens in Gao protest against French 'bias'](#)

-BBC, 05/30

BLUF: Thousands of people in Mali's northern city of Gao have staged a protest, accusing France of favoring their rivals from the ethnic Tuareg group.

- The protesters said Paris was colluding in the continuing occupation by the Tuareg of the regional capital Kidal.
- The separatist rebels say they will not allow the Malian authorities into Kidal to hold elections planned for July.
- Paris began withdrawing some of its 4,000 troops from the country in April and plans to gradually hand over to the Malian army and a UN peacekeeping force before the elections.

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SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN

3. On Peacekeepers Day, UN Vows to Keep Protecting S. Sudanese

-VOA, Andrew Green, 05/30

BLUF: The head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) vowed Wednesday that U.N. peacekeepers will continue to work to fulfill their core mandate of protecting South Sudanese civilians, despite an attack last month that killed five peacekeepers and seven local staff in Jonglei state.

- "The attack strengthened our resolve to continue and implement the mandate of UNMISS," the U.N. Secretary General's Special Representative for South Sudan, Hilde Johnson, told VOA News on the 11th International Day of U.N. Peacekeepers.
- Five Indian peacekeepers and seven civilian members of UNMISS staff were killed in an ambush in April when they were escorting a group of civilians from one town to another in Jonglei.

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4. US Concerned Over Sudanese President's Threat To Close Oil Pipeline From South

-RTT, 05/30

BLUF: The United States has expressed deep concern over the Sudanese President's recent comments that he may shut down the oil pipeline if South Sudan continued its support of the rebels operating on Sudanese soil.

- Omar al-Bashir, wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), gave a "last warning" on Monday that Khartoum will close the pipeline carrying oil exports from South Sudan if Juba continued to support SPLM-North rebels.
- South Sudan had agreed to resume its oil exports through Sudan in March, but ties between the long-time rivals worsened this month over the latter's accusations, which the South denies.

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5. [South Sudan expects first oil to arrive in Port Sudan mid-June](#)

-GulfTimes, 05/30

BLUF: South Sudan expects its first oil to arrive in Sudan's export port in mid-June as both countries are continuing to implement oil and trade deals despite Khartoum's renewed accusations over rebel support, Juba's ambassador to Sudan said.

- The neighbours, which fought one of Africa's longest civil wars, agreed in March to resume cross-border oil flows and end tensions plaguing them since the south seceded in 2011.
- South Sudan has started since then to pipe oil to two treatment plants in Sudan to be readied for exports, the first time since the landlocked new nation shut down its production of 350,000 barrels a day in January 2012 in a row over export fees.

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TANZANIA

6. [Tanzania signs port deal with China Merchants Holdings](#)

-Reuters, Fumbuka Wanakilala, 05/30

BLUF: Tanzania has signed a framework agreement with China Merchants Holdings (International) Co Ltd for the construction of a new port, special economic zone and railway network that could involve more than \$10 billion, the government said.

- The government has said construction of the port in Bagamoyo some 75 km north of the commercial capital, Dar es Salaam would relieve pressure on the Dar es Salaam port, the second largest in east Africa after Kenya's Mombasa.
- Foreign Minister Bernard Membe said the framework agreement between Tanzania and the Chinese port operator was signed during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to east Africa's second-biggest economy in March.

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

7. [UN's Ban Ki-moon Visits Congo: Admonishes Army While Delivering Aid](#)

-HuffingtonPost, 05/30

BLUF: United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visited the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) last week, and the publicity, coupled with a \$1 billion aid package from the World Bank, inadvertently spotlighted President Joseph Kabila's image as an ineffective manager of the affairs of his impoverished nation. Kabila and his Parliament have not provided constructive leadership when one considers that the United Nations' Human Development Index ranks the DRC at the bottom of 187 countries.

- Looking deeper down the rabbit hole of foreign aid, it is obvious the touted \$1 billion is chicken feed since the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo (MONUSCO) is costing global taxpayers close to \$1.5 billion a year.

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8. [French first lady demands end of impunity for DR Congo rapes](#)

-Expatica, 05/30

BLUF: France's first lady Valerie Trierweiler on Thursday urged the international community to help bring to justice those responsible for hundreds of thousands of rapes committed in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the past two decades.

- "I want bring an end to the silence surrounding this tragedy, a tragedy that has been going on for more than 20 years. 500,000 women have been raped," she lamented.
- Speaking at a side event to an ongoing session of the UN human rights council in Geneva, Trierweiler launched an urgent appeal to help the women of DR Congo, often described as "the rape capital of the world."
- In her address before numerous diplomats from western and African countries, she insisted that "a strong response from the United Nations human rights council is necessary to establish a mechanism to protect human rights" and "fight impunity."

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9. [UN charges that Congo's M23 rebels fired on Goma](#)

-ANGOP, 05/30

BLUF: A United Nations spokesman says that Congo's M23 rebels have fired several rockets on the eastern city of Goma, killing two people.

- The military spokesman of the United Nations mission in Congo, Lt. Col. Felix Basse, said Wednesday that in the past week the M23 rebels fired five rockets that hit the Mugunga camp for displaced people, killing one. Basse said two other rockets were fired by the rebels on the Ndosho neighborhood of Goma, killing one civilian, and wounding four others.
- Basse also said that civilians in the territory controlled by the M23 are threatened by looting, kidnapping and other violations of human rights.

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NIGERIA

10. [AP Interview: Nigeria Sees Outside Extremist Help](#)

-AP, Jon Gambrell, 05/30

BLUF: Islamic extremists who control portions of northeast Nigeria received anti-aircraft guns and other military-grade weaponry from outside sources, the nation's top defense spokesman said Thursday, as soldiers continue to battle militants across the arid, restive region.

- Brig. Gen. Chris Olukolade said Nigeria's military has regained ground across the northeast since President Goodluck Jonathan announced emergency rule for three states there, allowing soldiers to arrest anyone at will and occupy any building. However, there has not been any independent confirmation of any of the military's claims, as security forces shut down the region's mobile phone network and travel to the rural regions under assault remains impossible.
- As the fighting continues, insurgents and civilians continue to flee. But the brigadier general remains convinced that this deployment will work as others failed to stop a bloody insurgency that has killed more than 1,600 people since it began in 2010.

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11. [Nigeria Lawmakers Pass Anti-Gay Marriage Bill Setting Prison Sentences of up to 14 Years](#)

-AP, 05/30

BLUF: Nigeria lawmakers pass anti-gay marriage bill setting prison sentences of up to 14 years.

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12. [Nigeria's AMCON seeks advisers for bank sales - CEO](#)

-Reuters, 05/30

BLUF: Nigeria's "bad bank" AMCON will appoint financial advisers by June 15 to manage the sale of three lenders that were nationalised in 2011 and recapitalised, its chief executive told Reuters on Thursday.

- Nigeria nationalised the lenders when they failed to find new investors before a recapitalisation deadline. It changed their names to Mainstreet Bank from Afribank, Enterprise Bank from Spring Bank and Keystone Bank from Bank PHB.
- "We have advertised for a financial adviser who will take charge of the process," said Mustapha Chike-Obi, the CEO of state-owned AMCON. He said the advisers would solicit expressions of interest from prospective investors.

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MALI

13. [Sweden mulls Mali peacekeeping](#)

-IOL, 05/30

BLUF: The Swedish government proposed Thursday to send 70 soldiers to Mali in support of a UN peacekeeping mission that will start in the west African country in July.

- The proposal was welcomed in preliminary discussions in parliament between members of the ruling center-right coalition and the main opposition party, the Social Democrats.
- According to the proposal, the 70 soldiers and accompanying material will be deployed on July 1, with the option of quickly expanding the number to 160 soldiers if the need arises.

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14. [Mali's Sleeper Cell](#)

-AfricanArguments, 05/30

BLUF: When Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported late last month that Malian authorities had broken up an alleged cell of seven fighters from the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO, in French) in March in Bamako, it seemed to confirm suspicions many Malians and regional observers had held for months. After the fall of northern Mali and its progressive takeover by jihadist groups, many began to fear attacks in regional capitals.

- The French intervention in Mali in January, and subsequent threats by MUJAO spokesman Adnan Abu Walid Sahraoui to stage attacks in Bamako, Ouagadougou, and Niamey, compounded these concerns, as did a public warning about a bomb threat in February from the U.S. Embassy in Dakar. In Bamako in particular, this fear gave way late last year to panicked (and unconfirmed) reports of Islamist infiltration in Bamako, and in January the Tablighi Jama'at-linked Markaz Mosque in the Banankabougou neighbourhood was reportedly shuttered, though whether or not the mosque was actually closed or not is unclear.

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