STATEMENT OF

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INTRODUCTION

United States Africa Command is adapting our strategy and approach to address increasing U.S. national interests, transnational security threats, and crises in Africa. The African continent presents significant opportunities and challenges, including those associated with military-to-military relationships. Regional instability and growth in the al-Qa'ida network, combined with expanded responsibilities for protecting U.S. personnel and facilities, have increased our operational requirements. While our activities can mitigate immediate security threats and crises, reducing threats to the United States and the costs associated with intervention in Africa will ultimately hinge on the long-term development of effective and democratic partner nation security institutions and professional forces that respect civilian authority. The development of democratic security institutions and professional forces will be most effective if undertaken in the broader context of civilian-led efforts to strengthen governance and the rule of law. Together, these efforts will support enduring U.S. economic and security interests.

In the near term, we are working with African defense leaders, multinational organizations, European allies and interagency partners to address the immediate threats of violent extremism and regional instability. African partners are increasingly leading regional security efforts, and we are making significant progress in expanding collaboration and information-sharing with African and European partners as we help to build capacity and enable partner activities. We are working closely with other combatant commands and U.S. Government agencies to increase our operational flexibility.

The opportunity costs associated with addressing immediate threats and crises have made it more challenging to pursue our broader objective of expanding the positive influence of effective and professional African security forces. We accomplish this primarily through military-to-military engagement with countries that have the greatest potential to be regional leaders and influencers in the future. This includes countries already on positive long-term trajectories, as well as those that face a long road ahead in building trusted security institutions that enable responsive governance and economic progress. Strengthening relationships with current and potential regional powers is key to shaping the future security environment to advance our enduring national interests of security, prosperity, values, and promoting international order.

Our expanding operational requirements and their associated opportunity costs make it vitally important that we align resources with priorities across the globe, strengthen and leverage partnerships, and further enhance our operational flexibility. In Fiscal Year 2013, we conducted 55 operations, 10 exercises, and 481 security cooperation activities, making Africa Command an extremely active geographic command. We are pleased with what we have been able to accomplish with modest responses tailored to support local requirements, despite being one of the smallest combatant commands. Modest investments, in the right places, go a long way in Africa.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Africa is on the rise and will be increasingly important to the United States in the future. With six of the world's ten fastest growing economies, a population of 1 billion that will double by 2050, and the largest regional voting bloc in multilateral organizations, Africa's global influence and importance to the national interests of the United States and our allies are significant – and growing. Perceptions of the United States are generally positive across the African continent, providing natural connections on which to build and pursue shared interests.

In spite of many upward trends, Africa's security environment remains dynamic and uncertain. While the continent's expanding political, economic, and social integration are positive developments as a whole, they are also contributing to Africa's increasing role in multiple transnational threat networks, including the global al-Qa'ida network and drug trafficking networks reaching into the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. Countering the growing activity of the al-Qa'ida network in Africa and addressing instability in key nations are our primary near-term challenges. The collective aftermath of revolutions in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt, including uncertain political transitions, spillover effects, and exploitation by violent extremist organizations of under-governed spaces and porous borders, are key sources of instability that require us to remain vigilant in the near term. In the long term, our military-to-military engagement can help to reinforce and shape relations with those countries that have the greatest potential to positively influence security on the African continent, now and in the future.

Growth of the al-Qa'ida Network in Africa. Instability in North and West Africa has created opportunities for extremist groups to utilize uncontrolled territory to destabilize new governments. The network of al-Qa'ida and its affiliates and adherents continues to exploit Africa's under-governed regions and porous borders for training and movement of fighters, resources, and skills. Like-minded extremists with allegiances to multiple groups increasingly collaborate in recruitment, training, operations, and financing across Africa and beyond. Terrorists are learning their trade abroad, returning to their countries with hard-earned skills that increase their lethality. North Africa is a significant source of foreign fighters in the current conflict in Syria. Syria has become a significant location for al-Qa'ida-aligned groups to recruit, train, and equip extremists, who may also present threats when they return home. The increasingly syndicated and active violent extremist network in Africa is also linked to core al-Qa'ida, which is on a downward trajectory, and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, which is resurging and remains intent on targeting the United States and U.S. interests overseas. Multinational efforts are disrupting terrorist training, operations, and the movement of weapons, money, and fighters, but the growth and activity of the violent extremist network across the African continent continue to outpace these efforts. Additional pressure in east Africa and the Sahel and Maghreb regions, including efforts to counter violent extremist ideology and promote improved governance, justice, and the rule of law, are required to reduce the network.

Regional Instability. Current conflicts across the African continent vary widely in character, but share a few basic traits: complexity, asymmetry, and unpredictability. The internal instability associated with weak states can trigger external consequences that draw responses from the United States, African partners, and the broader international community. Weak governance, corruption, and political instability are often mutually reinforcing. Food insecurity and access to natural resources, including water, can exacerbate state weakness, drive human migration, and heighten social disruptions and regional tensions. The cumulative effects of instability in Africa draw considerable resources from countries and regional organizations on the continent, as well as the broader international community; nearly 80 percent of United Nations peacekeeping personnel worldwide are deployed in missions in Africa. In some countries, the failure of governments to deliver basic services to the people and enforce the rule of law has fueled distrust and fear in the government and security forces. Where a country lacks good leadership, external actors have only a modest capacity to positively influence the country's future. Where there is leadership that has the best interests of the country at heart, the United States and other partners can apply judicious measures to help the country move forward.

Regional and global integration. Political shocks and post-revolutionary transitions in North Africa continue to reverberate throughout the greater Mediterranean Basin and, by extension, the Middle East, Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Africa is increasingly important to our European allies, who are directly affected by the rising economic and political influence of some African countries, as well as the symptoms of instability emanating from other countries. Many European allies view Africa as the source of their greatest external security threats, including terrorism, illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and drug and arms trafficking. Our support to allies in addressing mutual security challenges in Africa may influence their willingness and ability to help shoulder the burden in future conflicts in other areas of the world. The African continent's energy and strategic mineral reserves are also of growing significance to China, India, and other countries in the broader Indian Ocean Basin. Africa's increasing importance to allies and emerging powers, including China, India, and Brazil, provides opportunities to reinforce U.S. security objectives in other regions through our engagement on the continent. While most African countries prefer to partner with the United States across all sectors, many will partner with any country that can increase their security and prosperity. We should be deliberate in determining where we leave gaps others may fill.

MISSION

Africa Command, in concert with interagency and international partners, builds defense capabilities, responds to crisis, and deters and defeats transnational threats in order to advance U.S. national interests and promote regional security, stability, and prosperity.

APPROACH

We believe efforts to meet security challenges in Africa are best led and conducted by African partners. We work with partners to ensure our military efforts support and complement comprehensive solutions to security challenges that leverage all elements of national and international power, including civilian efforts to gradually strengthen governance, justice and the rule of law.

We work closely with African and European partners to shape the security environment, share information, address immediate mutual threats, and respond to crisis. We coordinate with U.S. Government agencies and U.S. Embassies to ensure our activities support U.S. policy goals and the efforts of U.S. Ambassadors. We also work closely with other combatant commands, especially European Command, Central Command, Special Operations Command, and Transportation Command, to mitigate risk collaboratively, including through force-sharing agreements; by sharing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets; and by posturing forces to respond to crisis. The trust and teamwork between multinational and interagency partners is vital to the success of collective action.

Military activities are executed by Defense Attaché Offices, Offices of Security Cooperation, and six subordinate headquarters, some of which are shared with U.S. European Command: U.S. Army Africa and Southern European Task Force, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa, U.S. Marine Forces Europe and Africa, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa, U.S. Special Operations Command Africa, and Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa.

Africa Command's activities support partner efforts in six functional areas: countering violent extremist organizations and the networks that support them; building defense institutions and forces; strengthening maritime security; supporting peace support operations; supporting humanitarian and disaster response; and countering illicit flows of drugs, weapons, money, and people. The command assists in the development of defense institutions and forces as part of a broader U.S. Government effort. Our contributions also support the development of the African continental and regional security architecture. The capacities we help to build can strengthen the ability of our partners to combat wildlife poaching and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. Our long-term advisory relationships with militaries in fragile states help build and support local capacities as our partners make gradual progress toward stability, in their own ways and at a pace they can sustain.

Africa Command's primary tools for implementing our strategy are military-to-military engagements, programs, exercises, and operations, which are supported by our strategic posture and presence on the continent.

- Our **engagements** support bilateral relationships managed by U.S. Ambassadors and play a critical role in strengthening military-to-military relations in a region where we have little forward presence.

- Our **programs** and combined **exercises** strengthen defense institutions and the effectiveness of U.S. and partner forces. They also build trust and confidence, enhance interoperability, and promote adherence to the rule of law and respect for human rights. When planned appropriately, combined training and exercises can also help to preserve and enhance the readiness of U.S. and partner forces.
- Our **operations** are closely coordinated with regional and interagency partners and other combatant commands. When possible, our operations are planned and executed with the military forces of local partners, with the United States in a supporting role. In certain cases, our tailored advise, assist, and accompany teams help to enhance the effectiveness of partner operations, with lower risk to U.S. forces.
- Our strategic **posture** and **presence** are premised on the concept of a tailored, flexible, light footprint that leverages and supports the posture and presence of partners and is supported by expeditionary infrastructure. Our single enduring presence in the region is at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, which provides a critical platform for our activities, as well as those of Central Command, Special Operations Command, and Transportation Command. The operational challenges of conducting our activities across Africa, and their associated risks, are significant. Our limited and highly dispersed presence on the continent makes intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; mobility; medical support; and personnel recovery capabilities especially important to our mission, and I expect these requirements to grow in the future. As we look to future requirements, diversifying our posture to include a maritime capability would increase operational flexibility in support of crisis response and other high-priority missions.

To address future requirements and mitigate risk to our national interests in Africa, we are pursuing the following actions, which focus on increasing collaboration with partners, enhancing operational flexibility, and closing key gaps:

- Strengthening strategic relationships and the capabilities and capacities of partners, including by investing in developing defense institutions and providing robust training and education opportunities.
- Expanding communication, collaboration, and interoperability with multinational and interagency partners, to enable increased alignment of strategies and resources and avoid inefficiencies.

- Adapting our posture and presence for the future to reduce risk to mission and personnel, increase freedom of movement, expand strategic reach, and improve our ability to respond rapidly to crisis. Leveraging and supporting the posture and presence of partners are critical elements of our approach.
- Working with the intelligence community to improve our ability to share information rapidly with multinational and interagency partners, with the goal of making this the norm, rather than the exception.
- Leveraging combined training and exercises to strengthen interoperability and maintain readiness of U.S. and partner forces.
- Utilizing flexible, tailorable capabilities, including the Army's Regionally Aligned Force; the Marine Corps' Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force; and Special Operations Forces and General Purpose Forces advise and assist teams embedded in institutional, strategic, operational, and tactical headquarters to strengthen partner capability and support regional, African Union, and United Nations peace operations.
- Increasing operational flexibility by developing additional force-sharing agreements with other combatant commands and working with U.S. Embassies to seek diplomatic agreements to facilitate access and overflight.
- Working with the Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense to pursue the increased assignment and or allocation of forces by properly registering the demand signal for critical capabilities.
- Working with the Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense to address gaps in key enablers, including mobility and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, to support partnered and unilateral operations.
- Leveraging strategic communications and military information support operations as non-lethal tools for disrupting the spread of violent extremist ideology, recruitment, and messaging.

IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND ENHANCING STABILITY IN EAST AFRICA

Al-Qa'ida affiliate al-Shabaab remains a persistent threat in Somalia and East Africa. African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali forces have been challenged in regaining the momentum against al-Shabaab, which responded to losses of territory by conducting asymmetric attacks in Somalia and Kenya.

AMISOM's recent increase in force strength and the integration of Ethiopia, which played a major role in multinational security efforts in Somalia last year, are positive developments that will help AMISOM and Somali forces to more effectively counter al-Shabaab, particularly if the international community is able to source key enablers.

U.S. and partner efforts in Somalia focus on strengthening the ability of AMISOM and Somali forces to disrupt and contain al-Shabaab and expand state-controlled areas to allow for the continued development of the Federal Government of Somalia. The international community is also supporting the development of security institutions and forces in Somalia, to set the conditions for the future transfer of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali National Army and Police.

U.S. support to preparing AMISOM troop contributing countries for deployment to Somalia has enhanced partner capacities in peacekeeping and counter-terrorism operations. The United States continues to support AMISOM troop contributing countries in preparing for deployment, primarily through contracted training funded by the Department of State and increasingly supported by military mentors and trainers. Our military efforts have expanded in the past year to include planning and coordination with AMISOM and multinational partners, primarily through a small U.S. military coordination cell in Somalia, which is also conducting assessments to inform future security cooperation proposals. Precise partnered and unilateral operations continue to play limited but important roles in weakening al-Shabaab, and the support and collaboration of Central Command and Special Operations Command, including through force-sharing arrangements, have been critical to the effectiveness of operations in Somalia.

In waters off Somalia, piracy rates remain stable following recent steep declines. Piracy and armed robbery at sea in the western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden have decreased significantly since 2011, reflecting the combined effects of multinational military operations, the capture and prosecution of many suspected pirates, and improved industry security measures, including the use of armed guards. In 2013, zero ships were hijacked in nine attempted attacks in the region, compared to 27 hijackings in 166 reported attempts in 2011. Success in counter-piracy efforts in the western Indian Ocean, another area of strong collaboration with Central Command, may offer useful lessons for the Gulf of Guinea, where maritime crime rates remain at concerning levels.

We will continue working with multinational and interagency partners, as well as other combatant commands, to support efforts to reduce the threat posed by al-Shabaab in Somalia and maintain improvements in maritime security in the western Indian Ocean. We will also look for opportunities to support the development of Somali defense institutions and forces.

COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND ENHANCING STABILITY IN NORTH AND WEST AFRICA

In North and West Africa, we have made some progress in forging regional and multinational cooperation to combat the spillover effects from revolutions in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt. These revolutions, coupled with the fragility of neighboring states, continue to destabilize the region. The spillover effects of revolutions include the return of fighters and flow of weapons from Libya to neighboring countries following the fall of the Qadhafi regime, and the export of foreign fighters from North Africa to the Syrian conflict. Terrorist groups in North and West Africa have expanded their operations, increasing threats to U.S. interests. Al-Qa'ida affiliates and adherents, and other terrorist groups, have formed a dispersed network that disregards borders and uses historic trading routes to exploit vast areas of weak government control. Al-Qa'ida affiliates and adherents operating in North and West Africa include al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi, Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah, Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia, and Moktar Belmoktar's al-Mulathameem Brigade, which has morphed into al-Murabitun.

Among the countries in the region that have recently experienced revolutions, Tunisia appears best poised to succeed in its transition to a new government, and its military has been a stabilizing factor through the transition. In Libya, the security situation is volatile and tenuous, especially in the eastern and south-western parts of the country. Militia groups control significant areas of territory and continue to exert pressure on the Libyan government, which is challenged to provide basic security and services. We are supporting Libyan efforts to improve internal security by participating in a multinational effort to support modest defense institution building and the development of security forces, to include General Purpose and Special Operations Forces. We are currently in the planning stages and expect to begin program implementation later this year.

In many places in the region, U.S. assistance is having positive effects on strengthening the counter-terrorism and border security capacities of regional partners and maintaining pressure on terrorist organizations. In Mali, French and African forces reduced the territory controlled by AQIM and other terrorist groups last year and provided space for democratic progress, including elections. Thirty-five (35) countries, including 16 African countries, have pledged troops to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). U.S. support has enabled MINUSMA and French operations to secure key cities and disrupt terrorist organizations. The Department of State has led U.S. efforts to support the preparation of African troop contributing countries for MINUSMA deployment with non-lethal equipment and pre-deployment training supported by U.S. military mentors and trainers. U.S. forces are also advising and assisting MINUSMA forces. Mali faces a key security transition this year as French forces reduce in the country and Malian and MINUSMA forces assume greater security responsibilities.

In addition to supporting partner efforts to stabilize Mali, our programs and exercises are helping our regional partners disrupt and contain the threat posed by Boko Haram. Boko Haram continues to attack civilian and government facilities in northern Nigeria and has extended its reach into parts of Cameroon, Niger, and Chad. Nigeria has relied on a primarily military approach to counter Boko Haram; we are working with Nigeria and drawing on lessons from U.S. experience in counter-insurgency efforts to support efforts to develop a more comprehensive approach that respects universal human rights and ensures perpetrators of violence are brought to justice.

We are actively increasing regional cooperation with African and European partners, including in information-sharing and combined training, exercises, and operations. Our cooperation builds security capacity and can help to reinforce our partners' willingness to advance our shared interests. Our enabling support to French operations in Mali is advancing collective security interests while also reinforcing this critical trans-Atlantic security relationship. In addition to participating in the strong and growing multinational cooperation across North and West Africa, we continue to work with the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development through the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership to build longer-term, comprehensive regional counter-terrorism capacity.

Enhancing regional approaches will be essential to effectively addressing the root causes of instability and countering the growth and freedom of movement and action of terrorist elements across the network. As part of this, deepening our cooperation with African and European partners will enhance our mutual ability to leverage combined posture and presence to address immediate threats in the region. As we work with partners to support the development of democratic security institutions and professional forces, parallel progress in civilian-led efforts to strengthen governance, the criminal justice sector, and the rule of law will be critical to sustainable progress. We are grateful for the Congress's continuing support for the foreign operations appropriations that make these latter efforts possible, and enable a "whole of government" approach in this critical region.

PROTECTING U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES

While we have the responsibility to help protect all U.S. personnel and facilities on the African continent, our activities this past year focused heavily on supporting the Department of State in strengthening the security of high threat, high risk diplomatic missions in 15 locations across North, East, West, and Central Africa. The sheer size of Africa and the continent's limited infrastructure constrain the rapid deployment of crisis response forces to many of these locations, posing significant risks to mission and personnel.

Our current response forces consist of Army Regionally Aligned Force and Marine Corps Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force elements, a Fleet Anti-Terrorism Support Team, and a Commander's In-extremis Force. The majority of our response forces are based in Europe, with the exception of the Regionally Aligned Force element known as the East Africa Response Force, which is based at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti.

Recent operations to support the Department of State in securing U.S. personnel and facilities in South Sudan tested our crisis response capabilities. As the situation in South Sudan unfolded, indications and warnings provided by intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance proved vital to understanding the situation and informing the timely repositioning of assets. The East Africa Response Force provided security augmentation to the U.S. Embassy, and the Central Command Crisis Response Element and the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force – Crisis Response assisted in evacuation operations. This was a strong joint and interagency effort that included robust support from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Special Operations Forces, as well as other combatant commands and the U.S. intelligence community. Our ability to deploy

forces rapidly reflected the unique circumstances of the situation, including sufficient advance warning to allow the prepositioning of response forces near South Sudan, and was not representative of the speed with which we would typically be able to respond to requests from the Department of State to secure U.S. personnel or facilities throughout the continent.

We are working with the Department of State to refine crisis indicators, work toward a common understanding of decision points and authorities for evacuation operations, and identify options to improve response times. Developing additional expeditionary infrastructure to enable the rotational presence of response forces at locations where we currently have limited or no presence would increase our ability to reduce response times, given sufficient advance warning of crisis.

ENHANCING STABILITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

Despite modest increases in regional capabilities and cooperation in the past year, maritime criminal activities in the Gulf of Guinea remain at concerning levels. Maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea continues to negatively affect commerce, fisheries, the marine environment, food security, oil distribution, and regional economic development.

Several West African littoral countries, including Nigeria and Senegal, are addressing maritime threats actively and encouraging greater regional cooperation. The Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States are also promoting regional cooperation to address maritime crime, including by establishing combined patrols. Regional cooperation and interoperability are essential, given the threat and the small size of naval forces relative to the area of waters to be patrolled.

Africa Command will continue to work with Gulf of Guinea partners to build capacity and conduct combined operations through initiatives like the Africa Partnership Station, the African Law Enforcement Partnership, and counter-narcotics programs. Our maritime security exercises facilitate regional maritime cooperation and interoperability. These efforts support and complement civilian initiatives that address the root causes of maritime crime by strengthening governance and criminal justice systems and promoting economic development.

The political will of African governments and the development of comprehensive approaches to maritime security that emphasize civilian security and law enforcement elements will be critical to improving regional maritime security.

COUNTERING THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is one of several persistent destabilizing influences in central Africa and has created significant humanitarian challenges. The African Union Regional Task Force against the LRA, led by Uganda and with advice and assistance from the United States, is reducing the threat posed by the LRA to populations in central Africa. In the last six months alone, U.S. forces provided enabling support to 33 partner operations that disrupted LRA activities and significantly increased pressure on the LRA. Military operations, combined with robust efforts by civilian agencies and non-governmental organizations, have resulted in increased defections, the capture of key LRA leaders, and decreased threats to civilian populations. Additional enablers would allow our partners to respond more rapidly to actionable intelligence and improve the effectiveness of their operations.

LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

To be effective in our pursuit of enduring effects, our activities must be nested within a broader U.S. Government effort. Often, they are also nested within a multinational effort. Our priorities for military-to-military engagement are the African countries with the greatest potential, by virtue of their population, economy, and national power, to influence the continent positively in future decades. With countries already on positive trajectories as regional leaders and influencers, we can focus on strengthening military-to-military relationships to build capacity together. For others whose success is less certain, engagement and shaping by the international community can help to gradually enhance governance and security trends.

We recognize that if integrated into comprehensive strategies, the activities we conduct to address our immediate priorities help strengthen partner capacities and shape the regional security environment for the longer term. They also influence relationships and perceptions of the United States in ways that can affect our ability to address future challenges. As we address our immediate

priorities, we must also dedicate efforts to tending to our long-term priorities. Working with the range of international and interagency partners to effectively shape a more peaceful and secure future will reduce the likelihood of the United States and our partners being perpetually entwined in addressing immediate security threats.

CONCLUSION

Africa's importance to our national interests of security, prosperity, democratic values, and international order continues to grow. While the security environment in Africa will remain uncertain for the foreseeable future, we have an imperative to find effective ways to address increasing threats to our security. We also have an opportunity to make judicious investments that make security more sustainable while also furthering enduring U.S. interests. The increasing convergence of U.S. security interests in Africa with those of African partners, European allies, and the broader international community provides opportunities to significantly enhance multilateral cooperation as we work toward long-term stability and security. Improving trust and collaboration, and maintaining patience and consistency in our collective efforts, will improve the likelihood of our collective success.

A dynamic security environment and economy of force region call for disciplined flexibility – the ability to flex based on a general alignment of resources to strategy, a clear understanding of the management of risks, and realistic assumptions about what our posture and relationships can support. Sharpening our prioritization across the globe, deepening cooperation with partners and allies to better leverage combined efforts, and adhering to disciplined flexibility will help to mitigate risks and increase our efficiency. Our Nation will have to make increasingly tough decisions about risks and tradeoffs in the future. The Africa Command team will continue to work collaboratively with other combatant commands and the Joint Staff to provide our best military advice to inform decisions about managing risk in our area of responsibility and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support to the soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, coastguardsmen, civilians, and contractors of Africa Command.

We will go forward, together.