

Statement
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Organizations
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Chair Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the President’s FY 2020 budget request for foreign assistance to sub-Saharan Africa. The Bureau of African Affairs appreciates the role of this Subcommittee in advancing American values and the interests of the United States as we work together to promote security and stability, expand trade and investment, harness the incredible potential of Africa’s dynamic people, and counter malign influence from China and Russia.

I am pleased to be joined by my USAID colleague, Deputy Assistant Administrator Cheryl Anderson. Our engagement in Africa is truly a team effort with USAID and across the United States government. I would also like to recognize the dedicated people of the State Department and USAID serving the American people at our missions in Africa and here in Washington. I am honored to represent such a dedicated and talented group of public servants.

Africa is a continent of both opportunities and obstacles. Africa is home to some of the fastest-growing economies in the world with a burgeoning middle class that creates exciting opportunities for expanded commerce. At the same time, some African partners are confronted with serious stability and security issues, including from violent extremists and criminal networks. Africa also remains a focus of global interest and geostrategic competition.

To address these and additional issues, the President’s FY 2020 foreign assistance budget requests \$4.9 billion for Africa to advance our foreign policy and strategic priorities. Consistent with the Administration’s Africa Strategy, this budget will support our goals to promote trade and commercial ties to increase prosperity in the United States and African countries; strengthen peace and security efforts, including countering terrorism; address communicable diseases; and support democracy, human rights, and good governance. As outlined in the principles underpinning USAID’s Journey to Self-Reliance, we seek to work with partners who invest in their own people, helping those who are prepared to help themselves.

With nearly 70 percent of Africans under the age of 25 and Africa’s population projected to double to two billion people by 2050, we should continue to work with African nations and regional organizations to secure a prosperous and stable environment to harness the potential of Africa’s youth for economic growth and ingenuity. Their education, training, and successful integration into the economic futures of their countries help create viable alternatives to poverty, violent extremism, and criminal activity. The Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), launched in 2010, invests in the next generation of African leaders and the YALI Network now has over 500,000 members. Our request seeks continued funding for what is really an investment in Africa’s future.

To promote trade and investment on the continent, this budget prioritizes funding for economic growth activities. Specifically, we requested funds to support Prosper Africa, a whole-of-government initiative to increase two-way trade between U.S. and African partners. We have requested additional resources for Power Africa to advance the Electrify Africa Act of 2015 and funds for trade and investment capacity building.

The Administration's FY 2020 request seeks to leverage recent historic changes in several African countries. We recognize opportunities in Ethiopia to build on Prime Minister Abiy's reform agenda to promote an inclusive and transparent government, a free market economy, and private sector engagement and investment and will support his efforts. Similarly, the request supports President Tshisekedi's efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to fight corruption, strengthen governance processes, advance human rights, and combat the ongoing Ebola outbreak. We also want to contribute to Sudan's transitional government's efforts to establish a civilian-led government.

In Somalia, government reformers, with U.S. and international support, have implemented economic reforms that will improve macroeconomic stability, strengthen governance, enhance security and accountability, and bolster public confidence in the federal government. These reforms are expected to qualify Somalia for debt relief early next year. Such relief, which the United States strongly supports, will allow this strategic country to regain access to international finance institution's resources needed to advance the full range of political, security, and economic reforms necessary for the country's stabilization.

The FY 2020 request also recognizes the growing problems faced in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, where we are increasingly concerned about the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, and the risk of spillover into Coastal West African states. We seek to continue to support the G5 Sahel countries bilaterally as they implement a comprehensive strategy and conduct counterterrorism operations that respect human rights. Our security assistance programs are also strengthening prospects for stability in Somalia looking toward elections and advancing maritime security on both coasts. We will continue to build peacekeeping capacity of more than 20 African countries. In 2018, these efforts trained more than 27,000 African peacekeepers for UN and AU missions.

We continue to support democracy-strengthening programs to counter fragility; support stronger and more effective governance to thwart corruption; and promote delivery of basic services and transparency. Specifically, we request additional resources for Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Chad for democracy, human rights, and governance programs, not requested previously.

We want to be sure our funding will have an impact, and we are prepared to shift resources when we conclude they could be better spent elsewhere. The FY 2020 request therefore represents reduced assistance for South Sudan and Tanzania.

Africa is increasingly contested space in a world of global power competition. Some seek to exploit African countries for their own economic or geopolitical advantage or subvert Africans' desire for democracy. The United States takes a different path, one of genuine partnership. No

other nation can match the breadth and depth of long-term engagement on the continent, or our investments in Africans' health, economic prosperity, security and well-being. In FY 2019, the State Department and USAID invested \$6.3 billion across Africa to reduce poverty and hunger, save lives, improve security, create jobs, provide clean water, and improve the quality of basic education. Going forward we will increase our engagement and coordination with like-minded partners and countries to leverage our assistance and investments with the international community.

The success of this strategy will build on our strong relationships with individual countries, effective regional organizations, and most importantly, the people of Africa.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to hearing your views and answering your questions.