

Statement of
Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Molly Phee
U.S. Department of State
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee Hearing
“FY 2024 Budget Request for Africa”
June 22, 2023

Chairman James, Ranking Member Jacobs, it is a pleasure to see you both. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration’s FY 2024 Budget Request. The planned \$55 billion investment in Africa announced by President Biden at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit builds on existing programs with a proven track record and provides funding for promising new initiatives.

Our African partners ask us what the funding announced at the Leaders Summit means for them. Our answer is that the \$8 billion in the FY 2024 budget request – a portion of our overall ALS investment -- targets three categories of activity: reinforcing programs that have benefited African people and American interests; addressing Africa’s infrastructure deficit and accelerating economic growth; and pioneering new initiatives to meet entrenched challenges. Fundamentally, the goal of the summit and its implementation is to solidify a strategic partnership between the United States and African countries, institutions, and people.

In this effort, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, in his role as Special Representative for Summit Implementation, has been an invaluable partner -- lending his expertise and insights. Based on consultations with Africans, he will propose a new architecture to ensure the U.S. government maintains predictable and sustained engagement with the continent.

The Budget Request funds valued programs such as Power Africa, the Young African Leaders Initiative, and the African Women’s Entrepreneurship Program. The request amplifies funding for critically needed development financing in Africa, especially the impactful work of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the EX-IM Bank, and the Development Finance

Corporation. It will also fund new initiatives such as the Digital Transformation with Africa to expand affordable, inclusive digital connectivity, and the African Democratic and Political Transitions Initiative, known as ADAPT, to support democratic transitions. To elevate the voices of more than 45 million African members of the diaspora in America, we are also launching the President's Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement this month.

The pandemic underscored the need for continued investment in African health systems. To that end, we are requesting \$5.8 billion, which includes nearly \$3.8 billion for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic by 2030. To achieve this goal, we ask for strong bipartisan support for a clean PEPFAR reauthorization before it expires at the end of September. We are also committed to addressing food insecurity exacerbated by Russia's aggression in Ukraine. That is why we requested \$487 million for the U.S. government's flagship food security program, Feed the Future. In addition, drawing on FY2023 supplemental resources, Secretary Blinken's Envoy for Global Food Security, Dr. Cary Fowler, worked with USAID to design and launch a new initiative known as Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS). This innovative new program directs research funding to develop climate-resilient staple crops and improved soil.

To promote political stability, the budget request seeks \$436 million for democracy and good governance to counter democratic backsliding and to secure gains made in fragile democracies across the continent. In the Sahel, we are requesting \$388 million to support our efforts to increase disaster resilience, empower youth entrepreneurship, and reduce poverty. We are committed to countering harmful Russian and People's Republic of China (PRC) activities. We support additional resources in this space.

We remain heavily invested in diplomatic efforts to promote peace. Enlisting the AU, Kenya, South Africa, our diplomacy contributed to the cessation of hostilities agreement between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front. Our increased engagement in coastal West Africa

and Mozambique through the Strategy to Promote Stability and Prevent Conflict is making a difference. We are working closely with newly elected leaders in Kenya and Nigeria to promote economic development, inclusive governance, and state institutions capable of meeting security threats. We are responding to the outbreak of violence in Sudan by seeking to protect civilians, advance their democratic aspirations, and minimize threats to regional stability.

Our ability to execute on our goals and interests relies on our dedicated public servants, domestic and abroad. We've requested additional positions for critical personnel needs and are seeking incentives for posts that are difficult to staff.

In closing, let me reiterate my appreciation to this Committee for your commitment and counsel. I greatly value your support in upholding our shared pursuit of democracy, inclusive prosperity, and national security as the benchmarks for a successful U.S.-Africa partnership.