

Written Testimony of
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“Examining the Fiscal Year 2025 State and Foreign Operations Budget Request for Africa”
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Good afternoon, Chairman James, Ranking Member Jacobs, and esteemed members of the Subcommittee. I am grateful for the opportunity to address you today regarding the President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Budget Request. I would like to first express my sincere appreciation to this Committee for your long-standing bipartisan support for USAID and for your dedication to Africa.

For more than 60 years, the United States has maintained an enduring commitment to Africa. USAID partnerships and investments have played a pivotal role in saving lives, reducing poverty, strengthening democratic governance, and helping partners in their own development journey. Since 1990, our work has contributed to uplifting 700 million people from the grips of extreme poverty. In 2003, only 50,000 people in Africa were on life-saving HIV treatment, though an estimated 18.9 million were infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa alone. Since then, PEPFAR has saved more than 25 million lives, the vast majority of them in Africa and today, PEPFAR provides more than 20 million people with treatment.

Efforts by the U.S. Government and our partners have reduced fatalities stemming from HIV and malaria, curtailed tuberculosis, and strengthened global health security and maternal and child health across sub-Saharan Africa. In our commitments to our African partners, we have endeavored not only to address challenges, but also invest in development amplifiers to achieve shared goals.

Africa is home to one of the world’s fastest-growing populations — projections suggest that by 2050, one in every four individuals globally will be African. Moreover, Africa boasts the largest population of youth globally, with 70 percent of Africans under the age of 30 and nearly half of all Africans under the age of 15. These demographics represent the next generation of young people poised to catalyze economic advancement, foster greater equity, and lead the way to a brighter future for their communities. To harness this opportunity, in 2010, the United States launched the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), the U.S. government’s signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders. Since its creation, it now has more than 640,000 YALI Network members, and more than 33,000 graduates through the Mandela Washington Fellowship and YALI Regional Leadership Centers. These centers, located at four higher education institutions across Africa help support and develop young leaders in areas such as civic leadership, public management, business and entrepreneurship, and more. As YALI continues to grow each year, so does its influence through the

work of alumni, and other members of the Network who foster economic growth and development, improve public service management, and strengthen civic engagement and ethical leadership.

The Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request supports U.S. strategic interests and shared African goals on the continent. It aligns with priorities from the State-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for Africa and the U.S. Strategy Toward sub-Saharan Africa. It tackles key development challenges across Africa, such as access to essential healthcare services, combating food insecurity, enhancing democracy and human rights, strengthening our work related to trade, energy, and climate change, equitable education for all, and reducing instability and the proliferation of extremism.

The Request supports the implementation of commitments outlined during the 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, ensuring the continuation of our efforts to enhance collaboration between the United States and African countries.

Increasing Economic Growth and Trade

We know that economic growth remains uneven across the continent, and that expanding economic opportunity and investment is key to development gains. U.S. investments in Africa enhance economic growth, alleviate poverty and hunger, advance women's economic security, and create jobs. USAID has long supported Africa's work to facilitate trade and investment across the continent and we will continue to do so.

For example, our work on regional and continental economic integration provides essential resources to fuel market competitiveness and drive sustainable development across the continent. With the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat at the 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, we are actively assisting the implementation of that important continental trade initiative. USAID also supports African exporters looking to access the U.S. market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

In Fiscal Year 2025, we will also continue to connect African and American companies through the Prosper Africa Initiative. Since its inception in 2019, the U.S. Government has closed 1,852 deals valued at \$86 billion in trade and investment in 49 countries across the continent as part of the Prosper Africa Initiative, benefiting 498 American and African firms.

In support of Prosper Africa is USAID's Africa Trade and Investment activity (ATI), our flagship continent-wide business-development activity poised to create thousands of jobs both within Africa and the United States. Working hand-in-hand with the private sector, ATI identifies opportunities that deliver development impact, bring value to the private sector, and position the continent for future growth. For example, USAID assistance positioned Naïmadolls, a woman-owned company in Côte

d'Ivoire producing dolls inspired by diverse African cultures, to be the first Ivorian company to sell their products on Amazon. Our contribution will facilitate billions in exports and investments, mobilize private sector driven solutions, cultivate healthy business environments and unlock economic opportunities, particularly for women and youth.

The FY 2025 \$100.5 million request for Prosper Africa will accelerate two-way trade and investment between the United States and African states by modernizing and synchronizing the U.S. government's trade and investment toolkit to facilitate transactions and shape future market opportunities more effectively. For instance, Prosper Africa's virtual deal room connects investors with opportunities across the continent that have all been curated and vetted by experts on-the-ground. Our support to U.S. and African firms, through efforts like the virtual deal room, helps stimulate private capital for Africa's sustainable growth and promote African exports to the United States.

Turning to Power Africa, the FY 2025 request of \$100 million will continue Power Africa's transformation of the energy landscape, with the goal of adding 30,000 megawatts and 60 million connections by 2030. Power Africa plays a leading role in Africa's equitable transition to cleaner and more cost-efficient energy sources through innovation, commercialization, and deployment of cleaner energy technologies and infrastructure. USAID has a long history of taking a partner country-driven approach to development, and our partners across the continent are asking for our help as they work to deploy clean energy as a solution to meet their domestic energy and development goals.

USAID's recent investments have laid crucial groundwork for partner-driven sustainable development in the region, including support for natural gas projects that complement clean energy transitions. In 2023, Power Africa supported 1,042 MWs of clean energy-based electricity to come online, powering over one million homes and businesses. In 2023, Power Africa also supported the delivery of first-time or improved electricity to 33 million people through 6.7 million new on- and off-grid connections to homes and businesses. Power Africa's contributions to addressing the power deficit on the continent are helping to unlock the continent's development potential and improve quality of life for millions of people.

In FY 2025, we will build on this progress. Power Africa will continue to address energy poverty and bolster human development through private sector-led energy development that delivers reliable and affordable market-based energy as well as inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Strengthening Democracy

The President's FY 2025 Budget Request prioritizes engagement and collaboration with African partners to champion democratic values, tackle democratic deficits, and nurture genuine, transparent, and inclusive political systems that are responsive to the aspirations of all citizens. While there have

been important strides toward democracy in some countries in Africa, we must acknowledge that we have seen pervasive backsliding in various countries on the continent, particularly in the Sahel. Furthermore, marginalized groups, including women, LGBTQI+ individuals, and persons with disabilities still face discrimination and obstacles to meaningful inclusion and political participation. Weak state institutions and restricted civic and political space further exacerbate these challenges, with detrimental impacts on health, food security, and livelihoods.

The \$410.5 million democracy request for Africa will promote democratic ideals, address democratic deficiencies, and will foster legitimate, transparent, and inclusive political systems that respond to citizens' needs, including through support for civil society, electoral processes, our Democracy Delivers Initiative and the African Democratic and Political Transitions (ADAPT) programs. Democracy Delivers cements communities' hard-won democratic gains by surging resources to countries where we see democratic progress and leverages U.S. diplomatic power to reinforce progress, while ADAPT supports emerging democratic governments and civil society at critical moments by helping develop credible transition plans, support national dialogues, census, voter registration, and legal and constitutional reform.

Additionally, the Request funds the Digital Transformation with Africa Initiative, which deepens efforts to expand affordable and inclusive digital connectivity, build digital resilience and security, improve the livelihoods and economic well-being of Africans through digital technologies, and facilitate access to digital skills and literacy, particularly for youth and women.

In the initiative's first year, the United States swiftly established the institutional frameworks necessary to drive forward this comprehensive whole-of-government effort. Additionally, Vice President Harris issued a "Call to Action" to the private sector, rallying for investment in African digital inclusion, aligned with the initiative's aim. In 2023, the United States made a substantial investment of \$80 million in new digital infrastructure, projects, and technical programming, signaling a robust commitment to advancing digital development in Africa.

Building Africa's Resilience

Africa is characterized by resilience, transformation, and promise. Yet global health needs and rising levels of food insecurity, climate change, and violent extremism present critical challenges and developmental setbacks.

The President's FY 2025 Budget Request emphasizes the need to ensure access to vital health services across Africa. From childhood immunizations to combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, to fortifying preparedness capabilities continent-wide, the budget underscores a commitment to advancing health outcomes. It also reaffirms ongoing support for the President's Emergency Plan for

AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), fostering optimism as we strive toward our shared goal of eliminating HIV/AIDS as a public health concern by 2030. The Request provides \$3.81 billion for PEPFAR, and \$1.89 billion for the other health programs including global health security, malaria, tuberculosis, and maternal and child health.

We envision a world where everyone is healthy and well-nourished and has the same chance of survival, regardless of where they live. Since 2000, there has been a 54 percent drop in under-five mortality and a 42 percent decline in maternal deaths across USAID's 25 priority countries, 16 of which are in Africa.

The Request also recognizes the need to address food insecurity across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. The number of people requiring humanitarian assistance has increased by nearly a third – from 274 million in 2022 to 363 million at the end of 2023. We know that responding to emergencies is not enough. We are building resilience that helps communities to overcome recurrent social, environmental, and political shocks while also building their capacities for long-term self-reliant economic development. For example, in northern Kenya, USAID programs sustainably reduce persistent acute malnutrition and build resilience through emergency drought response activities as well as longer-term behavior change, health, and livelihood interventions.

The U.S. government's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, plays a key role in combating chronic hunger and undernutrition in sub-Saharan Africa. In areas where Feed the Future has worked, poverty, hunger, and child stunting all declined by 20-25% during the first decade of the initiative. Through Feed the Future, the FY 2025 Request of \$471.7 million will catalyze agriculture-led growth and improve nutritional status by enhancing agricultural productivity, increasing economic resilience in vulnerable communities, and expanding access to markets and trade for smallholder farmers, especially women.

Through Feed the Future's Resilience Challenge Fund in Somalia, we've prioritized women's empowerment in private agribusiness, fostering job creation and income growth. The fund helps reduce reliance on humanitarian aid by enhancing the capacity of women-owned milling companies, training youth, establishing village savings groups linked to banks, and raising agricultural productivity, as seen by the doubling of sorghum yields.

The President's FY 2025 Budget Request also underscores water's foundational role in Africans' lives and livelihoods, allocating \$124.3 million to implement the U.S. Global Water Strategy in sub-Saharan Africa. The Request will advance health, prosperity, stability, and resilience through improved water resources management and increased access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene.

USAID is committed to reaching 22 million people with new or improved access to water and sanitation by 2027, including those in conflict-affected areas and those without prior access to basic services. In Uganda, significant progress has already been made in expanding access to safer sanitation through a dynamic private sector collaboration with LIXIL, a leading global water and household technologies company, and Nice House of Plastics, a local manufacturer, providing low-cost sanitation facilities to 370,000 people across 20 districts.

With 16 out of the 20 countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change in sub-Saharan Africa, we must also address the wide-ranging impacts of climate change and the degradation of natural resources. In the Sahel, where competition for water resources is one of the drivers of conflict, our Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) II Program is enhancing communities' readiness for increasingly frequent and severe droughts by providing improved and accessible climate information and services.

The FY 2025 Budget Request will help ensure African countries are building the capacity to adapt to climate change and conserve biodiversity, while sustainably growing their economies and optimizing the use of natural resources and human capital in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner.

The President's FY 2025 Budget Request highlights the critical nature of initiatives that counter terrorism and extremism to address threats that aim to erode social cohesion and democratic governance. The Request asks for \$53.7 million for the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership, \$24.5 million to support the Partnership for Regional East Africa Counterterrorism, and \$11 million for the West Africa Regional Security Initiative. The request of \$25 million for the new Counter Russia Malign Actors in Africa Fund underscores our commitment to swiftly and effectively addressing challenges emerging from our adversaries.

U.S. assistance remains dedicated to guaranteeing equitable access to education for all children and youth, empowering them to reach their full potential. By enhancing educational systems, forging partnerships, and utilizing data-driven approaches, we are poised to make significant strides in improving the quality of basic education, vocational training, and higher education. Through collaboration with local institutions, we are confident that we can achieve our development objectives, especially considering the continent's dynamic and growing youth population. The education request of \$225.4 million prioritizes equitable access to education and improving learning outcomes for children and youth and leverages the potential of Africa's growing youth population.

The request of \$20 million for YALI will strengthen the organizational capacity to sustainably develop leadership skills and strengthen networks of young people to continue building transformational leaders who advance and advocate for development, peace and security, and stronger citizen-centered

public service management and governance. I feel incredibly fortunate to have connected with numerous YALI alumni during my visits to the continent. It's been an absolute delight to witness the impactful endeavors they're leading to ignite positive change within their communities, countries, and globally.

Conclusion

The President's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for sub-Saharan Africa underscores our dedication to fostering partnerships between the United States and Africa, institutions, and citizens. This request will enable USAID, in collaboration with our partners, to sustain our mutual commitment to shaping Africa's future for the benefit of African and American citizens alike, while also serving the broader strategic interests of the United States. Once again, I extend my gratitude for the opportunity to present testimony today, and I am eager to address any questions you may have.