



REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

THE CONSTITUENCY FOR AFRICA

2015 RONALD H. BROWN AFRICAN AFFAIRS SERIES

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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THE AFRICAN CAPACITY
BUILDING FOUNDATION



THE CONSTITUENCY FOR AFRICA

2015 RONALD H. BROWN AFRICAN AFFAIRS SERIES

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Message from the CFA

The Constituency for Africa (CFA) convened our 2015 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series on September 14th – 18th in Washington, DC. The theme of this year's Series was ***Strengthening Capacity in Africa to Address Health, Economic, and Technology Challenges***. With this theme, the focus of the 2015 Series was on:

1. Strengthening healthcare infrastructure in Africa;
2. Expanding the Diaspora participation in all aspects of U.S.-Africa policy and programs;
3. African Women's Empowerment through STEM – Building Partnerships between Africa and the US; and
4. Supporting the renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

By all accounts, this year's Series was a success! In cooperation with our sponsors and partners, CFA convened twelve events and brought together leaders and decision-makers – ***in the U.S., Africa, and the Diaspora*** – from the government, private sector, civil society, and the media to have focused discussions on key issues, and how we can collectively advance an Africa-focused agenda.

On behalf of the CFA's Board of Directors, it is our pleasure to present the **Report of Proceedings** for the 2015 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series. We hope that this document serves as a baseline as CFA seeks to further strengthen our collaboration with our sponsors, partners, and stakeholders over the next 12-24 months.

Dr. Roscoe Moore
Chairman of the Board (Interim)

Melvin P. Foote
President and Chief Executive Officer

Initiated by CFA in 1992 and re-named in honor of the late U.S. Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown in 1996, this Series is organized by CFA each year in conjunction with the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference.

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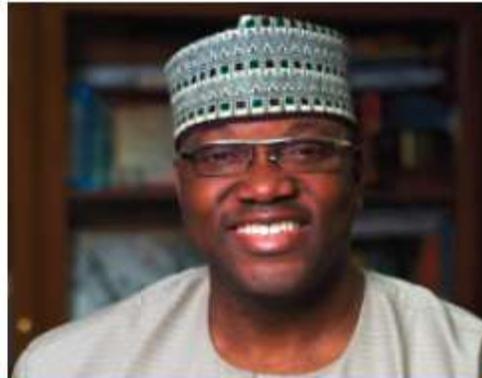
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INTRODUCTION

The 2015 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series was held in Washington, D.C. from September 14-18, 2015. This report summarizes the discussions at the following seven public sessions:

Monday, September 14, 2015

African Women's Empowerment through STEM Forum: Building Partnerships Between Africa and the United States, hosted by the World Bank.

African-American Unity Caucus Forum, hosted by His Excellency Serge Mombouli, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo to the United States, and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ambassadors' Group Reception Honoring African-American Leaders, hosted by the ECOWAS Ambassadors' Group and held at the Embassy of the Republic of Ghana

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Town Hall Meeting in Partnership with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of African Affairs: Strategies for Strengthening Healthcare Infrastructure in Africa, hosted by the U.S. State Department.

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Democracy and Governance Roundtable Elections and Governance in Africa: The Way Forward, hosted by the National Endowment for Democracy.

African Trade and Investment Business Roundtable, hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency and sponsored by the African Capacity Building Foundation.

Thursday September 17, 2015

Second Global African and Diaspora Leadership Teleforum: Promoting Dialogue Among Global Diaspora Leaders, hosted by AllAfrica.com.

Africa Agriculture Forum: Strategies for Strengthening the African Agriculture Sector to Increase Trade and Investment, Economic Development, and Food Security, sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the African Capacity Building Foundation.

Africa Capacity Development Stakeholders' Roundtable, sponsored by USAID and the African Capacity Building Foundation.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

September 14, 2015

African Women's Empowerment through STEM Forum: Building Partnerships Between Africa and the United States

The Constituency for Africa (CFA), in collaboration with the World Bank Group (WBG), African Union Commission (AUC), African Ambassadors' Group, Consortium of African Diasporas in the U.S. (CADUS), and Howard University ADVANCE-IT, gathered stakeholders from Africa, government, private sector, civil society, and the African Diaspora to share lessons learned and explore strategies regarding African women's empowerment and development towards Africa's Agenda 2063. The primary goal of the forum was to promote education, research, and human capacity development in Africa, the United States, and elsewhere.



Stephen Shalita, Acting Director of Africa External Communications and Partnerships, World Bank, gives welcome remarks.

Opening comments:

Mr. Steven Shalita, Acting Director of Africa External Communications and Partnerships (AFREC), World Bank Group, made short welcoming remarks.

Mr. Melvin Foote, President and CEO of CFA, explained that this was the third or fourth STEM in Africa forum and emphasized that the issue will be critical for future development. After all, at least half of the people in Africa are women. Mr. Foote also highlighted the importance of implementing the proposals discussed during the forum to continue to make forward progress.

Dr. Pius Kamau, President of Africa-America Higher Education Partnerships (AAHEP) and the co-founder of the Consortium of African Diasporas in the United States (CADUS), explained that CADUS was established two and a half years ago and has held six conferences, including one on STEM-related topics. In addition, the Africa America Higher Education Partnerships (AAHEP) has for the last seven years worked to bring African women to the United States to obtain Ph.D.'s in STEM fields and then return to Africa.

The next speaker was Tarek Ben Youssef, Charge d'Affairs for the African Union. Mr. Youssef noted that investment in youth and women results in high development multipliers. He also emphasized the need to develop incentives to encourage women to enter STEM fields and to address the low participation of women in STEM in a more holistic manner. Mr. Youssef believes that for shared prosperity, Africans must invest in their people, which should include education in STEM fields.



Ben Youssef, Charge d'Affairs, African Union.

Barbara Simmons, Inaugural Dean for International Education, the William V.S. Tubman University, commented that she

appreciated the African Union definition of the Diaspora, which includes the ancestors of the first Diaspora out of the African continent as well as Africans living around the world. This definition speaks to the purpose for the forum, to build an international union for development. Finally, Dean Simmons emphasized the importance of establishing working groups to follow up on the outcomes of the discussion.

Guest speakers:

Dr. Johnnetta Cole, Director of the National Museum of African Art and former President of Spellman College, emphasized the importance of substantially increasing the involvement of women and girls in STEM fields. She noted that less than 15 percent of the world's engineers are women; less than 24 percent of the technology workforce is women; and in terms of basic literacy, women make up two-thirds of people in the world who cannot read or write. Dr. Cole outlined the opportunities for STEM in Africa: Africa has the world's fastest growing economy at 10 percent annual GDP growth as well as the world's youngest population—41 percent are under 15 years old and another 19 percent are between 15 and 25 years old. However, she emphasized that STEM also faces challenges in Africa. The population of the continent is expected to double by 2050, reaching 2.5 billion. Many youth are unemployed and underemployed, even in more developed countries like South Africa. The Zambian Minister of Finance, Alexander Chikwanda, has described youth employment as a ticking time bomb. And while Africa contains 15 percent of the global population, less than 1 percent of STEM research and development occurs there. Dr. Cole noted that Africa's skill shortages in STEM fields are growing.



*Dr. Johnnetta Cole,
Director of the
Smithsonian National
Museum of African Art.*

In light of these challenges, Dr. Cole emphasized that the answer to finding future African STEM workers lies with women and girls. Studies have shown that girls increase school attendance by 10 percent when clean water is easily available to the family. In Africa, girls are expected to marry at an earlier age than boys, and if they are married, it is assumed that they do not need to further their education. Moreover, if a girl's family cannot afford to pay for education for all children, often girls are excluded. She believes that more funds must be dedicated to improving STEM education, since the quality of the education is highly dependent on laboratory materials and equipment. Dr. Cole also believes that foreign companies in STEM fields with operations in Africa must serve as leaders in bringing women into STEM. For example, she noted that many firms in the petroleum industry have historically been hostile to women and girls.

Dr. Cole encouraged the audience to learn strategies for effective STEM education from other regions in the world to be applied in Africa. She praised the World Bank for encouraging countries in Africa to scale up education, noting that the Bank has established 19 centers of excellence in African countries and is providing an additional \$150 million to STEM education efforts.

Dr. Cole highlighted the role that arts can play in conjunction with science. She noted that putting an 'A' in STEM makes it 'STEAM.' She concluded her remarks with several proverbs to showcase women as the untapped reservoir of global talent. A state that does not educate and train women is like a man who only trains his right arm. When you educate a man, you educate an individual; when you educate a woman, you educate a nation. Dr. Cole also noted Malala Yousafzai's observation that extremists have shown that a girl with a book is the image that frightens them most.

The second guest speaker, H.E. Ambassador Amina Salum Ali, joined the discussion via a voice call from Tanzania. Unfortunately, technical issues prevented Ambassador Ali from being heard.

Keynote Address:

H.E. Professor Hassana Alidou, Ambassador of Niger, delivered the keynote address. The Ambassador has been a great supporter of William V.S. Tubman University and is an honorary member of the board. She came to the United States in 1988 through a scholarship program, completing her Ph.D. at the University of Illinois before becoming a full professor at the University of Louisiana.

Ambassador Alidou noted that when she became the Director of Basic and Higher Education for UNESCO, she wanted to explore how to build bridges to STEM. Because African women in STEM face unique challenges, she proposed the development of a program that offers capacity building in two areas: acquisition of skills, and the role of female networks, mentoring and role models.

The Ambassador believes that the role of institutions in promoting STEM should be considered, particularly historically black universities, the U.S. Government, the World Bank, and the private sector. She listed several successful examples of institutional leadership on STEM. First, the African Union created a program to enhance women's participation in STEM in 2008. The program established four women laureates in STEM, giving them \$20,000 and a scientific certification by the African Union. However, the best thing that the program provided was a platform for the laureates to become role models for girls. In another example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID established a series of agricultural research fellowships. Ambassador Alidou noted that only one in four agricultural researchers in Africa is female. Women that received Gates/USAID fellowships developed 137 products and at least 57 refocused their research to be more responsive to the needs of women farmers. Ambassador Alidou explained that the World Bank launched the Africa Centers of Excellence (ACE) project to strengthen the ability of its partners to develop high-quality training at the regional level. The aim of the \$150 million project is to enhance the capacity of African universities in STEM fields, but the higher level objective is to meet skills needs in STEM areas. Professor Alidou would like to ask the World Bank how many female scientists are benefitting from ACE, what kind of research are they conducting, and what the outcomes are. She contends that since the ACE program has just begun, it is important to verify that universities receiving ACE funding have a gender program.

Despite these positive examples, the Ambassador noted continued challenges. Girls in Sub-Saharan Africa perform far behind their counterparts in the rest of the world. In fact, 70 percent of girls in SSA cannot read or do basic math problems. Therefore, it will be difficult to promote STEM if serious measures are not taken to support teacher capacity to teach these basic skills. With regard to learning math and science, girls are less exposed to those concepts in the classroom. Therefore, the Ambassador believes it is necessary to develop new strategies to help women and girls access STEM education.

The Consortium of African Diasporas in the United States (CADUS) can be an ally in advancing access to STEM through several mechanisms as outlined by Dr. Cole. First, CADUS can help with building networks and partnerships and can play a role by encouraging the Diaspora to employ girls and women in STEM fields. CADUS can also mobilize universities to promote research and joint distance learning to minimize the cost of joint research and learning. Along with the African Union, World Bank, USAID, historically black universities and the private sector, CADUS can empower girls in STEM in primary and secondary schools in Africa. In particular, mentoring in schools at this level to develop a STEM leadership academy is important. At a high school level, support should focus on promoting internships through international companies so female graduates can apply their knowledge.

CADUS can facilitate the development of a database of African and female STEM research, hopefully promoting collaboration between researchers at historically black universities and African researchers. CADUS can also develop a funding strategy with the full participation of African networks to promote research by African females. Ambassador Alidou believes that the best research should be rewarded on an annual basis.

Dr. Anthony K. Wutoh, Provost and Chief Academic Officer of Howard University, introduced the two panels.

Panel I: Initiatives already in existence – Women in the African Context

Dr. Sonya Smith, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Howard University, served as moderator for panel I.

Ms. Yvonne Gueye Issie, President of the Africa Chapter of the International Network of Women Engineers and Sciences (CIFISATS), Cote d'Ivoire
Ms. Issie reiterated that women in STEM is a global issue that requires global attention.

Professor Ezzoura Errami, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geology at Chouaib Doukkali University in El Jadida, Morocco; President of African Association of Women in Geosciences; Founder of African Geoparks Network (AGN) and the initiative “Day of Earth Sciences in Africa and the Middle East”
Professor Errami explained that the African Association of Women in Geosciences (AAWG) was created in 1995 to encourage women in the sciences and to raise awareness of gender issues in the male-dominated field of earth sciences. AAWG now has 500 members in 35 countries including Senegal, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, and Tunisia. The association organizes conferences on topics in earth science and promotes female participation. Professor Errami noted that the African Geoparks Network (AGN) was created in 2009 to support new products created from the continent's geological heritage and to hold more conferences.

Ms. Reine Essobmadje, President of WFEO-WIE and INWES, Cameroon
Ms. Essobmadje's organization is targeting teenage girls in STEM fields, mostly focusing on digital products. One product, Hack4Girl, helps girls design and build their own website in as little as three hours. At this point, the websites are intended to promote Cameroonian tourism. Ms. Essobmadje believes that this experience shows that the girls have the potential to be entrepreneurs along the lines of Facebook and Google. However, in order to get girls to be interested in STEM, she noted that it was important to understand their interests. The Hack4Girl program mixes technology with topics of personal importance to them.

Ms. Anna-Karren Nguno, Deputy Director, Regional Geoscience Division, Geological Survey of Namibia, Ministry of Mines and Energy
Ms. Nguno explained that the Geological Survey of Namibia (GSN) has 94 staff, 43 of which are women, including top management and the three deputy directors. She noted that the GSN hosted a conference of African women last year to promote girls in STEM fields. GSN also takes part in major career fairs and trade shows where they promote women and girls in geological sciences.

Ms. Pamela Juma Owidi, Association of Women Living with Albinism, Kenya
Ms. Owidi's organization is focused on helping people living with Albinism.



***Dr. Sonya Smith,
Professor of
Mechanical
Engineering, Howard
University, moderates
a panel discussion.***

Prof. Hortense Atta Diallo, Director of Cabinet of the President, Director of the Plant Production Research Pole, University Nangui Abrogoua, Cote'd'Ivoire

Professor Diallo explained that a June meeting outlined all existing STEM initiatives in Cote'd'Ivoire and elsewhere, and the report of the proceedings lists each one. She explained that sometimes people are not aware of the opportunities while others receive information too late to apply for scholarships and other programs.

Ms. Ekra Anne Marie, Aviation Civil Engineer, Director of the Office of Investigations

Ms. Marie shared that Cote'd'Ivoire just passed a law making universal education mandatory for all children between 6 and 16 years of age. She noted that this would oblige girls to attend school. Ms. Marie believes this law will be a positive step for girls, who generally do not have the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity in STEM fields.

Ms. Tea Yassi Juliette, Geophysicist Engineer

Ms. Juliette explained that a big problem for African women in science is finding a job after graduation, particularly in geosciences. Ms. Juliette explained that some members of AAWJ have completed their diploma but have subsequently encountered difficulties in finding employment, which has led some girls to choose other areas of study with better employment prospects.

Panel 2: Building Partnerships – What should be the role of public, private, academia and civil society – U.S. Business, African Diaspora towards Africa

Ms. Gena Bradford, President of BMG3, moderated panel 2. She explained that BMG3 has implemented in-house procedures to be sure to include local female engineers and architects on their construction projects. Ms. Bradford believes that any time the government extends contracts to foreign companies, they should make a point of including women. However, she noted that most companies only work with women when it is required of them.

Ms. Jean Bailey, Ph.D., Professor of Human Development; Director, Maryland KZN Sister State Committee

Dr. Bailey has worked with the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) to train leaders all over Africa to develop continuity in African leadership. She noted that the YALI program has been very successful and could be expanded through Sister Cities International (SCI). SCI was founded in 1956 to champion peace and prosperity and to foster bonds between communities around the world. Dr. Bailey noted that the state of Maryland is particularly suited for expanded partnerships in Africa because of the large number of Diaspora settled there. In fact, four sister state partnerships—two in Nigeria, one in Liberia, and one in South Africa—have been established in Maryland. Ms. Bailey is also working on education and training exchange programs. She indicated that Maryland has four historically black universities, over 40 universities, and at least eight community colleges focusing on STEM for women. Maryland's model is being expanded to other states, and she believes that extending it to other countries would help to foster STEM initiatives for women.

Dr. Andreas Blom, Lead Economist representing the World Bank Group

Dr. Blom noted that previous speakers had discussed the role of World Bank-funded activities in encouraging more women in STEM fields in Africa. He noted that the World Bank must receive a specific request on how to move the issue forward before it can respond effectively. He would like to get more information on where girls are falling out of the education system (e.g., in elementary school, junior high, or high school) He believes that an approach cannot be cut and pasted from one country to the next; rather, the implementation must be tailored to each country. Dr. Blom emphasized the importance of matching a funding source and a request from that source, suggesting that a conference on STEM in Africa with key high-level participants would help to achieve this objective.

Ms. Yvonne Gueye Issie, President of Africa Chapter of the International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists, President of CIFISATS in Cote d'Ivoire

Ms. Issie emphasized the need for practicality and cited the need for statistical data about African women in STEM fields. At this point, the data to demonstrate the problem do not exist. Ms. Issie suggested that the World Bank give financial support to CADUS and others to collect these data. She noted that while there are funds for African women in science, women often are not aware that it exists. She believes that African women in STEM fields need a platform where they can go to get the information they need.

Prof. Ezzoura Errami, Faculty of Sciences, Department of Geology at Chouaib Doukkali University in El Jadida, Morocco; President of African Association of Women in Geosciences; Founder of African Geoparks Network (AGN); and the initiative "Day of Earth Sciences in Africa and the Middle East"

According to Professor Errami, promoting research with all partners is of utmost importance. She advocated promoting women at the level of higher education, and also in primary education. She believes that civil society and the government should be partners in promoting girls' education because peace and local development are crucial to achieving education goals. She noted that fighting poverty will help bring more girls into the education system. Professor Errami indicated that it will be difficult to see the impact of interventions unless they are concentrated in one or two priority areas.

Ms. Reine Essobmadje, President, WFEO-WIE and INWES, Cameroon

Ms. Essobmadje explained that while collaboration is easy to promise, it is difficult to implement because people are usually speaking from their own perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to think about sustainability and inclusive development, collaborating with the public and private sectors to develop win-win solutions. According to Ms. Essobmadje, recent changes have been relatively small because the programs were built from scratch. In her opinion, programs should be built using the foundations that already exist. Education programs should be youth opportunity focused to address the lack of employment options. Ms. Essobmadje believes that the best way to protect the future is to create peace. One way to achieve this is by providing educators with adequate resources, working with businesses and the government to ensure sufficient funding to support and sustain progress. She believes that the business community can help change the mindset of African youth by harnessing their spirit of entrepreneurship.

Ms. Anna-Karren Nguno, Deputy Director, Regional Geoscience Division, Geological Survey of Namibia, Ministry of Mines and Energy

Ms. Nguno offered two recommendations to the panel: first, to increase funding to NGOs whose goals are to increase school attendance, and to increase partnerships among STEM institutions.

Ms. Pamela Juma Owidi, Association of Women Living with Albinism, Kenya

Ms. Owidi asked the audience to bear in mind the challenges faced by women with Albinism. She noted that many girls have been able to surmount successfully these challenges.

Prof. Hortense Atta Diallo, Director of Cabinet of the President, Director of the Plant Production Research Pole, University Nangui Abrogoua, Cote d'Ivoire

Professor Diallo emphasized that resources should be devoted to functioning partnerships, nothing that universities often sign MOUs that remain in desk drawers. She believes that any discussion of STEM should reflect the need for laboratories, which are admittedly difficult to acquire. She also highlighted the need for part-time educational opportunities because scholarships for full-time female students may not work if the women have to care for their families. She also revisited the World Bank ACE program and wondered how many scholarships were given to women as a result of the program. Professor Diallo noted that French-speaking countries face a language barrier that could make it more difficult to take

advantage of these resources. She suggested that the audience support mentorship programs and organize conferences to discuss educational experiences and success stories, though these would require additional funding.

Ms. Jeannette Kah Le Guil, African Diaspora

Ms. Le Guil is an employee of the World Bank. As a member of the Diaspora, she has built partnerships to promote female empowerment through STEM. Ms. Le Guil has partnered with people both in the United States and in Africa to work towards ending poverty and promoting shared prosperity. The World Bank and IMF Diaspora Group was established to provide a forum promoting professional and social networking between current and retired staff across the World Bank Group and to discuss the Diaspora contribution to development. The group would like to raise awareness about the role of the African Diaspora in development and membership is open to all.

Wrap Up and Next Steps:

Dr. John Riverson

Dr. Riverson emphasized that the greatest challenge to achieving female empowerment will be transforming words into action. He believes that it will be necessary to identify one organization to ensure the ideas discussed during the forum are being carried out on a step-by-step basis. In addition, partnerships should be formed with organizations that can fund the proposed initiatives. The first step is to conduct a background study to determine the real needs. However, he advised CADUS to partner with CFA, the African Union, and the World Bank to capitalize on the existing knowledge. Dr. Riverson believes that there are existing initiatives that could be identified to encourage the funding agencies to provide more substantial support on these issues. He noted that the team organizing this effort will begin a series of meetings, along with the World Bank, to develop an agenda to move forward. Dr. Riverson indicated that participants would be contacted by email with a more concrete action plan over the next few weeks.

African-American Unity Caucus Forum

As part of the 2002 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series, the Constituency for Africa (CFA) convened the first African American Unity Caucus (AAUC) at the Ralph Bunche International Affairs Center on the campus of Howard University. The AAUC was a forum made up of African and African-American leaders of Africa-focused organizations and programs.

The mission of the AAUC was to promote cooperation and coordination among member groups in an effort to strengthen the overall impact on U.S.-Africa foreign policy. The AAUC also had as its highest priority the educating and engaging of the African-American constituency in the affairs of Africa. Some of the groups that actively participated in the AAUC network included Africare, TransAfrica, National Council of Negro Women, CFA, Africa Action, African American Institute, Africa Society, Phelps Stokes Fund, American Association of Blacks in Energy, Education Africa, D.C.-Dakar Sister Cities Program, and Opportunities Industrialization Centers, International (OICI).

While some very solid progress was made in establishing the AAUC network, this progress was achieved in spite of some significant challenges, which ultimately inhibited participation and limited the AAUC's potential impact on U.S.-Africa foreign policy. Management style, personality issues, poor communication, and a lack of organizational capacity were all factors hindering progress of the AAUC in its initial years of operation.

In an effort to re-start the AAUC, CFA convened a meeting of approximately 30 leaders, many of those who were involved the formulation of the AAUC, as well as other Americans of African descent who have emerged as leaders in the Africa-focused community.

The forum participants discussed three primary issues: (1) the demise of African-American Africa-focused organizations and groups; (2) the upcoming U.S. Presidential campaign and an AAUC strategy to engage all campaigns in the interest of the Africa agenda; and (3) ideas and strategies for reconstituting the AAUC.

A report of proceedings for the AAUC Forum will be distributed directly to meeting participants and other interested stakeholders.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ambassadors' Group Reception Honoring African-American Leaders

ECOWAS Ambassadors' Group Honors African American Leaders

Reception Honors Advocates for Stronger U.S.-Africa Relations

The ECOWAS Ambassadors' Group hosted a reception to collectively acknowledge and recognize – *for the first time* – African Americans who have played a significant role in advocating for stronger U.S. relations with ECOWAS countries, as well as Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. The Honorees were Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Congresswoman Karen Bass (D-CA); Mrs. Florie Liser, Assistant United States Trade Representative for Africa; Dr. Johnnetta Cole, Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art; and Mr. Melvin Foote, President and Chief Executive Officer, Constituency for Africa. Ms. Jummy Olabanji, report/anchor at WJLA, the local ABC affiliate for the greater Washington, D.C. area, served as Mistress of Ceremonies.



L-R: Dr. Johnnetta Cole, Florie Liser, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Congresswoman Karen Bass, and CFA President, Melvin Foote Honored at ECOWAS Ambassadors Group Reception.

The ECOWAS Ambassadors' Group is comprised of Ambassadors representing a regional group of 15 countries, founded in 1975. Its mission is to promote economic integration in all fields of economic activity, particularly transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, and natural resources.

September 15, 2015

Town Hall Meeting in Partnership with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of African Affairs: Strategies for Strengthening Healthcare Infrastructure in Africa

In partnership with the U.S. State Department's Bureau of African Affairs, the Constituency for Africa convened a Town Hall Meeting on Africa to provide a forum to discuss the following topics:

- *Challenges to African Healthcare Infrastructure*
- *Success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Program*
- *Gains made in the MDG's and their impact on infrastructure development*
- *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Program of the World Health Organization*
- *Growth of the education of healthcare professionals in Sub-Saharan Africa*

As part of the Town Hall Meeting, the Constituency for Africa's Africa Healthcare Infrastructure Committee released its report, Strategies for Strengthening African Healthcare Infrastructure, written by Allen A. Herman, M.D., Ph.D.

Opening comments:

Mr. Melvin P. Foote, President and CEO of CFA, introduced the session with the intention to prompt the Diaspora to become more heavily involved in the healthcare sector in Africa.

Dr. Roscoe Moore, Jr., Interim Chairman of CFA, commented that many people are involved in the movement to improve healthcare in Africa. Dr. Moore believes that the infrastructure for healthcare must be strengthened in order to conquer Ebola, malaria, and HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Allen Herman, member of the CFA African Healthcare Infrastructure Committee and Founding Dean of the Republic of South Africa's National School of Public Health, noted the obsession with single diseases as a focus of healthcare efforts in Africa. Emphasizing that Africa is a large continent with many different groups of people, he advocated a more comprehensive approach to healthcare. In Rwanda, he noted that the average lifespan dropped precipitously during the civil war. Because the country built a robust health infrastructure, the lifespan recovered within five years after the end of the war. Though Namibia is a small country affected by AIDS, it has among the lowest infant mortality rates and highest life expectancy in Africa. Overall, Dr. Herman believes that the skills needed in the United States to deal with healthcare are the same as those needed in Africa to address similar issues.

Mr. Tarek Ben Youssef Senior is the Political Affairs Officer for the African Union in Washington, D.C. Because health is at the heart of national security, development, and human dignity, Mr. Youssef sees it as a critical issue for Africa's sustainable development. While Africa has made significant strides forward, it has the potential to achieve even more if it can overcome the burden of disease. He noted that millions across the continent suffer and die from diseases that are simple to prevent or treat. The Ebola epidemic taught important and useful lessons, particularly the importance of building primary healthcare



Melvin Foote gives introductory remarks at the U.S. State Department.

systems for national security. Another lesson was that the African Union should put into place a long-term program for emergency response to epidemics and other public health threats. As part of this effort, he explained that the African Union has made a commitment to establish an African Center for Disease Control (CDC) that will partner with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other key stakeholders to ensure that systems and measures are put in place to deal with future epidemics. Mr. Youssef noted three priority areas that could enhance Africa's healthcare resilience: increased investment in human resources; technology to build early warning systems and to transfer information efficiently; and more investment by governments in national health budgets. The African Health Strategy adopted in 2007 will expire at the end of 2015 and the African Union is developing a new strategy for 2015-30. According to Mr. Youssef, the African Union has developed a mutual partnership with the Obama administration and looks forward to a fruitful relationship on trade, power, security, and health. He noted that the President's recent visit to Africa was a strong signal of mutual interest and respect and exemplified his personal engagement with the continent.

Welcome and remarks:

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, delivered welcome remarks for the session. The Ambassador noted that Africa is making great progress, as exemplified by last year's African Leader's Summit, among other high-profile events. President Obama recently kicked off the Global Entrepreneurs Summit and spoke to the African Union—the first U.S. president to do so. The Ambassador praised the recent AGOA Forum in Gabon, which she attended. Despite this exciting progress, she reminded the audience that there is much work to be done to keep Africa moving forward. The Ambassador believes that strengthening health infrastructure is a critical priority in this effort. Without a healthy population, it is very difficult to achieve development and democracy goals. The Ebola epidemic revealed the fragility of the healthcare system and emphasized the importance of systems that can respond effectively to disease threats. However, the Ambassador emphasized that thousands of people die of other preventable diseases in other countries while the focus was on the three Ebola countries. She noted that the United States led the international response to Ebola and contributed \$2 billion in humanitarian assistance through the CDC, DOD, USAID, and other agencies. In April, Secretary John Kerry signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the African Union and the CDC to create an African CDC as a platform for sustainable, resilient health infrastructure on the continent. In addition, the United States launched the Global Health Security Agenda to help countries respond to outbreaks before they become epidemics.



Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, delivers welcome remarks.

She believes that it is necessary to translate the effective emergency response to Ebola to an effective long-term health system that can respond to all health care needs. Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield noted that clean water, good sanitation, and reliable power are all essential to reducing disease. While the United States is committed to helping build those systems through Power Africa and other initiatives, she emphasized that it cannot succeed alone. This is the responsibility of African governments and their people. The Ambassador believes that a sustainable, locally financed health care system is the best long-term solution for Africa and urged the audience to get involved in advocacy efforts to build healthcare infrastructure in Africa.

Mr. Melvin Foote then introduced the keynote speaker, the Honorable Ronald V. Dellums, who has an illustrious career. He served with distinction in U.S. Congress, as Chair of Armed Services Committee.

After leaving Congress, he was head of CFA for six years, during which time he helped develop the HIV/AIDS Marshall Plan. Mr. Dellums then served as the mayor of Oakland, California.

Keynote Address:

Because the previous speakers analyzed problems in healthcare in Africa, Mr. Dellums aimed to address the broader context. He noted that most development efforts view African countries as client states and offered several observations to change that perspective. First, while global economic growth has slowed, the average GDP across Africa is growing at a rate of 5 percent or more. This means that consumer spending is rising in Africa while it declines across the rest of the world. He noted that technological future of the world is dependent on Africa because the minerals that are significant in smartphones and other devices are abundant on the continent. Moreover, while the growth of young people in the world is decreasing, the share of young people in Africa's population is growing. The future global leaders will thus come from Africa. Finally, research indicates that solar and wind energy can create enough supply for virtually the entire world. Both of these resources are plentiful in Africa and thus Africa could be the future energy source for the world.



Honorable Ronald V. Dellums gives a keynote address.

Mr. Dellums noted that the context for this meeting is the interdependence of the world in areas of global health, economics, climate change, and terrorism. He believes that meeting these challenges will require universality. Mr. Dellums advocated for an approach consistent with “Ubuntu,” a term used to connote interconnectedness. He wants to move forward with an Ubuntu Plan. Mr. Dellums emphasized that beyond the healthcare delivery system, the context of a person's life affects their health. Everyone lives in an economic context and poverty thus plays a major role in people's health. He noted that the ecological context also matters, especially in the case of water. Finally, some people live in the context of violence and conflict, which has enormous implications for their health. Thus, the Ubuntu Plan must address existing problems, deal with root causes, and deal with the context within which people live their lives. It must develop stronger relationships between African countries and the rest of world based on collaboration, mutual respect, and willingness to engage in co-development.

With regard to eliminating poverty, Mr. Dellums explained that yesterday's principle is today's imperative. This generation must eliminate poverty not because it is the right thing to do, but because it is the only thing to do. Ultimately it is in the recognition of our oneness that we will achieve a world that is worthy of all of us.

Mr. Melvin Foote asked what would be critically important to move the U.S. Congress to support health care in Africa.

Mr. Dellums responded that in order to get politicians to advocate, it is necessary to build a movement with strength and vision. His advice is to create such a movement from a position of strength, rather from the position of a client state. He believes that politics requires engagement. For example, the Voting Rights Act (VRA) is 50 years old. Mr. Dellums



Joe Davidson, Washington Post Columnist, prepares to moderate the Strategies for Strengthening Healthcare Infrastructure in Africa Town Hall Meeting.

asked the audience to consider whether it is time to redefine representation, eliminate the electoral college, and/or make voting mandatory. Ultimately, he would like to put a new version of the VRA, incorporating the spirit of Ubuntu, in front of the American people.

Mr. Joe Davidson, Columnist for the Washington Post, served as moderator for both panels. Mr. Davidson commented that although there have been many changes in Africa, great gaps continue to exist in some areas, particularly in healthcare. He emphasized that this meeting offers an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and recommit to Africa.

Panel I: Civil Society Perspectives

Mr. Dikembe Mutombo, Chairman and President, the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation

Mr. Mutombo explained that the discussion of healthcare is part of a broader discussion. He noted that many people associate Africa with Ebola, and before that it was HIV/AIDS, and before that it was malaria and polio. However, the problem is bigger than any single disease. Africa is a resource-rich continent, even from colonial times. Mr. Mutombo believes that African minerals, oil, and gas produce enough money to take care of the entire continent's people. While Africa is rising, Mr. Mutombo emphasized that there is still a long way to go. His foundation built a new hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where no new hospital had been built in 45 years. He believes that similar initiatives need to continue. Mr. Mutombo emphasized that beyond governments, institutions and the Diaspora need to support these initiatives in Africa. Africa has more billionaires than many continents in the world, and Mr. Mutombo believes they should set a good example by investing in healthcare infrastructure.

Dr. Julius Garvey, respected vascular surgeon and son of legendary pan-Africanist Dr. Marcus H. Garvey

Dr. Garvey explained that while sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is located on the world's richest continent, it is also the world's poorest region and thus faces the greatest health problems. Most diseases could be easily prevented with adequate nutrition, immunization, or relatively simple interventions. To solve these problems, resources must be mobilized rapidly and delivered at the local level, both in rural communities and in cities. Due to brain drain, an additional 1.5 million healthcare workers are needed on the continent. Dr. Garvey believes that the focus should be on community health care workers, who can be trained relatively quickly and are not as specialized as medical doctors.



John Momoh (left), Chairman and CEO of Channels Television chats with Dikembe Mutombo (right), Chairman and President, Dikembe Mutombo Foundation.

Dr. Garvey explained that health and poverty go together. He believes that the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programs in the 1980s caused reduced investment in health by African governments, leading to the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS, especially in rural areas. In his view, international trade based on unfair exchange and false promises is not collaboration and does not represent mutual respect. He believes that Africa should support small, organic farms. This would be better for the environment and would slow the rapid increase in non-communicative diseases. He believes that the current system makes the rich richer and poor poorer. He noted that although African countries have been liberated from colonialism, they continue to suffer from the arbitrary borders drawn by colonial powers. He believes that Africans

should avoid imitating the solutions Europe has used to solve its own health problems; instead, Africans must develop their own solutions to their own problems.

Q&A:

Mr. Davidson asked Mr. Mutombo to explain how he built his hospital.

Mr. Mutombo felt a moral duty to take care of his people. He observed that the average life expectancy in the DRC was 44 for men and 42 for women and that many people did not have access to appropriate care. He wanted to make a difference and donated \$125 million of his own money, raising an additional \$250 million from other donors. Today, the hospital has been open for almost eight years, employs close to 400 doctors and nurses and has treated more than 160,000 people, mostly women and children. It is the only hospital in the country where patients do not have to bring their own bed, sheets, and blankets.

Mr. Mutombo would like to see copycats of his hospital opening all over the continent. He does not want to wait for another crisis to begin this work. He believes that the billions of dollars spent on Ebola could have been used proactively to train more doctors and open more clinics.

Mr. Davidson then asked Dr. Julius Garvey if he could elaborate on the point that many of these problems can be dealt with relatively easily. He noted that because it seems like an enormous problem, it is difficult to know where to start. Where would Dr. Garvey start?

Dr. Garvey responded that because most of the African population lives in rural areas, that is where healthcare services are most urgently needed. Preventative measures, including clean water and sanitation, are really the best place to start. Dr. Garvey explained that people who are not necessarily highly skilled can be very useful in doing the simple things. For example, delivering a baby overnight in a village in the Congo does not require a full medical doctor. In general, he believes using trained workers who are not doctors would allow for a broad scope of treatments at a much, much lower cost. Ethiopia is a good example. In 1997, the Government of Ethiopia changed its public health policy, working with Emory University to create a curriculum for a cadre of community health workers. Dr. Garvey believes that this is very doable.

Q&A:

A member of the audience was interested in how to secure funding for her company, which is raising \$3 million for a medical lab in Senegal. She noted that getting funding is particularly challenging because the lab is not targeting one specific disease.

Mr. Mutombo responded that raising money is never easy, no matter the cause. He was lucky and attracted donations from Americans who knew him from the NBA. He recommended that she ask people who have helped the company previously to introduce her to three additional people, and then ask each of them for three more introductions, etc.

How does youth development and physical education affect health infrastructure on a very basic level? How do we use each student going to these programs as a building block for health infrastructure?

Mr. Mutombo emphasized that physical education is very important, no matter where you live. He noted the rise of diabetes and heart problems in Africa. New technologies are a problem in America, where kids play video games and are not as active outdoors. He suggested that involving more African young people in practicing sports, like soccer, would be effective. However, he noted that clean water is needed to complement an exercise regimen. If children play outside all day in the sun, they should not be drinking Coke, Pepsi, and Fanta.

Dr. Garvey advocated working with a group of healthy young people as a teachable moment, a strategy used by the United Nations for HIV/AIDS prevention. He advised that the youth be taught about healthy sex practices, sexually transmitted disease, healthy eating, clean water, and other aspects of basic health.

An audience member noted that nothing works in isolation, which means that partnerships are necessary. In addition, healthcare itself is part of a larger democratic system. He asked the panelists for advice on forming healthcare partnerships.

Mr. Mutombo emphasized that partnerships were very important in building his hospital. He worked with many different institutions, including UNICEF and the CDC, and eventually built up a network of 37 partners. He emphasized that it is impossible to do things in isolation on the continent. Also, working with the local government is key to doing business in Africa.

Dr. Garvey explained that there are good and bad partners. In particular, he noted the presence of NGOs all over Africa that are serving themselves more than Africa. He noted that these kinds of institutions operate autonomously and do not work with the local government. They are very busy fulfilling their own agenda, not collaborating with the local government to build a stronger health system.

Is there an opportunity for CFA to have a program to appeal to everyone? There are three million Africans living in the U.S. and we could get them all to contribute a dollar a month to go to the Congo. It may not be too difficult to achieve and would be sustainable.

Mr. Mutombo thought this was a great point, but noted that people are not easy to deal with when you talk to them about money. He recommended that each member of the Diaspora living in America find a way to send \$50-100/month back home. He believes that each person needs to feel a moral duty to help.

Dr. Garvey responded that the concept of the Diaspora contributing money is a very good one, especially with 40 million Africans all over the world. He also recommended using technological tools like videoconferencing to allow the Diaspora to participate in training programs in their respective countries. He recommended that the tools be used to connect with African universities and local trainers on the ground. This is part of a new paradigm that Dr. Garvey believes needs to be developed.

Dr. Herman commented that it is best to work with people that look like you and have the same interests, and he explained that CFA has been doing precisely that for 25 years. He noted that 40 million people have enormous capacity, but lamented that the Diaspora is giving to every person except their own people. He believes the Diaspora needs to contribute intellectually to Africa, and noted that little contributions can make a big difference. Many years ago, somebody gave his parents money so he could attend school. It was a very small amount of money, but it changed his life. All Africans in the Diaspora have exactly the same experience. Dr. Herman suggested that members of the Diaspora spend 10 percent of their income to ensure boys and girls move ahead.

Mr. Davidson asked Dr. Garvey how to include—and not exclude—traditional healers in Africa's health care system. He noted that Guineans had problems with others outside their village during the Ebola crisis because they did not speak the language and wanted to exclude the workers that Guineans trusted. How can we be more inclusive of the traditional African culture?

Dr. Garvey responded that community health workers, rather than outsiders, should work with traditional healers. He estimated that 70 percent of Africans go to traditional healers. Therefore, he

believes it is necessary to bring the healers into the system, so they know their limitations and do not see outside healthcare workers as competition.

Dr. Herman commented that culture is a very important aspect of healthcare. Even after he went to medical school, when he returned to Africa he saw that people preferred traditional healers. He reminded the audience that people all over the world have logical systems for illness. Those systems must be understood, and programs must be integrated into the existing systems. These people are not dumb, and they have hundreds of years of tradition in dealing with diseases. Dr. Herman believes there is a way of combining science with African solutions to deal with health problems.

Dr. Herman lamented that in the \$30 billion pharmaceutical industry, most products are manufactured in India. He believes those pharmaceuticals should be placed in key regional centers all over the world, including in Africa. He wondered where pharmaceuticals were being made in Africa.

Dr. Moore responded that South Africa makes the most pharmaceuticals in sub-Saharan Africa. He believes a new African FDA with oversight over the drug approval and manufacturing process is necessary. According to Dr. Moore, it is quite easy to switch from making aspirin to making a malaria pill. However, Africa continues to purchase medications from outside, rather than building African capacity to make drugs. He noted that South Africa has organized training programs for college graduates, and they have an FDA to approve drug safety and efficacy.

In the DRC, the government is the worst business entity and worst healthcare provider. However, health insurance has not yet been discussed. How many Africans can afford to go to a hospital? That is one reason for the brain drain, the fact that Africa cannot afford to pay its doctors at high levels. Then they leave to seek the appropriate monetary return from their studies.

Mr. Mutombo responded that insurance is affordable in some African countries, including Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa. In the DRC, he is aware of some activity, but it is on a smaller scale. He believes in microfinance and offers every woman that comes to his hospital a microfinance credit. However, people in Africa are very suspicious when they see something new in the community. In the Congo, for so many years people would only go to the hospital when they had no hope left and were about to die. For that reason, many people in the community are reluctant to try Mr. Mutombo's hospital, even though it is cleaner than the government-run hospital and cheaper to see a doctor there. As a result, many people prefer to go to the government-run hospital, which is farther away. Mr. Mutombo is fighting very hard with family members to get them to see the doctor regularly. He explained that no one wanted to receive bad news.

Dr. Herman emphasized that all members of a community can contribute small amounts toward a larger insurance system. Building the insurance system on that idea will create a health clinic/safety net system that works.

Another member of the audience asked the panelists how much priority should be given to mental health.

Dr. Herman noted that the rate of clinical depression around the world is constant at approximately 30 percent. About 50 years ago, most psychiatrists were white and assumed that Africans did not have the mental capacity to have complex issues. For the first time, Africans now understand that mental health issues exist at similar rates on the continent. He emphasized that a lot of support for psychiatrists is needed, especially in countries with violence and conflicts.

A Nigerian audience member maintained that Nigeria had one of the best health care systems in the world in the 1970s. She traveled all over the world, and when she recently returned to Nigeria, she discovered that all the hospitals and roads had fallen into disrepair. Why? She believes it is because African leaders decided to let that happen because they can hop on a plane and go anywhere in the world to get care, so why should they bother? How can we get the leaders to take the health care system in Africa seriously? She noted that the only people who can help Africa are Africans themselves.

Mr. Davidson commented that this question gives the audience a lot to think about, even if there are no clear answers.

Dr. Moore commented that there is tremendous promise in Nigeria's health system. His organization just partnered with a 10,000 acre pharmaceutical plant in Nigeria that is ISO certified and compares with anything in America. All of the workers are Nigerian, and 40 percent are women. He noted that Nigeria is becoming a \$30 million market for pharmaceuticals.

How should colonial reparations be addressed by the global community? How can Africans negotiate and organize as a global people to advance their own health objectives (possibly under the auspices of the United Nations)?

Dr. Herman commented that many external people are telling Africans how to act. He believes Africa should shape its own destiny, rather than have it shaped by others. Even Ph.D.'s should not tell Africans how to live, especially if they have not experienced Africa.

Whereas the discovery of new human ancestor this week should be owned by Africans, the professor and his team did not look like the students of the university. Dr. Moore explained that negative liberty is who governs you, while positive liberty is the space you create for yourself. Nelson Mandela created that concept in his cell on Robben Island. Most Africans think liberty is about a vote, but it is also about an identity. He believes that the United Nations should incorporate as many Africans into this as possible.

Dr. Garvey explained that many Africans are still experiencing an identity crisis and are looking for someone else to solve their problems. Reparations have to be dealt with, not in a general moral framework, but in the specifics. The DRC is a good example. King Leopold ran that country and under that regime 10 million people died. Concerning identity, Africans have to define themselves as African people. For 500 years, the continent has been ravaged and is still being ravaged. Africans need a health care system, and Belgium should help create it. However, he emphasized that this approach has to be about specific instances, one by one, country by country. He believes that Ubuntu is needed because Africans have not yet accepted their identity as an integrated racial group.

Panel 2: International Perspectives

Mr. John Momoh, Chairman and CEO of Channels Television

Channels Television is the largest private media house on the continent, and Mr. Momoh is a journalist by training. He has witnessed a lot of rapid improvement in Nigeria, driven by the age of technology. However, Mr. Momoh emphasized the urgent need to take action. The oil crisis was a wake-up call for him, and he is concerned about the next crisis. Although Ebola was contained in Nigeria, the country does not have any critical response centers, leaving it vulnerable to another outbreak. Mr. Momoh would like to see six response centers put into place in Nigeria.

He emphasized that Africans are ultimately responsible for the development of the continent. Reinforcing links between Nigerians and the Diaspora will be necessary as part of this process. One strategy is to work with the professionals in America who can send contributions back to Nigeria. He

noted that if every African billionaire could be identified, and each contributes 10 percent of his or her fortunes to development, that would go a long way. Mr. Momoh also suggested that CFA name ambassadors to individual African countries to ensure that infrastructure is built. To move forward, he urged the audience to go beyond and ask more questions. He encouraged the group to draw a timeline to see what progress will be made in the next 365 days. He believes that Africa's potential is ready to emerge.

Dr. Anthony Wutoh, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Howard University

Dr. Wutoh was named Provost two months ago. He is a Pan-Africanist and pharmacist by training. He noted that healthcare is not just an issue in Africa. In fact, it is still being debated in the most industrialized nation in the world, the United States. He noted that because it is a multi-faceted issue, it will take collaboration to address many different levels.

As a pharmacist by training, he commented on counterfeit drugs, which are estimated to constitute 50 to 60 percent of all drugs sold in Africa, which is a huge problem. Howard University partnered with Purdue University to build a small manufacturing facility in Kenya where they manufacture anti-retroviral drugs and train African scientists. Dr. Wutoh explained that a country needs a process to evaluate and verify that the drugs sold are genuine.

The mission of Howard University is to educate and train the next generation of leaders. Some of their activities in Africa are geared toward capacity building, particularly training and educating health professionals in collaboration with universities. For example, they helped Addis Ababa University to make the pharmaceutical curriculum more clinical. Over 4,000 students have now been educated to focus on treating patients.

Capacity is a major challenge, especially with respect to the number of healthcare practitioners. Dr. Wutoh emphasized that health care not be a country by country issue; it is regional and continental. He maintains that Ebola exposed the failings of government and international institutions on a regional basis to address an issue that could have been addressed very early. These issues must be tackled on a country by country basis but from a regional and continental perspective.

Dr. Alueshima Bridget Utsaha, 2015 Mandela Washington Fellow

Ms. Utsaha has five years of experience in the medical field, much of which is a product of a U.S. partnership with Africa. Ms. Utsaha is Nigerian but did a regional public health training last year in Burkina Faso and Benin. All three countries have the same issues—they need better collaboration on water resources and child survival. Nigeria initiated an integrated health services program in all 36 states. This has helped minimize stigmatization because people can go to the hospital for a wide range of services (not just HIV services, for example). Ms. Utsaha believes that collaboration is needed within each country, but also at the sub-regional level as health is a multi-faceted issue that goes beyond borders. This means the solutions will also have to be multi-dimensional. She believes that HIV, tuberculosis and malaria programs have done a lot of good in Africa. Ms. Utsaha emphasized the need to tackle the problem of leadership. African countries are given vast quantities of money, and she wondered where it all goes. Ultimately, Ms. Utsaha believes we need to bring healthcare to the doorstep of every Nigerian, every African, and every black American.

Brainstorm session:

Mr. Davidson summarized the session, which he believed was an informative and engaging one. He emphasized that the challenge is to take this information to African constituents and colleagues. This is not Africa's problem; it is everybody's problem. Poverty has no face; we are all affected by it. When we work together, we can eradicate poverty. But if we take the mindset that we are only going look out for ourselves, and that this is Africa's problem, we will not make any progress.

Comments:

This issue goes beyond health. Africa needs a Marshall Plan. How can we get a concerted Marshall Plan for Africa to cover all areas (health, transportation, etc.)?

On behalf of “the young people,” we need to start pouring resources into the K-12 generation. When we talk about education, we are talking about higher education. More conscious efforts are necessary to educate this generation at 5 or 6 years of age so they can grow up to change Africa and the world.

Archives are very important. Each one of us has something we can share with the next generation. Space is also important because it has shrunk due to technology. Twitter is an instant archive. Everyone should share one idea using Twitter or similar technologies.

We have not talked about management. This is bringing all our African institutions down. Those that have succeeded have good management. This includes management of resources, human and financial, and program management. Without accountability, we are unable to share the information we have. We need to find a way to see how we can help our countries develop proper management systems.

We have not heard a lot of emphasis on innovation. Instead, we are trying to find all kind of shortcuts to catch up with injustice, colonialism, and other problems. But small things are working in Africa, like cell phones. The commenter’s firm put together a patient registration tool that uses simple cell phones and the cloud to track information and cost only \$2 million. She believes that Africans should continue to move forward with these simple initiatives.

Another commented noted that she would love to see more Africans putting together these types of forums in the future and take whatever comes out of it and implementing it on the ground. Traditional healers are actually curing a lot of things from cancer to every disease you can think of. She believes that pooling these resources will help cure the entire world.

A 19 year old audience member commented on the lack of young people in the room. She emphasized that the forum should be opened up to more young leaders, so they can make connections for when “you guys aren’t here anymore.”

Critical response centers are very important. When I was in Africa, when people got sick, they would have to fly all the way to Paris for treatment. Mr. Mutombo should be commended for his hospital. But it is also important to partner with young doctors and nurses to open other specialized facilities. Many people in Africa have died because they were misdiagnosed or undiagnosed and never made it to the doctor. We need to bring information regarding health care to African countries. We should think about using more advanced technology to enable distinguished doctors to operate within Africa and save lives.

Jessica Rockwood, President, International Public Health Advisors helped put the forum together. She believes that progress in healthcare comes down to a governance and leadership issue. What is the role of CFA to engage on a policy change agenda to ensure that healthcare infrastructure becomes a priority in the country context? She would like to focus on the governance side as the next step.

To wrap up, Mr. Mutombo noted that the ultimate goal of these efforts is to ensure that people across the African continent have access to healthcare the way people do in America. He challenged the audience to do their best with knowledge, not just money, to push Africa forward. He conceded that there is still a lot of work to be done but encouraged the audience to find a way to save as many people as possible. He worried that the next generation will judge us for not doing more. Mr. Mutombo

concluded that we need to involve more young people in these efforts, to let them know that we are working very hard to make sure that the future will be much brighter for them than it is for us.

September 16, 2015

Democracy and Governance Roundtable: Elections and Governance in Africa — The Way Forward

This meeting gathered stakeholders from Africa, government, the private sector, civil society, and the African Diaspora to examine best practices, explore strategies, and share lessons learned from the elections that have taken place on the African continent in 2015. Additionally, speakers and participants assessed upcoming challenges and opportunities with the electoral process and governance.

Mr. Carl Gershman, President, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), indicated that he was delighted to work with Mr. Melvin Foote and the Constituency for Africa, noting that Mr. Foote moderated several Congressional sessions during the African Leaders' Summit in 2014. He explained that some elections in Africa are successful, such as those in Nigeria, only because citizens are mobilized. He noted the difficult elections in Burundi and explained that NED-supported groups are now working on healing a deeply divided political system. People on the front lines are taking the first step for democracy, but Africa has poor governance and the only way to correct it is through transparency. Mr. Gershman believes that a mobilized civil society is necessary to monitor the elections process. For organizations with a generalized global purpose, none are more focused on Africa than NED.

Mr. Melvin Foote, President and CEO, CFA, explained that this forum would be very helpful to monitor what is happening going forward. Its goals are to educate the public, improve coordination, and shape U.S. policy toward Africa. Mr. Foote believes that democracy is flourishing in Africa and that NDI is helping to support the continuation of these efforts.

Mr. Gregory Simpkins, Staff Director, U.S. House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health and Human Rights, moderated the panel discussion. Mr. Simpkins expressed disappointment in recent trends; he noted that two decades ago, African leaders pledged to give up power peaceably. Now, Rwanda and Burundi are considering changing their constitutions, President Kabila is postponing elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Angolan President changed the constitution to subvert direct election of the President, and in Burkina Faso a coup has taken power just weeks before planned elections.

Mr. Simpkins noted that Mo Ibrahim established a foundation to promote African governance offering an initial prize of \$5 million and \$200,000 for life. Unfortunately, this prize has been withheld more often



L-R: Keith Jennings, Jennifer Cooke, Chris Fomunyoh, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, Melvin Foote, Gregory Simpkins, Sandra Pepera, and David Peterson after the Democracy and Governance Roundtable.

than not because no leader qualified for it. Mr. Simpkins believes that organizations must continue to support free and fair elections and that Congress must continue to provide support for these efforts.

Panel Discussion:

Mr. Dave Peterson, Senior Director for Africa, National Endowment for Democracy

Mr. Peterson noted that democracy tends to be equated with freedom at NED. He explained that elections are a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democracy. While he believes that good governance can happen in the absence of democracy, he also noted that democracy can happen without good governance. Still, democracy and good governance should go together, as illustrated by the Nigerian election last March. He noted that despite Nigeria's poor governance, the will of the people was expressed. Likewise, the elections in Senegal last year were another example of democracy in a country that is not well governed. He believes the government of Ethiopia has stamped out democracy and the recent elections there, though conducted with little violence, were not free and fair. The Ethiopian civil society and press are both silent. Burundi is not well governed, and the recent elections stoked considerable unrest, especially in the capital. Mr. Peterson believes that the President's effort to run for a third term has damaged the constitution.

He noted that Cote d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, and Burkina Faso each have elections coming up. These countries have a little democracy but need more support. While the DRC and Rwanda also have upcoming elections, Mr. Peterson noted that neither of those contests will be democratic. Rwanda has good governance but lacks an independent press, viable opposition, and civil society. The DRC is receiving the most attention at NED, and next year's elections could be the most important in the world. While it is one of the worst governed countries in the world, a dynamic civil society and independent media could push for more freedom. There is a lot at stake, including a population of 80 million people, the legacy of a war which has left 5 million dead, and ongoing crises that have spawned an enormous effort from the United Nations and the United States. Mr. Peterson reminded the audience that against great odds, democracy and freedom still have a fighting chance.

Ms. Jennifer Cooke, Africa Director, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Ms. Cooke noted the preponderance of gloomy newspaper articles charting a decline in democracy in Africa. In contrast, she highlighted the mounting pressure for elections and accountability over the last 15 years that have led to mounting resistance for change. She believes that the Nigerian story is exciting because of the potential of reformers to force a positive change. African citizens are beginning to demand more democracy as economic growth in turn expands the middle class. And because citizens are more connected, the demonstration effect is even more powerful. Ms. Cooke emphasized the mounting frustration with poor leadership and poor governance in Africa, which has led to more demand for change, in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Tanzania, for example. Even in Angola, people are protesting for teacher pay and water. Ms. Cooke noted that the mobilization of youth has been important as new technologies enable messaging on voter rights, peace, and election monitoring, all of which were in evidence in the Nigerian election. Ms. Cooke is optimistic in the long-term, due to the sophistication of civil society in countries like Kenya, Burkina Faso, and others.

However, governments are resisting these changes. This resistance has taken on more nuanced forms, with the façade of legality to help deflect criticism. Media restrictions have started to appear in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. She noted that when Burkina Faso enacted laws eliminating political candidates from eligibility, ECOWAS ruled it undemocratic. While the government ignored the ruling, in her view it was still a useful precedent. In general, ECOWAS is playing an important role in fighting the extension of the constitution. Ms. Cooke outlined several key lessons learned from the Nigerian election. First, the role of money in the Nigerian election was balanced because those individuals who made money in the

previous government are no longer in government. In other countries, including Tanzania and Burkina Faso, incumbency is a significant advantage, as financing the opposition is an enormous challenge. Second, sub-national governance in places like Nigeria and Kenya is becoming more important as more attention is paid to accountability and transparency at the state and local level.

Ms. Cooke believes that for a democracy to be successful, society needs to have complete freedom of expression and a fundamental consensus to play by the rules of the game. She believes that leadership is important, and a country should be led by a national leader rather than a party leader. She sees this as a moment of competing pressures and indicated that the critical mass of places like Senegal and Nigeria could tip the balance of openness and democracy in Africa.

Ms. Sandra Pepera, Director for Gender, Women and Democracy, National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Ms. Pepera characterized African democracy as low intensity, but she believes there is a move towards a much more substantive engagement of the population. She noted that again and again it becomes clear that while the people want democracy, their leaders do not. She advised the audience to monitor Ghana because what happens there at the end of next year will be a huge test. The main issue is one of inclusion, and to meet the standard of integrity, the process must be transparent and accountable. She noted that many social groups in many contexts (faith groups and women's groups, for example) are being more engaged. As some groups are included in the process, it is very difficult to reverse those gains. Ms. Pepera believes that inclusive elections allow women and men to participate without fear of reprisal; therefore, a key goal has been in to ensure the integration of women in these activities.

In general, politics is interested in better understanding what it means to live within different democratic spaces, for gender in particular. While 64 percent of the Rwandan parliament is made up of women, Ms. Pepera emphasized that they encounter little debate, competition or diversity. It is understood that more representative and inclusive parties win votes. She noted that the cost of excluding women is important to understand, and that money undermines the ability to develop issue-based non-party advocacy. There is an increase in African women becoming educated and exercising agency over household incomes. She believes that women's groups need to rise above the factions and form a unified voice. In fact, the expectations of women themselves and their leadership are increasing at the same time that more women are migrating to urban areas and gaining greater access to education and employment. Ms. Pepera noted that ICT can enhance the effectiveness of inclusive organizations although there is limited evidence that digital ICT helps strengthen women's voices in particular. In fact, she noted that women are 40 percent less likely to have Internet access. Women's organization within political parties also remains a problem. Ms. Pepera noted that violence during an election can decrease women's participation by 23 percent. She emphasized that women are more than eight times more likely to be the victim of electoral violence.

Mr. Chris Fomunyoh – Senior Associate and Regional Director, Central and West Africa Programs, National Democratic Institute

Mr. Fomunyoh noted that NDI is honored and privileged to be a co-sponsor for the panel. He referenced the remarks of Ms. Cooke, who highlighted the dichotomy on the African continent and noted that for every Burundi, there is a Nigeria. Mr. Fomunyoh emphasized that demand for democratic governance on the continent continues to grow. However, while elections are important, they do not equate to democracy. Elections do serve as an important test, measuring the effectiveness of the legislative branch to allow for more inclusion, and the prevalence of freedoms of the press, association, and the judiciary. Mr. Fomunyoh gladly reported that the process of having elections is becoming more institutionalized in many countries across the continent.

He then highlighted five countries with upcoming elections—Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Angola. The Tanzanian elections are bringing to the fore the question of the vitality of political parties on the continent where many parties have been in power since independence. The young electorate no longer remembers the independence effort, and many of the traditional parties are being challenged by newly formed parties. Mr. Fomunyoh cited Burkina Faso as an example of how civil society has managed to drive political transitions. The 2014 uprising created a new opportunity for the state to redefine the relationship between government and civil society. However, the process is complex because existing institutions are facing new actors that may not be willing to defer to existing groups. Mr. Fomunyoh explained that the election agency is conducting itself in a fair manner, and the constitutional court is making rules and maintaining respect. While there was tremendous electoral violence in Cote d'Ivoire in 2010, ten candidates have been vetted and approved by the constitutional court for the upcoming election there. Guinea faces a question of voter identification because past votes have gone along ethnic lines. He believes that women are instrumental in moving the country through the process. Angola rushed an election in 1992, but the country was not quite prepared for it. When President Savimbi lost the election, he refused to accept the outcome. In looking forward, Mr. Fomunyoh is hopeful for consolidated African democracy across the continent.

Q&A:

An audience member noted the elephant in the room—half a dozen African dictators with good relationships with the United States. He asked what the U.S. role would be in either supporting or denying support to these governments

Mr. Simpkins responded that a 1997 resolution called for severing ties with Mobutu, and there is a resolution in Congress now concerning Rwanda. He acknowledged that the United States sometimes supports security concerns over human rights, but reminded the audience that other factors need consideration as well.

Mr. Fomunyoh noted that many Africans are pleased by the leadership Congress has demonstrated in recently passing a bill to earmark funds for the development of democracy on the continent. He indicated that while members of Congress have always been supportive of Africa, they have to be careful not to undercut the message of the executive branch. President Obama has said that Africa needs strong institutions rather than strong leaders. Mr. Fomunyoh believes that a frank conversation should inform dictators they will not get away with hurting their own people.

Ms. Cooke noted that the executive branch uses rhetoric, but removing needed aid (such as PEPFAR or security support) may be difficult to do in response to democracy issues. She believes that U.S. lectures on democracy will not benefit Ethiopia. However the United States should push back on the Ethiopian government and look for levers that may be more effective when advocating for reform. She suggested that through engagement with the African Union, standards and norms can be put in place that will gradually spread across the continent and pull others along.

Mr. Peterson explained that in many of these situations, the U.S. government has many interests. In the case of Ethiopia, the country is well governed, so drastic action is not merited. He noted that while Rwanda is well governed, there is no freedom. The United States stands for certain values, and we would like our partners to demonstrate those values as well. Mr. Peterson noted that the U.S. government has a difficult role and NED tries to stay out of the policy debate; their objective is to support the democratic process.

Another question concerned the issue of U.S. interests and security priorities.

Ms. Cooke responded that Rwanda is a case in point. The government can only get so far by delivering economic benefits. Authoritarian governments may be planting the seeds of instability as they form partnerships in peacekeeping, but intervene in other areas that do not foster security.

Mr. Simpkins emphasized that security is a real need, especially in areas with terrorist groups. He explained that in Ethiopia, the government portrays one of their opponents as a terrorist group but really they are an enemy of Ethiopia, not the United States.

Mr. Fomunyoh explained that civil society has had a powerful influence, except for in authoritarian regimes. He believes that fair elections can help citizens play the role that they should play in society, but some countries make that difficult. He explained that civil society has advocated for policy changes in some countries where political parties could not (in Nigeria, for example). Mr. Fomunyoh believes that where political space is open, there is more room for civil society.

Mr. Peterson responded that in the DRC it looks like plan A will fail and plan B may not work either. Still, for all the chaos and poor governance in the DRC, he is still somewhat optimistic. He believes the hard work, courage and determination of NED partners is helping the reform process. The situation there reminds him of Nigeria because so many different voices are unable to be contained. He explained that the DRC has a lack of resources, poor security and a culture of corruption. Ultimately, Mr. Peterson hopes that should President Kabila decide to step down, the opposition and the international community will give him credit and accept his decision.

In Uganda, there are 112 districts and 112 representatives reserved for women. However, in most cases, the same woman represents an area for 25 years. Does affirmative action still make sense?

Ms. Pepera responded that affirmative action still makes sense. She explained that there are many different quota regimes, and it can be carried out in many different ways. She believes that quotas are important to catalyze change, but over time she would like female candidates to be competitive without the special help.

An audience member commented that because African women historically are very empowered, and policy should treat them as such.

Ms. Pepera responded that women have long had an important role in Africa, and their rightful place is absolutely clear.

The next question concerned the plan for Africa in 2030. Presidents Zuma, Mugabe, and others will have exited government by then. There is a need for good governance now because it takes time to adjust. Would it be possible to create a platform to train politicians before they take office, so a critical mass of people are trained and ready to serve in office?

Mr. Fomunyoh responded by recalling the answer to an earlier question. An election process needs to be monitored as a process. We should not wait until election day to monitor how things are going. He, therefore, encouraged the audience to begin working on the 2016 elections now. He believes that Africans need to be grooming young leaders now, which is why many people are applauding efforts to expand the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). It is important to provide more opportunities for young people to get involved in government early on in their careers, especially local government.

Ambassador Johnnie Carson, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and Senior Advisor, U.S. Institute for Peace, delivered closing remarks. Ambassador Carson praised the panelists' deep

interest in passion, not only in Africa but in the promotion of democracy across the continent. He thanked Mr. Foote and the Constituency for persevering in their steadfast commitment to upholding the value and principles of the late Ron Brown on democracy and inclusion for all. He highlighted NDI's strong commitment to global democracy and emphasized that the organization is actively committed to democracy in Africa. Ambassador Carson announced that on September 21, NDI and the U.S. Institute of Peace would host President Kikwete of Tanzania for a public speech as he prepares to leave office.

Ambassador Carson reminded the audience that democracy is not linear, not smooth and not always speedy. He cited the enormous amount of time taken by the United States to achieve the rights that we take for granted today. In comparison, a great deal of progress has been made in Africa over a relatively short period. Forty-eight countries have witnessed sharp decreases in the number of coups d'état and the number of military governments. Strengthening of democratic institutions and adoption of democratic constitutions has prevailed, with non-governmental organizations flourishing across many areas. In addition, there is a growing popular upsurge in the desire and demands of Africans to have a representative, multiple party constitutional governments.

However, he reminded the audience that continued democratic progress is not guaranteed. In those countries that have made democratic progress, the government leaders must now live up to the democratic expectations of their citizens, delivering the social and economic benefits that people expect in a democratic and pluralistic society. Democratic governments must also deliver security and must be more inclusive of women and civil society organizations. Ambassador Carson believes that civil society organizations are the heart of democracy and government crackdowns are absolutely wrong. Democratic leaders must also fight corruption and make better use of their resources. Increasingly, they must address the challenges of extraordinary population growth in population across Africa (including the youth bubble). And democratic governments must remember that leaders must be held accountable and democracy does best through strong institutions, strong parliaments and independent judiciaries, media that can report and criticize, and civil society organizations that can represent the interests of their members and elected officials.

Ambassador Carson does not believe that leaders should be allowed to extend their term of office. In fact, leaders that have been in power for decades will pose enormous challenges for their societies (particularly Angola, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Rwanda). He believes that entrenchment of leadership at the very top translates into crises and consequences later on. Entrenched leadership at the top has a number of clear characteristics, including isolation, elimination of opposition, and increased corruption.

Ambassador Carson reminded the audience in Washington of President Obama's remarks in Accra, Ghana on July 11, 2009. The president said that Africa needs more strong intuitions and not more strong men—in the 21st century, capable, reliable and transparent intuitions are the key to success. He believes that the United States is strong because of its democratic institutions, not because of one person. American institutions are flexible enough to allow good leaders to take us to new heights and rigid enough to keep bad leaders from taking us down too far. He believes these factors will also drive Africa. The Ambassador is not overly optimistic or pessimistic about Africa's future.

African Trade and Investment Business Roundtable

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), the Constituency for Africa convened an African Trade and Investment Business Roundtable to discuss strategies and opportunities for Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) to do business in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on the ECOWAS region. Special remarks were given by H.E. Omar Arouna, Ambassador of the Republic of

Benin, who provided an African perspective on business opportunities for MBE's in the ECOWAS region, and discussed the Embassy of Benin's upcoming energy, agriculture and infrastructure trade mission.

Additional speakers included senior U.S. government officials who discussed President Obama's Doing Business in Africa (DBIA) Initiative and the resources available to support MBEs, Members of the African Diplomatic Corps, African public and private-sector representatives, representatives of U.S. and African trade associations and international finance organizations, MBEs and other U.S. companies currently doing business in Africa.

Ms. Jeannine Scott, President, U.S.-Angola Chamber of Commerce, served as the moderator for the panel discussion. Ms. Scott noted that this is an exciting time for private sector initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The first panel will be discussing opportunities for minority-owned business enterprises in SSA and resources available in the U.S. government. In addition to the speakers from the Department of Commerce and Treasury, Ms. Scott explained that within these agencies there are other offices that may be available to assist businesses. The U.S. government has additional agencies (including the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and the Export-Import Bank) to assist the private sector.

Mr. Van Freeman, Special Advisor to the Office of the National Director, Minority Business Development Agency offered welcome remarks, followed by Mr. Jacques Walker, Senior Advisor, CFA and Chief Operations Officer, TransGen Energy, Inc.

Panel I: Opportunities for Minority-Owned Business Enterprises in SSA – Utilizing U.S. Government Resources and Technical Support

Mr. Reinaldo Garcia, Commercial Service Officer, U.S. Export Assistance Center, U.S. Department of Commerce

Mr. Garcia explained that he is a Foreign Commercial Service Officer with the Department of Commerce (DOC). DOC has three major branches, one of which is

international trade, and the Commercial Service is within the International Trade Administration (ITA). This forms the export arm of U.S. government, whose mission is to promote U.S. exports overseas. He works with a whole host of resources available to U.S. companies trying to launch overseas business ventures. The Commercial Service is split into two branches: domestic and overseas. Domestic offices help U.S. companies in their goal to do business overseas. Each of 114 offices nationwide employs a number of trade specialists with expertise in leading industrial sectors (i.e. infrastructure, power/energy, oil, etc.). For U.S. clients trying to reach overseas offices, the domestic office will get in contact with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the desired country and make the connection to the country-level trade specialist with expertise in the appropriate sector.



Jeannine B. Scott, President, U.S.-Angola Chamber of Commerce.



Melvin Foote greets Van Freeman, Special Advisor to the Office of National Director, MBDA.

The Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) offers the following services: market intelligence and research, matchmaking services to find the right partner overseas, international company profiles of foreign companies, and promotion of single companies in foreign markets. In addition, FCS hosts two types of trade events: the international buyer program (where each U.S. Embassy or Consulate around the world recruits buyers to come to a show in the United States made up of U.S. exporters) and international trade shows (where FCS brings American companies abroad to meet with local companies one-on-one). FCS also has liaison offices in key international institutions, including the World Bank, African Development Bank, etc.

Mr. Garcia then discussed the key issues for Africa. As the second-fastest-growing region in world, the African market is an enormous opportunity for U.S. exporters. But investors in Africa need to mitigate their risk through insurance. They should also conduct due diligence and market research to determine if a physical presence is required, whether a partner is required, etc. He encouraged potential investors in Africa to “know the competition.” FCS is looking at many sectors, including agriculture, telecommunications, mining, retail, power, and infrastructure. FCS holds events throughout the year. The biggest event in 2015 is happening now in South Africa, with more than 100 U.S. companies represented. Other upcoming events include a trade mission to the Canary Islands in November and another event in Orlando in December.

Ms. Scott thanked Mr. Garcia for his comments and theorized that the audience would have questions on how to interact with the FCS domestic and international offices and how to get invited to FCS events.

Mr. Jean-Robert Badguidy, Access to Capital, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce

Mr. Badguidy explained that the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) has existed under the Department of Commerce for 45 years. Its mission is to foster growth in global competitiveness of minority business enterprises (MBEs) through increasing access to capital, global markets, and contracts. MBDA works closely with the International Trade Administration (also under Commerce) in the international arena.

Mr. Badguidy explained that lack of access to capital and credit markets is the biggest impediment facing small businesses domestically. This issue is even more complicated in international transactions. In those cases, it is important to mitigate the risk of non-payment through the proper mechanism. MBDA does not give loans; they have strategic domestic and international partnerships with institutions like OPIC, USTDA, the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Export-Import Bank, and USAID.

Mr. Badguidy explained that minority-owned businesses have an important advantage over non-minority owned businesses: they are more likely to be involved in exporting because of cultural and linguistic ties. But lack of access to capital is a problem, so the most important thing to do is extend financing or mitigate the risks of foreign buyers through export credit insurance. He noted that while the Export-Import Bank is not currently operating, some private insurance firms also offer this product.

Regarding financing, Mr. Badguidy advised that companies identify appropriate mechanisms for market penetration and then figure out best markets and products to sell. The International Trade Administration can help identify where hot markets are, and then MBDA can assist with the financing. Mr. Badguidy noted that there are a variety of different resources available, including credit guarantees, TDA funds, grants, feasibility studies, etc.

He explained that the role of MBDA is to match MBEs and provide technical assistance with financing resources. He believes that for an MBE to really be successful, the company needs to be able to extend its financing terms. This is especially important in Africa, where medium-term financing over two to four years is generally either unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

Ms. Scott followed up by asking if MBDA is engaged in any specific capacity-building programs, or if those activities are on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Badguy introduced Martin, the MBDA Africa specialist. Martin explained that the agency is “pretty active” in capacity building activities through initiatives like Power Africa and the Africa Diaspora Marketplace.

Ms. Alexia Latortue, Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Development Policy, U.S. Department of Treasury
Ms. Latortue explained that her comments would be more macro-level than those of the other panelists. She targeted her discussion to the factors driving growth and poverty reduction in Africa. She noted that while it has almost become cliché to talk about Africa being “open for business,” there is a genuine cause for optimism over Africa’s untapped potential.

Ms. Latortue believes that the estimated \$2.6 trillion infrastructure gap represents enormous opportunities for the U.S. public and private sectors. She believes there are further opportunities for innovation around energy, solar, and education. And Ms. Latortue noted that dialogue with African leaders is good because they believe the time has come to rely on themselves. While Official Development Assistance is important, it is not enough to deliver on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ms. Latortue discussed the need in Africa for transparent and fair tax systems, and to combat illicit finance. Ms. Latortue recently attended a conference on development finance in Addis Ababa and observed a new conviction and momentum for action. Because there are non-financial enablers of development, Ms. Latortue believes that the policy environment also needs to be improved. She mentioned that STEM helps to leapfrog the development process. Ms. Latortue believes African leaders are consistent in their message that economic transformation will not occur without the ability to train engineers and scientists on the continent.

She explained that the U.S. Treasury has oversight for regional development banks and the World Bank. Ms. Latortue noted that the United States is the World Bank’s largest shareholder and the second largest shareholder at the African Development Bank. In 2014, the World Bank approved \$11 billion in new commitments to Sub-Saharan Africa, and the African Development Bank approved \$7 billion. These additional funds will facilitate growth and regional integration, and increase the size of consumer markets across Africa. But Ms. Latortue explained that the private sector faces many challenges in Africa, including trade restrictions, inadequate energy, poor infrastructure, and weak policies. International institutions are tackling these challenges in two ways. The World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) work directly with Africa’s private sector. IFC provides \$16 billion in loans, grants, equity guarantees, and insurance to Sub-Saharan Africa. The African Development Bank approved \$2.4 billion including a fast-expanding portfolio in guarantees. These institutions are also working with the government to improve the enabling environment, supporting anti-corruption, legal and tax reform, promoting transparency, development of local capital markets, access to finance, and developing entrepreneurs on the continent.

Ms. Latortue believes that Africa represents a business opportunity for U.S. companies. Often the international institutions have a liaison from the Treasury. At the World Bank, a new procurement policy based on lifecycle values was recently approved that makes U.S. companies more competitive. She noted that traditionally the volume of business that U.S. companies win at those institutions lags far behind other countries. Ms. Latortue encouraged the audience to contact the Treasury liaisons at these institutions for help. But she cautioned that companies “need to show up” because other countries show up.

Ms. Scott commented on the role of the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). She spent a lot of time in the U.S. Office of the Africa Development Bank and remembers that very few contracts were awarded to U.S. companies. Ms. Scott believes that a change in the U.S. attitude will be necessary to embrace Africa. U.S. businesses will need to be more proactive about these opportunities. She then asked Ms. Latortue how businesspeople can get more information on the role of sovereign wealth funds, which she believes are becoming more and more important in terms of financial resources.

Ms. Latortue responded that OPIC has a great network with increasingly vibrant local companies. They are really forward-looking on Africa and have become one of her best sources on up-and-coming equity and sovereign wealth firms in Africa.

Q&A:

A man from Sierra Leone asked about financing for loans with high-interest rates. His organization owns a school there and took out a loan to for the school's construction. They have tried to refinance with international banks, but because the interest rate is so high they have not had much success. How can they move the process forward, understanding that the organization has the financial statements to prove their ability to pay back the loan?

Mr. Badguidy responded that the best way to approach this challenge would be through one of the multilateral funds at OPIC, or one of the specialty social lenders. For example, the Calvert Foundation in Bethesda deploys funds for social programs both domestically and internationally. He inquired whether the organization had U.S. partners.

The respondent from Sierra Leone clarified that it is a non-profit organization trying to link youth in the U.S. and Sierra Leone.



Africa Trade and Investment panel discussion.

Ms. Latortue suggested searching for impact investors active in Sierra Leone. She urged the respondent to contact any organizations that match their needs. She also noted that new, non-traditional banks have opened in several African countries and are looking to serve a different market (for example, Advance and Access). She suggested the respondent check to see if there are similar institutions operating in Sierra Leone.

What partnerships do you have on the ground? And how do you go about making that information known? How do you reach out to small businesses?

Mr. Garcia responded that people have called the Foreign Commercial Service the “best kept secret” in the U.S. government. As a result, the office is trying to do a better job of promoting itself, partly by participating in events like the CFA forum. He provided two websites with more in-depth information for businesses: www.trade.gov and www.export.gov. In addition, the FCS has a presence on-the-ground in many countries with either a commercial office or a partner (a partner might be the U.S. State Department Economic Section). Once a U.S. company is ready to export, and they have identified a particular country of interest, that is the best time to contact the FCS office. The FCS staff will work with the company to help find a distributor, joint venture partner, etc. and will advocate on behalf of the company with local government and local businesses.

What is the role of the Commercial Service Officer in dealing with small businesses on-the-ground? Is there a documented success record? It becomes capital-related at a certain point, and if you are doing business in Africa, you need to bring money.

Mr. Garcia responded that the FCS has many success stories. He explained that their goal is to promote SMEs overseas and once the client has achieved results, FCS promotes their success. Mr. Garcia noted that stories of small businesses being successful overseas are collected and disseminated on an annual basis by FCS.

The respondent asked for more specifics on the dollar value and number of deals closed with FCS support in the past 12 months.

Mr. Garcia emphasized that the first step for FCS assistance is to verify that the company is export-ready. After all, not all small businesses are ready to export, and FCS wants to create successes rather than failures. He explained that each FCS domestic office serves a particular U.S. region, and recommended that the respondent contact his local export assistance center to get the specific numbers for that particular office.

To determine if a company is export ready, Mr. Garcia explained that the FCS staff would ask specific questions to gauge whether a company is ready to go overseas with their product. Many companies want to export new products, but FCS will ask how many units they have sold in the United States to gauge whether the product is truly ready to compete in major international markets. He reminded the audience that going overseas is expensive. Companies that visit foreign markets can spend thousands of dollars for a short trip of only three or four days. Mr. Garcia noted that FCS would help companies whether they are ready to export or not, but emphasized that FCS will be honest with companies about their weaknesses.

The next comment came from a small business owner from Benin. He explained that West Africa has done much work to develop a regional market. For his business, he would like to sell to the local market, not to the United States. He would like to link with major companies operating in Benin.

Mr. Garcia advised the business owner to speak to the local FCS office in Benin so they can assess his needs and objectives. The local expert would then interview four to six people on his behalf. The FCS team will look for potential clients, and the Benin team members are experts in the Benin market.

Ms. Scott noted that U.S.-based business owners may qualify for minority supplier programs.

What efforts are being made to develop an overall continental strategy in development? It seems like a disjointed set of projects, proposals and requests for funding. Is there a overall comprehensive design to the U.S. government approach?

Ms. Scott acknowledges that there are disconnects and overlaps even within Commerce and the Small Business Administration, etc. She believes the U.S. government needs to rethink how to make those activities more efficient.

Ms. Latortue addressed this comment not by offering answers, but by offering insights into the overall plan for Africa. She noted that the European Union is under a lot of stress and that only highlights the challenges of creating economic and political unions across very diverse countries. In her view, as the African Union builds its own capacity, it is becoming a serious partner in this regard. The African Union is effectively addressing challenges to security, economic growth and health care at a regional level.

Other institutions, including the World Bank and African Development Bank, are likewise increasing the share of work they do at a regional level. And the Millennium Challenge Corporation would like to begin with regional investments, rather than working country-by-country. Despite the difficulty involved in aligning the political will and technical challenges at a regional level, there is a major movement to do just that. Ms. Latortue noted that serious people within and outside Africa are working on this, with some track record of achievement.

How does the Department of Commerce define a small business, and when was that definition last revisited?

Mr. Garcia responded that the government has two parameters for designating a small business. Companies are “small businesses” if they have fewer than 500 employees, or they have been certified by the Small Business Administration. He believes that definition was revisited in 2008.

How do you regulate informal trade in Africa?

Ms. Latortue noted that some countries have made big efforts to get rid of informal trade. But she noted that blind regulation could be very dangerous, especially because the informal sector still employs a large proportion of the workforce. The incentives for the informal sector to become formal must be identified and addressed. Ms. Latortue believes that the benefits of becoming formal must be clear, whether it is delivering basic services or being more transparent, etc.

Special Remarks: ECOWAS Perspectives

H.E. Omar Arouna, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Republic of Benin, noted that regional integration is already happening in West Africa by private companies and big, cross-border banks. He reminded the audience that in Africa, all borders are porous. In his view, regulations are now catching up with what is being done on-the-ground.



Ambassador of the Republic of Benin, Omar Arouna (foreground), provides an ECOWAS perspective.

Ambassador Arouna explained that in Benin, business people go through informal channels because they want to avoid taxes, and thus retain higher profits. Understanding this, the Government of Benin asked businesses to register at no cost. Registered businesses were then able to access credit, so they got a concrete benefit from formalization. This strategy worked well in Benin.

Ambassador Arouna explained that ECOWAS is a union of 15 West African countries trying to operate as a single market. It was created in 1975 and revamped in 1993 with the overall goal of becoming a single market of 300 million people with a GDP of \$106 billion. This creates enormous opportunities for U.S. companies to come and invest. Although the market is huge, there are many sub-markets. He noted that many companies are doing business on a very small scale in several countries, but their operations are not linked. For example, the Ambassador spoke with an entrepreneur in Benin doing business in Benin and Togo, who denied being a multi-national. To address these issues, he noted that ECOWAS is currently working on harmonizing laws between members.

The Ambassador noted that in order for ECOWAS to function, each member has to open markets for the transportation of goods and people. This is difficult, in part because most African countries get a large share of their revenue from imports/exports and cross-border trade. As a result, opening borders will result in governments losing some revenue. ECOWAS is trying to address this through various mechanisms, including the Co-Prosperity Agreement between Benin, Togo and Nigeria. ECOWAS is also working on human rights issues. Ambassador Arouna noted that companies wishing to do business internationally have to operate with the same level of human rights in each country where they have a presence. He also believes that democracy and free and fair elections are good for business. The Ambassador explained that business in Africa is often tied to a political apparatus. He believes this may be necessary when entering the market, but then companies should detach themselves. ECOWAS is working on transparency measures to help this process.

The Ambassador then explained the institutional context of ECOWAS. The Conferences of Head of State and Council of Ministers come together to harmonize views on specific issues, and the Executive Secretariat coordinates the agenda. ECOWAS also has a Community of Court of Justice for business litigation issues between countries. Finally, ECOWAS houses an Economic and Social Council as well as a Health Organization.

Ambassador Arouna then offered practical advice for doing business in ECOWAS. For companies wondering how to access such a big market, he noted that succeeding in business is not a science—it often comes down to political will. While a high-risk approach can yield high rewards, the Ambassador advised a more cautious approach to doing business in Africa. When the Ambassador was in the private sector, he knew the country on the ground, including the operating environment and businesses with the means to credibly assess the market. He advised that the best strategy for international businesspeople would be to work with a local who understands the culture and the market. He explained that U.S. companies that try to replicate their U.S. operations in Africa are not successful.

The Ambassador advised the audience to avoid getting bogged down in local politics. He explained that when any U.S. company, big or small, enters an African country, the locals see dollar signs. However, he warned that by perpetuating that mindset, businesses would not succeed in that market because they are creating a craving that they will eventually not be able to fulfill.

Creating a business in Africa may seem simple, for example, in Benin you can create a foreign company in one day. However, the Ambassador advised that doing business there will be difficult without a local partner. While you may not be on the ground yourself, it will be necessary to coordinate with someone there. He further advised the audience to keep in mind that they should not expect to get rich in Africa after one day—only those who keep at it will make it. The Ambassador emphasized that Africa is full of potential, citing the success of mobile phones on the continent.

The Ambassador noted that capital is difficult to find in Africa, particularly from local banks. He explained that even a good business person with capital might not qualify for a loan. However, because relationships are so important in Africa, if the banker is a friend, he may get the loan anyway, even if he is unable to repay the loan. This is common in many banks, and they react by raising interest rates to be sure they can recoup their money. The Ambassador believes that explains why borrowing money is so expensive in Africa. He advised the audience to explore non-local banks, particularly OPIC and the Export-Import Bank, which work with local banks and guarantee loans.

While big businesses follow the philosophy of “been there, done that,” the Ambassador believes that small businesses are very well suited to Africa. For example, a five-person firm was very successful in building a hotel in Benin. He advised businesses to “come in lean and light” to get established and then expand the business once they are in the market. He advised getting into a smaller country (like Benin)

and then expanding operations to Nigeria. After all, the two countries have a free-trade zone, and Benin is “Nigeria lite.” U.S. SMEs should single out one country to start, with a view of expanding to more countries as one small market will not be enough to sustain them for the long-term. The Ambassador advised SMEs to develop an approach that will create a larger market for their products.

The Ambassador believes that the ECOWAS community could learn how to cooperate and aggregate resources from U.S. corporations. He emphasized that U.S. corporations entering the ECOWAS market can share a cross-spectrum of resources even in different areas of business. He noted the presence of quality consulting firms on the ground to help facilitate human resources. The Ambassador concluded by discouraging the audience from letting language become a barrier to investment. After all, money is the same in every language.

Ms. Scott noted that ECOWAS is the biggest market in Africa but wondered when the countries would share a common currency.

Ambassador Arouna responded that the issue of a common currency is much discussed. But he noted that a currency has to be pegged to something. This has not been agreed upon among all ECOWAS countries. He pointed out that the CFA is only convertible because it is linked to the euro. And some countries, like Ghana, have their own currency. With all the currency fluctuations, he wonders if integrating currency is the best approach. While no decision has been made, more voices in Africa are advocating that ECOWAS look at this issue. He believes that the ultimate outcome should be decided by Africans.

The audience heard brief remarks from Joanne Hill, Chief of the Office of Business Development at the Department of Commerce. She explained that the entire business development team collaborates very closely with the International Trade Administration. As the former Africa Specialist at the Department of Commerce, Ms. Hill led three delegations to Africa. The Minority Business Development Agency promotes B2B linkages with SMEs and global corporations. She emphasized that these activities are about an economic imperative, not out of affection for Africa, but out of profit. She believes the United States could do more in Africa like China is doing.

Panel 2: Market-entry strategies in SSA – Success Stories

Ms. Abby Asem, Strategy International Director, The Hershey Company

Ms. Asem noted that Hershey is a major chocolate and cocoa producing company with headquarters in Pennsylvania. It is very active in West Africa. Ms. Asem explained that Hershey’s strategy in West Africa fits into three buckets. Because the company does not buy cocoa beans directly, Hershey needs sustainability in its sourcing, and much of that comes from Ghana and the Ivory Coast. The second bucket is corporate social responsibility. The company’s founder, Milton Hershey, left his money to a school. Therefore, education is very important to the company. Hershey started a pilot school lunch program in Ghana, with the potential to expand to other markets where they do business. Finally, Hershey considers its operations in Africa a commercial venture, though they do not have success stories yet from a commercial perspective. While Hershey is primarily a North American company, they have



Abby Asem, Director, Strategy International, Hershey Company.

concentrated more growth overseas over the past ten years and are now starting to look at entering the market in West Africa.

Ms. Asem offered her comments from a consumer goods perspective. First, Hershey had to learn how to operate in Africa. They were previously successful in some markets where “they knew how to do it.” But the company also failed in several markets. Hershey’s strategy in Africa is, therefore, to be very specific and take enough time to learn. The company is operating not at a country level, but at a city level. This is more manageable to start and can be expanded in time. And it offers Hershey the opportunity to learn about the market potential, local competitors, etc. Some cities are very significant economically. For example, the GDP of Lagos, Nigeria is larger than Ghana’s GDP. She emphasized that Hershey is leveraging their strengths as they develop the proper market entry strategy. Rather than chasing fads in high-growth sectors, they are pursuing their core product: chocolate. Ms. Asem believes that a company should focus on its strengths when entering new markets. She explained that Hershey is localizing the entire value chain in West Africa, including sourcing, talent, and distribution. Ms. Asem believes that doing everything from the United States will not work very well. While some Hershey markets are export-only, meaning that products are made in the United States and then exported, Africa is a different model. Finally, partnership is very important to Hershey. They have learned that going it alone is not optimal in Africa so they work with local partners and do due diligence on the ground.

Hershey is facing some impediments to doing business in West Africa. One is infrastructure—refrigeration is necessary to deliver firm, rather than melted, chocolate. African supermarkets have this capacity, but that is just a small share of the total market Hershey would like to capture. The company is still determining the best approach to refrigeration in these markets. Another impediment for Hershey is the regulatory environment in West Africa. Ms. Asem emphasized that the company is interested in protecting their long-term investments there. Informal trade is another source of competition for Hershey. While the company does not have a commercial presence in Africa, Hershey products are already being sold in these markets by distributors unaffiliated with the company. This is competition for legitimate sales, because Hershey will go through formal channels and pay taxes, while the informal distributors will not. Ms. Asem shared that the Hershey motto is “Fail a little; learn a lot.” She emphasized that those wishing for immediate success should probably stay out of the African market.

Mr. Mori Diane, Executive Vice President, AMEX International, Inc.

Mr. Diane owns a small business in Washington, D.C. with a consulting branch that works mainly with development agencies, principally USAID. The company also has a private sector practice that works with African entrepreneurs and seeks to improve the African policy environment. Mr. Diane offered some examples of successful business initiatives led by his firm. A trade and investment project in Ghana helped Ghanaian SMEs to become effective exporters of pineapples to the United States. Previously, all pineapple exports from Ghana traveled by air, which left very little room for expansion. Mr. Diane’s company brought a Belgian supermarket chain into Ghana to speak to pineapple growers to demonstrate the market potential. They determined that a shipping line going to Cote d’Ivoire could make a port call in Tema, Ghana. As a result, Ghanaian exports of pineapples doubled within five years.

Mr. Diane has also undertaken for-profit ventures. His company understands the cultural setting in Africa. A few years ago, African textiles became very popular in the United States. In response, his company created a clothing line and brand based on textiles from Senegal, tie dyes from Guinea, kinte cloth from Ghana and other cloth from Mali. They established a clothing factory in the Washington, D.C. area to produce female garments with European style mixed with African fabrics. Some of the most prestigious stores, including Garfinkle and Nordstrom, carried the line and the knock-off brand was sold at TJ Maxx.

Based on his many experiences with the private sector and as a consultant, Mr. Diane offered the following comments. He believes that many African countries are offering exiting opportunities for SMEs. He acknowledged that numerous challenges remain but emphasized that rewards are high for successful business ventures. Mr. Diane listed five key challenges facing businesses: cumbersome administrative red tape, lack of financial institutions and instruments, lack of an adequate and reliable communications system, poor infrastructure, and lack of local management capacity to make decisions—which he cited as the biggest problem. With regard to local management, he believes the Diaspora can intervene, bringing education and technology to the continent.

Mr. Diane strongly encouraged businesses to engage in sectors that add value to local produce. Dry fruit production is one example—very good quality fruit in West Africa goes to waste because of the lack of available cold storage. Price differences between African markets and the United States offer another opportunity. For example, avocados sell for 5 cents in West Africa and \$2 each in the United States.

Ms. Gena Bradford, President and CEO of BMG3 Enterprises, Inc.

Ms. Bradford is an architect who has been involved in Africa only fairly recently, since 2008. Ms. Bradford needed to raise money for a housing project in Liberia but did not want to rely on the government to finance her construction projects. She knew this would be riskier, and the deal would take longer, but that the reward would be much greater. She realized that in order to raise money, she would have to build relationships. This entailed a relocation from Southern California to the Washington, D.C. area to be near African Embassies. She wanted to be closer to where business is done, and she wanted to get to know important people.

When dealing with African governments, Ms. Bradford advised the audience to figure out how to help them get the collateral. While developers bring a project and money to a country, the government has to put skin in the game through a collateral guarantee. As a developer, she has had to do that work on behalf of the government in order to finalize the deal. Ms. Bradford reminded the audience that financing is the most important part of any project. In Africa, the deal is not done until the Finance Minister and President are on board with the terms.

Ms. Bradford suggested that businesspeople go directly to the Embassy of the country they are targeting. Some Embassies are not as open as others. She was very impressed by the Embassy of Mauritius and looks forward to doing business there.

Overall, Ms. Bradford's path to doing business in Africa has been a long one. She noted that doing business in Africa is not easy, and urged businesses to define their path and their business model before trying to enter the African market.

Ms. Scott noted that the risk element is key in decision-making. She asked the panel how they were able to convince others to do business in Africa, especially those who say that they would like to do it but there are too many challenges (corruption, infrastructure, etc.).

Ms. Bradford emphasized that people have to know what they are offering and where those skills fit in order to maximize their benefit. She noted that she is a problem-solver and put those skills to work on the continent. She realizes in these negotiations that she has something to offer, something that the other side needs.

Ms. Asem asked the audience to determine their true motivation for exploring business opportunities in Africa. Is it for growth, charity, a love of African people? She reminded the audience that expansion to Africa is not for everyone and those without a strong enough conviction may not last. Hershey has developed sourcing relationships in Africa and now they see the opportunity to be a commercial presence there as the market continues to grow.

Mr. Diane explained that there are two components of risk: the intrinsic nature of the sector a business is working in, and the other is unknown. When people look at Africa, the perceived risk is much greater because of a lack of information. Mr. Diane believes that it is the responsibility of African countries to share more information about what opportunities are available.

Ms. Scott noted that the panel addressed non-U.S. sources of financing. She asked the panelists how they would counsel people to access capital or other financial resources outside of the U.S. market.

Ms. Bradford advised the audience to explore private equity, venture capital, and other non-government sources of funding. She explained that these sources are made up of networks of people whose resources are not advertised—they operate through word of mouth.

Q&A:

A business person in the audience with over 30 years of experience in trade and investment commented that risk in Africa is different from risk in the United States. For example, he worked on a \$30 million water project in Cameroon that is in limbo because the Export-Import Bank lost Congressional authorization. He advised that businesses be prepared for the unexpected in Africa. He also highlighted that businesses should be realistic about how long it takes to get things done in Africa. For the Cameroon project, it took one year to get the necessary documents from the government. He concluded by recommending an additional resource for businesspeople looking to enter Africa. Family funds from prominent U.S. families (the Rockefellers, etc.) are funding development projects in Africa and could work with U.S. business interests there.



Martin Ezemma (middle), Business Development Specialist, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce, with attendees.

Ms. Bradford emphasized that making progress in Africa takes time. In her case, they are finally closing on the final housing construction contract after seven long years. She noted that African governments take a lot of time because they have to do their due diligence and get all stakeholders on board. She also pointed out that sometimes these projects involve changing the status quo, and it can be difficult to change people's mindset.

Mr. Diane noted that the problem with the Export-Import Bank financing could have happened in the United States. He emphasized that international business is a two-way street, and he does not believe Africans should be expected just to adapt to external events.

How do you do business in the construction industry when there is so much government involvement? (Without having to bribe people?) In Africa, it can be very difficult to distance yourself from the politics.

Ms. Bradford explained that her business model is BOT (build, operate, transfer), which is less likely to be influenced by bribes. Ms. Bradford's firm writes certain rules for permitting directly into their proposals to minimize opportunities for bribes when dealing with contractors. She emphasized that the U.S. government can be used to eliminate opportunities for bribes, particularly the Commercial Officer.

Ms. Bradford emphasized that “not all business is good business.” She advised that though people will try to solicit bribes, it is never a good business practice. Recently, a Finance Minister requested a “legal” commission (which was actually illegal). She refused to pay, and he was fired the next day.

One member of the audience commented that government is everything in most African countries, and therefore business cannot be government-agnostic. Political considerations are always necessary. For example, in Nigeria, most businesses shut down three to four months before the recent election. U.S. firms need people with both backgrounds to understand the political context.

Another audience member commented that the Diaspora can serve as a bridge to link U.S. and African businesses. This has worked very well in Nigeria. The organization was able to mobilize a number of people here to travel to Nigeria and team up with locals. Still, to minimize risk, U.S. businesses need to be aware of integrity issues.

A third member of the audience shared that she started a foundation in Liberia. She would like to build a state-of-the-art hospital on her recently purchased 12 acres of land. She underscored that in order to do business in Liberia, you need to develop personal relationships. This topic of personal relationships in Africa was highlighted effectively by the panel discussion.

What was your experience with partners on the ground in Africa?

Ms. Bradford responded that good partners are available, but international firms need to do due diligence. USAID trains people to help ready them to collaborate with international businesses. A group of African Americans has migrated to Ghana to do business in a wide range of sectors.

Would Hershey be willing to partner with a minority firm in Africa/the Caribbean?

Ms. Asem responded that she would be interested in getting more information.

Mr. Melvin Foote concluded the session, thanking all participants for the informative and productive discussion.

September 17, 2015

Second Global African and Diaspora Leadership Teleforum: Promoting Dialogue Among Global Diaspora Leaders

The global, virtual gathering of African Diaspora Leaders had a discussion focused on the following:

- *Strategies to Address the Healthcare Infrastructure Challenges in Africa*
- *Improving STEM in Africa*
- *Engaging and Mobilizing the Diaspora*

The purpose of the African Diaspora Teleforum was to have an open and transparent dialogue on effective strategies to accomplish the following: (1) identify African Diaspora priority initiatives; (2) identify strategic methodologies in order to encourage awareness and participation within the African Diaspora community around the globe; (3) clarify outstanding issues and concerns of the Africa Diaspora; and (4) develop an action plan to move forward with African Diaspora initiatives.

Hermine G. Zossoungbo Ph.D., President of African Immigrant Org, hosted the teleforum.

Mr. Melvin Foote, President and CEO of the Constituency for Africa, previewed the discussion that would focus on the role of the Diaspora in shaping U.S. policy toward Africa. He updated participants on the progress of the 2015 Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series, noting that the Town Hall Meeting on September 15 had been successful in getting participants to move beyond Ebola toward bigger healthcare issues. He also highlighted the historic reception with ECOWAS Ambassadors on the evening of September 14, which honored African policy leadership on Africa. The honorees were Congresswoman Karen Bass, Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Melvin Foote.

Mr. Foote pointed out he was the only man, which just shows that women are dramatically leading the work on Africa from the United States. He noted that the Constituency for Africa is starting to forge a new relationship with African diplomatic corps. In addition, numerous young people are involved and have been part of discussions to determine how best to move the Diaspora forward. They are highly educated and coming from the best universities, majoring in engineering, business, and economic policy. This demonstrates that CFA is also building partnerships with the next generation. Mr. Foote highlighted the informative discussion on governance. That session involved the National Endowment for Democracy, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the National Democratic Institute discussing upcoming elections in Burkina Faso, Guinea, and elsewhere. When it ended, there was a coup in Burkina Faso!

Overall, the participation from Africans in this year's Ron Brown African Affairs Series has been very strong. The discussion is really among African people who "get it." He emphasized the need to involve other partners, too, to make sure that everyone "gets it." Mr. Foote noted that Dr. Julius Garvey was part of core organizing committee as well as an important partner in the Diaspora. Dr. Garvey carries the mantle of his father, Marcus Garvey. Mr. Foote was with Dr. Garvey in Trinidad for the annual celebration of emancipation. He noted that Dr. Garvey was an absolute legend there; wherever he went, thousands and thousands showed up to see him.

Session I: Promoting STEM in Africa

Keynote Speaker: Nkem Khumbah, Ph.D.

Dr. Khumbah is originally from Cameroon and is now a Mathematics Lecturer at the University of Michigan. He is the coordinator of the STEM-Africa Initiative at the University of Michigan, and the Executive Curator at the NEF.

Dr. Khumbah believes that competitive scientific manpower explains the rise of China and Korea over Africa. Around the 1960s, many African countries were still dealing with the effects of colonialism. So African leadership felt the need to assert African humanity, which was an immediate post-colonial need. As countries became independent, colonists retreated, leaving African bureaucracies empty. According to Dr. Khumbah, African leaders thus had the immediate priority of filling those offices with economists, lawyers, and other professionals. Thus, developing a strong state apparatus was a key goal after independence. Mr. Khumbah believes that African governments have been overly successful at that over the past 50 years. African countries are mostly exporting raw materials; Dr. Khumbah believes they need scientists and engineers to add value and transform those raw materials.

In the 1980s while Africa was developing its universities, much of the funding came from the World Bank and IMF, and this was inefficient. African governments were instructed against dedicating money to higher education or scientific manpower, which resulted in a lack of investment in these areas. Therefore, Africa regressed while Harvard and MIT flourished. Dr. Khumbah believes that Africa needs to focus on scientific manpower. Many countries have strategies to become "emerging countries" so broadly speaking, they recognize the lack in scientific power between themselves and China, Korea, and other successful economies. Dr. Khumbah explained that many countries are putting forward scientific policy documents and strategies because for the past 20 years they have neglected STEM. But Africa has

a weak educational base, with unfavorable student/teacher ratios and people in ministries without the necessary scientific expertise.

In his role at the University of Michigan, Dr. Khumbah is looking at how to influence U.S. policy toward Africa to emphasize science. He believes that health is a scientific problem. He emphasized that non-Africans should support African development so Africans can solve their own healthcare problems. He noted that sending medication to Africa that has been made abroad by other scientists does not serve African interests. Instead, he believes Africa needs to develop its own medication from its own industry. When Kwame Nkrumah led Africa to independence, his efforts focused on the African Diaspora. Dr. Khumbah believes the Diaspora is the foundational partner for Africa's development; more than any multilateral institution. Now that Africa is trying to engage globally, Dr. Khumbah believes that Africa needs to be able to build its own roads and bridges and solve problems like Ebola. In his view, science is how African citizens become empowered to solve problems locally.

Dr. Khumbah noted that there are large companies in Africa in the telecommunications and banking sectors. He asked the audience to consider if MTM could become the next Google or Huawei. He believes they need to conceive and do it. Dr. Khumbah appealed to his Diaspora colleagues to help Africa move to the next stage in development by creating more scientific manpower. He suggested that members of the Diaspora leverage institutions of higher learning and research to support these efforts. He believes Africans are ready for it and cited several examples of scientific-led economic development. Israel is a small country, but very powerful because of their scientific prowess. Dr. Khumbah also noted that Chinese-made products have improved immensely over the past 20 years due to scientific advances.

Dr. Khumbah proposed identifying key leadership institutions in the west and developing a plan to leverage those. The Diaspora is key in leveraging officials for institutional partnership. Dr. Khumbah believes that brain drain is a misnomer, and should not define Africa. The problem is strengthening core institutions to train STEM manpower to develop Africa's value-added natural products, so they are not exported raw. Dr. Khumbah believes a critical mass of scientists is needed on the continent. He noted that Cameroon only has 100 math professors. This is because education since independence has focused on the humanities. Millions of doctors and engineers are needed to replace the current system where expatriates come in to build the roads and infrastructure.

Q&A:

Dr. Zossoungbo asked Dr. Khumbah as a member of the Diaspora living in the United States and working in the STEM field, what one thing he would do to promote STEM in Africa.

Dr. Khumbah responded that he would establish a large fund for scientific development in Africa run by Africans. He noted that money for health expenditures is generally targeted to particular diseases and Africans themselves do not have control over how it is spent. Dr. Khumbah noted that President Obama's budget for science is \$150 billion. The total rises to about half a trillion dollars if other resources are counted. He noted that while African leaders have pledged to dedicate 1 percent of GDP towards science, this has not happened. He believes that while Africa has the leadership and professors to advance in STEM, it lacks the resources. Therefore, if he had the power, Dr. Khumbah would establish the largest fund for science in Africa.

Charles Sharp, of the Black Emergency Management Association, emphasized the linkages between STEM and healthcare. This is especially true for water, which is a very important resource. Mr. Sharp noted that much of the work of the Gates Foundation involves bringing products made in other countries to Africa. He believes that Africans have the expertise to manufacture their own water delivery system. He asked Dr. Khumbah if water delivery systems are in fact being manufactured on the continent. He noted that Coca-Cola also imported water purification systems.

Dr. Khumbah replied that he does not agree with Africans importing finished products. He believes that many international institutions are looking at short-term solutions, which leads to a strategy of importing goods from abroad. Dr. Khumbah believes that practice has displaced Africa's own development agenda of trying to develop African manpower. Malaria is a good example of this. Bed nets were being manufactured abroad and then provided to African countries. He believes that Africa needs to develop its own industry with its own workers, so that they can own the process. In his view, one of the biggest faults of the aid industry is that Africa does not own the agenda or the process. Dr. Khumbah does not believe that looking for solutions from external sources will not work for Africa. The fund he proposed in response to the previous question would allow Africans to develop their own strategy separate from the aid system.

Dr. Zossoungbo noted that this is a question of global power, and more manpower is urgently needed on the continent.

Dr. Barbara Simon of William Tubman University was in the studio to make comments.

Dr. Simon wanted to reinforce the earlier discussion at the World Bank session on empowerment of African women through STEM, which was the second part of a session held in June. She emphasized that resources are critical to mobilizing STEM. Dr. Simon announced that the core group would be meeting the following day to develop next steps on a concrete and sustainable agenda. She noted that Africans and the Diaspora have to come forward to make collaboratively progress.

Professor Sonia Smith from Howard University noted that developing capacity for women in STEM involved tackling barriers to entry. She agreed with Dr. Khumbah's advice to create partnerships with Africans, and invited the Diaspora to engage with knowledge, not just resources. She believes that is essential for creating sustainable opportunities—not just one-off opportunities.

A caller from Germany agreed completely with Dr. Khumbah that Africa is lacking in scientists and engineers. In Cameroon, together with a private university, he is trying to train people who can act on the ground. He asked Dr. Khumbah how the Diaspora can support these kinds of initiatives.

Dr. Khumbah noted that individual efforts can be helpful, as long as they are organized. He suggested that members of the Diaspora that are part of research organizations in the United States or Europe should partner with African organizations. While a lack of interest in Africa is sometimes assumed, Dr. Khumbah believes that more often people forget about Africa. He emphasized the importance of additional funding to support African colleagues in attending international conferences, and for scholarships for African students at research institutions and universities. This is particularly effective if members of the Diaspora are administrators at those institutions.

A caller from Georgia noted that he had just completed the most comprehensive Diaspora survey from respondents in more than 100 countries. It is available online at Diaspora.com. He believes that African leaders care more about power than their own intellect, and that causes them to fight each other. This mentality started with Europeans that went to Africa to divide the people and force them into slavery. The caller believes that now this attitude is exhibited by African leaders and the Diaspora, which is causing people to sabotage each other. He believes that the problem in Africa is being misdiagnosed. The Diaspora thinks of money as the problem, but they need to start learning how to craft a better solution by working together.

Dr. Zossoungbo pointed out the need for collaboration between members of the Diaspora. She emphasized that it was also important for African leaders to mobilize the Diaspora and to make the countries attractive for engagement by the Diaspora.

A principal at a consulting firm noted that her company is currently mobilizing Diaspora resources to build programs and infrastructure. She noted that it is necessary to understand the business of funding—it is not benevolent. She believes that funding is being relegated to middle managers in Africa, but it should be a strategic priority. Africans need to understand how to compete, and must develop an infrastructure that makes sense to funders as a business, rather than a development exercise. After all, most organizations are looking for a return on investment, not only financially but also in the size of the footprint they are going to make. Therefore, she believes that leveraging high-impact programs is important. She also emphasized the importance of collaboration and forming partnerships. She concluded by informing the audience that the conversation would continue at an event at the State Department on October 14.

Session 2: Strategies to Address Healthcare Infrastructure Challenges in Africa

Keynote Speaker: Allen A. Herman, M.B., ChB, Ph.D.

Dr. Herman emphasized that health not be an individual issue. He believes that the context of our lives, where we live, work, love, and pray all have an impact on our personal health. Dr. Herman attended medical school in South Africa, has worked with the National Institutes of Health in the United States, and also worked on the ground in South Africa. He has experience all over the world, but what remains consistent is that the biggest health problems are among the poorest and most vulnerable.

The World Health Organization has always argued that timely health care is the most important. He noted that clinics in rural Africa are underserved, and without the proper tools, the programs will not function. Dr. Herman emphasized that Africa has been beset by health problems that are quite unusual. Between 1960 and 1985, life expectancy increased from 35 years to 60 years but still lagged behind Europe and the United States, where life expectancy was close to 80 years. But in the 1990s, the AIDS epidemic dropped life expectancy to 40 or 50 years of age. AIDS is now under control, and life expectancy has rebounded to 61-63 years. However, civil war and civil strife continues to affect life expectancy in Africa.

Dr. Herman noted that although Africans have buildings they call clinics and hospitals, they are underserved with inadequate medication and poorly supplied operating rooms. However, some countries are doing well. Namibia is a good example, with a stable democracy and extraordinary health statistics. Dr. Herman cited Rwanda as another positive example. He believes that some of the West African countries affected by Ebola were doing well until the onset of that epidemic. Dr. Herman explained that Ebola exposed major weaknesses in African healthcare systems; particularly a lack of capacity to deal with epidemics. Epidemics have the power to destroy an entire country, and Dr. Herman believes that some countries will take ten years to recover from Ebola.

Regarding epidemics, Dr. Herman noted the complexity of the problem, which is compounded by wide differences in the quality of available healthcare. He explained that care in parts of Johannesburg compares with the best facilities in New York City and Washington, D.C., while in Soweto, the conditions are very poor. According to Dr. Herman, the solution is to train more Africans on the continent as healthcare professionals and to ensure that government and private sector money for health is equitably distributed through the system. It is also important to create leadership in a healthcare system that can support political leadership in African countries. He believes that within every community in Africa, there is enough wisdom and leadership to solve the community's problems.

Dr. Herman conducted a study on mental health in South Africa with colleagues all over the world to try to understand the relationship between mental illness and forgiveness. He discovered that good mental health is a part of good physical health. He believes that a high level of forgiveness, Ubuntu, leads

to better mental health. He noted that Archbishop Desmond Tutu argued that Ubuntu is a leadership construct that allows people to forgive.

He believes that Africans need to control the investments that come into the continent, need to be trained in healthcare, and need to practice Ubuntu in their practical lives. Dr. Herman noted that respected African leaders were remarkable because they understood the humanity of everybody, most especially of their own people. He emphasized the importance of the concept of reconciliation and structural approaches to healthcare systems, rather than disease approaches to healthcare systems.

Q&A:

Bob Sharp of the Black Emergency Managers Association expressed interest in short-term initiatives to address the major healthcare issues within the next six months to one year. He asked what exactly can be done in the short-term to help develop the next workforce for healthcare workers for countries affected by Ebola.

Dr. Herman responded that the idea of quick solutions is important. He suggested that Mr. Sharp link up with people in those countries that bear the great burden of training the West African people. Dr. Herman advised the audience to put resources directly into the institutions in West Africa, rather than to solve the problems with external institutional work. He emphasized that African institutions need resources to continue training programs. He suggested that Mr. Sharp help these institutions develop curriculums to build the capacity of emergency managers. He noted that it would be useful to donate money for children to go to school to become emergency managers. While the cost to bring them to the United States or Europe is prohibitive, these students could be trained in Africa at one-tenth the cost, with the same quality of education. He advised Mr. Sharp to take his intellectual and financial resources, identify partners that are sustainable and stable and make their programs work better. Dr. Herman noted that it would be best to harness the capacity that already exists. Within six months, Mr. Sharp's organization could develop a short-term certificate program for Ebola management that trains local people on what to do when the next epidemic comes.

Another caller noted that the importance of health cannot be overestimated in African development. Last year, the Ebola epidemic killed 20,000 people within a short period of time, which stimulated help from around the world, including \$15 billion to improve the health infrastructure in Africa. The caller asked Dr. Allen how the money should be spent, noting that the African Union and the United States have decided to develop an African CDC to ensure that the disease can be contained as quickly as possible on the ground.

Dr. Allen responded that the CDC is an old organization—it has existed since the early 1900s. He explained the CDC model for Epidemic Service Officers. Officers are sent to remote places with tools and a full course of training. But they have daily communications with the CDC to help solve the problem. Dr. Herman believes the CDC model is very effective in dealing with epidemics as they arise. He noted that Nigeria did not have an Ebola problem, because they used CDC techniques to identify quickly people and isolate them, containing the spread. On the other hand, South Africa did not have AIDS early on, but it later became the epicenter after the government failed to deal with the disease appropriately.

Dr. Herman emphasized that Africans must not import from the West the obsession with medication to manage epidemics. He noted that simple preventative measures like washing hands or managing the water supply are often very effective for preventing the spread of disease. He believes that is consistent with the work of Epidemic Officers, who find the correct solution for the problem, rather than the fancy solution. In his view, the correct community-specific solution for epidemics has to be local.

A caller asked about the existence of an overall strategy for African development from among its own resources. He noted that many U.S. medical students are now looking to careers in administration because it is more lucrative. With a personal practice, a doctor is concerned about liabilities. He believes that healthcare should be considered along with infrastructure, as individuals cure their bodies and get nutrition from the land, food and water.

Dr. Herman expressed his deep belief in universality of health. He noted that 20 percent of children are undernourished, and 10 percent of adults are over-nourished, a result of modern lifestyles. Dr. Herman believes that public health must be connected to the food system. When he was a public health professional, he worked with farmers to make sure people got nutrition—and malnutrition disappeared in his region. Nourishment was a key ingredient in his family, reinforced by traditional leaders in the community. Dr. Herman believes that public health should be combined with agricultural extension programs – including small farm programs, water programs and sanitation programs – as part of the overall health strategy. He noted that in rural areas in Africa, the way people operate makes sense for the local community, but people from all over the world come in and try to change the way they do things.

A caller from New York City addressed Dr. Khumbah to ask how scientists and engineers living in the United States can be recruited to return to Africa. He suggested establishing one city where the scientists and engineers can settle. He asked Dr. Khumbah if the African Union would be open to the idea of designating such a city in Africa.

Dr. Khumbah responded that the question was loaded, because choosing one city necessarily means choosing one country. He suggested working through the African Union Heads of State Summit, who could issue a call to the Diaspora and work this out internally. Dr. Khumbah believes that Ghana has a lot of experience of welcoming Diaspora. He noted the variation among African countries in their ability to receive Diaspora, but that is not because of unwillingness.

Mr. Wale Ajibade, Producer and Director of the Teleforum and Executive Director of African Views Organization, commented that students at the University of Uganda invented a remote-control robot that can detect explosive devices. He noted that they also invented the first electronic car in Africa. Mr. Ajibade asked how Africans can bring innovations like these to the global marketplace.

Dr. Khumbah responded that innovations can be brought to market very quickly. Research cities (like the Silicon Valley) are what enables products to go from academia to the marketplace. He emphasized the need for venture capital in Africa, because what exists there is weak. After all, venture capital is what propelled American innovation. Dr. Khumbah believes that Africans need a fund for emerging technologies, because there are many ideas but very little knowledge on how to bring those ideas to the outside world.

Session 3: Engaging and Mobilizing the Diaspora

Keynote Speaker: Barry A. Biekman, Ph.D.

Dr. Biekman is a Netherlands Statesman and Social Scientist with expertise on Global African Affairs. She is a Civil Society Representative on International Decade for People of African Descent at the United Nations. Unfortunately, Dr. Biekman was unable to join the discussion due to technical difficulties.

The next speaker emphasized that organizing a Diaspora has to be a passion. While much progress has been made, there is still a long way to go. The main problem is overcoming funding issues, which is becoming easier with teleforums and technology. He noted that he would like to build a stronger partnership with the African Union, because they are in a position to support the Diaspora. The

Diaspora is full of energy, but everyone is looking to the African Union for leadership in connecting with Africans on the continent.

Mr. Ajibade introduced Dr. Zakia to discuss the Emancipation Support Committee of Trinidad and Tobago, the secretariat of Pan-African organizations in the Caribbean. Dr. Zakia explained that the committee is focused on supporting Africans who live outside of Africa. She expressed a desire for greater collaboration between the African Union, the Caribbean organizations and the Diaspora so that African people can take charge and do the work themselves. Finally, Dr. Zakia emphasized the need for an international forum where everyone can come together.

Q&A:

A caller from New York City noted that although the African Union promised to create the sixth region in 2003, it is only on paper. He asked whether the concept has been abandoned.

Dr. Zakia responded that it was unfortunate that the African Union had not been as effective and timely as expected in transforming this vision into reality. But she noted that the Diaspora has not advocated for the sixth region, either. In her view, it is necessary for the Diaspora to advocate for important issues.

A caller from Jamaica agreed with the earlier comments encouraging closer collaboration between the African Union and the Diaspora. He advocated for an ongoing discussion mechanism to allow members of the Diaspora to stay connected. He noted that many issues cannot be resolved in just an hour or two, and, therefore, a more sustainable means of discussion would be useful.

Dr. Julius Garvey joined the discussion, also agreeing that closer collaboration was necessary. He believes that when Africans come together around specific problems, pooling their resources, they can come up with effective solutions. He emphasized that change will not come from million dollar companies, but through individuals making strong connections with Africans on the continent. He believes the Diaspora can bring knowledge and resources to tackle specific issues on the ground.

A caller from Los Angeles noted that the discussion has touched on the difficulties the African Union has in engaging with the Diaspora in the United States. He reminded the audience that several participants have firsthand experience working with the African Union.

Another speaker addressed the sixth region issue, which he believes underlines the need for a plan for organizing the African Diaspora, especially at the grass-roots level. He noted that ECOSAC in the African Union has 150 representative seats, 130 of which are reserved for civil society organizations. Therefore, only 20 seats are available to represent the millions of people in the Diaspora. His organization, like many others, came up with a plan for the African Union. That was six years ago, and they are still waiting to hear back.

One of the leaders of mobilizing the African Diaspora in Germany called with a question for Dr. Garvey. He asked if Dr. Garvey would work with private clinics in Africa given the lack of health insurance and well-equipped public hospitals.

King Ashanti from Ghana commented on the lack of a central body in the Diaspora for Africans to connect with. He emphasized the multitude of disconnected organizations. He also noted that the Diaspora organizations need to understand how to connect with Africans.

A caller from Tanzania concluded the call by noting that the next General Secretary of the United Nations should come from Africa.

Africa Agriculture Forum: Strategies for Strengthening the African Agriculture Sector to Increase Trade and Investment, Economic Development, and Food Security

The purpose of this event was to discuss opportunities to strengthen the agriculture sector in Africa, consistent with the objectives and initiatives of public and private sector stakeholders, including the World Bank Group, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), African Union Commission (AUC), and others. Participants in the forum discussed current initiatives, best practices and lessons learned, and ideas to further develop Africa's agriculture sector.

Mr. Jacques Walker, Senior Advisor, Constituency for Africa and Chief Operations Officer for TransGen Energy, Inc., welcomed participants. He reminded the audience that the forum was intended to go beyond talk to become a discussion on opportunities, challenges and strategies to move African agriculture forward.

Mr. Franklin Moore, former Deputy Assistant Administrator for USAID's Africa Bureau, was the moderator for the discussion. He emphasized that many observers cite agriculture as one of the two or three most important development topics in Africa. Mr. Moore noted the increasing role of Afro-Caribbeans and African Americans in the economic transformation of the United States as well as their home countries. This is exemplified by Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, who represents the Virgin Islands and will deliver the keynote address.

Keynote:

Congresswoman Plaskett sits on the House Committee on Agriculture. This topic is pivotal to economic growth for her district in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Congresswoman wanted to be a voice for those that are forgotten in the big agriculture industry. She noted that agriculture is a major economic driver not just in the United States, but across the world. Congresswoman Plaskett emphasized her firm belief in the enormous potential of the African continent. She believes that African agriculture, technology and innovation can be a driving force for the rest of the Diaspora. As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, she believes that the Constituency for Africa does tremendous work on enlightening members of Congress.

Congresswoman Plaskett shared the little-known fact that the quickest way to improve and grow a developing economy is agriculture, not infrastructure. Agricultural development addresses major social issues, including employment, poverty, economic inequality, trade and investment. In dense rural areas, food security issues are paramount. Strengthening agriculture is important because it spurs private sector job growth and pulls families out of poverty. African agriculture can increase opportunities for trade and investment, which will allow governments to make larger investments in infrastructure and quality of life. Congress and the Congressional Black Caucus are looking at many of these topics. They recognize the role trade can play in agriculture in Africa and support the work of USAID and the Constituency for Africa. Still, far more needs to be done.

Congresswoman Plaskett emphasized the significant linkages between agriculture and nutrition and agriculture and income inequalities. While Congress spends a lot of time looking at nutrition, agricultural development also helps farmers begin to make the leap into larger exports of their products. Congress is very excited by new technical assistance programs initiated by USAID, Feed the Future (FtF), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the New Alliance Group. Congress also supports programs that increase lending and access to credit for agricultural enterprises in domestic and export markets. It further supports research and development to equip local farmers with the technology and

expertise to become more efficient through hybrid seed development and drip irrigation. Congresswoman Plaskett noted that technological advances can incentivize young people to embrace agriculture. Many farmers are aging, and she believes technology is the key to keeping young people involved in agriculture in Africa. Technology allows small farmers to do exciting and interesting things.

From her perspective as a lawyer, Congresswoman Plaskett believes in the importance of land ownership and reforms of land use rights. A recent article in the *Washington Post* described the situation of tobacco farmers in Zimbabwe. Joint ventures are being formed with the white owners that were displaced, to take advantage of their expertise to sustain and grow the farms. The Congresswoman acknowledged that we in the United States have issues with minority farmers. We also have issues of income inequality, food distribution and food deserts—where Americans have no access to fresh food or grocery stores and are therefore reliant on small corner stores with only canned goods. In the Virgin Islands, many foods that could be grown locally are being imported, resulting in higher food prices. This underscores the need for greater transfer of resources and knowledge between the United States and Africa. In particular, there is a tremendous need for training and technical assistance through public-private partnerships to develop agricultural and economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Congresswoman Plaskett urged the panel to create an action plan and to take that plan and put it into practice.

Special remarks:

Ms. Tjada D'Oyen McKenna, Assistant to the Administrator, USAID Bureau for Food Security; and Deputy Coordinator for Feed the Future (FtF), explained that FtF covers 10 different government agencies but is led by USAID. Its goal is to help countries make progress on sustainable development, reduce malnutrition, and to partner with U.S. universities, civil society organizations, the private sector, and African governments. The efforts of FtF focus on smallholder farmers in Africa, the majority of which are women. In some countries, up to 70 percent of the workforce is made up of smallholders with 2 acres or less. She noted that investment in the agricultural sector is at least twice as effective at alleviating poverty and increasing incomes than investments in other sectors.

Ms. McKenna highlighted four key points essential to illustrating the role that the United States is playing in the African agricultural sector. First, the efforts that began in 2010 when President Obama announced a \$10 billion commitment have already had a significant impact in securing new partners and opening new markets. In 2014 alone, U.S. Government programs reached 9 million children and helped 2.5 million smallholder farmers gain access to new tools or technologies to increase yields and incomes. New data suggest there have also been significant reductions in poverty and stunting. Between 2009 and 2014, there was a 25 percent reduction in stunting in Kenya.

Second, Ms. McKenna emphasized that the goals of FtF are sustainable. She believes the program can meet its ambitious target of reducing poverty by 20 percent. Once links are created to new technology, markets and investments, smallholders become dynamic players in transforming agriculture. Ms. McKenna believes the leadership in Africa was very strong on this front. Last year, African leaders reaffirmed this commitment in the Malabo Declaration, which builds on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) principles of evidence-based policy, partnerships, and agriculture-led development. The Declaration also sets an ambitious—but attainable—agenda for the next decade that will help achieve FtF goals by eliminating hunger, cutting poverty in half, and significantly expanding youth employment.

Third, Ms. McKenna expressed that continued U.S. engagement with Africa would be necessary to achieve food security. President Obama pledged to work alongside farmers in poor nations in 2009, resulting in a major breakthrough at the G-8 meeting that year as U.S. leadership mobilized \$22 million dollars for that purpose. The United States is a close partner with the European Union and the New

Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and FtF has received strong bipartisan Congressional support.

Finally, Ms. McKenna emphasized that the support of the Constituency for Africa has been and will continue to be essential to the work of FtF and USAID. She is very encouraged by the broad support from Congress, non-governmental organizations, universities, and civil society organizations. USAID works with minority-owned enterprises, too, and in fact 38 percent of small business funding went to minority-owned businesses last year. USAID also supports innovation labs with U.S. universities and top institutions across the world.

Q&A:

Mr. Moore asked Ms. McKenna how Feed the Future changes the ways emergency food assistance is handled. He noted that in the United States, economic development is generally handled separately from relief and development.

Ms. McKenna responded that the United States has long been a leader in humanitarian assistance and continues to be so. Feed the Future does not change the provision of commodities. Instead, the program helps ensure more funds are spent on local food purchases and thriving agricultural markets to support food aid products. USAID has created a committee on resilience to examine how relief operations can help with long-term economic development. The goal is to help people recover quickly from emergencies and disasters. Over time, the aim is to reduce the number of people in need of acute emergency assistance.

An audience member commented that in her work with rural farmers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), she never encountered Feed the Future or USAID. Instead of using technology like tractors, her program has been using animals (like cows) to increase production. She wondered how Feed the Future could help farmers in the DRC with water resources, training, or challenges getting products to market.

Ms. McKenna responded that the use of technology does not necessarily mean the tractors and big equipment. She explained that Feed the Future uses products that work locally and are sustainable. These include improved seeds, information delivered through cell phones, and small-scale irrigation projects. Farmers are the primary focus of FtF, but the program also partners with other institutions for bigger development projects, like the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the World Bank. Feed the Future currently operates in 12 African countries. The DRC is not part of the program, but Ms. McKenna noted that there is constant discussion of which countries should be included.

Panel: Private sector perspectives

Mr. Bill Guyton, President, World Cocoa Foundation

Mr. Guyton explained that the World Cocoa Foundation is a non-profit with 115 members. Its goal is to increase the sustainability of cocoa. Members span multi-national corporations like Mars and Nestle, as well as processors, traders, and many smaller companies at all levels of the value chain. The diverse membership has a broad spectrum of interests, from branding to input suppliers. Mr. Guyton noted that seventy percent of the cocoa supply comes from West Africa, primarily Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria. Therefore, there is a focus on improving the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in these countries.

Mr. Guyton explained that partnerships are very important to the foundation, particularly USAID. The foundation collaborated with USAID to work closely with host governments to improve training practices for small-scale farmers. He emphasized that this would not have been possible without the support of USAID. The model for the activities of the World Cocoa Foundation has changed over time

to become more dynamic. Earlier on, the private sector and USAID each contributed 50 percent of the funding and then they selected an international NGO to do the on-the-ground implementation. Today, companies invest directly in supply chains and learn directly from farmers. This is a positive development for the very small farmers in very rural areas of West Africa. The World Cocoa Foundation recently launched a new initiative, Cocoa Action, with the goal of achieving transformational change in the lives of 300,000 cocoa farmers. This is a strategy that incorporates productivity improvement with community development and involves I I companies and \$400 million in funding over the next four years. Mr. Guyton explained that the current challenge is finding ways to include farmers' voices every step of the way. He emphasized that USAID served as a convenor, helping the foundation to interface with the African governments, which was critical to the success of the initiative.

Professor William Hare, University of the District of Columbia's College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability, and Environmental Sciences

Professor Hare came to the United States as a Fulbright scholar to research enhancing soil productivity in developing countries. He discussed the activities of the University of the District of Columbia (UDC)'s College of Agriculture. Professor Hare emphasized that Washington, D.C. is a bifurcated city with a large difference between economic groups. Through the UDC, his team had an opportunity to build a comprehensive food system with urban implications in the United States and international relevance. Professor Hare distributed a handout with an article, "Food Security: The Urban Food Hubs Solution," by Sabine O'Hara, which highlights the goals of the urban farm. UDC is also holding an Urban Agriculture Symposium in October 2015 with the goal of enhancing the dialogue on these issues.

Professor Hare explained that the objective was to build a food system that incorporates a "wow factor" for the next generation of urban food producers. The team integrated math, engineering, and concepts like solar energy to distribute water. For example, the farm uses wastewater from fish to make organic fertilizer. The farm is using solar power in very innovative ways, like food drying and refrigeration. The farm is also built to galvanize research data from students on topics like economic profitability, social responsibility and environmental sustainability. Professor Hare is not a proponent of subsistence farming; instead he believes small farms should be profitable. He is Liberian and does not believe that the subsistence system has worked there.

Mr. Shuaibu Suleiman, Acting Director General, Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa

Mr. Suleiman began his remarks with a story. An Israeli business person went to Nigeria to explore business opportunities and after landing in Abuja, he was taken to Port Harcourt by car, which is an 8-hour drive. He commented to the driver that he could tell that Nigerians are very hard-working because the landscape was so green. In Israel, maintaining a green landscape requires considerable effort and investment. But in Nigeria, Mr. Suleiman explained that irrigation is widespread. His point is that Africans have many resources, including land and water. Because of these resources, crops grow throughout the year in Africa. However, many countries are still importing massive quantities of food; particularly rice. It is estimated that if countries along the West African coast stopped importing rice, up to 80 percent of the population would die. This is unfortunate, especially because Nigeria has very large flood plains for cultivating rice that could feed an enormous amount of people.

Mr. Suleiman believes that developing agriculture must be a critical focus for Africa, especially as the price of crude oil continues to plummet. Today, the price is about \$42 per barrel, and that is predicted to fall to \$20 per barrel. Many of the countries that rely on oil exports to build up foreign exchange are now less able to buy food imports. The rapid population growth (of about 4.5 percent per year) means that Africa's population will exceed 2 billion by 2025, and the food gap is growing by the day. Problems like Boko Haram create big challenges for West Africa, increasing the number of internally displaced people and threatening food security.

Mr. Suleiman emphasized that agriculture also provides employment opportunities. Africa faces a growing population of unemployed young people, which is a problem not just for Africa, but for the world. One of the quickest fixes to this problem is to develop the agricultural sector. Still, despite these incentives, Mr. Suleiman questioned whether countries are truly serious about agriculture. He noted that in one country in Africa, there only 2,000 tractors compared with over 3,000 SUVs on the streets.

Mr. Suleiman believes that it is very important for the Diaspora community to serve as a bridge between Africa and the rest of the world. The Directorate is interested in promoting these partnerships, through the Diaspora Affairs Department (DAD). The DAD has a desk on agriculture to link serious Diasporans dedicated to agriculture with opportunities in Africa. For example, in Nigeria financial institutions can offer “soft” loans to farmers. The Nigerian Export Promotion Council and Nigerian Export-Import Bank have been restructured to provide services that facilitate agricultural development. Mr. Suleiman believes that the Diaspora can do far more in agricultural production.

Mr. Suleiman believes that developing infrastructure on the ground (in the form of storage and water facilities) represents a fundamental challenge for African agriculture. He noted that very little can happen in the absence of the proper infrastructure. With regard to partnerships between universities and industry in Africa, Mr. Suleiman finds them lacking. He noted that universities often develop innovations that cannot go to market. The linkages between universities and industry should, therefore, be strengthened. Another serious challenge is the processing of agricultural products. Mr. Suleiman noted that there are a large number of products that require processing and refrigeration. The World Bank has done work in facilitating production, and processing should be the next step.

Mr. Suleiman explained that capacity building is a key focus for the Directorate, which funds 64 such programs across Africa. This is where they find synergy with the Constituency for Africa. However, he noted that most proposals submitted to the Directorate give minimal attention to issues that have to do with agriculture, gender, and youth empowerment. In his view, this is a problem, and the emphasis should shift back to those three topics.

Q&A:

The first question was directed to Professor Hare. The audience member wondered why he disagreed with the idea that subsistence farming could alleviate poverty.

On subsistence farming, Professor Hare responded that farming systems should be profitable and focused on the urban population. Demographics show that in the United States 75 to 80 percent of the population lives in urban areas. This is lower in developing countries, but it is increasing. He explained that food security is not a problem in the rural sector, because they do subsistence farming. Professor Hare emphasized that the growing urban population is now dependent on the vast majority of those rural farmers to provide food. He does not believe that is sustainable; instead, farmers need to produce food from a commercial perspective. The UDC farm is promoting triple yield: produce food for community development, energy, and water. He believes that no matter how much money USAID is providing through Feed the Future, as long as African universities do not have the capacity to improve continuously agricultural systems, they will remain stagnant. Professor Hare believes that urban areas are where the demand is, and governments import food because they are focused on the urban population. Professor Hare believes Liberia is a good example of this. He explained that the President was unable to close the border with Guinea because that was the source of food, and so Ebola also traveled across the border. Professor Hare believes that integrated farming is the next generation of farming in the United States and around the world. He noted that the longer food travels, the less nutrient dense it is. Therefore, a shift to local food will increase nutrient security.

Professor Hare emphasized that subsistence farming not be irrelevant. However, he would like to reevaluate the whole concept of small farms. Rather than focusing on making a few dollars of profit, he believes farmers should be trained in various aspects of the agriculture industry (including food distribution, marketing, preparation, storage, waste management, etc.). The process should be holistic. This system is more sustainable in developed countries because they look to universities. In developed countries, education is done through non-governmental organizations, which are only as sustainable as their funding opportunities. Professor Hare emphasized that what is missing in Africa are universities and institutions that can partner with farmers from a production and research perspective. Once innovations are developed and piloted in the university, they can be replicated in the private sector.

Mr. Suleiman responded by offering a divergent view on subsistence agriculture. In the United States and other developed countries, the system described by Professor Hare works well. However, he noted that some countries in Africa have a rural population of 75 to 80 percent. These people depend on sustainable agriculture for food and employment, which makes it necessary in the short-term. Over time, Mr. Suleiman believes that the subsistence system can evolve in Africa as long as governments make clear, responsible policies. He urged Africans to begin to examine the resources available to develop an integrated system like Professor Hare described.

Where is the funding for refrigeration? The average person cannot get the necessary funds. Trucks with refrigeration facilities are very expensive.

Mr. Suleiman explained that governments are trying to develop practical policies for increasing access to finance. In Nigeria, the government has tried to restructure the Bank of Industry for just this purpose. As a result, many people can access funding from the Bank of Industry. He also referenced the Bank of Agriculture, which offers loans solely for agricultural production under the same favorable terms as the Bank of Industry. In addition, Mr. Suleiman noted that a number of other sources of funding also exist. Cooperatives, where members contribute weekly and pool their money together, are one example. The Directorate also has the Nigerian Technical Cooperation Fund, which Mr. Suleiman will highlight in the next forum on capacity building.

How is the World Cocoa Foundation trying to help cocoa farmers turn their product into something they can process rather than sell raw cocoa? Are you doing anything to add value to the raw product?

Mr. Guyton responded that Cote'd'Ivoire is the largest processor of cocoa in the world, but most of this is done by large processors (including ADM and Cargill). He then explained the harvesting process in West Africa, which is changing for the better. Approximately 800,000 to 1 million farmers harvest the cocoa trees by hand twice per year. Farmers cut pods off of trees, scoop the beans out of the pods, ferment the beans, and dry them on mats. The beans then pass from trader to trader and are then delivered to the port. At the port, the beans are processed into powder and liquor and then transported to consuming countries where they are mixed with sugar or dairy products and finished. In some cases, more finished products are being made in Africa. For example, a French company in Cote'd'Ivoire is now making finished products and selling them locally—that capacity did not exist five years ago.

Mr. Guyton emphasized that chocolate is not the only finished product originating from cocoa. The World Cocoa Foundation issued innovation grants to companies to develop other products. In Ghana and Cote'd'Ivoire, the grants were used to make a more commercial version of the soap they were already producing from cocoa. Fertilizer is another product that comes from cocoa, as well as cocoa liquor. Mr. Guyton believes that more research should be done in order to develop additional products from cocoa.

Would the World Cocoa Foundation be willing to partner with African-focused NGOs or businesses to do value addition on cocoa or AGOA?

Mr. Guyton explained that the African Cocoa Initiative finances local research institutes in West Africa helping African researchers to deal with pest problems and access African extension agencies to provide support for cocoa and food products. The initiative also works to strengthen local service providers in local communities. The Foundation's membership includes many African businesses as well as farmer cooperatives. Mr. Guyton emphasized that Africans are involved with the implementation of all of the World Cocoa Foundation programs.

A member of the audience commented that African voices should be a part of U.S. development strategies so that agriculture in Africa is not one-sided. At this point, she believes the United States is developing programs for Africa without input from African governments. The speaker cited a lack of leadership on the African side. She indicated that African governments need to be part of program development and negotiations so that countries are not passively receiving millions of dollars.

Another member of the audience commented that the European Union (EU) put together an agreement to bring most agricultural products produced in Europe to Africa without tariffs. He does not believe that agreement will encourage the development of agriculture on the continent. He noted that the EU is signing an agreement with each country individually, rather than using a regional or continental approach. While Nigeria stopped other West African countries from signing these agreements, Kenya was forced to sign after the EU stopped importing Kenyan tea last year.

Mr. Suleiman responded that only Africans can develop Africa, and others can only support or partner with Africans in these efforts. He acknowledged that Kenya was in a difficult position negotiating with the EU and cited similar experiences in the ECOWAS region. He urged the audience to consider the long-term implications of their actions. He believes that Africans often allow mundane issues to sway their attention, and urged them to redirect their focus to important issues that will promote sustainable development and integration of the African continent, including a common currency for ECOWAS and cross-border travel. He believes that African countries will have to make some sacrifices in order to develop a strong union, and should do so.

Closing remarks:

Mr. Stanley Straughter, Member of the Board of Directors, CFA; and Chairman, Center for Black Culture and Understanding, offered his thanks to all of the participants in the forum. He was particularly encouraged by the presence of young people, who he believes will be the ones to resolve the remaining issues with agriculture in Africa. He emphasized his great faith in the younger generation and their abilities. He concluded by encouraging everyone in the audience to visit the UDC farm.

Mr. Melvin Foote concluded the forum by offering thanks to USAID for their valuable support to the Constituency for Africa (CFA). He believes that the influence of CFA is growing, as evidenced by the fact that the two groups are having focused and thoughtful discussions on development in Africa, which was not happening two years ago.

Africa Capacity Development Stakeholders' Roundtable

The Roundtable was held in cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the African Capacity Building Foundation, and the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa. The event convened thought leaders and policy-makers from Africa, the United States, and the Diaspora to discuss strategies to develop human, organizational, and institutional capacity throughout the African continent.

Mr. Melvin P. Foote, President and CEO, Constituency for Africa, emphasized that the last session of the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series would also be the most important. He noted that the roundtable offered an opportunity to really get into the details of what specific organizations can effectively do to support capacity building in Africa. He believes that these organizations should not just feed the continent, but empower it.

Mr. Jacques Walker, Senior Advisor, Constituency for Africa and Chief Operations Officer for TransGen Energy, Inc. served as moderator. He explained that the final session of the conference channeled the true believers—the people that are serious about taking action. Mr. Walker emphasized that the discussion of capacity building—human, organizational, and institutional—would be more important than any of the other sessions in the Ronald H. Brown Series. He noted that the Constituency for Africa is skilled at bringing together stakeholders from civil society, the private sector, and government to discuss how best to move forward on important issues. He proposed an interactive, informal exchange of ideas that would result in a robust discussion on capacity building, leadership and next steps.

Global Capacity Development and Leadership Roundtable

Mr. Crispian Kirk, President and CEO of OIC International (OICI)

Mr. Kirk explained that OICI is one of the largest skills and job training organizations in the world, by number of people trained. OIC was founded by Reverend Leon Sullivan in Philadelphia in 1964. After building a reputation for successful job training initiatives, a group of West Africans advocated that they bring the movement to Africa. OIC International was founded in Lagos, Nigeria in 1969. It expanded to Ghana in 1971 and Ethiopia in 1973. OICI offices are not arms of a U.S. organization; they are wholly owned locally with local staff and the participation of local governments and local community leaders. Mr. Kirk explained that strong leadership on-the-ground and local ownership were key. Mistakes happen when international staff fly in and try to solve local problems.

The original OICI programs in Africa were in vocational occupations, including carpentry and hospitality. Those training programs still exist today. OICI has now trained over one million people, with a placement rate of 75 percent. What has contributed to this success? USAID was a key source of funding when the programs started up, but that only lasted for three years. OICI continued to raise funding because they had a local board, which ensured good relationships with the government, private sector, and the overall community. OICI has now expanded to 20 countries.

Mr. Kirk emphasized the importance of leadership, not just at the Executive Director level, but throughout the organization. The principle of local ownership applies to hiring practices and when OICI deviated from this principle, it was a big mistake. OICI hired a Ph.D. in education who was born in the country where they had their office, but had been living in the United States for many years. It was a terrible decision, because the new hire had not built any trust. His attitude when he arrived was that he had all of the answers, which displeased other staff members who had been working with the organization for decades. Mr. Kirk urged the audience to look beyond a person's technical qualifications to consider that there must be trust within the community to get things accomplished in Africa.

Mr. Kirk believes that capacity building takes significant investment and time. He reminded the audience that it is important to be humble. As an international organization, you do not have all of the answers, and your role is to help Africans refine they answers they already have to make it a stronger organization. OICI is both an implementer and a receiver of capacity building. Mr. Kirk noted that OICI still needs capacity building, and, in fact, all organizations do.

Mr. Shaibu Suleiman, Acting Director General, Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa (DTC)

Mr. Suleiman explained that the Directorate of Technical Cooperation (DTC) is an agency of the federal government of Nigeria. Its major source of funding is the Nigerian Technical Cooperation Fund (NTCF). The DTC was founded in the 1990s when the President of Nigeria realized that for Africa to make progress, cooperation and integration were necessary. Other African leaders also embraced this mindset; in total 35 African countries established Ministries of Cooperation and Integration. Mr. Suleiman explained that the DTC was created to harness the knowledge and experience of individuals that would otherwise be forced to retire (at age 60, or after 35 years of public service). In fact, these individuals have a lot of potential to mentor youth and otherwise encourage sustainable development in Nigeria and across Africa.

The NTCF was intended to contribute to social and economic progress and towards facilitating the integration of the continent. Its initial endowment was \$25 million in a fund co-managed by DTC and the African Development Bank. Only Africans can access the fund, and the money goes to projects approved by DTC. Mr. Suleiman offered several examples of DTC projects. The funds sponsor Masters and Ph.D. students at the African University of Science and Technology in Abuja, Nigeria. By the time students graduate, they have a very strong network from many different countries across the continent. Another example is an entrepreneur in Gambia bringing together people from Ghana, Nigeria, and Gambia to do the agricultural capacity building. The Gambians go to Nigeria for six months to get agricultural training, and Nigerians receive training on tailoring and carpentry in Gambia. Beyond building capacity, this program has allowed participants to develop professional networks. Mr. Suleiman explained that these are the types of things DTC would like to facilitate.

The NCTF started in 2004. That year, DTC received 142 proposals, from most of the countries in Africa. Approximately half of the requests for funding did not meet DTC criteria. In all, 64 projects were funded; 30 of these have been completed, and the remaining 34 are ongoing. The co-management with the African Development Bank helps guarantee transparency for the NTCF. Technical review committees in both agencies offer another level of due diligence to ensure projects meet the appropriate criteria. In the beginning, NCTF was not well known, and DTC had to do a lot of advertising. They were also constrained by the capacity; \$25 million is not a large amount. The federal government of Nigeria is now looking at expanding the capacity of the fund. A significant challenge in implementation was the time lapse between project approval and release of funds that affected the impact of the project. Now, DTC mandates that funds should be delivered within one month of project approval. This year, Mr. Suleiman reported that DTC received over 150 proposals. He noted that only 17 had directly to do with gender. And while most of the projects approved initially were in West Africa, DTC has tried to concentrate in other sub-regions in subsequent years. More information is available on the DTC website: www.dtca.gov.ng.

Mr. Suleiman highlighted the capability Africans have to impart more capacity to the continent, especially through the Diaspora. He cited a report that the Diaspora community contributes 40 percent more to the American economy than to the African economy and urged the audience to reverse this trend.

Ricardo Michel, Director, Center for Transformational Partnerships, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), offered brief comments. Mr. Michel explained that the mission of USAID is to end extreme poverty; much of that work is focused in Africa. The Center for Transformational Partnerships is in the U.S. Global Development Lab, which seeks to identify innovations and leverage them on a global scale to transform the development enterprise. Mr. Michel noted that the development community is not able to do this alone, and they, therefore, collaborate with partners, especially in the private sector. According to Mr. Michel, USAID's historical work to build the capacity of governments must continue, along with work to improve the enabling environment to

support entrepreneurs. He also believes it is necessary to collaborate with non-government organizations, foundations, and individual governments to effectively address these issues.

Mr. Michel noted that Africa is now spawning numerous innovations. But in his work with African innovators, the issue is not funding, but scale. He sees capacity as the limiting factor and believes that addressing the binding constraints to scaling is the next frontier. Mr. Michel believes that the earlier session on STEM was critically important, because it is not just about education, but specifically education that can help address these issues. He noted that the U.S. Global Development Lab invests in and supports innovators through impact investors and others.

Mr. Michel commended the audience on what they are trying to achieve through the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series and challenged them to make it work. In his view, the Diaspora is another key resource; Africans living abroad possess much of the capacity that is needed on the continent. The Center for Transformational Partnerships is working to connect the Diaspora with opportunities in their home countries, not just through remittances but through business opportunities. The African Diaspora Marketplace is one such initiative. Mr. Michel concluded that there are many tools available to make the work of development agencies more impactful, but improvements must still be made in the enabling environment to maximize their effectiveness.

Q&A:

An audience member from Tanzania asked about support for a virtual university of science and engineering that has yet to launch.

Mr. Michel replied that the Center for Transformational Partnerships is matching scientists in the United States with scientists in Africa to address specific issues.

Another audience member commented that the discussion about improving the investment climate usually revolves around imports. Nobody talks about SMEs and the Diaspora coming in to invest. From where you sit, and from the perspective of the African governments, what can be done to enable the environment for those of us who want to invest in Africa?

Mr. Michel responded that USAID engages with the Diaspora to support their efforts in a number of ways, including through the African Diaspora Marketplace and a partnership with Western Union. Members of the Diaspora are also involved in advocacy and philanthropy. His office asks how they are engaging with the Diaspora in the United States to help them think about the issues that they need to be advocating for in the home country. This is a narrow focus for the Center for Transformational Partnerships now, but they are doing donor-revised funds in Kenya, for example. Mr. Michel believes his office needs to do more outreach, and will be working with high profile institutions in the next year, including the Aspen Institute.

Mr. Michel noted that the Diaspora is not monolithic, and people, therefore, need to think about how to engage with the movement on multiple levels. The Center for Transformational Partnerships is making a concerted effort to work with the local private sector, which they believe is the backbone of economic growth. He emphasized that partnerships are formed not just with multi-nationals, but also with local companies, which have the long-term interests of the country in mind. Overall, Mr. Michel believes that the Center needs to be more collaborative in collective action.

Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie, Executive Secretary, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

Professor Nnadozie cited the oft-repeated statistics that Africa is doing very well economically and is one of the fastest-growing regions in the world. Still, he felt dissatisfied because the growth has not been as inclusive as it should be and, therefore, has not benefitted a large segment of the population—

primarily women and youth. Besides climate change, Professor Nnadozie believes that the most significant problem Africa is facing is the youth bulge. In 2014, Africa was home to 1.1 billion people of employment age. Professor Nnadozie believes that depending on how it is managed, this could be a demographic dividend or demographic trouble.

He has studied the problem of youth unemployment and found that the problem is far more serious than anybody thinks. Most jobs are coming from the public sector—the private sector is not as dynamic as it should be and, therefore, is not creating enough jobs. Professor Nnadozie urged the audience to focus on developing the private sector, not just multinationals, but local enterprises as a source of future employment. He noted that the labor market also has supply side problems. Educated people in Africa do not have the skills needed to fill the available jobs, and many African universities are not educating Africa's youth to solve Africa's problems. Professor Nnadozie noted that the education system is very difficult to change because it is known to be a problem, but no one is fixing it. He believes that investments in infrastructure and institutions are less important than the lack of capacity. The African Capacity Building Foundation takes this challenge very seriously, and would like to solve this problem by viewing capacity in a holistic way. While Professor Nnadozie believes that institutional and human capacity is important, the most critical capacity challenge is leadership. He noted that people often claim they need political will, but reminded the audience that this will come from a mindset. He believes that development goes beyond technical matters to the mindset of the people on-the-ground.

Professor Nnadozie explained that the feeling on the continent is that the solution and the money to solve problems will come from abroad. He noted that this is not the case, especially with so many African billionaires. He explained that the African Capacity Building Foundation has achieved quite a lot. The foundation created 35 think tanks, many highly ranked, in Africa. They have also trained 10,000 middle managers across the continent who have practiced sound economic management even in the face of the recent financial crisis. The foundation is currently working with the African Union to build capacity for domestic resource mobilization to help Africa become self-sustaining. Additionally, the foundation is fighting illicit monetary outflows, which amount to more than official development assistance and foreign direct investment combined. The greatest source of these outflows is commercial activities, including tax evasion, and the foundation is building capacity to plug these holes.

Ms. Veronique Kabongo, Global Head of Learning and Leadership, World Bank; and Chair of the World Bank-IMF Africa Society

Ms. Kabongo joined the World Bank seven years ago and considers herself a relative newcomer to development. She previously worked in the private sector in a Human Resources capacity. Ms. Kabongo is originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and she refers to herself as a Francophone, which she believes is a very different mindset than Anglophone Africa. She views the language barrier in Africa as a capacity issue. Ms. Kabongo recently became Chairman of the World Bank-IMF Africa Society, which seeks to facilitate a greater awareness of African affairs among staff. The Society numbers 5,000 people from every country in Africa and represents the most highly educated Diaspora in located in a single institution.

Ms. Kabongo commented on the discussion offered by the previous panelists. In response to Mr. Kirk of OICI, who said that Africa needs strong leaders, she agreed but emphasized that leaders are not enough; strong institutions and a robust enabling environment are also necessary. Ms. Kabongo believes that Africans need to create an environment that allows people to succeed, especially women. She has seen many capable and passionate leaders fail miserably because they did not have the proper environment to make them successful. Ms. Kabongo noted that technology is a big part of it. For education, African institutions are investing in basics (like books). She believes they need tablets, the internet, and reliable energy.

In response to Mr. Suleiman of DTC, Ms. Kabongo said that 60 is the new 30. In many countries in Africa, civil servants are asked to retire at 55, which is a post-colonial legacy. Ms. Kabongo noted that at age 55, most people have another 30 years to live. She believes that the age of retirement should be changed in Africa. Elsewhere in the world, the average retirement age is between 62 and 67. Ms. Kabongo noted that in the DRC, over half of the civil service is over the age of retirement. She believes that 60-year-olds should not be mentors, but rather should continue to work in institutions and build them from the inside.

In conclusion, Ms. Kabongo believes that this is a crucial moment for effectively addressing employment issues. She cautioned that those who fail to invest in African entrepreneurs will miss the boat on development in Africa. Based on data from the World Bank, Africa will be the largest employer in the world with the youngest population by 2050. Therefore, Ms. Kabongo believes the solution is education, and her advice is to invest.

Q&A:

A member of the audience reminded the panelists to speak about “women and girls,” rather than just women.

A member of the audience noted that old colonial systems of education that have died out in France are still being used in Africa. What specifically will build educational capacity in Africa?

Ms. Kabongo responded that when she joined the World Bank and looked at the Africa education strategy, she realized that 60 percent of education loans were going to infrastructure (i.e. building schools). She believes that African schools need technology, not more blackboards. She would like the world to stop treating Africa as if it is the 1960s. Ms. Kabongo introduced her colleague, an Education Specialist, to give further information.

The World Bank Education Specialist noted that Africa has continued using the same educational techniques (like rote learning) while the rest of the world has moved on to soft skills (like teamwork). One problem is that many African teachers have barely completed primary education themselves. In most cases, the teacher lacks the knowledge and capacity to deliver for the children. She noted that while most African countries have moved to universal education, they still serve only the few children who can make it to school. In general, education is being managed by someone who comes from the classroom without an idea of how to manage the educational enterprise.

Mr. Melvin Foote commented that these same problems exist for the Diaspora, among black communities around the world.

Professor Nnadozie noted that Africa has a long history of benefitting and suffering from external advice. Certain research suggested that investment in primary education would solve all kinds of problems, and many African countries blindly adopted that philosophy. As a result, they neglected investments in secondary and tertiary education. Professor Nnadozie also highlighted another issue, which is the kind of education being delivered. African universities are not educating for the needs of the population. For example, countries with natural resources have universities that do not teach on mining or petroleum engineering, etc.

Mr. Kirk emphasized a lack of connectedness within the African corporate community. For example, in Nigeria, entrepreneurs have no experience running a corporate enterprise. Therefore, they refuse to invest in their employees, which leads to high turnover. This is also true of Nakumatt in Kenya, which has yet to move to a corporate model for business that includes investing in staff. Mr. Kirk also believes there should be discussion in Africa of increasing the minimum wage. Even people who graduated from

college are used to being unemployed, so they live with family members. When a job opportunity arises, if it does not pay well, they would rather sit at home than work. In general, the workforce is not viewed as a valuable commodity in Africa, and that has to change.

The audience questions resumed. How can we change the leadership structure of Africa? We should deal with causes, not symptoms, or we will keep going around in circles. Our leaders are structured to extract from us, not give back to us. Leaders come into office and take all the money and resources and give us crumbs. We are not invested in education; that is unsustainable.

Ms. Kabongo responded that one of the most important leadership traits is discipline. She believes that leadership starts by listening and doing.

For development to be sustainable, we need to effectively address language barriers. For example, Nigeria is bordered by four Francophone countries. Can the World Bank help to bridge that gap?

Professor Nnadozie replied that countries must deal with the resources they have. They should move forward as best they can, given their reality. He advised the audience to go beyond themselves to see that Africa is one continent.

In order to succeed, where do we need to focus our education? In the United States and Europe, farmers and lawyers were needed. Despite the importance of STEM, we need economists to change the colonial patterns of trade, which will in turn drive job growth.

An anti-corruption specialist and lawyer originally from Nigeria commented that without ending corruption, nothing will change in Africa. He believes that corruption is the biggest problem the continent faces. How do you factor in corruption into the way you see moving forward in Africa?

Professor Nnadozie responded that it is unnecessary to have a set of ideal political and economic conditions before development can begin. Instead, he believes the path for development should be determined given the challenges the country faces. He noted that if countries must eliminate corruption before they can develop, then development means they will have adequate resources to overcome corruption. He believes it would be wrong to present Africa as a corrupt continent because corruption exists everywhere. Professor Nnadozie would like to correct that notion of Africa.

How do you encourage grassroots organizations, is there a mentoring program encourage this process? It appears that bigger firms get most of the money.

Ms. Kabongo responded that this speaks to the value of networking. She believes that mentoring programs should bring big and small companies together.

As we address these issues, how do we talk about cultural structures? Creative industries (including parks, historical landmarks, and museums) are not being preserved, and they are an important part of the economy. How do we nurture those resources?

Mr. Jacques Walker ended the session and reminded the participants that a key intended outcome of the discussion is to stimulate further coordination and collaboration.

Mr. Melvin Foote gave final closing remarks. He reminded participants that the Constituency for Africa is planning three or four additional meetings before the end of the year on the same topics discussed throughout the Ronald H. Brown African Affairs Series. He emphasized that CFA's work will go beyond the conference, extending to the development of a multi-year strategic plan of action.

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