



WHY AFRICA MATTERS TO US NATIONAL SECURITY

Grant T. Harris





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Cover photo: Malian, US, and European Special Operations Forces train as part of Exercise Flintlock, an annual US Africa Command-sponsored exercise that included over two thousand military personnel from twenty-four countries in 2017. Flintlock is designed to increase regional cooperation and build partner capacity to protect civilians and reduce sanctuary for violent extremist organizations in North and West Africa. Photo credit: US Air Force Technical Sergeant Marelise Wood, Flintlock Public Affairs.

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Executive Summary

The United States cannot afford to underinvest in Africa, a continent of over a billion people with growing political and economic power. And yet, there is a persistent misconception prevalent among the American public—and even many foreign policy professionals—that Africa is largely irrelevant to US national security.

This is dangerous, for three reasons.

First, transnational threats from Africa are persistent and real. The continent's uneven democratic and economic growth and pockets of conflict contribute to a disproportionate number of weak and failed states, which threaten US interests at home and abroad by opening the door to terrorism, criminal activity, and pandemics. For example, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and other groups are expanding their reach across Africa¹ and, but for a swift global response, the Ebola crisis of 2014 to 2016 could have caused well over a million deaths and vast economic harm.

Second, economic and political needs will inevitably draw the United States to Africa. Though the continent is currently underrepresented in the global economy, that will not last forever. Africa boasts a growing middle class and, by 2050, will constitute a quarter of the world's population.² While US businesses are underinvested in African markets, China and other global competitors are making deep economic inroads that are feeding jobs in their own countries and creating economic ties that translate into greater political influence. Though not always a zero-sum calculus, China's deepening ties to the region will undoubtedly reduce US influence. Moreover, African states are forming an increasingly unified voice and salient voting bloc on global issues, particularly in multilateral fora; these developments could help either advance or block key aspects of the United States' global agenda on issues ranging from counterterrorism to nuclear security.

Third, incidences of conflict, humanitarian crisis, and mass atrocities in Africa put significant pressure on

the United States to act, in fulfillment of the nation's historic global leadership role. Though some question the value of maintaining the United States' role as "global policeman," military and counterterrorism strategists staunchly agree that, in today's complex and dangerous global environment, it is insufficient to merely keep Americans safe on American soil. Indeed, the rationale for promoting stability and development goes much further; it gets to how the United States has traditionally seen itself in the world, by promoting leadership and values that advance human dignity.³

Serious engagement in Africa is needed, even if one's view of US national security imperatives is limited to countering transnational threats. The logic is simple: instability breeds threats, and unilateralism breeds failure. More to the point, advancing the stability and partnerships needed to protect Americans ultimately requires promoting local economies, supporting good governance, and addressing conflict in African countries.

Furthering stability—the only durable solution to transnational threats—depends on economic growth and good governance. Nothing illustrates the stakes more clearly than Africa's demographic shifts. Given the region's young population (with a median age of eighteen), African leaders must create eighteen million jobs per year.⁴ This is a tall order, requiring US trade and assistance. Success would propel strong economic growth, but failure would create a large pool of youth who lack opportunities and are potentially susceptible to radicalization, thereby directly increasing the terrorist threat facing the United States. Though the causes of radicalization vary and are complex, a recent study of Boko Haram recruits identified financial

1 William Arkin, Robert Windrem, and Cynthia Mcaffden, "New Counterterrorism 'Heat Map' Shows ISIS Branches Spreading Worldwide," *NBC News*, August 3, 2016, <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/new-counterterrorism-heat-map-shows-isis-branches-spreading-worldwide-n621866>.

2 UNICEF Division of Data, Research, and Policy, *Generation 2030/Africa*, UNICEF, August 2014, https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Generation_2030_Africa.pdf, 7.

3 The September 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States reads, "In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States—preserving human dignity—and our strategic priority—combating global terror." "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," The White House, 2002, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf>, 10. J. Peter Pham writes, "In short, while US policy might be motivated by the cold calculus of political realism, moral principles are not divorced from those interests and can, in fact, help advance them." See J. Peter Pham, "Next Front? Evolving United States-African Strategic Relations in the 'War on Terrorism and Beyond,'" *Comparative Strategy*, 26:39-54, 2007, <http://www.jmu.edu/nelsoninstitute/Nextfront.pdf>, 41.

4 International Monetary Fund, *Regional Economic Outlook-Sub-Saharan Africa Navigating Headwinds*, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2015/afr/eng/pdf/sreo0415.pdf>, 30.

incentives, more than religion, as a key driver of group membership.⁵ In fact, West African youth have joined jihadist causes for financial inducements of less than \$600.⁶ The fundamental importance of stability is further illustrated by the current migration crisis, with a significant proportion of migrants fleeing economic hardship, conflict, and governance problems in Africa.⁷ US allies in Europe view this mass migration as a grave national security threat, affecting their political focus, resource allocation, and relationships with specific African states in a manner that trades off against other US priorities.

Similarly, the United States needs willing and capable African partners to protect itself from transnational threats, which also requires investment in Africa's

economic development. To be "willing," African governments must believe that the United States treats them with respect, shares their interests, and invests in their futures. To be "capable," African governments often need assistance to effectively combat threats, particularly to do so in a manner consistent with US values. Fostering genuine partnerships therefore means supporting development and economic growth in African countries; transactional relationships will not yield the strong and deep partnerships needed to protect US interests. Nor is the United States the only possible partner for African governments; other major powers—with different interests—are competing for influence and offering investment, military cooperation, and assistance.

Beyond transnational threats, however, there is a broader set of issues at stake, including the United States' interest in being optimally competitive in Africa's growing markets; garnering political support for a global agenda that advances US interests and values; and maintaining the kind of leadership that comes from being generous and principled in working to protect innocent people from natural and man-made disasters.

5 Martin Ewi and Uyo Salifu, "Money Talks-A Key Reason Youths Join Boko Haram," Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief 98 (2017) <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/policybrief98.pdf>, 4.

6 Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2016*, <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf>, 84.

7 This includes North Africa, with unstable Libya providing a major departure point for migrants trying to reach Europe. See "Migrant crisis: EU Leaders Agree Plan to Stop Libya Influx," BBC, February 3, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38850380>.

Introduction

Engagement with Africa is frequently considered altruistic (i.e., of marginal benefit to the United States), or a national security imperative only with respect to counterterrorism. The former view is completely misguided, while the latter is myopic. In reality, African countries are linked to a wide and growing range of US national security and economic interests, and a broader recognition of these links is urgently needed to better inform policy and strengthen United States-Africa relations.⁸

The perception that US engagement with Africa is optional or irrelevant to core interests will, at best, diminish the tools available to policy makers (including financial resources and high-level attention), stunt US relationships on the continent, and cause missed opportunities. At worst, underinvestment in key partnerships and capacity in the region will increase the threat to Americans both at home and abroad, and diminish US influence in the international order.

In an effort to dispel the harmful myth of Africa's secondary importance to US national security and economic prosperity, this paper outlines the United States' material interests in Africa through the following lenses: transnational threats, economic growth, access to natural resources, and promoting an international order that benefits the United States.

8 Given that North Africa is often included with the Middle East in terms of security analysis and thus already receives a relatively higher level of attention, this paper focuses primarily on sub-Saharan Africa ("Africa" hereafter unless where otherwise noted). In any discussion of broad regional dynamics, some level of generalization is inevitable, but when the term "Africa" is used, it is in no case meant to imply homogeneity among the fifty-four diverse countries that comprise the continent. Finally, as the title of this paper makes clear, its scope is limited to how Africa affects US national security interests, though national security motivations are not the only reasons that the United States should deeply engage in Africa. A national security lens inherently focuses disproportionately on the challenges and negative trends in

Africa, leaving greater discussion of the many positive trends and potential of the continent to other works.

Transnational Threats

It has long been recognized that weak and failed states incubate instability that directly threatens US national security. Unfortunately, Africa is home to most of the world's fragile states: in 2016, African countries took nineteen out of the top twenty-five slots in the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index.⁹ Whether the threat is terrorism or a deadly virus, the United States requires willing and capable African partners that can participate in broad, cooperative—and often regional—responses, particularly because many of these threats are overlapping and mutually reinforcing.

Terrorism

Terrorist groups based in Africa are inflicting terrible suffering and directly threaten the interests of the United States and its allies. In 2015, the number of people killed in terrorist attacks in Africa was the same or higher as the number of fatalities caused by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) in the Middle East.¹⁰ While it cannot be emphasized enough that the vast majority of this misery has fallen on Africans, terrorist groups also endanger Americans and US interests.

Multiple Africa-based groups maintain links with primary US adversaries like ISIS and al-Qaeda, which carried out the bombings of two US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. More recently, there are growing concerns about terrorist organizations in the Sahel with links to al-Qaeda.¹¹ ISIS has also been looking to Africa to expand its reach; the group is fully operational in eighteen countries, including eight in Africa (of which three are in North Africa),¹² and it secured allegiance from Boko Haram in Nigeria in 2015.¹³ As described by a previous commander of the

United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), “Terrorists with allegiances to multiple groups are expanding their collaboration in recruitment, financing, training, and operations, both within Africa and trans-regionally.”¹⁴

African-based groups such as Boko Haram—the second most lethal terrorist group in the world¹⁵—and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) espouse dangerous anti-American and/or anti-Western ideologies. Both have been responsible for targeting establishments frequented by Westerners, including attacks by Boko Haram against a United Nations (UN) building in Nigeria (2011), and by Africa-based al-Qaeda affiliates against hotels in Mali (2015), Burkina Faso (2016), and Côte d’Ivoire (2016). AQIM made more than \$90 million kidnapping Europeans for ransom from 2008-2014.¹⁶ In addition, al-Shabaab, which is an affiliate of al-Qaeda, has conducted various attacks in East Africa, including at a restaurant and rugby club in Uganda (2010) and the Westgate Mall in Kenya (2013).

Terrorist activities by these groups do not just pose localized threats: their anti-American messages reach potential audiences far and wide, including across Africa and in the United States. Al-Shabaab has solicited US residents and citizens (including among the approximately 150,000 strong Somali immigrant community in the United States¹⁷) for funding,¹⁸ new

9 Fund for Peace, “Fragile States Index 2016,” <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/rankings-2016>.

10 This includes sub-Saharan and North Africa. See Nicole Gaouette, “US official: Terror Kills as Many or More in Africa than Mideast,” CNN, May 10, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/05/10/politics/africa-terror-isis-boko-haram/>.

11 “African Leaders Agree to New Joint Counter-Terrorism Force,” *France 24*, last updated on February 6, 2017, <http://www.france24.com/en/20170206-african-leaders-agree-new-joint-counter-terrorism-force>. See also Jennifer G. Cooke, Thomas M. Sanderson, J. Caleb Johnson, and Benjamin Hubner, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/militancy-and-arc-instability>, 16-19; Reuters, “Mali Jihadist Groups Announce they Will Merge: Report,” March 2, 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mali-security-idUSKBN1692MY>.

12 William Arkin, Robert Windrem, and Cynthia McFadden, “New Counterterrorism ‘Heat Map’ Shows ISIS Branches Spreading Worldwide.”

13 Jennifer G. Cooke et al., “Military and the Arc of Instability,” 3.

14 General David M. Rodriguez, “United States Africa Command 2015 Posture Statement,” Senate Armed Services Committee, <http://www.africom.mil/media-room/document/25285/usafricom-posture-statement-2015>.

15 Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2016*, 16.

16 Rukmini Callimachi, “Paying Ransoms, Europe Bankrolls Qaeda Terror,” *New York Times*, July 29, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/30/world/africa/ransoming-citizens-europe-becomes-al-qaedas-patron.html>.

17 Phillip Connor and Jens Manuel Krogstad, “5 Facts About the Global Somali Diaspora,” Pew Research Center, June 1, 2016, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/01/5-facts-about-the-global-somali-diaspora/>.

18 Federal Bureau of Investigation, “San Diego Jury Convicts Four Somali Immigrants of Providing Support to Foreign Terrorists: Defendants Sent Money to al Shabaab in Somalia,” February 22, 2013, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/sandiego/press-releases/2013/san-diego-jury-convicts-four-somali-immigrants-of-providing-support-to-foreign-terrorists>. See also Kristina Davis, “SD Somalis Sent to Prison in Terrorism Case,” *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, November 18, 2013, <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-somalia-prison-sentence-moalin-terrorist-2013nov18-story.html>.

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members,¹⁹ and to encourage attacks on US soil.²⁰ In 2009, Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the “Underwear Bomber,” was inspired by al-Qaeda to attempt to explode an airplane bound for the United States.²¹

Indeed, the characteristics of weak and failed states—including corruption, poor governance, and insecurity—breed terrorist threats by providing safe havens for perpetrators, avenues for profitable illegal activities, and opportunities to recruit disaffected individuals. In some cases, fragile states lack the capacity to act. In other cases, they may be unwilling to crack down on terrorism, as when Sudan provided refuge to Osama bin Laden in the early 1990s.

In some circumstances, the threats are so pressing that the United States has sometimes been left with little choice but to take direct action, which is greatly facilitated by having a physical foothold in Africa and access to key infrastructure. As a case in point, Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti is critical to US counterterrorism efforts on the continent and in the Middle East, including operations against al-Shabaab in Somalia and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen.²²

Ultimately, however, successful counterterrorism endeavors require motivated and capable partners. The United States could not do it alone even if it wanted to—it would be an unwise investment and, more to the point, ineffective. In addition to direct military action, the United States must invest in strengthening partners’ ability to confront and prevent regional threats, including before they can escalate and affect US interests (abroad, and especially at home). This includes providing vital security cooperation and assistance to increase African partner capacity, which is neither a quick nor a small task. Mounting a meaningful security relationship depends on strong diplomacy and building partnerships across military, law enforcement, intelligence, and other channels. It may also require, as in the case of Nigeria or Kenya, confronting human rights issues to ensure compliance with US laws (e.g., Leahy human rights vetting of foreign security forces) that would otherwise prevent the US provision of certain types of assistance to specific units or individuals. In contrast, divorcing short-term counterterrorism operations from a deeper partnership that incorporates security and other assistance to African states could backfire if partner states lack the necessary will or ability to pursue comprehensive and effective strategies.

To that end, the United States has increased its security partnerships in Africa. In 2015, AFRICOM conducted seventy-five joint operations, twelve major joint exercises, and four hundred security cooperation activities.²³ In addition, supporting African-led interventions (such as in Somalia and the Lake Chad

19 Neil Ungerleider, “How Al-Shabaab Uses The Internet to Recruit Americans,” *Fast Company*, September 25, 2013, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3018339/how-al-shabaab-uses-the-internet-to-recruit-americans>.

20 Anti-Defamation League, “Al Shabaab’s American Recruits,” February 2013, <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/combating-hate/al-shabaabs-american-recruits.pdf>, 4-5.

21 Scott Shane, “Inside Al-Qaeda’s Plot to Blow Up an American Airliner,” *New York Times*, February 22, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/22/us/politics/anwar-awlaki-underwear-bomber-abdulmutallab.html?_r=0.

22 “United States Central Command and United States Africa Command,” United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, March 9, 2017, <https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/hearings/17-03-09-united-states-central-command-and-united-states-africa-command>; The White House, *Fact Sheet: Joint Statement by the Leaders of the United States and the Republic of Djibouti* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 5, 2014). See also Andrew Jacobs and Jane Perlez, “US Wary of Its New Neighbor in Djibouti: A Chinese Naval Base,” *New York Times*, February 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/25/world/africa/us-djibouti-chinese-naval-base.html>. As a small insight into US reliance on Camp Lemonnier more generally, according to then Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, an average of sixteen drones and four fighter jets take off or land at Camp Lemonnier every day, and such operations are likely to become more frequent. See Craig Whitlock, “Remote US Base at Core of Secret Operations,” *Washington Post*, October 25, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/remote-us-base-at-core-of-secret-operations/2012/10/25/a26a9392-197a-11e2-bd10-5ff056538b7c_story.html?utm_term=.2de60e691589. See also “Letter from the President -- Supplemental 6-month War Powers Letter,” The White House, December 5, 2016, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/05/letter-president-supplemental-6-month-war-powers-letter>.

See also Elizabeth McLaughlin and Luis Martinez, “The US Role in Yemen: What You Need to Know,” *ABC News*, October 13, 2016, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/us-role-yemen/story?id=42780004>. See also Eric Schmitt, “U.S. Signs New Lease to Keep Strategic Military Installation in the Horn of Africa,” *New York Times*, May 5, 2014, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/06/world/africa/us-signs-new-lease-to-keep-strategic-military-installation-in-the-horn-of-africa.html?_r=0.

23 “Statement of General David M. Rodriguez, Commander, United States Africa Command Before the Senate Armed Services Committee,” Senate Armed Services Committee, March 8, 2016, <http://www.africom.mil/media-room/document/28035/2016-posture-statement>, 4. As an ancillary benefit, US security partnerships with African countries can benefit US troops involved in joint missions or other training exercises. “In particular, US forces learn to operate more effectively in a coalition and adapt to foreign environments,” according to a 2013 RAND assessment of overseas military bases. See Michael Lostumbo, et al., “Overseas Basing of US Military Forces,” RAND Corporation, 2013, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR201.html, 95. For instance, US soldiers collaborating with Ugandan forces in missions to counter the Lord’s Resistance Army have cited the benefits of honing specific tactical skill sets. For example, see Brock Jones, “Ugandan, American Soldiers Build Drop Zones, Skill Sets During Atlas Drop 11,” *US Army*, April 19, 2011, <https://www.army.mil/article/55179/ugandan-american-soldiers-build-drop-zones-skill-sets-during-atlas-drop-11>.



A Ugandan soldier serves near Mogadishu, Somalia, as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). AMISOM consists of more than 20,000 troops and police from various African countries. *Photo credit: UN Photo/Stuart Price.*

Basin region) can improve effectiveness and lend military operations a greater sense of legitimacy in countering threats that, in any case, demand regional solutions to be effective. Supporting African forces in addressing conflicts and conducting counterterrorism operations has minimized US boots on the ground, saving American lives in the process.²⁴

Combating terrorism requires not just partners, but also a holistic approach to address development challenges and prevent extremism. Security tools are necessary but not sufficient to address and prevent terrorism; overreliance on tactics like military missions, intelligence gathering, and border policing will not adequately protect US interests. Instead, countering violent extremism requires tackling the underlying structural challenges that may expose individuals to radicalization and motivate violent acts. As is stated in President George W. Bush's Freedom Agenda,

"It is in the best interests of our Nation to alleviate the despair that can allow extremism to take hold by fighting hunger and disease, supporting basic education initiatives, and advancing global economic development."²⁵

Unfortunately, many African countries face just such development challenges, coupled with an exploding youth population that could either be an incredible economic boon or a substantial risk for national and regional stability. "During the next five years, growing African populations will become more youthful, urban, mobile, and networked, and better educated—and more demanding of a voice," explains the National Intelligence Council.²⁶ African governments must implement forward-thinking policies, including

24 Of particular note, African countries provide 61 percent of peacekeepers in all global UN and AU missions. See Linda Thomas-Greenfield, "Africa: A Big Year for the US-Africa Partnership," *AllAfrica*, December 30, 2016 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201612300686.html>.

25 The White House, *Fact Sheet: President Bush's Freedom Agenda Helped Protect the American People*, (Washington, DC: The White House, January 12, 2009), <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/freedomagenda/>.

26 National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends: Paradox of Progress* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, 2017), <https://www.dni.gov/files/images/globalTrends/documents/GT-Full-Report.pdf>, 39.

democratic and economic reforms to invest public resources wisely, tamp down corruption, and improve investment climates to attract private capital. Just to absorb the growing labor force, Africa will need to create approximately eighteen million jobs every year until 2035.²⁷ Alternatively, misguided policy or denying opportunities to youth for short-term political gain will fuel discontent, extremism, and conflict.

“In dire situations, it can take very little to persuade disaffected youth to join extremist groups.”

In dire situations, it can take very little to persuade disaffected youth to join extremist groups. In West Africa, young recruits receive less than \$600 to join terrorist groups.²⁸ A recent study of Boko Haram recruits identified financial incentives, more so than religion, as a key driver of group membership.²⁹ This suggests that, among the many other complex factors that lead to radicalization, addressing poverty and governance issues remains central to tackling the root causes of terrorism. This further suggests that, without good alternatives, the number of terrorist recruits will continue to increase. According to General Thomas D. Waldhauser, the current commander of AFRICOM, African youth join extremist groups for jobs more than ideology; for that reason, he testified to Congress, “We have got to find a way to get at education, health care, hopelessness, livelihood, and the like...” because “we cannot kill our way to victory here.”³⁰

Viewing Africa only through the soda straw of security tools and direct action would impede sustainable solutions, pervert Washington’s choice of partners, and prevent the United States from being effective in eliminating threats to its interests. Partnerships with African countries are therefore critical, not only to create jobs and opportunities for youth, but also to work with governments to address policies and corruption that create grievances and foster radicalization.

Health Threats

In a globalized world, communicable diseases can easily cross oceans and borders. Combating such threats depends on capable partners with effective institutions to detect and prevent epidemics before they can spread. Developing these capacities requires substantial funding and coordination to strengthen early warning systems and healthcare services. But it is a far better option than risking American lives, resorting to expensive emergency measures, and enduring economic shocks that may have long-term negative implications.

First, US leadership has been critical in reducing the direct and indirect impacts of devastating epidemics in Africa. The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) created under President George W. Bush saved some 740,000 lives over four years.³¹ With the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, action by the United States and its allies—including military involvement—helped avoid a worst-case scenario of 1.4 million cases in four months.³² Early intervention decreased the chances of US citizens becoming infected, and minimized the possibility of a viral mutation; had that happened, the risks to the global population would have been enormous.³³

Second, the United States cannot completely isolate itself in the face of such health crises. At the time of the

27 International Monetary Fund, *Regional Economic Outlook-Sub-Saharan Africa*, 30.

28 Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Terrorism Index 2016*, 84. As President Obama pointed out in 2015, “poverty alone does not cause a person to become a terrorist... But when people -- especially young people -- feel entirely trapped in impoverished communities, where there is no order and no path for advancement, where there are no educational opportunities, where there are no ways to support families, and no escape from injustice and the humiliations of corruption -- that feeds instability and disorder, and makes those communities ripe for extremist recruitment.” “Remarks by the President at the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism,” The White House, February 19, 2015, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/19/remarks-president-summit-countering-violent-extremism-february-19-2015>.

29 Ewi and Salifu, “Money Talks,” 3-6.

30 “United States Central Command and United States Africa Command,” United States Senate Committee on Armed Services.

31 Ruthann Richter, “740,000 Lives Saved: Study Documents Benefits of AIDS Relief Program,” Stanford Medicine News Center, May 15, 2012, <https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2012/05/740000-lives-saved-study-documents-benefits-of-aids-relief-program.html>.

32 Lena H. Sun, Brady Dennis, and Joel Achenbach, “CDC: Ebola Could Infect 1.4 Million in Liberia and Sierra Leone by End of January,” *Washington Post*, September 23, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/cdc-ebola-could-infect-14-million-in-west-africa-by-end-of-january-if-trends-continue/2014/09/23/fc260920-4317-11e4-9a15-137aa0153527_story.html?utm_term=.749ebbc8bf60.

33 US Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations: Hearings before the Committee on Appropriations on the US Government Response to the Ebola Outbreak, 113th Cong., 2nd sess., 2014, 8, 10-11, 14. See also “President Barack Obama’s Full Interview with NBC’s Chuck Todd,” Meet the Press, September 7, 2014, <http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/president-barack-obamas-full-interview-nbcs-chuck-todd-n197616>.

Ebola outbreak, some 3,000–6,000 passengers a week were traveling between West Africa and the United States.³⁴ The United States would have been much more directly impacted—and much sooner—had Ebola been more concentrated in a country like Nigeria, with greater travel and commercial links to the United States. Nor is simply closing the borders a practical response, as illustrated by ineffective travel restrictions to contain the spread of H1N1 influenza in 2009.³⁵

There is also the risk of weaponizing a highly infectious disease for bioterrorism purposes. Though the likelihood of this happening with Ebola is low due to logistical and financial hurdles, that has not stopped state and non-state actors from trying in the past,³⁶ and the possibility that such a threat could emanate from Africa should not be overlooked.

Additionally, epidemics can have long-lasting destabilizing effects that undermine US security. PEPFAR was founded on the realization that “the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS would depress economic development, inhibit good governance, and decrease the size and productivity of the workforce—conditions that breed instability and conflict.”³⁷ In the case of Ebola, even though Americans had a slim chance of contracting the disease, President Obama rightly determined that out-of-control infections could lead to panic and the economic collapse of affected African countries, with global security implications.³⁸

Third, new and/or more frequent outbreaks are a distinct possibility in the future, partly as a result of growing and urbanizing populations in Africa and elsewhere, and the increased incidence of human-to-animal interactions. “Emerging diseases against which humans have no preexisting immunity or effective therapies pose significant risks of becoming pandemics,” warned former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper.³⁹

Moreover, Africa’s generally weak national health systems heighten the likelihood that a localized disease will expand into a pandemic. For example, countries in Africa are the least likely of any region to have pandemic preparedness plans for avian influenza, which is especially worrying in light of recent outbreaks of “highly pathogenic” strains that have affected millions of birds across Europe, Asia, and Africa.⁴⁰ If these strains succeeded in transferring to humans, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) cautions, “an influenza pandemic could result, with potentially high rates of illness and death worldwide.”⁴¹

Trafficking

Africa hosts various types of illegal trade, including in environmental products, drugs, weapons, and people—many of which follow similar routes—that strengthen criminal and terrorist networks in Africa and beyond. In some cases, these trafficked goods find their way to the United States; in all cases, this illicit trade threatens the peace and stability of African countries, the sanctity of borders, the rule of law, and lawful commerce.

First, the scale of trafficking in Africa has increased substantially for certain goods. The continent is a growing transit hub (and final market) for illegal drugs. Twenty years ago, barely one metric ton of cocaine a year was seized in all of Africa.⁴² More recently, at least twenty-two tons were confiscated in just sixteen months in transit from South America to West Africa.⁴³

34 Brittany Water, “Ebola and US National Security,” *International Policy Digest*, November 7, 2014, <https://intpolicydigest.org/2014/11/07/ebola-and-u-s-national-security/>.

35 See Paolo Bajardi et al. “Human Mobility Networks, Travel Restrictions, and the Global Spread of 2009 H1N1 Pandemic,” *PLOS*, <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0016591#pone.0016591.s001>; and see “No rationale for travel restrictions,” World Health Organization, May 1, 2009, http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/public_health/travel_advice/en/. The study concludes that it “is unlikely that given the ever-increasing mobility of people travel restrictions could be used effectively in a future pandemic event.”

36 Dina Fine Maron, “Weaponized Ebola: Is It Really a Bioterror Threat?” *Scientific American*, September 25, 2014, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/weaponized-ebola-is-it-really-a-bioterror-threat/>.

37 Tom Daschle and Bill Frist, “The Case for Strategic Health Diplomacy: A Study of PEPFAR,” Bipartisan Policy Center, November 2015, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/the-case-for-strategic-health-diplomacy-a-study-of-pepfar/>. Charles Snyder, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in 2004, explained: “The continent’s crises and conflicts, as well as the brutal HIV/AIDS pandemic, breed instability, which opens new safe harbors for our enemies.” “Remarks by Charles Snyder,” The American Enterprise Institute, April 13, 2004, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/31950.htm>.

38 “Remarks by the President on the Ebola Outbreak,” The White House, September 16, 2014 <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/16/remarks-president-ebola-outbreak>.

39 James R. Clapper, “Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community,” Senate Armed Services Committee, February 9, 2016, https://fas.org/irp/congress/2016_hr/020916-sasc.pdf, 15.

40 Jeanette Dawa, “Bird Flu in Uganda Highlights Gaps in Africa’s Plans to Manage Pandemics,” *The Conversation*, February 6, 2017, <http://theconversation.com/bird-flu-in-uganda-highlights-gaps-in-africas-plans-to-manage-pandemics-71757>.

41 “First Human Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Virus Infection Reported in Americas,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 8, 2014, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/news/first-human-h5n1-americas.htm>.

42 Liana Sun Wyler and Nicolas Cook, “Illegal Drug Trade in Africa: Trends and US Policy,” Congressional Research Service, September 30, 2009, <https://fas.org/srgp/crs/row/R40838.pdf>, 8.

43 UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *World Drug Report 2016*, https://www.unodc.org/doc/wdr2016/WORLD_DRUG_

Twelve percent of the cocaine trafficked through Africa is destined for the United States.⁴⁴ Simultaneously, wildlife trafficking is devastating iconic African species. For example, Tanzania has lost more than half of its elephant population—enough to supply one hundred metric tons of illegal ivory annually for the past seven years.⁴⁵

Second, trafficking is both a cause and a symptom of instability. With respect to drug trafficking, the enabling conditions in West Africa have been likened to those that underpin drug-related violence in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁴⁶ The situation is so extreme in Guinea-Bissau that it has been labeled a “narco-state,”⁴⁷ and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) even arrested the chief of Guinea-Bissau’s navy in 2013 for smuggling cocaine across US borders.⁴⁸ Additionally, increased weapons trafficking is fueling violent activity. African governments have dramatically increased their weapons imports in recent years,⁴⁹ and many of these legally purchased weapons make their way to other African countries or otherwise exacerbate regional conflicts.⁵⁰ In Mali, for instance, “most of the illicit flow is coming from licit stocks.”⁵¹

The profits from unlawful trading—worth at least \$450 million a year in cocaine alone—so vastly overshadow the earning potential of local security

and law enforcement personnel that marginal bribes easily pave the way for large-scale corruption.⁵² These illicit practices then become entrenched: in the wildlife poaching business, government officials and national armies have been implicated.⁵³ In addition, trafficking undercuts development gains by reducing state revenues and undermining businesses that rely on sustainable natural resources. Kenya, for instance, derives 12 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) from conservation-based tourism.⁵⁴ Illicit financial flows cost African governments more than \$50 billion per year—a massive sum that fuels violence and weakens governments (undermining the very institutions needed to combat transnational threats to US interests) rather than support development and grow African economies.⁵⁵

“[T]rafficking is both a cause and a symptom of instability.”

Third, armed groups can profit from trafficking, which contributes to conflict and violence. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, “conflict diamonds” helped fuel years of strife. Sudan’s Janjaweed militia has used revenues from ivory trafficking to fund conflict in Darfur, while the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) engages in elephant poaching to fund its violent activities in central Africa.⁵⁶ In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the illicit trade in gold, charcoal, and timber supports up to forty-nine rebel groups, sustaining militias despite international

REPORT_2016_web.pdf, 39.

44 Ibid.

45 UNODC, *World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in Protected Species*, 2016, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/wildlife/World_Wildlife_Crime_Report_2016_final.pdf, 42.

46 Davin O’Regan, “Cocaine and Instability in Africa: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean,” *Africa Security Brief* No. 5, 2010, <http://www.gsdc.org/document-library/cocaine-and-instability-in-africa-lessons-from-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/>.

47 UNODC, “Perspectives: Guinea-Bissau, New Hub for Cocaine Trafficking,” Issue 5, May 2008, https://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/Magazines/perspectives_5_WEB.pdf, 2, 4-7.

48 Antony Loewenstein, “Guinea-Bissau Struggles to End its Role in Global Drugs Trade,” *Guardian*, January 7, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jan/07/guinea-bissau-global-drugs-trade>.

49 This includes North Africa. See Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, “The United States Leads Upward Trend in Arms Exports, Asian and Gulf States Arms Imports Up, says SIPRI,” March 16, 2015, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2015/united-states-leads-upward-trend-arms-exports-asian-and-gulf-states-arms-imports-says-sipri>.

50 According to UNODC, “Sudanese weapons and ammunition have been detected in Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea and Mali – all countries that do not procure from Sudan.” UNODC, “Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment,” February 2013, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West_Africa_TOCTA_2013_EN.pdf, 33-37.

51 Ibid.

52 This estimate is from 2006. Wyler and Cook, “Illegal Drug Trade in Africa,” 6, 10.

53 Jeffrey Gettleman, “Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy as Ivory Fuels Wars and Profits,” *New York Times*, September 3, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/04/world/africa/africas-elephants-are-being-slaughtered-in-poaching-frenzy.html>. See also “Wildlife Poaching Threatens Economic, Security Priorities in Africa,” National Intelligence Council, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Wildlife_Poaching_White_Paper_2013.pdf, 3.

54 Same Weru, “Wildlife Protection and Trafficking Assessment in Kenya: Drivers and Trends of Transnational Wildlife Crime in Kenya and its Role as a Transit Point for Trafficked Species in East Africa,” *Traffic Report*, May 2016, <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/157301/27151701/1468499629057/Kenya-report.pdf?token=BVe0Xs9G%2BqLXzuQ70BF8li6480M%3D,1>.

55 The AU/ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, *Illicit Financial Flows: Report of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa*, 2011, http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/iff_main_report_26feb_en.pdf, 2.

56 Gettleman, “Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy.” United Nations Environment Programme and Interpol, *The Rise of Environmental Crime* (Nairobi: UNEP), 2016, <http://web.unep.org/environmentalgovernance/erl/resources/publications/rise-environmental-crime>, 11.

peacekeeping efforts.⁵⁷ By motivating and supporting armed groups, these lucrative trafficking opportunities contribute to state fragility. In the Congo alone, around 1.6 million people remain displaced by these conflicts.⁵⁸

Fourth, a number of terrorist groups in Africa (and beyond) profit from illegal trading. Boko Haram, Ansar Dine, AQIM, and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) have all been linked to drugs and human trafficking.⁵⁹ Hezbollah—which the United States designated a “Foreign Terrorist Organization” in 1997⁶⁰ and, more recently, as undertaking “global criminal activities... to fund its global terrorist activities”⁶¹—may generate a significant portion of its revenue from cocaine flows through Africa.⁶² Similarly, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was suspected of exporting cocaine through the continent,⁶³ and al-Shabaab has earned millions from the illegal sale of charcoal (and previously trafficked in ivory).⁶⁴

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Partnering with, and building the capacity of, African governments is also needed to lower the threat posed to the United States by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). To begin with, state and non-state actors have exploited weak institutions in African countries to facilitate the trafficking of WMDs. For example, Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan smuggled

nuclear technology through South Africa (among many other countries) to supply buyers in Libya and North Korea in the 1990s and early 2000s.⁶⁵ Another worry is that African states, which produce 20 percent of the world’s uranium, may lack the security or verification capacity to prevent uranium resources from contributing to nuclear weapons programs.⁶⁶ Relatedly, over a dozen African countries have shown interest in developing nuclear power, and radioactive sources are used in medical and industrial applications across the continent.⁶⁷ Weak governance and inadequate technical expertise could leave nuclear facilities vulnerable to theft or sabotage by terrorists seeking the raw materials for a dirty bomb. Containing such threats requires close cooperation with African countries and the African Union (AU), which have shown increasing commitment toward criminalizing the use and production of WMDs.⁶⁸

Piracy

Maritime piracy in Africa threatens the lawful flow of international commerce—which affects energy prices and US commercial interests—and endangers American lives and assets, particularly in two hotspots of high strategic importance.

The first area of concern is Somalia, which sees from 12 to 20 percent of the world’s ships pass along its coast and through the Gulf of Aden.⁶⁹ At the height of the piracy crisis in 2011, around 237 ships were attacked, of which twenty-eight were successfully hijacked.⁷⁰

57 UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and Interpol, “The Rise of Environmental Crime,” 68-69.

58 Jason K. Stearns and Christoph Vogel, “The Landscape of Armed Groups in the Eastern Congo,” The Center on International Cooperation, Congo Research Group, December 2015, <http://congoreserchgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CRG-Armed-Groups-in-the-Congo.pdf>, 5.

59 International Crisis Group, “Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency,” Africa Report No. 216, April 3, 2014, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/curbing-violence-nigeria-ii-boko-haram-insurgency>, 24.

60 US Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

61 “H.R. 2297 — 114th Congress: Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015,” 2015, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr2297>.

62 Matthew Levitt, “Hizbullah Narco-Terrorism: A Growing Cross-Border Threat,” The Washington Institute, September 2012, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Levitt20120900_1.pdf, 34.

63 Wyler and Cook, “Illegal Drug Trade in Africa,” 4. FARC was designated a “Foreign Terrorist Organization” in 1997. US Department of State, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>.

64 UNEP and Interpol, *The Rise of Environmental Crime*, 11; Gettleman, “Elephants Dying in Epic Frenzy”; International Fund for Animal Welfare, “Criminal Nature: The Global Security Implication of the Illegal Wildlife Trade,” June 2013, http://www.ifaw.org/sites/default/files/ifaw-criminal-nature-2013-low-res_0.pdf, 12-13.

65 Michael Laufer, “A. Q. Khan Nuclear Chronology,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 7, 2005, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2005/09/07/a-q-khan-nuclear-chronology-pub-17420>.

66 Concerns about the security of nuclear resources in Africa most recently reemerged with a break-in at Pelindaba nuclear reactor and research center in South Africa in 2007. See Michael Wines, “Break-In at Nuclear Site Baffles South Africa,” *New York Times*, November 15, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/15/world/africa/15joburg.html>; See also Ian Anthony and Lina Grip, “Africa and the Global Market in Natural Uranium: From Proliferation Risk to Non-proliferation Opportunity,” Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, November 2013, <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRI39.pdf>.

67 World Nuclear Association, “Emerging Nuclear Energy Countries,” last updated on March 2017, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/others/emerging-nuclear-energy-countries.aspx>.

68 Nicolas Kasprzyk, “African Parliaments Lead the Continent’s Fight Against Weapons of Mass Destruction,” Institute for Security Studies, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/african-parliaments-lead-the-continent-fight-against-weapons-of-mass-destruction>.

69 Maritime Security Center, “About MSCHOA and OP ATALANTA,” <http://www.mschoa.org/on-shore/about-us>.

70 One Earth Future Foundation, “The Economic Cost of Somali Piracy 2011,” 2011, http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/sites/default/files/economic_cost_of_piracy_2011.pdf, 8.



Ivorian and Ghanaian sailors participate in a counter piracy hostage rescue scenario in the Gulf of Guinea as part of Exercise Obangame Express 2017 on March 26, 2017. Exercise Obangame, which is sponsored by US Africa Command, involves almost twenty African countries and seeks to improve regional cooperation and capacity to combat illicit activity in the Gulf of Guinea. *Photo credit:* US Navy Photo/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Justin Stumberg.

During the ten years prior, Somali piracy led to trade reductions worth \$22–25 billion annually; the European Union (EU) bore the vast majority of these losses, but the United States also suffered around \$875 million in annual foregone trade.⁷¹ In addition, US lives have been directly endangered, and even lost,⁷² at the hands of Somali pirates. As of 2013, up to 3,741 crewmembers of 125 different nationalities had been captured at different points, and 97 sailors had lost their lives.⁷³

The second worrisome area is the Gulf of Guinea—the gateway to trade with Nigeria, traditionally Africa’s largest producer of oil. While US reliance on Nigerian crude oil imports has decreased over the years, just a few years ago Nigeria supplied the United States with about the same amount of oil as the Middle East.⁷⁴

Unfortunately, pirates in West Africa—some with links to Nigerian militant groups⁷⁵—have targeted petroleum tankers to feed the region’s black market for fuel.⁷⁶ The impact on the local oil industry has been significant:

71 Alfredo Burlando, Anca D. Cristea, and Logan M. Lee, “The Trade Consequences of Maritime Insecurity: Evidence from Somali Piracy,” Munich Personal RePEc Archive, Paper No. 61934, October 24 2014, https://mpa.ub.uni-muenchen.de/61934/1/MPRA_paper_61934.pdf, 41.

72 “Four American Hostages Killed by Somali Pirates,” February 2, 2011, *NBC News*, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/41715530/ns/world_news-africa/t/four-american-hostages-killed-somali-pirates/#.WKPe1hJ95-V.

73 The World Bank Group, “Ending Somali Piracy Will Need On-Shore Solutions and International Support to Rebuild Somalia,” April 11, 2013, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2013/04/11/ending-somali-piracy-will-need-on-shore-solutions-and-international-support-to-rebuild-somalia>.

solutions-and-international-support-to-rebuild-somalia.

74 Corey Flintoff, “Where Does America Get Oil? You May Be Surprised,” NPR, April 12, 2012, <http://www.npr.org/2012/04/11/150444802/where-does-america-get-oil-you-may-be-surprised>.

75 Jonathan Saul, “West Africa Pirates Switch to Kidnapping Crew as Oil Fetches Less,” Reuters, May 3, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-westafrica-piracy-idUSKCN0XUIOR>.

76 UNODC, “Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment,” February 2013, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West_Africa_TOCTA_2013_EN.pdf, 45.

between 2006 and 2009, Nigerian oil exports declined by 600,000 barrels a day.⁷⁷ The costs of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea approached \$720 million in 2015, of which over 60 percent was borne by the shipping industry.⁷⁸ Not only are US commercial interests at stake, but oil theft (through piracy and other illegal activities) could have severe destabilizing effects across the region and potential implications for the global supply of petroleum products.⁷⁹

Thanks in part to policing by the United States, the EU, NATO, and other forces, there were no major incidences of piracy in Somali waters from mid-2012 to early 2017. However, the underlying conditions for piracy—including poor governance, conflict, and poverty—are still in place. In fact, in the wake of reduced security measures, drought, and continued political turmoil, Somali pirates seized four ships in a one-month period in early 2017.⁸⁰ The situation in the Gulf of Guinea, where AFRICOM is providing maritime security training and equipment, is equally challenging. Although oil theft diminished alongside falling oil prices, attacks on ships are increasing,⁸¹ as are incidents of kidnapping-for-ransom.⁸² As a result, the Gulf of Guinea is now considered the world's most dangerous region for sailors.⁸³

The failure to resolve the threat of Somali piracy, despite the massive cost of the international naval response,⁸⁴ underscores the importance of working

with African partners not only to combat immediate piracy threats and develop strategies for regional maritime security, but also to create alternative livelihoods that can strengthen local economies in a legal and sustainable manner.

Environmental Degradation & Climate Change

The impacts of environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and climate change in Africa pose a challenge to US national security.

First, climate change has been identified as a “threat multiplier” by the Department of Defense. “Rising global temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, climbing sea levels, and more extreme weather events will intensify the challenges of global instability, hunger, poverty, and conflict,” cautioned former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. “They will likely lead to food and water shortages, pandemic disease, disputes over refugees and resources, and destruction by natural disasters in regions across the globe.... We are already beginning to see some of these impacts.”⁸⁵

Due to its particular climatic and economic conditions, Africa could be especially vulnerable to climate change.⁸⁶ Impacts like famine and more frequent natural disasters would destabilize communities and increase mass migration and conflict. Increased competition for land and water is already playing out in Nigeria, where intense violence has broken out as a result of migrating Fulani herdsmen seeking viable pasturelands; in 2016, such conflicts resulted in more deaths than were caused by the Boko Haram insurgency.⁸⁷ Relatedly, desertification trends have been linked to the conflict in Darfur.⁸⁸

It is in the United States' interest to help build resilience in African countries because the consequences of destabilization will be intense and far-reaching. Here

77 “Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea: A Clear and Present Danger,” *Economist*, April 16, 2009, <http://www.economist.com/node/13496711>.

78 Oceans Beyond Piracy, “The State of Maritime Piracy 2015: Assessing the Economic and Human Cost,” <http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/reports/sop2015/summary>.

79 As of 2013, “more than 30 percent of US oil and 40 percent of Europe’s oil passes through the Gulf and is vulnerable to West African piracy.” “Shippers Raise Alarm Over Oil Piracy in Gulf of Guinea,” *Voice of America*, October 14, 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/a/shippers-raise-alarm-over-piracy-in-gulf-of-guinea/1769278.html>.

80 Jeffrey Gettleman, “Somali Pirates Attack, Raising Fears that a Menace Is Back,” *New York Times*, April 4, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/04/world/africa/somalia-pirates.html>.

81 Agence France-Presse, “US Warns of Growing Piracy Risk Off West Africa,” *Inquirer.Net*, February 15, 2017, <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/871648/US-warns-of-growing-piracy-risk-off-west-africa>.

82 “Crew Kidnappings Reach Decade High in 2016,” *World Maritime News*, January 20, 2017, <http://worldmaritimeneews.com/archives/210082/crew-kidnappings-reach-decade-high-in-2016/>.

83 “The State of Maritime Piracy 2015,” Oceans Beyond Piracy.

84 Oceans Beyond Piracy estimates that, in 2012, government military operations to counter piracy off the coast of Somalia exceeded \$1 billion. See Oceans Beyond Piracy, “The Economic Cost of Somali Piracy 2012,” http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/sites/default/files/ecop2012final_2.pdf. It is also estimated that foreign naval vessels would sometimes spend \$1 million per day on fuel costs while patrolling the Somali coast. Gettleman,

“Somali Pirates Attack, Raising Fears That a Menace Is Back,” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/04/world/africa/somalia-pirates.html>.

85 Department of Defense, *2014 Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2014), http://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/CCARprint_wForward_e.pdf, Foreword.

86 Coleen Vogel, “Why Africa Is Particularly Vulnerable to Climate Change,” *The Conversation*, May 20, 2015, <https://theconversation.com/why-africa-is-particularly-vulnerable-to-climate-change-41775>.

87 Yomi Kazeem, “Nigeria Now Has a Bigger Internal Security Threat than Boko Haram,” *Quartz Africa*, January 19, 2017, <https://qz.com/886949/fulani-herdsmen-are-now-a-bigger-security-threat-for-nigeria-than-boko-haram/>.

88 UNEP, “Sudan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment,” 2007, http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/sudan/UNEP_Sudan_PCEA_executive_summary_2007.pdf, 8.

again, poverty, state fragility, and conflict increase opportunities for radicalization and help to create safe havens for terrorist and criminal threats that directly affect US interests. Additionally, US and UN resources and leadership will be called upon more often as increasingly erratic and severe climatic conditions lead to greater humanitarian crises.⁸⁹ The United States has unique military and other capabilities for responding to such situations—if and how the United States uses them will go a long way in shaping global opinion of US power.⁹⁰

Moreover, Africa's natural resources are critical for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Protecting its tropical forests could strengthen the global carbon sink, and provide multiple economic benefits.⁹¹ Conversely, failure to act is likely to result in extensive deforestation and the release of sizeable greenhouse gas emissions. Africa also has about 45 percent of the world's arable, uncultivated, non-forested land, which could play a central role in ensuring food security for an increasingly populated world faced with the uncertainties of climate change.⁹²

At the multinational level, climate change remains one of the most difficult global environmental governance challenges, and it is unlikely to be solved without Africa's support, including for the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement. Although President Donald Trump's administration has expressed strong skepticism as to the causes and impacts of climate change, this is not in accordance with the prevailing view of the scientific community.⁹³ Nor is climate change some far-off threat that will only affect other countries; by the year 2050, coastal property in the United States worth as much as \$106 billion could be below sea level if no mitigation action is taken.⁹⁴

“[C]limate change remains one of the most difficult global environmental governance challenges, and it is unlikely to be solved without Africa's support. . .”

According to a separate estimate, the “loss of tourism revenue, increased hurricane damages, at-risk residential real estate, and increased electricity costs” would reduce Florida's Gross State Product by \$92 billion (which constitutes 2.8 percent) by 2050.⁹⁵

Second, even relatively localized environmental degradation (often exacerbated by climate change) can indirectly impact US interests. Widespread habitat destruction is contributing to rapid biodiversity loss, which reduces the genetic diversity of crops and medicinal plants. Moreover, degraded environments are less able to provide crucial ecosystem services like water filtration and soil fertility, compounding food insecurity and poverty, and contributing to patterns of migration and conflict. Yet another concern is that deforestation in Africa has been linked to increased human-animal interactions, which facilitated the spread of Ebola in West Africa in 2014–2016.⁹⁶

Cybersecurity

Although a nascent problem to date, cybercrime on the continent could quickly increase as more and more African users come online while cybersecurity systems lag behind. Failure to act would contribute to the perpetuation of global cybercrime and leave Internet users everywhere increasingly vulnerable.

First, cyber threats emanating from Africa directly harm Americans, and will harm them more as Internet penetration in Africa increases. Nigeria is the originator

89 *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, 2012), <https://globaltrends2030.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/global-trends-2030-november2012.pdf>, 107.

90 Ibid.

91 Bedoret Brigitte, Halleux Claire, Charles Doumenge, and Carlos de Waseige, *The Forest of the Congo Basin: Forests and Climate Change* (Belgium: COMIFAC, 2015), <https://agritrop.cirad.fr/578904/1/Forets%20of%20the%20congo%20basin.pdf>, 27. A “carbon sink” is a natural or artificial reservoir that absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

92 Derek Byerlee and Klaus Deininger, *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2011), <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEC/Resources/Rising-Global-Interest-in-Farmland.pdf>, xxxiv.

93 John Schwartz, “Trumps Climate Views: Combative, Conflicting,” *New York Times*, March 10, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/10/climate/donald-trump-global-warming-views.html>.

94 The Risky Business Project, *National Report: The Economic Risks of Climate Change in the United States* (The Risky

Business Project, June 2014), <https://riskybusiness.org/report/national/>, 4.

95 Tatiana Borisova, Norman Breuer, and Roy Carriker, *Economic Impacts of Climate Change on Florida: Estimates from Two Studies* (Gainesville: University of Florida IFAS, 2014), <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/FE/FE78700.pdf>, 10. See also Frank Ackerman and Elizabeth Stanton, *Florida and Climate Change: The Costs of Inaction* (Medford: Tufts University, 2007), <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/FloridaClimate.html>, 9-16.

96 Terrence McCoy, “How Deforestation Shares the Blame for the Ebola Epidemic,” *Washington Post*, July 8, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/07/08/how-deforestation-and-human-activity-could-be-to-blame-for-the-ebola-pandemic/?utm_term=.ca9fe1f9301.

of nearly 20 percent of all “advance fee” Internet scams worldwide,⁹⁷ and this type of fraud swindled Americans out of more than \$50 million in 2015.⁹⁸

Second, insufficient cyber protections and policies in Africa are one of the factors that could dissuade US businesses from pursuing opportunities in the region. At the most basic level, it increases operating costs and the risk of fraud.

Third, there is a more worrying possibility that China’s extensive involvement in revamping Africa’s telecommunications infrastructure presents a cybersecurity threat to Americans and US firms. Ethiopia, for instance, received \$3.5 billion in Chinese loans for its telecommunications systems, with implementation contracts going to Chinese firms.⁹⁹ “If you build the network on which all the data flows,” noted then Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, “you’re in a perfect position to populate it with backdoors or vulnerabilities that only you know about.”¹⁰⁰

Fourth, weak cyber policies and legal frameworks are exploited by terrorist and criminal groups. According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Boko Haram, AQIM, and al-Shabaab have used information and communications technologies in the “planning, coordination, implementation and promotion” of attacks.¹⁰¹ Additionally, many Internet users in Africa draw on outdated or counterfeit software prone to glitches or hacking, and few businesses or governments implement sufficient security measures. In 2013, Somalia, Algeria, and Rwanda were among the top twenty countries with the highest ratio of malware-infected computers.¹⁰²

Moreover, Internet regulation in Africa has not kept pace with the rapid increase of users, or the growth in mobile money and other financial platforms. Over half of the countries in sub-Saharan and North Africa lack cybercrime laws,¹⁰³ let alone the capacity to enforce them.¹⁰⁴ Greater US investment in African partner capacity would help combat crime, terrorism, and espionage as threats to US national security.

Threats to European Allies

Just as the United States depends on its allies in countering transnational security risks and pursuing common goals, so too must its allies be able to count on the United States. This includes confronting the migration and transnational threats that are emanating from Africa and stressing European institutions, causing European allies to reallocate attention as well as foreign and military assistance that could otherwise be devoted to shared priorities in the Middle East and elsewhere.

First, European allies view mass economic migration as a critical threat to Europe, and much of that migration is coming from Africa. In 2016, almost all of the migrants trying to reach Italy originated from African countries (primarily Eritrea, The Gambia, Ghana, and Nigeria).¹⁰⁵ Without a long-term solution, this mass movement is likely to continue as employment opportunities in Africa fall short of population growth, climate change exacerbates already difficult conditions for farmers and pastoralists,¹⁰⁶ and severe water stress affects 75-250 million Africans.¹⁰⁷ Stemming migration is of such urgency to the European Union that it is increasingly open to working with African governments that the United States has long sought to isolate due to their destabilizing behavior.¹⁰⁸

97 Daniel Engber, “Who Made That Nigerian Scam?” *New York Times*, January 3, 2014, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/magazine/who-made-that-nigerian-scam.html?_r=0.

98 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *2015 Internet Crime Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2015), https://pdf.ic3.gov/2015_IC3Report.pdf, 16.

99 Iginio Gagliardone and Sam Geall, *China in Africa’s Media and Telecommunications: Cooperation, Connectivity and Control* (Oslo: NOREF, 2014), http://noref.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/7880fd6b12b93bdd18eddcdbd4f4e207f.pdf, 3-4.

100 Ibid. See also Anupreet Amole, Timothy Harkness, and Emily Holland, *World Data Protection Report* (Washington, DC: The Bureau of National Affairs, 2015), http://www.freshfields.com/uploadedFiles/SiteWide/News_Room/Insight/The%20Growing%20Threat%20of%20Cyber%20Attacks%20in%20Africa.pdf.

101 Mactar Seck, *Tackling the Challenges of Cybersecurity in Africa* (Addis Ababa: Economic Commission for Africa, 2014), http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/ntis_policy_brief_1.pdf, 2.

102 Amzath Fassassi and Jean Shiloh, “Cybercrime in Africa: Facts and Figures,” *ScidevNet*, July 7, 2016, <http://www.scidev.net/sub-saharan-africa/icts/feature/cybercrime-africa-facts-figures.html>.

103 William Wright and Moctar Yedaly, “Cyber Security Trends in Africa,” speech delivered at the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, June 13, 2016, <https://www.thegfce.com/documents/speeches/annual-meeting-2016/06/13/presentation11>.

104 UNODC, *Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime* (Vienna: UNODC, 2013), https://www.unodc.org/documents/organized-crime/UNODC_CCPCJ_EG.4_2013/CYBERCRIME_STUDY_210213.pdf, 121.

105 Gaia Pianigiani and Jim Yardley, “Three Days, 700 Deaths on Mediterranean as Migrant Crisis Flares,” *New York Times*, May 29, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/30/world/europe/migrants-deaths-mediterranean-libya-italy.html?_r=0.

106 The Brookings Institution, *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2017* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2017), https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/global_20170109_foresight_africa.pdf, 79.

107 National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends: Paradox of Progress* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, 2017), <https://www.dni.gov/files/images/globalTrends/documents/GT-Full-Report.pdf>, 39.

108 A case in point is Eritrea. Also, the EU has been criticized for human rights violations committed by the Government of Sudan in an effort to curb migration.

Second, Europe's geographical proximity to Africa makes it particularly vulnerable to terrorist threats emanating from Africa as well as the billions of dollars' worth of drugs that are smuggled into European cities after transiting through Africa.¹⁰⁹ France is sufficiently worried about terrorism in the Sahel—and the threat it poses to French and European interests—to station thousands of troops in the region.

Threats to American Citizens Overseas

Robust ties with African nations are necessary to protect American citizens living on the continent,

and to evacuate them when necessary. This is true in instances of terrorism as well as more general instability, as occurred recently in South Sudan (2013 and 2016) and the Central African Republic (2012). The United States maintains basic staging facilities, or “Cooperative Security Locations,” in various African countries, which provide the US military with the flexibility to respond to regional crises.¹¹⁰ Recent events (including the attack on the US consulate in Benghazi, Libya; the need for staging areas to deploy US troops responding to the Ebola outbreak; and persistent threats to embassies and other locations frequented by US citizens) have only increased the need for such cooperative agreements with African countries.¹¹¹

See Arthur Nelsen, “EU Urged to End Cooperation with Sudan after Refugees Whipped and Deported,” *Guardian*, February 27, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/feb/27/eu-urged-to-end-cooperation-with-sudan-after-refugees-whipped-and-deported?utm_source=%5BNewsletters%5D+The+Africa+Report&utm_campaign=35cd9e1004-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2016_02_27&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7ee2458fc1-35cd9e1004-339752233.

109 Charlotte Florance and Ana Quintana, “Regions of Enduring Interest: Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa,” in The Heritage Foundation, *2015 Index of US Military Strength* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2015), http://index.heritage.org/military/2015/important-essays-analysis/regions-enduring-interest-latin-america-caribbean-africa/#identifier_27_36.

110 Lauren Ploch, *Africa Command: US Strategic Interests and the Role of the US Military in Africa* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011), <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34003.pdf>, 9-10.

111 See John Vandiver, “Staging Sites Enable AFRICOM to Reach Hot Spots ‘Within 4 Hours,’ Leader Says,” *Stars and Stripes*, May 8, 2015, <https://www.stripes.com/news/africa/staging-sites-enable-africom-to-reach-hot-spots-within-4-hours-leader-says-1.345120#.WPFwqdLythF>. See also Danielle Dixon, “African Partners, Proximity Key to Crisis Response Solutions,” July 9, 2015, Marine Forces Europe and Africa, <http://www.marforeur.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/610839/african-partners-proximity-key-to-crisis-response-solutions/>.

Economic Opportunity and Competitiveness

In the long run, the strength of the US economy will, in some way, depend on the interest and capacity of American businesses to operate in Africa, as well as the willingness of African consumers to purchase American goods and services. The continent's demographic and economic trends make this clear. By 2050, a quarter of the world's population will live in sub-Saharan and North Africa,¹¹² and about a billion of those will be under the age of eighteen and poised to enter the labor force.¹¹³

While Africa still only accounts for about 3 percent of global GDP,¹¹⁴ it is becoming increasingly connected to the global economy. Aside from the oil exporters and Arab Spring countries (which experienced low commodity prices and political shocks, respectively), the rest of Africa maintained an annual real GDP growth rate of 4.4 percent between 2010 and 2015,¹¹⁵ outpacing global growth. Granted, this growth was uneven across countries, and overall, growth across sub-Saharan Africa decelerated significantly in 2016, to 1.5 percent.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, non-commodity exporters like Kenya, Ethiopia, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire are projected to see growth exceeding 6 percent in 2017.¹¹⁷

Consequently, Africa is the last frontier of emerging markets, with massive potential for increased consumption. Its population—young, rapidly growing, and urbanizing—will help shape global markets for decades to come. By 2025, an additional 90 million African households will enter the consumer class,¹¹⁸ contributing to a total household purchasing power

of \$2.1 trillion.¹¹⁹ In short, Africa's fundamentals are encouraging.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, other countries—and particularly China—are outpacing the United States, seizing economic opportunities that could otherwise be contributing to US growth and jobs. Across Africa, China's infrastructure projects generate some \$50 billion a year in earnings,¹²¹ which of course contribute, directly and indirectly, to numerous jobs for its citizens. US companies remain underrepresented in the region, partially because they tend to overestimate the risks of doing business in Africa; in fact, companies that are active in African countries are bullish on doing business there.¹²²

Now is the time for the United States to double down on its economic engagement with African countries. This will require not only a willing private sector, but also sustained US government efforts to support American economic competitiveness in these emerging markets. That means providing nimble financing, political risk insurance, and other tools to facilitate US investment. It also means taking steps to ensure a level playing field for US companies, such as doggedly advocating for transparent decision-making processes and promoting greater capacity to protect intellectual property in African countries. Pursuing a long-term strategy to promote US investment can support the continent as well as American jobs; it can also help answer the question of where global growth will come from and help cushion the US economy against downturns and weakness elsewhere in the world. In contrast, gutting the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA), and other agencies, as some have proposed, would

112 UNICEF, *Generation 2030 | Africa*, 7.

113 Ibid.

114 "GDP Share of World Total (PPP) Data for All Countries," *Economy Watch*, April 7, 2017, http://www.economywatch.com/economic-statistics/economic-indicators/GDP_Share_of_World_Total_PPP/.

115 Dominic Barton and Acha Leke, "3 Reasons Things are Looking Up for African Economies," *World Economic Forum*, May 5, 2016, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/what-s-the-future-of-economic-growth-in-africa/>.

116 International Monetary Fund, *Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa Multispeed Growth* (Washington, DC: IMF, 2016), <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2016/afr/eng/pdf/sre01016.pdf>, ix.

117 Ibid. ix.

118 Includes sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. See Yaw Agyenim-Boateng, Richard Benson-Armer, and Bill Russo, "Winning in Africa's Consumer Market," McKinsey & Company, July 2015, <http://www.mckinsey.com/indUStries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/winning-in-africas-consumer-market>.

119 Jacques Bughin, Mutsa Chironga, Georges Desvaux, Tenbite Ermias, Paul Jacobson, Omid Kassiri, Acha Leke, Susan Lund, Arend Van Wamelen, and Yassir Zouaoui, "Lions on the Move II: Realizing the Potential of Africa's Economies," McKinsey Global Institute, September 2016, <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/middle-east-and-africa/lions-on-the-move-realizing-the-potential-of-africas-economies>, in brief.

120 Ibid.

121 Andrew Jacobs, "Joyous Africans Take to the Rails, With China's Help," *New York Times*, February 7, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/07/world/africa/africa-china-train.html?_r=0.

122 EY, *Navigating Africa's Current Uncertainties* (South Africa: EY, 2017), [http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-africa-attractiveness-program-2016/\\$FILE/ey-africa-attractiveness-program-2016.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-africa-attractiveness-program-2016/$FILE/ey-africa-attractiveness-program-2016.pdf), 4.



The Port of Mombasa in Kenya is one of Africa's busiest ports. *Photo credit: Kenyan Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism/Stuart Price.*

reduce vital tools on which the United States depends to promote US investment in African countries.¹²³

¹²³ For instance, OPIC tripled its Africa portfolio between 2009 and 2016, and committed over \$7 billion in financing and insurance to projects in Africa, which mobilized more than \$14 billion in additional investments in the region. Over the same time period, USTDA more than doubled the size of its portfolio in Africa, supporting 135 projects in fourteen countries and raising US exports by at least \$2.5 billion. See The White House, *Fact Sheet: US-Africa Cooperation on Trade and Investment Under the Obama Administration* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2016), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/21/fact-sheet-us-africa-cooperation-trade-and-investment-under-obama>.

Finally, commercial ties affect political influence. By missing out economically, the United States is also missing opportunities to strengthen political relationships—another area where China and others are edging in. In other words, not only does sluggish US involvement set back American companies, it also weakens US global influence, to the advantage of foreign governments whose interests may not closely align with those of the United States.

Access to Natural Resources

Africa is a key supplier of natural resources that have important military and commercial uses and, as a growing oil and gas exporter, increasingly affects global energy prices, all of which impact the US economy.

It is in the US national interest to maintain access to key inputs that cannot be procured within its own borders. The United States relies almost entirely on imports for nineteen minerals that serve crucial economic and national security purposes.¹²⁴ Africa, which boasts about a third of the world's mineral reserves,¹²⁵ is a key supplier of these minerals, including ones that are critical to US national defense, such as platinum (for automotive and aerospace applications); iridium (for electronics, including in aircraft engines and satellites); tantalum (for jet engines, missile and global positioning systems); and tourmaline (for aerospace and ballistic purposes).¹²⁶ Of course, the United States is not alone in this concern. China also looks to Africa for many of these same resources.¹²⁷ While fears of the United States being locked out of markets for key mineral products have so far proved exaggerated,¹²⁸ the United States should remain vigilant to maintain free trade in this sector.

Africa is also important to US energy security. Though direct US oil imports from Africa (and elsewhere) have fallen lately with discoveries of domestic reserves and US shale oil production,¹²⁹ the United

States remains vulnerable to any disruptions in global oil markets—to which African countries are major contributors. In 2015, Africa accounted for 9.1 percent of global oil production and 14.4 percent of liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports.¹³⁰ In an integrated global market, any disruption in African oil supply will affect US oil prices, whether the imports come from Africa or not. To illustrate, interruptions in the supply of Libyan oil in 2011 led the United States to tap into its Strategic Petroleum Reserve.¹³¹ Elsewhere, political developments and regional instability have, at times, reduced oil output in the Niger Delta by over 25 percent, directly affecting US companies and world oil prices.¹³² Oil supply fluctuations will also impact the price of manufactured goods from oil-importing nations—upon which the United States relies heavily¹³³—while US allies in Europe and Japan will likely remain dependent on African oil imports for the foreseeable future.¹³⁴ And as US demand for Africa's oil has fallen, China's has surged, offering yet another facet to increasingly strong Sino-African economic ties (which expand China's political influence on the continent, for reasons discussed below).¹³⁵

Ultimately, Africa's role in world energy markets is only likely to grow. The continent has 8 percent and 7 percent, respectively, of the world's proven oil and gas reserves.¹³⁶ It has been called “the last true oil and gas frontier,” and most of its oil blocs are yet to be

124 Marc Humphries, *China's Mineral Industry and US Access to Strategic and Critical Minerals: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2015), <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43864.pdf>, summary.

125 This includes North Africa. African Natural Resources Center, *African Natural Resources Center Strategy (2015-2020)* (Abidjan, African Development Bank Group, 2015), https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/African_Natural_Resources_Center%E2%80%99s_Strategy_for_2015-2020.pdf, 1.

126 Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, *Strategic and Critical Materials: 2015 Report on Stockpile Requirements* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2015), <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=764766>, Appendices 6-41-6-87.

127 Humphries, *China's Mineral Industry and US Access to Strategic and Critical Minerals: Issues for Congress*, 6-7.

128 “More than Minerals,” *Economist*, March 23, 2013, <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21574012-chinese-trade-africa-keeps-growing-fears-neocolonialism-are-overdone-more>.

129 Africa provided around 10 percent of US oil imports as recently as 2011. Energy Information Administration, as reported by NPR. See Corey Flintoff, “Where Does America Get Oil? You May Be Surprised.”

130 This figure includes North Africa. PricewaterhouseCooper, *The Choice to Change Africa Oil & Gas Review*, August 2016, <http://www.pwc.co.za/en/assets/pdf/africa-oil-and-gas-review-2016.pdf>.

131 Steven Mufson and Zachary A. Goldfarb, “U.S., Allies to Release 60 Million Barrels from Oil Reserves,” *Washington Post*, June 23, 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/us-allies-to-release-60m-barrels-from-oil-reserves/2011/06/23/AGhcVKhH_story.html?utm_term=.368cf372dede.

132 Ploch, *Africa Command: US Strategic Interests and the Role of the US Military in Africa*, 15.

133 Anthony Cordesman, *American Strategy and Critical Challenges in US “Energy Import Dependence”* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2015), <https://www.csis.org/analysis/american-strategy-and-critical-changes-us-%E2%80%99Cenergy-import-dependence>, 9.

134 Allison Good, “Should the US Worry About China's Interest in Africa?” *The Century Foundation*, January 21, 2014, <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/should-the-u-s-worry-about-chinas-interest-in-africa/>.

135 Rupert Rowling, “China Binges on African Oil Like Never Before After OPEC Cuts,” *Bloomberg Markets*, April 5, 2017, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-05/record-flows-of-african-oil-head-to-asia-amid-china-buying-surge>.

136 This includes North Africa. African Natural Resources Centre, *African Natural Resources Center Strategy*, 1.



A gas pipeline runs through the town of Okrika near Port Harcourt, Nigeria. *Photo credit: REUTERS/Akintunde Akinleye.*

claimed.¹³⁷ East Africa, in particular, has massive gas potential that, if effectively developed, will make it a “major player” in LNG exports.¹³⁸

Finally, various African countries are also interested in nuclear energy, and China and Russia have each

expressed interest in providing financing, training, and construction services. Building and operating a nuclear power plant is essentially a one-hundred-year relationship, and US interests in promoting safe and secure nuclear energy call for early engagement to strengthen national regulatory bodies, nonproliferation provisions, and education pipelines to deliver multiple generations of nuclear expertise, ultimately leading to US companies competing effectively for a share of Africa’s nuclear build.

137 “Africa Set to Become Top Gas Market, Says Experts,” *ESI Africa*, February 15, 2017, <https://www.esi-africa.com/news/africa-set-become-top-gas-market-says-experts/>.

138 David Ledesma, *East Africa Gas - Potential for Export* (Oxford, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, March 2013), <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/NG-74.pdf>.

Advancing an International Order that Benefits the United States

The United States' leadership position in the current world order cannot be taken for granted. The preservation of US global influence requires the advancement of American values abroad and, more directly, cultivating and deepening relations with African states if the United States is to maintain its international standing. These objectives are reflected in the 2015 US National Security Strategy, which states the need to “advance an international order that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges,” specifically by cooperating with partners to “reinforce and update the rules of the road, norms, and institutions that are foundational to peace, prosperity, and human dignity in the 21st century” and by “strengthening and growing our global alliances and partnerships, forging diverse coalitions, and leading at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations.”¹³⁹

The African continent, with its fifty-four countries and over a billion people, will play a growing role in shaping the international order, and will affect the role and vitality of US leadership therein. African countries are important to US efforts to: (1) advance vital interests in international organizations and uphold sanctions regimes; (2) promote American values overseas; and (3) exert global influence and leadership.

Advancing Global Priorities

US cooperation with African states and organizations is crucial to advancing a plethora of crosscutting national security priorities. While US engagement with African countries by no means guarantees support for its policies, disengagement can pose roadblocks to vital US priorities.

First, African countries represent over a quarter of United Nations member states as well as the largest regional bloc in many international fora. Thus, African votes can be decisive as the United States seeks to use international institutions to advance its interests on issues like nuclear nonproliferation, food security, or supporting Israel. In particular, the United States relies heavily on the United Nations to further counterterrorism measures against groups

like al-Qaeda and ISIS, principally through enhanced cooperation (e.g., on sanctions and efforts to cut off terrorist financing).¹⁴⁰ Indeed, many critical partners either prefer or demand that non-military efforts to toughen borders, prosecute terrorists, or address radicalization be pursued under the UN counterterrorism framework.¹⁴¹ African countries can also represent critical votes on the UN Security Council, which affects numerous US priorities such as sanctions against North Korea.

Second, the African Union is an increasingly important voice on both African and global issues that can help or hinder US goals. For instance, the AU opposed any foreign military intervention in Libya in 2011, contrary to plans by the United States and NATO allies working through the UN Security Council.¹⁴² This complicated US diplomatic entreaties to individual African states and reduced political support for US actions. Also noteworthy is President Bashar al-Assad's request in 2013 for the AU to side with him in opposing a UN-backed intervention in Syria—a country that has African Union observer status.¹⁴³

Moreover, AU member states “are becoming more sophisticated in coordinating their diplomatic positions in forums outside of the AU,”¹⁴⁴ which means that Africa will exercise more and more regional power in international institutions. Though the United States has traditionally provided extensive assistance to the AU, others are also stepping up their involvement; most dramatically, China funded the \$200 million construction of the AU headquarters in Ethiopia.

¹⁴⁰ Eric Rosand, “Why Trump Needs the United Nations,” The Brookings Institution, January 11, 2017 <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/01/11/why-trump-needs-the-united-nations/>.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² “AU Opposes Foreign Military Intervention in Libya,” *SANews*, March 21, 2011, <http://www.sanews.gov.za/africa/au-opposes-foreign-military-intervention-libya>. See Alex De Waal, “The African Union and the Libya Conflict of 2011,” World Peace Foundation, December 19, 2012, <https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2012/12/19/the-african-union-and-the-libya-conflict-of-2011/>.

¹⁴³ Anita Powell, “South Africa Opposes Syria Strikes,” VOA, August 29, 2013, <http://www.voanews.com/a/south-africa-jacob-zuma-opposed-to-us-international-military-strikes-on-syria/1739566.html>.

¹⁴⁴ Reuben Brigety, “Trump's Deafening Silence on Africa,” *Foreign Policy*, February 15, 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/15/trumps-deafening-silence-on-africa/>.

¹³⁹ The White House, *Fact Sheet: The 2015 National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2015), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/06/fact-sheet-2015-national-security-strategy>.

Third, engaging African states is important in order to politically isolate and enforce sanctions against actors that threaten US national security. North Korea has looked to African states, including Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, and Mozambique, to sell arms and maintain military relationships, in violation of UN sanctions.¹⁴⁵ These sales offer a rare source of hard currency to the North Korean regime, which can be used to advance its weapons of mass destruction and nuclear programs. Further, Uganda has defied US sanctions in past dealings with at least one Russian corporation.¹⁴⁶

“[E]ngaging African states is important in order to politically isolate and enforce sanctions against actors that threaten US national security.”

Fourth, African countries directly impact the situation in the Middle East and, therefore US interests in that region as well. The geographic proximity and historic, economic, and social ties between the two regions are inextricable. This is well illustrated by the Yemeni conflict between Iran-backed Houthi rebels and Saudi-backed government forces, especially as the Saudi coalition has lobbied certain African states to provide political support, troop contributions, and basing access. This is only a recent instance of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on the one hand, and Iran on the other, jockeying for influence in and support from Africa. As Alex Rondos explains, “a pattern of strategic realignments by countries in the Horn with players in the Gulf is affecting their domestic politics, disturbing relations among them, and creating entirely new challenges for the Horn of Africa—and by extension in the Red Sea region.”¹⁴⁷ The United States

must be vigilant and engaged in these developments given its important security interests in the Middle East; ignoring Africa’s influence on this region would be unwise.

Advancing US Values

Promoting good governance, human rights, and peace have long been bipartisan tenets of US foreign policy. To quote former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice: “For the United States, supporting international development is more than just an expression of our compassion. It is a vital investment in the free, prosperous, and peaceful international order that fundamentally serves our national interest.”¹⁴⁸

More directly, there are four ways in which the United States strengthens its security by advancing US values in Africa.

First, promoting good governance and human rights on the continent advances human dignity and has multiple knock-on benefits. This kind of progress helps to build more stable environments for African and US businesses (e.g., strengthening the rule of law protects commercial investments) and to deter dangerous radicalization.¹⁴⁹ Additionally, governments that share US values about democracy and rights tend to be better partners in the pursuit of other global objectives, like free trade and information sharing.

Second, preventing atrocities is not only important in its own right, but also has positive secondary benefits like limiting political and economic instability, and preserving global confidence in US leadership. As President Obama noted, “Our security is affected

2016--issue-no-6/the-horn-of-africa---its-strategic-importance-for-europe-the-gulf-states-and-beyond, 155.

148 *FPI Analysis: Foreign Aid Advances US Security, Prosperity, and Global Leadership* (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy Initiative, 2013), <http://www.foreignpolicy.org/content/fpi-analysis-foreign-aid-advances-US-security-prosperity-and-global-leadership>.

149 As President Obama stated, “if the dignity of the individual is upheld across Africa, then I believe Americans will be more free as well, because I believe that none of us are fully free when others in the human family remain shackled by poverty or disease or oppression. ... Governments that respect the rights of their citizens and abide by the rule of law do better, grow faster, draw more investment than those who don’t.” The White House, “Remarks by President Obama at the University of Cape Town,” June 30, 2013, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/30/remarks-president-obama-university-cape-town>. The *US Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*, released in 2012, describes “promoting democratic states that are economically vibrant and strong partners of the United States on the world stage” as a core US interest in sub-Saharan Africa. The White House, *US Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2012), https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/africa_strategy_2.pdf, 2.

145 Salem Solomon, “Sanctioned and Shunned, North Korea Finds Arms Deals in Africa,” *VOA*, March 22, 2017, <http://www.voanews.com/a/sanctioned-and-shunned-north-korea-finds-arms-deals-in-africa/3777262.html>. See also Oskar Nkala, “Namibia Confirms North Korean-Built Arms and Ammunition,” *Defense News*, March 17, 2016, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/2016/03/17/namibia-north-korean-arms-ammunition-factory/81902650/>.

146 Caroline Hellyer, “Russia Returns to Africa Amid Increasing Isolation,” *Al Jazeera*, March 10, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/russia-returns-africa-increasing-isolation-150305071828897.html>.

147 Alexander Rondos, “The Horn of Africa: Its Strategic Importance for Europe, the Gulf States, and Beyond,” *Horizons* no. 6, 2016, <http://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter->

when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods. America's reputation suffers, and our ability to bring about change is constrained, when we are perceived as idle in the face of mass atrocities and genocide."¹⁵⁰ The US failure to act quickly during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, for example, is considered a foreign policy disaster.

Third, investment in development not only advances US values, but also directly impacts US security. As a case in point, PEPFAR has been described as the "translation of US taxpayer dollars into compassion and hope for those in despair and dying across the globe."¹⁵¹ Yet, in addition to saving millions of lives, PEPFAR also "may have had key secondary effects" on socio-economic indicators, state stability, and improving public opinion toward the United States in target countries.¹⁵² Such investments through US foreign assistance are widely considered to be "critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put [American] men and women in uniform in harm's way,"¹⁵³ and they also cost much less than most Americans realize.¹⁵⁴

Fourth, providing humanitarian assistance is consistent with Americans' sense of compassion. The United States is the largest single contributor of humanitarian aid to Africa,¹⁵⁵ and media reports of human suffering

frequently elicit a public response—sometimes morphing into calls for US intervention.¹⁵⁶ Given this public pressure, there is a financial argument for getting involved early and decisively to "save lives, alleviate suffering, and minimize the economic costs of conflict, disasters, and displacement"¹⁵⁷ before crises (and expenses) can escalate.

As a subsidiary matter, humanitarian assistance elicits goodwill that strengthens American global influence and keeps the United States safer (which supports the soft power argument below). For instance, a swift and charitable response to the 2004 tsunami encouraged two-thirds of Indonesians to see the United States in a more favorable light—including among self-identified supporters of Osama bin Laden.¹⁵⁸

Though these arguments are rooted in US values, they make a very practical case for deep engagement in Africa. Promoting stability, capacity, and development in African countries increases US security, and is part and parcel of building lasting partnerships based on respect and mutual self-interest so that, as African partners get stronger, they can take on more of the responsibility of helping solve global problems.

Advancing US Global Leadership

In Africa, there is no doubt that the United States is at risk of losing influence relative to other international actors. China tops the list, but others, such as Turkey, Iran, Russia, India, Japan, and the EU are also increasingly keen to strengthen their ties to the continent. Reduced influence means reduced global leadership and global efficacy. This potential loss should galvanize US commitment to forging increasingly economic-based ties with Africa, not forgetting the added value of soft power.

A chief concern to US global leadership is rivalry with China, which is unfolding in a dramatic way in Africa. China's presence there has grown exponentially over

150 The White House, *Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2011), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/04/presidential-study-directive-mass-atrocities>.

151 Embassy of the United States in Tanzania, "The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)," <https://tanzania.usembassy.gov/pepfartz.html>. For additional background on how investments in health in particular relate to US values and national security, see Institute of Medicine, *The US Commitment to Global Health: Recommendations for the New Administration* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2009), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK32621/>.

152 Tom Daschle and Bill Frist, *The Case for Strategic Health Diplomacy: A Study of PEPFAR*, 4.

153 Dan Lamothe, "Retired Generals Cite Past Comments from Mattis While Opposing Trump's Proposed Foreign Aid Cuts," *Washington Post*, February 27, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/02/27/retired-generals-cite-past-comments-from-mattis-while-opposing-trumps-proposed-foreign-aid-cuts/?utm_term=.1275f576df14.

154 Many Americans overestimate how much of the federal budget is spent on foreign aid, with the average estimate being 25 percent; the actual proportion is 1 percent or less. See Mollyann Brodie, Bianca DiJulio, and Jamie Firth, *Data Note: Americans' Views On The US Role In Global Health* (Washington, DC: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2015), <http://kff.org/global-health-policy/poll-finding/data-note-americans-views-on-the-u-s-role-in-global-health/>.

155 Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development, *Development Aid at a Glance: Statistics by Region - Africa* (Paris: OECD, 2015), <https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/2%20Africa%20-%20Development%20Aid%20at%20a%20Glance%202015.pdf>, 2.

156 Dan Henk, "US National Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Parameters*, Winter 1997-98, 92-107, <http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/Articles/97winter/henk.htm>.

157 US Department of State, *Strategic Goal 5: Providing Humanitarian Assistance* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2007), <https://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2007/html/82955.htm>.

158 Ken Ballen and David Caprara, "Return on American Humanitarian Aid: They Like Us," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 10, 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2012/1210/Return-on-American-humanitarian-aid-They-like-us>. A similarly positive effect was observed among Pakistanis following US assistance to the victims of the 2005 earthquake. See Ken Ballen and David Caprara, *Impacts of Malaria Interventions and Their Potential Additional Humanitarian Benefits in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2012), <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/malaria-africa-caprara.pdf>, 9.

the last two decades, with its funding of \$75 billion worth of development projects between 2000 and 2011,¹⁵⁹ and in 2015, China pledged another \$60 billion in assistance (including aid, loans, and export credits).¹⁶⁰ China overtook the United States as Africa's largest trading partner in 2009.

Some have argued that this trend is not a strategic threat to US interests¹⁶¹ and, to a certain extent, they are correct. Chinese investment has brought badly needed capital and infrastructure to Africa, which spurs development and greater global investment. And insofar as China needs a certain degree of stability on the continent to protect those investments, its security interests align with those of the United States. But to consider China's stepped-up involvement as wholly benign would be shortsighted and naïve. Not all of China's activities in Africa trade off against US economic, political, and military influence and interests, but some certainly do.

First, China's approach to investment and assistance can corrode democratic institutions in Africa. Its general loans-for-resources prototype is deliberately apolitical, and apathetic with respect to many of the requirements that US assistance imposes, such as transparency, governance, labor standards, environmental sustainability, and human rights. By providing support with "no-strings-attached," China props up systemic flaws in African institutions.¹⁶² This arrangement may facilitate short-term funding needs, but it contributes to long-term problems for national and regional stability. Further, as China displaces the United States and EU as export destinations for certain

African goods, it creates negative pressure that lowers labor standards in those exporting countries.¹⁶³

Second, China's high-visibility commercial diplomacy and development aid translate into public goodwill and political influence that disadvantage US interests. China's investments are backed up by soft power tactics like educational and cultural exchanges, as well as political party training programs.¹⁶⁴ In addition, China is rapidly expanding its media presence across the continent. In reference to the growth of Chinese and Russian television networks in Africa, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton commented that the United States was "engaged in an information war and we are losing that war."¹⁶⁵ Indeed, a growing number of Africans look favorably upon China's state-driven development model: in three out of five African regions, it equals or surpasses the popularity of the United States as a development model, according to Afrobarometer.¹⁶⁶

This is significant for all of the many reasons that influence in Africa matters to the United States, including partnerships to push for global priorities and voting power in international organizations. The backing of African countries also allows China to better insulate itself from criticism in multilateral fora.¹⁶⁷ On eleven occasions between 1998 and 2008, the support of African countries at the UN was crucial in defeating human rights proposals against China.¹⁶⁸

159 This statistic includes North Africa. See Axel Dreher, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Vijaya Ramachandran, Austin Strange, and Michael J. Tierney, *China's Development Finance to Africa: A Media-Based Approach to Data Collection* (Washington, DC: Center for Global Development, 2013), https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/chinese-development-finance-africa_0.pdf.

160 The \$60 billion figure includes North Africa. See Noritsu Onishi, "China Pledges \$60 Billion to Aid Africa's Development," *New York Times*, December 4, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/05/world/africa/china-pledges-60-billion-to-aid-africas-development.html?_r=0.

161 RAND Corporation, "China Not a Threat to US National Security Interests in Africa," April 22, 2015, <http://www.rand.org/news/press/2015/04/22.html>.

162 John Banks, George Ingram, Mwangi Kimenyi, Steven Rocker, Witney Schneidman, Yun Sun, and Lesley Anne Warner, *Top Five Reasons Why Africa Should Be a Priority for the United States* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2013), https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/04_africa_priority_united_states.pdf, 6-7. See also Fred Dewes, "8 Facts about China's Investments in Africa," The Brookings Institution, May 20, 2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2014/05/20/8-facts-about-chinas-investments-in-africa/>.

163 Christopher Adolph, Vanessa Quince, and Aseem Prakash, "Do African Exports to China Hurt Labor Rights? Here's What We Found," *Washington Post*, March 3, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/03/03/do-african-exports-to-china-hurt-labor-rights-heres-what-we-found/?utm_term=.9892acd2d216.

164 ICF Monitor, "Education and the Exercise of Soft Power in China," January 13, 2016, <http://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/education-and-the-exercise-of-soft-power-in-china/>; Yun Sen, "Political Party Training: China's Ideological Push in Africa?" The Brookings Institution, July 5, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2016/07/05/political-party-training-chinas-ideological-push-in-africa/>.

165 Gagliardone and Geall, "China in Africa's Media and Telecommunications: Cooperation, Connectivity and Control," 3. See Hangwei Li and Jacqueline Muna Musiitwa, "China Steps Up Media Charm Offensive Across Africa," February 22, 2017, *This is Africa*, <http://www.thisisafrioonline.com/Analysis/China-steps-up-media-charm-offensive-across-Africa?ct=true>.

166 Africans polled by Afrobarometer widely perceive China as a positive influence in Africa despite some perceptions that Chinese goods are poor quality. See Deborah Brautigam, "Afrobarometer: China Wins Favorable Reviews in New Africa Survey," *The China-Africa Research Initiative Blog*, October 31, 2016, <http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/2016/10/afrobarometer-china-wins-favorable.html>.

167 Yun Sun, "China in Africa: Implications for US Competition and Diplomacy," The Brookings Institution, April 3, 2013, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/china-in-africa-implications-for-u-s-competition-and-diplomacy/>.

168 Geoff Dyer, "Using the Continent as a Training Ground," *Financial Times*, January 24, 2008, <http://www.ft.com/>



Liberian children line the streets of Monrovia, Liberia holding Chinese flags and awaiting the arrival of China's President Hu Jintao on February 1, 2007. According to a 2015 RAND study, Chinese head of state visits to Africa outpaced US presidential visits by three times during the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and China hosts a summit with African leaders every three years. *Photo credit: REUTERS/Christopher Herwig.*

Third, China is stepping up its military and security engagements in Africa, which is problematic for a host of reasons. In 2015, China announced plans for its first permanent military presence outside of the South China Sea, to be built in Djibouti. It is no coincidence that China has invested substantially in Djibouti's infrastructure—equivalent to some 60 percent of the country's GDP¹⁶⁹—including a widely-acclaimed railway.¹⁷⁰ This new base reflects China's maritime (and other) expansionary intentions,¹⁷¹ just as its counterpiracy efforts off the African coast provide the country with “a platform to enhance its expeditionary capacity” in a vital region.¹⁷² More directly, China's

military presence poses “operational security” risks given its close proximity to the nearby US base.¹⁷³

China has become an important purveyor of weapons to African countries.¹⁷⁴ The primary concern

[cms/s/0/89892ad6-ca20-11dc-b5dc-000077b07658.html?ft_site=falcon&desktop=true#axzz4ZWgfBob3.](https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/pdf/2015/dsacr15338.pdf)

169 International Monetary Fund, “Djibouti Staff Report for the 2014 Article IV Consultation - Debt Sustainability Analysis,” January 15, 2015, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/pdf/2015/dsacr15338.pdf>, 2.

170 Jacobs, “Joyous Africans Take to the Rails, With China's Help.”

171 Andrew Jacobs and Jane Perlez, “US Wary of Its New Neighbor in Djibouti: A Chinese Naval Base.”

172 J. Peter Pham, “Pirates and Dragon Boats: Assessing the Chinese

Navy's Recent East African Deployments,” *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, April 14, 2013, p. 87.

173 John Vandiver, “AFRICOM: Resource Constraints Add Risk for US forces in Africa,” *Stars and Stripes*, March 10, 2017, https://www.stripes.com/news/africom-resource-constraints-add-risk-for-us-forces-in-africa-1.458000#.WMKUO_krKUK.

174 In 2011, China supplied as much as a quarter of the African market (including North Africa and excluding South Africa). See Colum Lynch, “China's Arms Exports Flooding Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Washington Post*, August 25, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/chinas-arms-exports-flooding-sub-saharan-africa/2012/08/25/16267b68-e7f1-11e1-936a-b801fabab19_story.html?utm_term=.8dc71936a629. That number has since fallen, and between 2011-2015, “Russia accounted for 34 per cent of arms exports to the region, France for 13 per cent, China for 13 per cent and the USA for 11 per cent.” See Aude Fleurant, Sam Perlo-Freeman, Pieter Wezeman and Siemon Wezeman, *Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2015* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2015), <http://books.sipri.org/files/FS/SIPRIFS1602.pdf>.

is to whom.... China's lack of end use verification requirements "makes Chinese arms an attractive alternative to governments which might seek to use their military forces in a manner not aligned with US expectations."¹⁷⁵ Moreover, China has flexed its diplomatic muscle to weaken UN efforts to limit the spread of arms to African conflict zones.¹⁷⁶ Thus, China's provision of arms, combined with military training, can blunt US policy goals by fueling instability, reducing the effectiveness of US and UN sanctions, and undercutting American attempts to professionalize African militaries. And, as with economic relationships, deep military ties translate into meaningful political influence.

China has also stepped up its participation in UN peacekeeping operations, sending the majority of its soldiers to Africa.¹⁷⁷ To be clear, these deployments have many positive effects and should be welcomed. Nonetheless, positioning itself as a major troop contributor also improves China's competitiveness for top UN posts and amplifies the country's voice in international conflict-resolution conversations (e.g., with respect to South Sudan) in which the United States has traditionally enjoyed a leadership role (which has implications not just in Africa, but perhaps eventually in the Middle East as well).¹⁷⁸

175 "Policy Questions for the Next US AFRICOM Commander," *African Defense*, July 12, 2016, <http://www.african-defense.com/interesting-post/policy-questions-for-the-next-us-africom-commander/>.

176 Lynch, "China's arms exports flooding sub-Saharan Africa."

177 Lucy Hornby, "China Expands UN Peacekeeping Role as US Influence Wanes," *Financial Times*, November 23, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/e8091efa-ad5f-11e6-9cb3-bb8207902122>.

178 Ibid.

Overall, there is certainly room for the United States and China to cooperate on shared development and security goals in Africa. For China, the premium on stability will only increase as its investments grow and more Chinese citizens move to the continent. But the United States must be mindful of ceding its influence in Africa over time as China deepens its economic, political, military, and cultural ties with African countries—and what those strengthened ties will mean for China's global leadership and US-Chinese relations.

The prospect of reduced US influence also applies with respect to other emerging competitors on the continent. Russia, for example, increased its trade with Africa by ten times between 2000 and 2012, is also a major arms supplier, and is looking to secure access to oil and other commodities as a buffer against the actions of Western powers.¹⁷⁹ For its part, Turkey has built twenty-seven new embassies in Africa in six years,¹⁸⁰ with its largest in Somalia.¹⁸¹ Additionally, the list of economic actors that have held summits with African governments is long and includes the EU, China, Japan, Israel, India, and South America.

179 Joshua Meservey, *Four US Policy Priorities for Africa in 2016* (Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2016), <http://www.heritage.org/africa/report/four-us-policy-priorities-africa-2016>.

180 Daragh Neville and Alex Vines, "President Erdoğan's Africa Agenda: From Business to Embassy-Building," *Newsweek*, January 26, 2017, <http://europe.newsweek.com/erdogans-agenda-turkey-africa-548136?rm=eu>.

181 Abdi Guled, "Turkish President Opens New Embassy in War-Torn Somalia," *US News & World Report*, June 3, 2016, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2016-06-03/turkey-president-recep-tayyip-erdogan-in-war-torn-somalia>. See also Laura Pitel, "Somalia Reaps Rewards of Ankara's Investment," *Financial Times*, May 24, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/bae31b04-fa6f-11e5-8f41-df5bda8beb40>.

Conclusion

A review of Africa's importance to US national security emphasizes two key messages: first, that the United States ignores Africa—replete with vexing transnational threats as well as massive economic opportunity—at its peril; and second, that Africa's geopolitical and economic importance will only grow over time. More baldly stated, foreign policy professionals who ignore or underestimate Africa's strong ties to US national security are committing malpractice; it is untenable to believe, even implicitly, that Africa is of secondary importance to US interests.

After many decades of Africa being viewed mainly as a destination for aid and charity work or through the lens of the Cold War, the last three US presidents have taken steps in the right direction, solidifying important partnerships on the continent, and building on a history of bipartisan support for Africa-related policies.

To reverse course and retrench would be dangerous. Instead, it is critical that the United States seize opportunities to deepen US-Africa relations and advance US investments in areas such as economic development, governance, health, trade, and youth employment, thus deterring the factors that contribute to instability and violence. It is equally critical that the United States encourage strong investment climates and support economic opportunities for American companies.

These efforts necessitate the sustained application of US resources, in the form of diplomacy, high-level attention, foreign assistance, and trade and investment tools. Success in these areas will directly affect the safety and prosperity of Americans, as well as the United States' position as a global leader.

About the Author



Grant T. Harris is CEO of Harris Africa Partners LLC and advises companies and organizations on strategy, policy, and mitigating risk with respect to doing business in Africa.

For four years, Harris served as the principal advisor to President Barack Obama on issues related to Africa, serving as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the White House from August 2011 to August 2015.

In this role, Harris initiated and coordinated US policies toward the forty-nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including political, economic, and security matters. Harris conceived of and was a primary lead in implementing the historic US-Africa Leaders Summit, in which President Obama hosted fifty-one African Leaders in Washington, DC in August 2014. The Summit generated \$37 billion in new commitments to support trade, investment, and development across Africa.

Harris also initiated and coordinated the Doing Business in Africa Campaign, to encourage greater US trade and investment; launched the President's Young African Leaders Initiative, to support emerging leaders; and conceived and was the primary architect of the *US Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa*, signed by President Obama in 2012. During his time at the White House, Harris also oversaw US efforts to create and implement the *National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking*, and led the US response to various peace and security crises across Africa.

Prior to this position, Harris was Deputy Chief of Staff and Counselor to Susan Rice, the US Ambassador to the United Nations and a member of President Obama's Cabinet. Previously, Harris was an associate at the law firm of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, where he focused on international business transactions. Prior to that, Harris served in the African Affairs Directorate at the National Security Council at the White House under President Bill Clinton and at the US Mission to the United Nations under Ambassador Richard Holbrooke.

Harris holds a law degree from Yale Law School, a Master's in Public Affairs, with Distinction, from Princeton University, and a BA, *summa cum laude*, from the University of California, Berkeley. His writings have appeared in such publications as *Forbes*; *Yale Journal of Law & Policy*; *Berkeley Journal of International Law*; *Horizons*; *Israel Law Review* (peer-reviewed); and *The San Francisco Chronicle*. He is a frequent conference speaker and has been widely quoted on Africa issues in US, international, and African media. In January 2017, Harris was appointed by President Obama to serve on the US Holocaust Memorial Council.

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